

During National Homelessness Week, 2-8 August this year, Australian social workers are calling for more investment in social housing to help end homelessness.

Last month, the AASW submission to the Inquiry into Homelessness in Australia, called on the federal government to build or acquire additional social housing.

AASW National President Christine Craik said the COVID-19 pandemic has shown that we can respond to homelessness quickly as a response when there is a threat to public health, and this quick response has protected some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

“During this pandemic, the Victorian government has housed many who were homeless as part of a public health response until April next year. We welcome this move, and would argue that this initiative needs to happen on a more permanent basis, not just during a pandemic and needs to be implemented across the country.

“We are supporting the Everybody’s Home campaign this week. Building social housing and repairing empty or substandard public housing needs to be prioritised in all neighbourhoods across Australia. This kind of initiative will result in local jobs, economic stimulus and work towards social cohesion across the country. This pandemic has wreaked havoc with our most vulnerable communities and if there is to be one positive thing to come out of this, let that legacy be that this was the time we took a different path around social housing and committed ourselves to eradicating homelessness forever.

“For anyone, becoming homeless can feel like a personal failure and many of our cultural myths and negative stereotypes around homelessness and poverty feed into this. You can tell a lot about the health of a community by the way it treats its most vulnerable citizens. We need to challenge these myths and those negative stereotypes about homelessness and mobilise politically to end homelessness for good. We urge everyone to use this week to engage with the Everybody’s Home campaign.”

Social workers know the effects of housing insecurity on vulnerable people. We know the ways in which this intersects and complicates other systemic disadvantage, including family violence, child protection and mental health.

See the Scope of Social Work Practice areas in Homelessness, Family Violence, Child Protection and Mental Health.

Scope of Social Work Practice – Homelessness
Scope of Social Work Practice – Family Violence
Scope of Social Work Practice – Child Protection
Scope of Social Work Practice – Mental Health
ENDS

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