

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



Saturday, 2 April 2022

HOUSING SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE MOTHERS AND NEWBORNS

The Andrews Labor Government is giving dozens of vulnerable pregnant women experiencing homelessness or insecure housing access to a safe place to live and valuable support through maternity and early parenting services.

Minister for Health Martin Foley and Minister for Housing Richard Wynne today met with Cornelia Program residents and toured the apartments in Melbourne's inner south.

In an Australian-first between the Labor Government, the Royal Women's Hospital, HousingFirst and Launch Housing, the Cornelia Program aims to break the cycle of homelessness for vulnerable women and their babies.

The Government has contributed \$13 million for the redevelopment of the 36 apartments and a further \$3.1 million is being invested over three years to support the program, including \$650,000 for specialist homelessness support services.

The program aims to support up to 50 women and their babies each year with access to transitional accommodation for up to a year in 36 purpose-built apartments.

Pregnant women and new mothers will also have access to specialist maternity health services, along with access to other health and psychosocial programs. Guidance and support to find long-term stable housing is also provided.

Keeping mothers and babies together in a safe and secure location provides women in the program with the best opportunity to care for and bond with their newborns.

The program is also being supported through a major philanthropic grant from private donors and long-time supporters of the Royal Women's Hospital.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"This program will ensure vulnerable women facing homelessness get access to the services and support they need through pregnancy and the postnatal period."

"By keeping these mothers and their babies together in a secure location, we're providing them with the opportunity to care and stay with their child in the safety and comfort of secure housing."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Housing Richard Wynne

"We're providing pregnant women and new mothers and their babies with safe housing and wrap around support so they can give their child the best start to life."

"This Australian first program provides our most vulnerable women with hope and dignity and a pathway out of homelessness and into secure housing."