



EVAWQ welcome the news of a state housing summit to be held next month.

In the months since the sector has been calling for this summit, the housing crisis has intensified, and Ending Violence Against Women Queensland (EVAWQ) keenly awaits the opportunity to discuss and strategic key actions.

Domestic, family, and sexual violence are the main reasons women and children become homeless in Australia. A severe shortage of social and affordable homes and increased levels of housing stress are leading many women and children to remain in unsafe and insecure living situations and communities. Crisis and transitional accommodations are virtually non-existent in most regional centres today. Women and children experiencing domestic and family violence may see the abuse affect their capacity to work and secure the financial independence required to move out of the family home, or may experience blacklisting and eviction from rental properties based on the behaviours of another person's violence.

In addition, older women (those aged 55 and over) are the fastest growing group to experience homelessness in Australia. Many of these women may still be working or seeking work and have been priced out of the rental market. This trend has continued due to the ongoing shortage of affordable housing, the aging population, and the gender pay inequality. A range of actions are needed to assist these women with housing security that is suitable, achievable, and permanent.

Other alarming trends caused by the current housing crisis include:

- No exit points for women leaving shelter which causes extended stays.
- Bottlenecks for women entering shelters which results in no shelter vacancy for women seeking refuge.
- Women being forced out of private rentals due to unsustainable rent increase or desire for landlord to sell / move back in.
- Women returning to live with previous partners (past PUV's) out of necessity.
- Women returning to other unsafe environments – couch surfing – resulting in further victimisation.
- TICA listings for rental arrears due to rent increases and other increase living costs.
- Overcrowding to meet rent leading to breaches associated with overcrowding which result in eviction.

EVAWQ sees the summit as an opportunity to ensure more coordinated responses to domestic, family and sexual violence are included in the key actions. With adequate, stable housing we can enhance a sense of safety, security and privacy for our women and children.