



Specialist homelessness services 2017–18: 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 domestic and family violence and young people) as well as more generic services for people in housing crisis.

How many people were assisted?

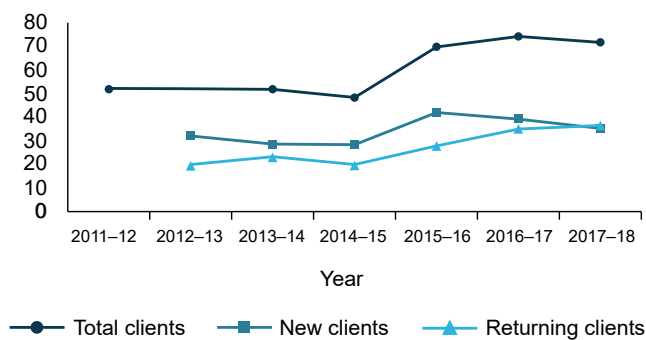
One in 110 people in New South Wales (NSW) received homelessness assistance, lower than the national rate (1 in 85). The top 3 reasons for clients seeking assistance were:

- housing crisis (45%, compared with 39% nationally)
- financial difficulties (41%, compared with 39%)
- domestic and family violence (32%, compared with 39%).

On average, 31 requests for assistance went unmet each day.

Figure 1: Trends in New South Wales client numbers client numbers

Number of Clients ('000)



Source: Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) unpublished data**.

****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 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. For further information, refer to the Technical notes.

Quick facts

- **71,628 clients** were assisted, representing 25% of the national Specialist Homelessness Services population (288,795 total clients).
- **47% were homeless** on first presentation, higher than the national rate (43%).
- **9 in 10 clients (90%) at risk of homelessness** were assisted to maintain housing.
- **4 in 10 clients (41%) who were homeless** were assisted into housing.



Table 1: New South Wales client characteristics, 2017–18

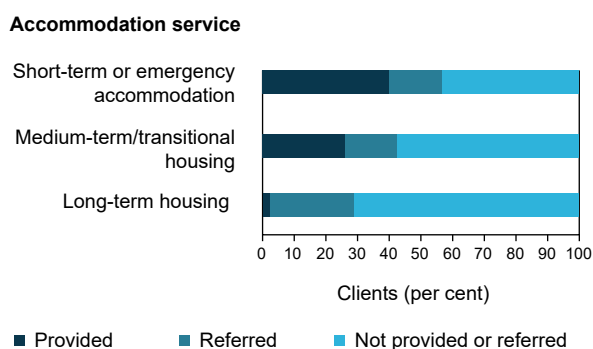
		NSW	Australia
Sex (%)	Male	43	39
	Female	57	61
Indigenous (%)	Major cities	59	62
	Inner regional	31	23
Remoteness (%)	Outer regional	8	11
	Remote and very remote	1	5
	Living alone	32	30
Living arrangements (%)	One parent with child/ren	36	35
	Couple with child/ren	11	12
	Couple without child/ren	5	5
Labour force (%)	Other family or group	16	18
	Employed	12	12
	Unemployed	57	48
Education status (%)	Not in labour force	31	40
	Education/training	25	22
Median length of support (days)	Not in education/training	75	78
	Median length of support (days)	52	39
Median length of accommodation (nights)		61	32
Proportion receiving accommodation (%)		24	29

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
Sources: SHSC National and NSW supplementary tables 2017–18.

Accommodation services

A greater proportion of New South Wales clients needed accommodation compared with the national SHS population (64% and 56%, respectively).

Figure 2: New South Wales clients, by most needed accommodation type and service provision status, 2017–18



Source: SHSC 2017–18 NSW supplementary table CLIENTS.27.

Client groups of interest

While the overall service use rate was lower in New South Wales in 2017–18 compared with the previous year, a slightly higher service use rate was reported for the priority groups of clients experiencing domestic and family violence and children on protection orders.

Table 2: Client rate per 10,000, by priority group

	New South Wales		Australia	
	2016–17	2017–18	2016–17	2017–18
All clients	95.9	91.1	119.1	117.4
Indigenous	800.3	774.6	813.9	802.7
Young people presenting alone (15–24)	17.9	17.1	17.4	17.6
Older people (55 and over)	7.1	6.8	9.7	9.8
Domestic and family violence	33.2	33.9	47.4	49.2
Disability	4.1	2.5	4.5	3.2
Mental health	31.4	30.6	32.0	32.9
Exiting custodial arrangements	2.8	2.8	3.4	3.4
Leaving care	2.9	2.6	2.9	2.8
Children on protection orders	3.3	3.4	3.6	3.5
Drug/alcohol use	11.4	10.4	11.3	11.0

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 National and NSW supplementary tables 2016–17 and 2017–18**.

Housing outcomes

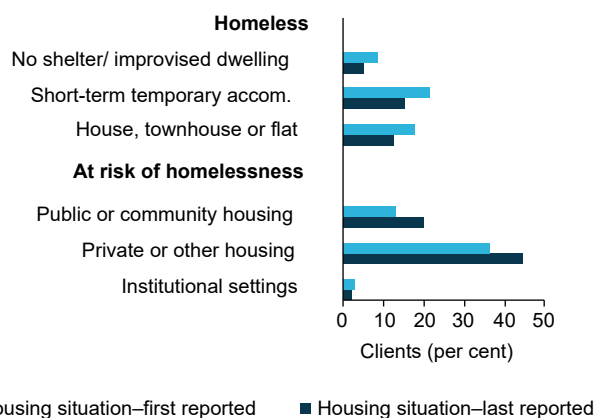
Housing outcomes are described for clients whose support had ended and housing situation known.

Of the 19,900 clients who began support homeless, 41% (around 8,100 clients) were assisted into housing. Of these clients, 32% (2,600 clients) were housed in public or community housing, while 64% (nearly 5,200 clients) were housed in private or other housing.

Of the 23,000 clients who began support housed but at risk of homelessness, 90% were assisted to maintain housing. Of these clients at risk:

- nearly 5,000 (85%) of those in public or community housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 8% (around 460) were assisted into private or other housing
- around 13,500 (84%) 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.

Figure 3: New South Wales clients, by housing situation at beginning and end of support, 2017–18



Source: SHSC 2017–18 NSW supplementary table CLIENTS.22.

More information

More information is available from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2017-18/contents/contents>.

Specific information on the New South Wales is available from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2017-18/data>

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