

Q&As – Launch of Housing First Auckland

What is Housing First Auckland?

This joint initiative, between the Government, Auckland Council and five community social housing providers, aims to end homelessness in Auckland recognises that it is easier for people to address issues such as mental health and substance use, once they are housed.

Why is this important?

We don't want to see anyone living on the street or in shelters, or in garages and overcrowded homes. We are acutely aware that there are some New Zealanders who need more support.

The reasons why some people turn to the streets are complex, such as addiction or mental health. There is no quick or easy fix.

For two years, the priority of the Housing First Auckland pilot is to quickly move people into appropriate housing and then immediately provide wrap-around services to support their success.

Who is involved?

Affinity Services, Auckland City Mission, Lifewise, LinkPeople and VisionWest have been funded by Government to work collectively over the next two years to deliver Housing First services in Auckland. The collective is called Housing First Auckland.

Affinity works in Central and West Auckland. Lifewise together with Auckland City Mission work in the City Centre. VisionWest works in West Auckland and LinkPeople works in South Auckland.

The Government (via the Ministry of Social Development) and Auckland Council provide funding.

How will it work?

The Housing First model recognises that it is easier for people to address the issues such as mental health and substance abuse, once they are housed. The priority is to quickly move people into appropriate housing and then immediately provide wrap-around services to support their success.

Who will this help?

472 homeless people over two years. Across the city, community outreach is underway in areas known for rough sleeping including people living in cars and also with people living in boarding houses. The pilot will work with individuals who range in age from 17 to 70, and with children.

What sorts of needs might homeless people have?

Multiple and complex needs are persistent and interrelated health and or social care needs, which impact an individual's life and ability to function in society.

These may include:

- long-term street homelessness
- mental, psychological or emotional health needs
- drug or alcohol dependency
- contact with the criminal justice system
- physical health needs
- experience of domestic violence and abuse.

Wrap-around services will help support a person to return to independent living, after they have found a home, including returning to work.

How many homeless or rough sleepers are there in Auckland?

According to Statistics NZ's 2013 Census figures, there are 4197 people across New Zealand living without habitable accommodation (rough sleepers on the street, in a car, or other improvised dwelling). Around 771 of these are in the greater Auckland region.

How much is this costing?

The pilot is costing \$4.75 million over two years. The Government is investing \$3.75 million and the Auckland Council \$1 million.