

# HOUSING FIRST IN PERTH

*Findings from the 50 Lives 50 Homes Evaluation*

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31<sup>st</sup> May 2022





# **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY**

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which we meet today and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Sovereignty has never been ceded.

***It always was and always will be, Aboriginal land.***



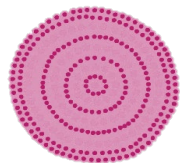
# WHO WAS SUPPORTED BY 50 LIVES?

*For the Cohort Consenting Between October 2015 and June 2020:*



**427**

**PEOPLE SUPPORTED**



**40%**

**ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES  
STRAIT ISLANDER (N= 170)**



**37**

**YEARS**

**AVERAGE AGE**  
*(Range 16-73 years)*



**52%**

**MALE (N=221)**



**45%**

**FEMALE (N =194)**



**50**

**INDIVIDUALS WERE SUPPORTED  
WITH THEIR FAMILIES**



**26%**

**WERE AGED 25 OR UNDER  
AT CONSENT (N= 110)**

# YEARS SPENT HOMELESS

*Of the 386 Individual\* VI-SPDAT Respondents:*



**5.2 YEARS**

**SPENT HOMELESS – BEFORE  
DOING VI-SPDAT\*\***



**37%**

**PEOPLE HAD SPENT MORE THAN  
5 YEARS ROUGH SLEEPING (N=141)**

**17%**

**PEOPLE HAD SPENT MORE THAN  
10 YEARS ROUGH SLEEPING (N=67)**

**40**

**YEARS – LONGEST TIME SPENT  
HOMELESS BEFORE VI-SPDAT**

\* There is a Family and an Individual version of the VI-SPDAT, only version 1 of Individual surveys have been included here

\*\* An individual could have remained homeless for many additional years after completing VI-SPDAT before being housed

