

Progressing Housing First in Victoria

October 2023

OFFICIAL



This was our foundation



Victoria's first initiatives launched in 2009 and 2010

- Common Ground
- Sacred Heart Mission's *Journey to Social Inclusion*.



Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Plan (2018)

- Established assertive outreach and supportive housing teams, critical components of a Housing First response



Our challenge to expand

- To demonstrate to the community that Housing First approaches work and have an enormous long-term benefit to the whole community – which merits greater investment by governments.



The pandemic and scaling up Housing First approaches



In 2020-21

- 105,000 people sought support from homelessness services.
- Over 12,000 were identified as sleeping rough.
- Return clients: 60% of clients had already accessed homelessness services in the previous five years



Emergency hotel response

- In the pandemic, emergency accommodation was provided to over 30,000 households for over 1.4 million nights.
- Onsite health concierge, homelessness support at up to 24 hotels



Catalyst for ground-breaking investment in Housing First programs

- *From Homelessness to a Home*
- *Homes For Families*
- The Victorian Government invested over \$150 million across 2020-22, and \$12 million ongoing to deliver Housing First.

What impact did we have?



A visible reduction in people sleeping rough

Between 2020-22, people sleeping rough declined by 14%.

Responses that ensured people did not return to rough sleeping.

Who did we support?

- From Homelessness to a Home (H2H) supported over **2,500 people**
- Homes for Families (H4F) supported **170 families**
- Across both programs: over **800 children supported**

Capital investment for Housing First

- \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build: greater access to social housing
- Over 450 spot purchases

★ *Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan* (\$45 million)

★ *Housing First* (\$230 million)



Lessons learned

Lessons learned ensure continuous improvement

Collaboration and collective impact

- Ongoing sector engagement is critical
- Sectors working together support locally-driven responses

Pathways to stable housing

- The scale of H2H presented challenges to rapidly source housing
- Ensuring a pathway to stable housing

Best practice support models

- Some complex clients need extended support or additional support in supportive housing



We expect approx. **80%** of households can **sustain their housing**

What are we doing next?

We are increasing investment for:

- Partnerships Addressing Disadvantage
- Self-determination: Aboriginal-specific entry points
- Eight supportive housing facilities: four are already operational in Melbourne, Carlton, Dandenong and Seddon; two are under construction in Melbourne and St Kilda, and two will be in regional Victoria.
- Housing First program for young people leaving care

Victoria's future

Making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring through early intervention, targeted supports and **Housing First** approaches.

And self-determined interventions for Aboriginal people.