



Specialist homelessness services 2019–20: New South Wales

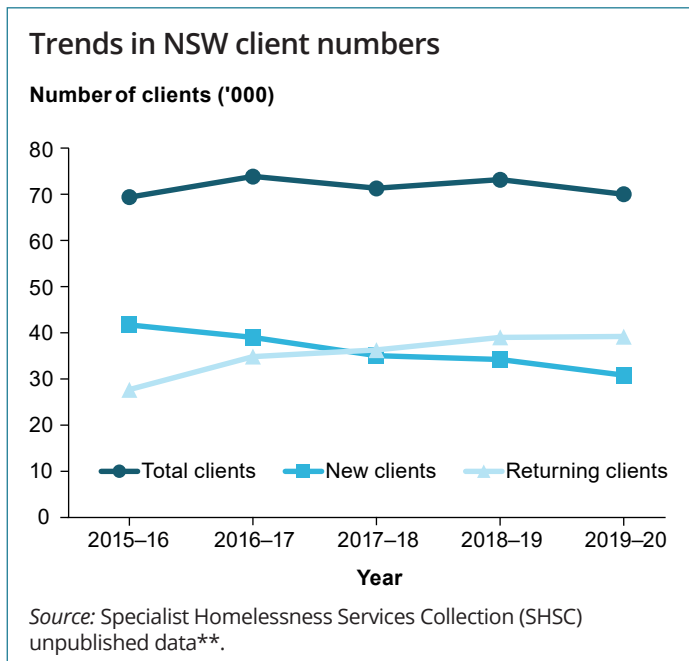
Homelessness can profoundly affect a person’s mental and physical health, their education and employment opportunities, and their ability to fully participate in society. Governments across Australia fund a range of specialist services to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) deliver services for specific groups (such as people experiencing family and domestic violence and young people) as well as more generic services for people in housing crisis.

How many people were assisted?

One in 115 people in New South Wales (NSW) received homelessness assistance, lower than the national rate (1 in 87). The top 3 reasons for clients seeking assistance were:

- financial difficulties (40%, compared with 41% nationally)
- housing crisis (36%, compared with 34%)
- family and domestic violence (35%, compared with 39%).

On average, 25 requests for assistance went unmet each day.



Quick facts

- 70,400 clients were assisted in NSW—24% of the national SHS population (290,500 total clients).

Of NSW clients:

- 46% were homeless on first presentation, higher than the national rate (43%).
- 9 in 10 (92%) who were at risk of homelessness were assisted to maintain housing.
- 4 in 10 (42%) who were homeless were assisted into housing.

Client characteristics, 2019–20

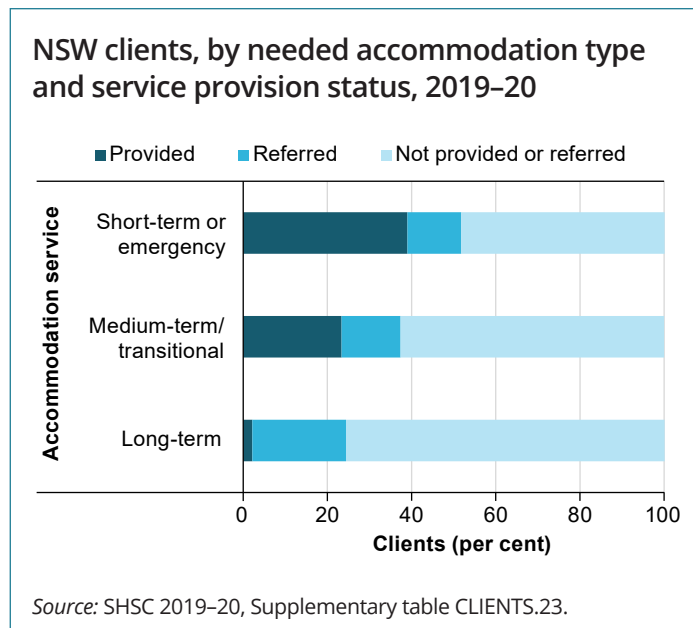
	NSW	Australia
Sex (%)	Male	40
	Female	60
Indigenous (%)	30	27
Remoteness (%)	Major cities	61
	Inner regional	23
	Outer regional	11
	Remote and very remote	6
Living arrangements (%)	Living alone	30
	One parent with child/ren	34
	Couple with child/ren	13
	Couple without child/ren	5
Labour force (%)	Other family or group	18
	Employed	13
	Unemployed	51
Education status (%)	Not in labour force	37
	Education/training	21
Median length of support (days)	Not in education/training	79
	58	43
Median nights of accommodation	59	28
Proportion receiving accommodation (%)	24	30

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: SHSC supplementary tables 2019–20.

