

What housing and support services are available to older people?



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Housing options for older people

Public and Social Housing are the main low-cost options for housing in Victoria. Rents are set at 25% - 30% of household income. There is also housing set aside for people who are over 55 (Older Person's Housing or Elderly Person's housing) and the Victorian Public Housing Register prioritises this group, reducing waiting times. Further eligibility criteria are found [\(here\)](#).

Independent Living Units are a source of low-cost accommodation for older persons on low incomes, often provided by not for profit organisations. More information can be found [\(here\)](#).

This booklet [\(here\)](#) provides information on other affordable housing options for older people.



Housing support services

- Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG): Housing information and Referral. HAAG can do this directly with the consumer when you refer the person and can also do secondary consults with you as a worker to identify housing support options/a retirement housing service.
- Wintringham: a specialised welfare company that provides housing and care to elderly, frail men and women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- The Opening Doors Framework: ensures an integrated and coordinated response by having a limited number of designated access points into the homelessness system.
- ASK IZZY: A mobile website that connects people who are in crisis with the services they need right now and nearby. The details on how to contact these services can be found on page 30 of the resource.



CHSP Assistance with Care and Housing (ACH) Program

The Commonwealth Program that addresses housing and homelessness for older people is currently (*as of 2021*) called the Assistance with Care and Housing (ACH) program. (*Some ACH services will transition into the new care finder program from January 2023*).

- *Current as of 2021, ACH can be accessed at age 50 (45 if Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander) for people who are at risk of premature ageing through being homeless, or at risk of homelessness*
- My Aged Care is currently the access point for the ACH Program. More information in this factsheet, ([click here](#))
- ACH provides support to people who experience or are at risk of homelessness. Services currently include:
 - Advocacy
 - Financial and Legal Assessment
 - Referrals regarding Hoarding and Squalor
- If eligible for ACH a client is also eligible for linkage to other CHSP programs.

Further Support

Access and Support Workers support marginalised individuals to ensure they get the services they need. They are available in Victoria to support consumers in navigating service systems and to access the services they need. Find your local worker ([here](#)).

Contact your Regional Diversity Advisor to discuss local resources and support organisations for your region.

Achieving Housing

Activity 8

Looking for home and finding community

The resource 'Home at Last – Looking for Home & Finding Community' shows what it means to older people who have been homeless ([here](#)).

Questions:

1. Reflecting on the above video, discuss how it relates to what you already know, or your perceptions about housing insecurity?
2. What are the benefits gained from seeking help?



Possible activity reflections

- The above explained how housing insecurity/homelessness can look, such as living in inappropriate or unsafe accommodation, unaffordable rent, living in a very small and often overcrowded house and having to move houses many times. This may be different from how homelessness is portrayed traditionally as sleeping rough/on the streets
- The video also showed that homelessness impacts people of all gender and ages, and that older people who do not own their own house are at higher risk of homelessness
- Some of the benefits of seeking help that were highlighted in the video include: feeling part of a community of people who have had similar experiences of housing insecurity. The video showed this resulted in great friendships and support as well as reduced social isolation.

Don't lose sight of the person, their needs and what's important to them

Keeping a person's needs at the centre of all decisions, promotes a person-centred approach. It is important to understand who they are, what's important to them, what the person wants to do, what the person is able to do for themselves and where support is needed.

This may include:

- Identifying other aged care services (including In Home Support, home care packages and residential aged care) that may be appropriate and inform the client of these services
- Discussing other service options to determine the full range of services the consumer may require support from, including financial, health, legal, mental health, police, public guardian/trustee, prison/justice/correctional, social and disability services
- Supporting consumers who experience or are at risk of homelessness, to access services where they are currently living, or at a place where they are safe and comfortable
- When making referrals it is essential that services coordinate and support each other to ensure the consumer's needs are at the centre of their work and do not 'fall through the cracks'

Remember

Currently, as of 2021 (yet this may change when ACH services will transition into the new care finder program from January 2023) people who have prematurely aged are eligible for Aged Care Services (such as CHSP and ACH program) from the age of 50 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from 45 years and older

Whilst many other support systems like social support groups etc can increase wellbeing, they are less effective when there is no stable housing

Just because someone may be at risk of homelessness, it shouldn't prevent the person from accessing social support and other CHSP services.



We value your feedback.
Please click the link below for a short
evaluation.

[Evaluation](#)

