



National Housing  
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# Ageing and insecure housing

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# **Pathways out of homelessness: Supporting older women out of homelessness**

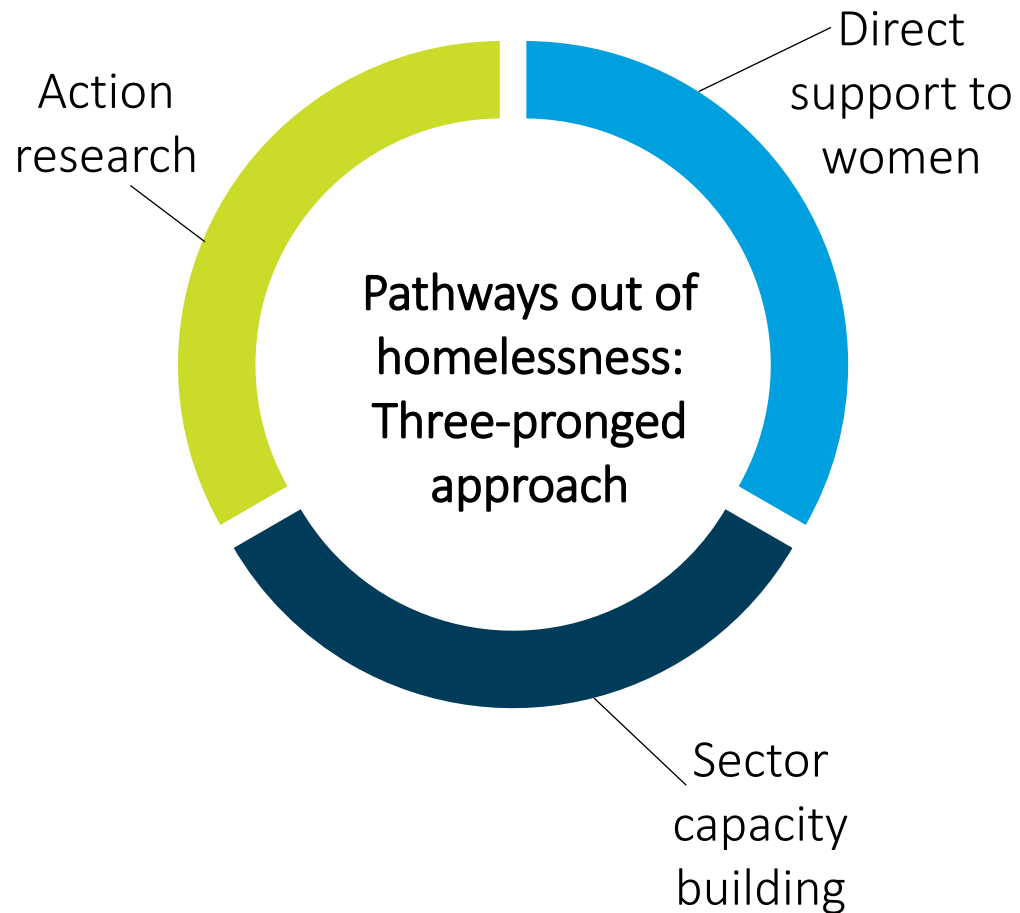
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## Introduction and overview



**MISSION  
AUSTRALIA** | together  
we stand



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*



THE UNIVERSITY  
of ADELAIDE







*"Thank you for everything, it's funny in sheets, the poor sleeping bag is in the wardrobe but shit its cosy, it's a new beginning and God knows when I will wake up, in 3 days xx"*

## Service Provision: What we've learnt

- › Women need a flexible approach to meet their needs
- › Face-to-face engagement is preferred, but option for virtual engagement is also important
- › Responses must be person centered, with trauma informed framework
- › Women need their experiences to be heard and validated
- › Take care with language use to reduce stigma around homelessness
- › Service provision must be non-judgmental to support women's engagement
- › Women don't like to be case managed

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## Interim Research Findings

### Challenges and barriers to accessing and providing support:

- Women don't know where and how to get help
- Services not aware of older people's needs
- Services are siloed
- Women present with less complexity and score lower on assessments, affecting eligibility
- Lack of appropriate and affordable housing
- Wellbeing considerations

For women  
this felt  
like...

*"I didn't know where to go for help, I kept saying to myself for months 'where do I go?' I was ashamed to tell family."*

*"Everywhere I rang gave me a list of phone numbers to ring myself...everything felt too hard to manage."*

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## What's needed and what's next

- › A single entry-point service for women at risk of and experiencing homelessness that:
    - › Provides holistic support
    - › Empathic workers
    - › Includes lived experience workers
    - › Uses assessments and eligibility criteria appropriate for older women
    - › Focuses on early intervention
    - › Provides pathways to safe, secure and appropriate housing
    - › Provides advocacy for women
    - › Is trauma-informed and strengths-based, promoting women's agency and independence
    - › Raises community awareness about older homeless women
  
  - › What's next?
    - › Completion of the research
    - › Continued advocacy for the needs of women
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*"...This was taken on the first evening that I came to the house...I can breathe I can literally breathe, I am not having to just barely survive anymore."*



*“...I had a beautiful garden in my own home...now that I just have a veranda instead of a whole garden, I just put some nice things around...[just] because it is Housing it doesn't mean it has to be dirty it doesn't have to be full of violence it doesn't have to be full of graffiti it can still be a really lovely place because everyone that lives here deserves that.”*



*“I haven't been able to enjoy making my own meal preparation for months...It's these things that you miss, there is so much loss not having a home.”*

