



MEDIA RELEASE

Domestic violence demands investment in homelessness services

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As the National Cabinet announces its response to the rapid review into the prevention of violence against women, new data reveals a critical shortage in homelessness support services for women and children escaping domestic and family violence (DFV).

"Without substantial investment in homelessness support services, women will continue to be stuck in unsafe homes or to escape violence into homelessness," Homelessness Australia's CEO, Kate Colvin said.

The latest analysis by Homelessness Australia shows a concerning trend in the inability of services to meet the growing demand for support among those escaping violence.

Of the 104,187 people who experienced domestic and family violence and sought support from homelessness services, close to one quarter (23.1%) of those needing short-term or emergency accommodation missed out, while more than half (53.6%) of those needing medium-term/transitional housing missed out. And a staggering seven in ten (71.1%) of those needing long-term housing missed out.

A further 295 people per day were turned away from homelessness services with no assistance able to be provided; 80% of whom were women and children.

"These are women and children who have fled a violent situation only to find there's nowhere safe to go," Colvin said. "When almost one in four of those needing short-term, emergency housing are left in the lurch, Australia must surely reconsider its priorities."

The data also reveals increasing unmet needs across various support services compared to five years ago. For mental health support, 33.1% missed out (up from 32.1% in 2017-18), while for court support, 25.2% missed out (up from 22.2%).

Service sought	Clients who needed service 2022-23	Clients who missed out (service neither provided nor referred) 2022-23	Percentage clients who missed out 2022-23	Percentage clients who missed out 2017-18
Short-term or emergency accommodation	48,141	11,103	23.1	20.8
Medium-term/transitional housing	31,219	16,732	53.6	48.7
Long-term housing	37,392	26,582	71.1	65.3



Assistance to sustain housing tenure	26,838	5,002	18.6	15.3
Mental health supports	14,133	4,674	33.1	32.1
Legal/financial services	10,579	2,780	26.3	26.0
Assistance to obtain/ maintain government allowance	11,947	2,084	17.4	13.9
Court support	11,787	2,970	25.2	22.2

"Lack of access to a safe home and support increases women's and children's risk of experiencing harm or death. The impact of lack of access to housing was highlighted in the Missing and Murdered First Nations Women's Report, in the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and their Children, and in countless lived experience testimonies," Colvin said.

Homelessness Australia is seeking an immediate investment in housing and accommodation for those fleeing violence, and in homelessness and family violence support to stop women being turned away from the help they need.

"It's crucial that we bolster investment in frontline homelessness and domestic violence response services. When families and children reach out for help, we need to ensure there's a dedicated worker available and the necessary housing and accommodation to provide them with a stable home."

Contact: Nick Lucchinelli 0422229032