# HOUSING OUTCOMES



**284  
people**

**WERE PROVIDED PERMANENT  
HOUSING AT SOME POINT**  
*(67% of 427 people supported)*

*With 64 (out of 284) people being housed  
more than once*



**30  
weeks**

**MEDIAN TIME TO BE HOUSED**  
*(approximately 7 months)*

*Average approx. 11 months.*



**1.7x longer**

**MEDIAN TIME FOR AN ABORIGINAL  
PERSON SUPPORTED BY 50 LIVES  
TO BE HOUSED**



**77  
people**

**WERE NEVER PERMANENTLY  
HOUSED, AND DID NOT EXIT  
SUPPORT**



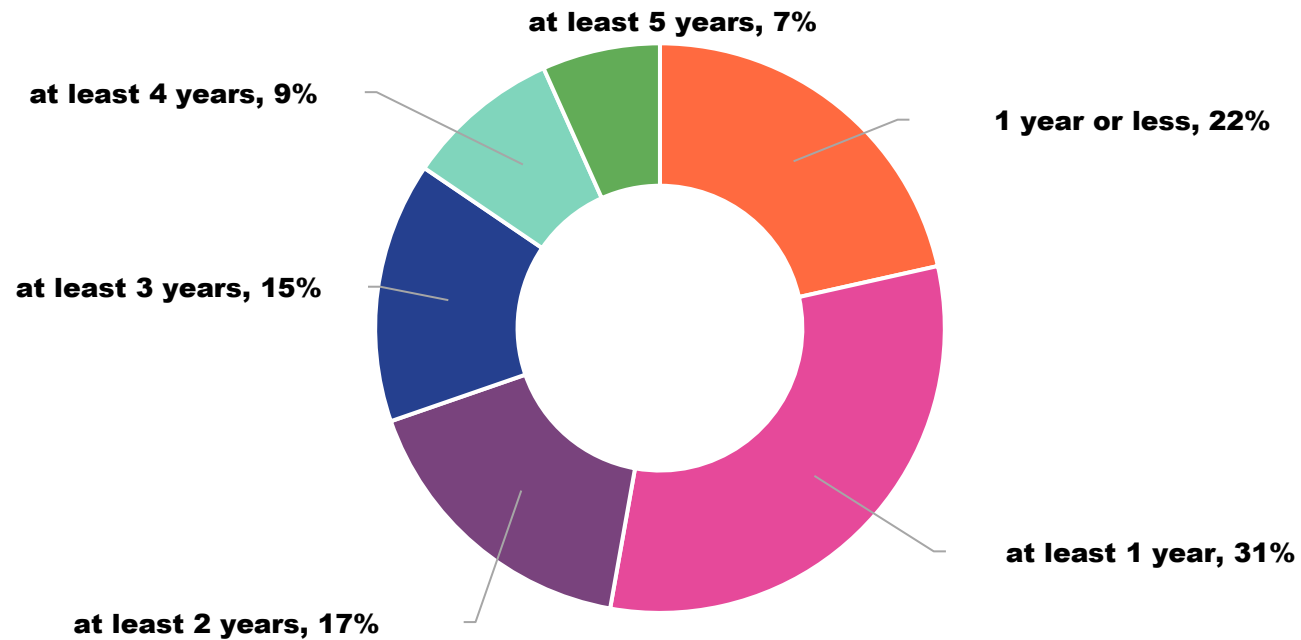
**1.5  
years**

**MINIMUM TIME STILL WAITING  
TO BE PERMANENTLY HOUSED**

*Many waiting for 5+ years*

# HOUSING OUTCOMES *cont..*

*Longest period each person was housed as at Dec 2021:*





# SUSTAINING TENANCIES

*Of the 284 people who were permanently housed:*



**73%**

**OVERALL RETENTION  
AT THE END OF 2021**



**82%**

**SUSTAINED THEIR  
HOUSING FOR AT  
LEAST ONE YEAR**



**20%**

**OF EXITS WERE 'POSITIVE'**  
*(i.e., move into more supported  
accommodation)*




**18%**


**OF EXITS WERE 'UNAVOIDABLE'**  
*(i.e., death and prison)*


- No real differences between gender and Aboriginality in sustainment in the long term
- Those who score  $\geq 15$  on VI-SPDAT were most likely to sustain for 5 years (i.e., those considered the “most vulnerable” chronic rough sleepers)
- After-Hours Support Service (AHSS) – elicited through interviews AHSS was single most influential factor for supporting people to sustain their tenancies, respond to health and psychosocial needs and prevent eviction.
- Very few examples in international literature for long-term evaluation

