

27 July 2020

## Victorian Response

Victoria: more than new 500 cases today.

Launch has been trying (with amazing staff) to provide a great service to clients most in need, whilst ensuring the public is engaged and aware of how experiences of disadvantage are all interconnected. One possible gap is a discussion about how homelessness in and of itself is a massive health risk – not sure the community is ready to engage with increased morbidity and mortality of homelessness.

Learnt that people with a chronic experience of homelessness greatly exceeds official estimates – perhaps 5 times greater e.g. 2000.

So, arguably, 2000 is the demand for or permanent supportive housing target number of homes+ support (see data below.)

Total current clients	740			Total clients since 16th March	2268	
VI-SPDATS completed	442	60%		VI-SPDATS completed	1195	53%
Score over 10	138	31%		Score over 10	362	30%
Score 5-9	234	53%		Score 5-9	637	53%
Below 5	70			Below 5	196	
IAPs completed	507	69%		IAPs completed	1411	62%
high high high	221	44%		high high high	518	37%
Other	286			Other	893	

### All clients since March 16<sup>th</sup>

- 73.9% were already known to LH, with
- an average history of 8 years since first support from LH
- an average of 46 service contacts per client
- 26.1% were new to LH during COVID

### Current clients in EA

- 77% were already known to LH, with
- an average history of 8.2 years since first support from LH
- an average of 53 service contacts per client
- 23% were new to LH during COVID

### Emergency accommodation as a Housing First response?

Some success stories that speak to the value and outcomes of Housing First. Number of hard to engage clients previously not interested in accommodation when it was offered but have now done

so. Staff believe that this change can be put down to providing people with options that are of better amenity than we've been able to offer in the past, plus their support workers have recognised their individual choices, and the accommodation hasn't imposed any behavioural or treatment conditions. These clients have been in control of the process and next steps, which is of central importance to this cohort.

Also engaging with physical health care, dentistry and family reconnections – so – despite the hotel not being a home – and all the uncertainty and stress of not having certainty – still getting good results for some people – usually where there is an existing worker or support relationship in place, but not always. Some people getting help for the first time.

### **Hotel Emergency response teams:**

#### **General overview**

As community transmission of COVID-19 increases the DHHS is requesting implementation of a Hotels & Homelessness Emergency Response for hotels where people experiencing homelessness are currently residing.

The key objective of this response is to ensure appropriate preventative measures are in place to protect the health and wellbeing of people experiencing homelessness from further COVID-19 outbreaks and to ensure homelessness and housing services have the supports and resources they require to support people in temporary accommodation.

#### **Response 1: Hotels Emergency Response Team**

Response 1 will be applied when a hotel is accommodating 20 or more people experiencing homelessness. All members of the Homelessness Emergency Support Team will work together to facilitate a coordinated health, safety and support response.

The Hotel Emergency Response team consists of:

- On site 24/7 security
- Health Concierge (9am -5pm 7 days a week)
- Hotel support worker (9am -5pm 7 days a week)

Launch Housing, Sacred Heart Mission, Melbourne City Mission, The Salvation Army and Vincent Care Victoria will be providing this response with each organisation allocated a number of hotels by the DHHS with health support from the Royal Melbourne Hospital and Peter McCallum Cancer Centre.

The hotel emergency response is funded for the entire duration of the Stage 3 "Stay at Home" restrictions which at this stage is until the 17th of August.

### **Mental health outreach support:**

The Alfred are continuing to provide outreach Mental Health support to the hotels in their area and St Vincent's have begun providing support to the hotels in their area.

The Royal Melbourne Hospital mental health team have been provided funding from the DHHS to establish a taskforce team to provide a proactive mental health response specifically to clients accommodated in hotels within RMH's catchment. The RMH are currently recruiting to roles within this team with the team funded for three months at this stage, as part of the funding there will be a dedicated housing support worker role with RMH keen for this role to be filled by a Launch Housing

staff member. Next week I hope to have more details on this with an EOI likely to go out internally for this role.