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| **Supported housing for people living with mental illness** |
| Fact sheet, November 2021 |

# More homes for Victorians living with mental illness

The Big Housing Build is a $5.3 billion investment from the Victorian Government for the construction of more than 12,000 new homes across Victoria. 2,000 of these new homes will be for Victorians living with mental illness, to ensure they have access to safe, secure and stable social housing.

### The Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System

As part of its work, the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System (the Commission) investigated a broad range of housing situations that can influence a person’s mental health. The Commission noted that a stable home can bring a sense of safety, security and belonging—all of which are fundamental to a person’s mental health, wellbeing and ability to lead a fulfilling life.

The Commission recommended that the 2,000 new homes for Victorians living with mental illness be delivered as supported housing, which means that housing is provided in tandem with tailored mental health and wellbeing supports. It also recommended that these homes be prioritised for people who require ongoing intensive treatment, care and support, and that Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services assist with the process of selecting the people who will be allocated this housing.

More information on the Commission’s recommendations for supported housing for adults and young people living with mental illness is available in chapter 16 (volume 2) of the [Commission’s final report](https://finalreport.rcvmhs.vic.gov.au/).

# What Homes Victoria is doing

Homes Victoria has started work to implement the Commission’s recommendations for supported housing for people living with mental illness, and is working closely with the Department of Health.

Initial work has commenced to implement the recommendation to deliver co-designed supported housing for adults living with mental illness as part of the Big Housing Build. As a first step, Homes Victoria has partnered with Mental Health Victoria to recruit people with lived experience to participate in a co-design process for the supported housing for adults. Participants will include people with lived experience of mental illness and families, carers and supporters. Participants will come from diverse backgrounds such as Aboriginal people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people from the LGBTIQ+ community. There will also be participants across different age groups and from regional areas of Victoria.

This co-design process will be run over the coming months. Homes Victoria will also engage with key stakeholders throughout the design process, including seeking input from the community housing and mental health sectors.

This process will help ensure that supported housing for people living with mental illness is delivered in a range of housing configurations, appropriately located, and accompanied by individually tailored mental health and wellbeing treatment, care and support.

The Social Housing Growth Fund (SHGF), part of the Big Housing Build, will provide up to $1.38 billion in funding to community housing agencies to deliver up to 4,200 new social housing dwellings across Victoria. Of the 2,000 dwellings to be allocated to Victorians living with mental illness, a proportion will be customised dwellings to be procured under the SHGF Grants Program.

# Next steps

Future work over the coming months will include engagement with young people as part of the co-design of new supported housing for people aged 18-25. Engagement with young people will be run separately to ensure that this housing responds to the particular needs of young people.

Homes Victoria will also be revising the Victorian Housing Register’s Special Housing Needs ‘priority access’ categories to include people living with mental illness. This will support the recognition of people who are living with mental illness as a priority population group as part of Victoria’s 10-year strategy for social and affordable housing, and ensure that they are allocated a continuing substantial proportion of social and affordable housing over the next ten years.

# More information

Please contact [MHco-design@homes.vic.gov.au](mailto:MHco-design@homes.vic.gov.au) if you would like more information or have any questions.

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