# HEALTH OUTCOMES

*Of the 364 people who saw Homeless Healthcare (85% of cohort):*

 **71%**  
PHYSICAL HEALTH  
CONDITION (N=257)

 **71%**  
MENTAL HEALTH  
CONDITION (N=257)

 **62%**  
AOD MISUSE  
DISORDER (N=224)

 **50%** DUAL DIAGNOSIS

 **42%** TRI-MORBIDITY

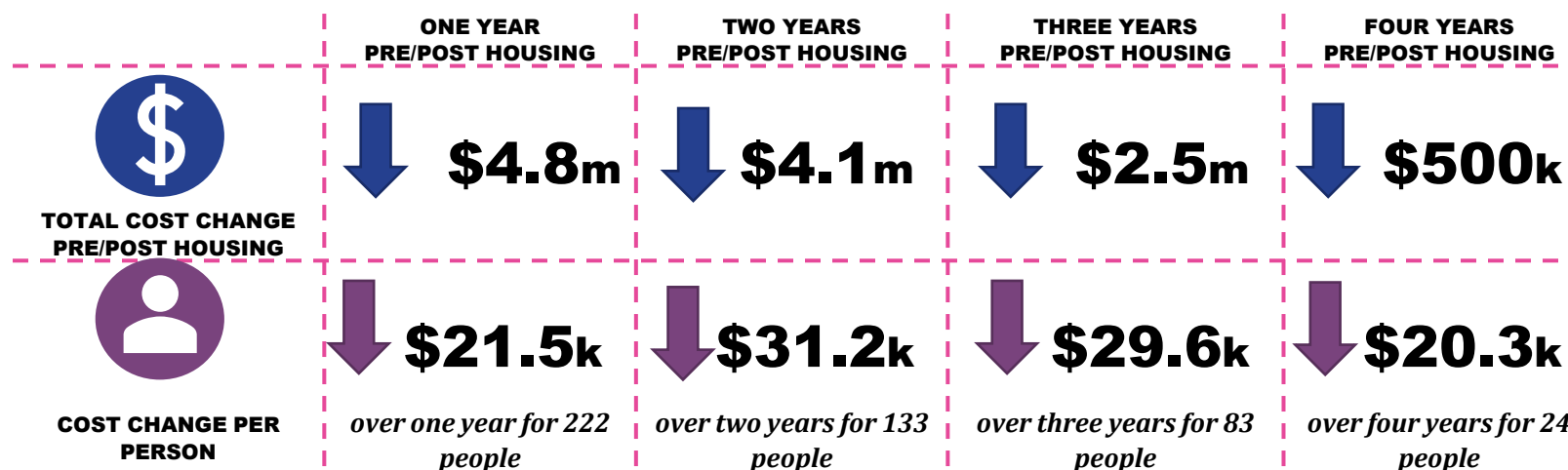
- It can be long process to ***identity, unravel, & treat*** health conditions that have onset/worsened while experiencing homelessness
- Nurses as part of AHSS & access to no cost primary care (e.g., Homeless Healthcare) has been vital in supporting people, particularly those with multiple chronic health conditions



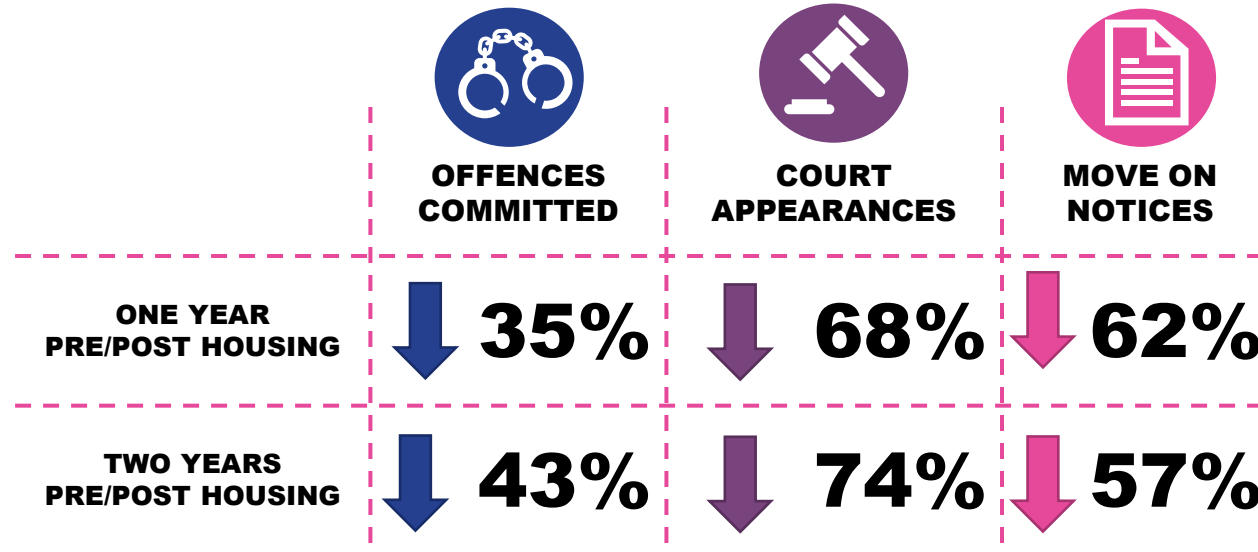
# HEALTH OUTCOMES ONCE HOUSED

## Decreases observed in:

- total ED presentations, ambulance arrivals to ED and number of people presenting to ED
- total inpatient admissions, people admitted and total days admitted



