A George Institute Fact Sheet

Healthy Housing: Communication between health, social and housing services - *November 2019*

The George Institute for Global Health

Facts:

- 78% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW live in urban areas.
- 29% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia rent their homes from a social housing provider.
- 25% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in non-remote areas report one or more major structural problems, such as cracks in walls or floors, sinking or moving foundations, or plumbing problems.
- Poor housing in childhood is known to predict poorer health in adulthood, even after controlling for socioeconomic factors.

Project cycle:

2018-2020

Partners:

The George Institute for Global Health

Sydney Children's Hospital's Network

Barnardos

Ngala Nanga Mai, SCHN

UNSW Sydney

The University of Sydney

The University of Wollongong

Kidsafe NSW

The Sax Institute

University of Technology

We acknowledge the support and partnership with Ngala Nanga Mai and La Perouse Community Health Centre.

Supporters:

Background:

- Poor housing is associated with poor physical and emotional health and wellbeing, particularly among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Social housing services are overstretched and many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and service providers find the system difficult to navigate.
- Serious housing problems such as poor dwelling conditions, crowding, unaffordability, instability and homelessness are common for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including in urban areas.
- Currently there are no established effective care and communication pathways to connect agencies providing housing, health and social services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in South East Sydney.

Aims:

- The goal of this project is to improve and facilitate communication between housing, health and social services.
- The project will map the key social housing services involved in the provision of housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South East Sydney and will develop an enhanced referral pathway between housing, health and social services to improve efficiency and coordination.

Methods:

- A systematic review will be conducted of housing needs assessment tools used in health and social service settings.
- Qualitative semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders, including housing providers, local Aboriginal Land Councils, legal and tenant advocacy services, among others.
- Mapping will be carried out of housing communication and referral pathways between housing, health and social services in South East Sydney.
- Yarning sessions will be conducted with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in South East Sydney.
- A co-designed housing assessment and referral pathway tool will be developed.

Impact:

- The project will lead to the development of a housing assessment tool that, if effective, will enable systematic, culturally safe assessment of client housing needs.
- Improved communication, efficiency and referral pathways between housing, health and social services.
- Support ongoing cross-sectoral collaborations to improve social housing conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in urban areas.

Contact:

To find out more about the Healthy Housing Study and its principal investigators Dr Kate Hunter (TGI) or Dr Melanie Andersen (UNSW Sydney) or The George Institute for Global Health, please contact: Tina Wall +61 410 411 983 twall@georgeinstitute.org.au

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