Accommodation services

A greater proportion of clients in NSW than nationally needed accommodation (66% and 59%, respectively).



Client groups of interest

While the overall service use rate decreased in NSW in 2019–20 compared with the previous year, service use rates for some priority groups fell across all priority groups.

Clients per 10,000, by interest groups

	NSW		Australia	
	2018–19	2019–20	2018–19	2019–20
All clients	92.1	87.0	116.2	114.5
Indigenous	697.9	673.0	782.0	798.3
Young people presenting alone (15–24)	17.9	16.9	17.2	16.7
Older people (55 and over)	6.8	6.2	9.7	9.6
Family and domestic violence	34.9	33.9	46.6	47.0
Disability	2.2	2.0	2.9	2.6
Mental health	31.7	31.4	34.6	34.8
Exiting custodial arrangements	2.8	2.6	3.8	3.7
Leaving care	2.4	2.2	2.7	2.7
Children on protection orders	3.4	3.0	3.7	3.5
Drug/alcohol use	10.4	9.5	11.2	11.2

Notes

- Crude rates are used except for Indigenous rates which are directly age-standardised (see online technical information).
- Minor adjustments in rates may occur between publications reflecting revision of the estimated resident population by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Sources: SHSC Supplementary tables 2018–19 to 2019–20.

Housing outcomes

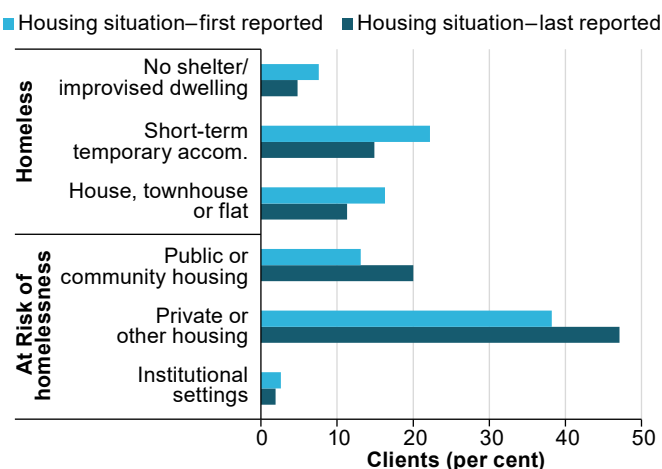
Housing outcomes are described for clients whose support ended in the financial year and detailed information about housing situation was known at the start and end of support.

Of the 19,000 NSW clients who began support homeless in 2019–20, 42% (around 8,000) were assisted into housing. Of these, 1 in 3 (31% or 2,400 clients) were housed in public or community housing, while 2 in 3 (66% or 5,300 clients) were housed in private or other housing.

Of the 23,500 NSW clients who began support housed but at risk of homelessness in 2019–20, 9 in 10 (92% or 21,500) were assisted to maintain housing. Of these clients at risk:

- More than 4 in 5 (83% or 4,950) of those in public or community housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 8% (around 450) were assisted into private or other housing.
- More than 4 in 5 (82% or 14,200) of those in private or other housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 6% (1,000) were assisted into public or community housing.

NSW clients, by housing situation at beginning and end of support, 2019–20



****Note:** Data for 2011–12 to 2016–17 have been adjusted for non-response. Due to improvements in rates of agency participation and SLK validity, 2017–18 data onwards are not weighted. The removal of weighting does not constitute a break in time series and weighted data from 2011–12 to 2016–17 are comparable with unweighted data for 2017–18 onwards. For further information, refer to the Technical notes.

More information

More information on NSW and national SHS data is available from [Specialist homelessness services annual report](#).