

MEDIA RELEASE

No fixed address – new report on homelessness

25 September 2025

The impact of housing instability on people's health

Housing supply, availability and affordability are all major issues in our society in 2025, and we are seeing the flow-on effects to people who are experiencing this, particularly in relation to their primary health needs.

As housing insecurity can affect people from all walks of life, Murray PHN recently published an in-depth health needs assessment on homelessness, highlighting the strengths and gaps in the capacity of primary healthcare to meet the health needs of this population and to identify opportunities to improve access to services.

This edited report “Housing Instability and Health” provides Murray PHN community members with some of the key insights into the ever-present threat of housing insecurity in our communities.

Population health data on the location, demographics, and health needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness were identified and examined, together with analysis of significant stakeholder consultations that included health service providers, housing and homelessness service providers, Murray PHN Clinical and Community Advisory Councils, Medical Advisors and subject matter experts.

Murray PHN CEO Matt Jones said addressing homelessness and the needs of homeless people is a key priority for Primary Health Networks around Australia.

“People who are experiencing homelessness or unstable housing situations often find it difficult to break a poor health cycle. For example, poor health can undermine housing stability or lead to homelessness through loss of income or increased care needs. At the same time, unstable or inadequate housing can worsen health due to stress, unsafe living conditions and lack of access to the health services that they need.

“While state and federal governments are working to increase housing stock across the country, it falls to agencies in our communities to help people struggling with the extended impacts of homelessness, he said. “And the evidence is clear – longer term homelessness can significantly shorten a person’s life.”

“A stable roof over your family’s head is not a luxury – it is one of the basic building blocks of life, and should not be too much to expect as a member of a first world society,” he said. “Those of us who enjoy the comfort and security of stable housing don’t always recognise that people just like us can end up homeless through no fault of their own.”

Some facts about homelessness:

- The fastest growing group of people experiencing homelessness is in people over 65
- Homelessness goes hand-in-hand with health issues
- People aged 10 -25 have the highest proportion of homelessness of any age group
- Homelessness is not a problem confined to cities
- Life expectancy for people experiencing homelessness is greatly reduced, with people dying as much as 40 years younger than other Australians.



Leadership



Collaboration



Respect



Accountability



Innovation

To read the report, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/2025MurrayHealthReport>

About us:

Murray PHN is one of 29 PHNs (Primary Health Networks) around Australia working to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary healthcare and service systems. Across our region, we work with general practitioners (GPs), community health, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), pharmacy, aged care and allied health practitioners, and with acute services such as hospitals, specialists and emergency care.

The role of PHNs is to help to support and integrate the work of these important services to ensure that the people get the right care, in the right place, at the right time. In the Murray PHN region, which covers almost 100,000 sq km of regional Victoria, we work to develop and maintain sustainable models of primary healthcare for our communities.

Contact details

Email communications@murrayphn.org.au anytime or alternatively contact:

- Monday – Thursday: Jackie Grant, Murray PHN Communications Specialist e: jgrant@murrayphn.org.au or t: 0408 366 312
- Tuesday – Friday: Amity Bradford, Murray PHN Communications Specialist e: abradford@murrayphn.org.au or t: 0412 060 308

Images of Matt Jones

- https://www.murrayphn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Murray-PHN-CEO_Matt-Jones_2024.jpg
- https://www.murrayphn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Murray-PHN-CEO_Matt-Jones_2_2024.jpg