

Media Release

The Hon Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning
Minister for Housing



Friday, 10 April 2020

SAFE PLACES FOR THE HOMELESS TO RECOVER AND ISOLATE

The Victorian Government will use repurposed aged-care sites to provide self-isolation facilities for Victorians experiencing homelessness – helping them recover from coronavirus, or avoid infection in the first place.

Minister for Housing Richard Wynne announced \$8.8 million for four pop-up facilities that will provide health care and supported accommodation for more than 200 rough sleepers over the next six months.

The accommodation will be located at four sites in inner Melbourne and will be operated by Anglicare Victoria, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Launch Housing, Sacred Heart Mission and VincentCare Victoria.

St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne will provide the critical role in leading clinical responses in all facilities.

Those eligible for the service are people experiencing homelessness who:

- have undergone testing for coronavirus and are awaiting results
- have undergone testing for coronavirus and returned a positive result
- are required to self-isolate and do not have suitable housing to do so
- are being discharged from hospital and require accommodation to recover from coronavirus

Homelessness services staff will provide 24-hour support to people in the facilities alongside St Vincent's Hospital staff, and will work with people as they recover to look at their options for when they exit the facilities.

The Government is also assisting public housing tenants during the pandemic by not including any Commonwealth Government financial stimulus payments in rent assessments over the coming months.

This will ensure the rent of public housing tenants does not increase as the extra payments come through -- ensuring the support directly assists those experiencing financial hardship.

For more information, visit dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus or call the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 for advice if you have any symptoms.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Housing Richard Wynne

"People without secure accommodation are at greater risk of contracting coronavirus because they can't self-isolate or quarantine – this will help keep them safe and slow the spread of virus."

"These new pop up facilities will give people sleeping rough somewhere safe to isolate and recover, and ensure they have the information, advice and support they need to look after themselves and those around them."

"Homelessness support staff are working hard every day to make sure the most vulnerable Victorians can get a roof over their head and stay well - we thank them for everything they're doing in these challenging times."