# JUSTICE OUTCOMES



*Ways people in 50 Lives were supported for legal issues (to prevent justice contacts):*

- **Financial support** (e.g., unpaid fines) → supported into debt repayment plans, financial counselling
- **Tenancy issues** (e.g., rent arrears, property damage) → liaison with housing providers
- **Victim of crime** (e.g., FDV, child abuse) → assistance to source community legal advice, trauma counselling, support to apply for compensation



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Embedding of Housing  
First in WA Policy

Ending Rough Sleeping  
for Many

Development of Youth  
and Aboriginal Models

Demonstrating Benefits  
of Ongoing Support

Breadth of Sector  
Collaboration

Increased Emphasis of  
the Housing-Health  
Nexus

Development of Innovative  
Solutions to Ending  
Homelessness





# OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS...

Improve Public Housing  
Waitlist Processes

Facilitate Rapid Access  
to Appropriate Housing

Rehousing for Those who  
have Lost their  
Tenancies

Enable Individuals to  
Choose Where and with  
Who they Live


Provide Support to Keep  
People Housed Long-  
Term

Provide Resourcing for  
Case Workers

Investment in Aboriginal  
Controlled Organisations

More Focus on Health in  
Homelessness Policies

## Complemented by and Building off Recommendations from Report 3:

- Learn from key challenges faced by 50 Lives in implementing a Housing First approach
  - Building capacity in communities and sectors to 'do' Housing First
  - Better matching of housing supply to demand
  - Availability of other options for people for whom Housing First may not work or be suitable
  - Ensure services aren't just trauma aware, but are trauma informed and trauma responsive
  - Increase involvement of peer workers and people with a lived experience of homelessness
  - Improve shared data collection and monitoring
  - Involve more non-homeless sector services
  - Advocacy on systemic challenges to ending homelessness
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# RECOMMENDATIONS

## *Three dominant themes across these recommendations:*

### HOUSING



- ↑ ↑ ↑ public housing availability so that people can be housed first
- better matching of supply to demand and need
- ↑ Aboriginal organisation led housing providers & management
- ↓ barriers to getting and staying on waitlist

### SUPPORT



- ↑ case workers, including longer term support for those with complex needs
- ≠ water down after hours support
- ↓ barriers to NDIS & other sustainable long term supports

### HEALTH



- ↑ investment in trauma informed health services to support people once housed (primary care, dual diagnosis (e.g., mental health + AOD), allied health, trauma therapy)

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

*As at 31 December 2021*



**48%**

**WERE PERMANENTLY  
HOUSED (N=207)**



**13%**

**WERE ACCOMMODATED (N=55)**  
*(Including transitional, temporary, lodging  
and unknown types of housing)*



**4%**

**WERE COUCH SURFING WITH  
FRIENDS OR FAMILY (N=17)**



**4%**

**HAD LEFT PERTH (N=18)**  
*(Including moving rurally, out of  
state and overseas; unknown  
housing status)*



**1%**

**WERE CURRENTLY IN A LONG-  
STAY MENTAL HEALTH UNIT  
(N=5)**



**11%**

**UNKNOWN (N=45)**



**6%**

**WERE ROUGH SLEEPING (N=28)**  
*(including in vehicles)*



**4%**

**WERE IN PRISON (N=15)**



**9%**


**HAD DIED (N=37)**





# WHERE ARE THEY NOW? *continued...*

While 50 Lives has now morphed into the **Zero Project**, it remains essential to ensure for this cohort:

- ongoing access to AHSS, trauma informed healthcare, support to build community integration & reduce loneliness;
  - Pathways to rapid re-housing (if tenancy lost or no longer appropriate);
  - Longer-term sustainable support options (including supported accommodation) as people age or health deteriorates.
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# A FINAL WORD

*I've got a roof over my head. It's changed my world... it's something you wake up each day and you embrace it and it's like, okay, today is a beautiful day because I don't have to worry about where I'm gonna sleep or get a feed, and if I need assistance, it's there. – **Person Supported by 50 Lives***

