



Homelessness Australia

Creating a framework for ending homelessness

The use of Government Funded Specialist Homelessness Services 2010/11

A Sector Briefing

Key points

Table 1: Comparison of data showing the use of specialist homelessness services in 2009/10 and 2010/11

Group	2009/10 (n)	2010/11 (n)	Increase (n)	Increase (%)
Clients	135,700	142,500	+6800	+5.01%
Accompanying children	84,200	88,000	+3800	+4.51%
Total:	219,900	230,500	+10,600	+4.82%

- In 2010/11, 230,500 people were supported by Government funded specialist homelessness services. This is up from 219,900 in 2009/10, an increase of just under 5%.
- Of the 230,500; 142,500 (62%) were clients and 88,000 (38%) were accompanying children. This is proportionally the same as last year.
- The proportion of Indigenous clients increased to 21.2% in 2010/11 from 20.8% in 2009/10.
- The average length of support periods increased from 64 days in 2009/10 to 68 days in 2010/11.
- The average length of accommodation increased slightly from 60 days in 2009/10 to 65 days in 2010/11.
- Young women and very young children aged 0-4 were the largest users of specialist homelessness services.
- 1 in 40 young women aged 15-19 were supported by specialist homelessness services. This represents 2.5% of all young women in that age group across Australia, up from 1.9% in 2009/10. 1 in 61 young men (1.6%) aged 15-19 were supported by specialist homelessness services last year up from 1 in 65 in 2009/10.
- Overall, 1 in 50 young men and women aged 15-19 were supported by specialist homelessness services in 2010/11. This was up from 1 in 65 young people in 2009/10. This is a cause for concern in light of claims that youth homelessness estimates are overstated.
- 1 in 38 Australian children aged 0-4 (2.6% of all Australian kids this age) were supported by specialist homelessness services in 2010/11. This is the same proportion as last year.

Main reasons for seeking assistance

Single males aged 25+

The main reasons for seeking assistance given by single males aged 25+ were:

- Financial difficulties and problems with budgeting (28.6%) eviction (9.9%) and problematic alcohol and other drug use (8.4%).

Single females aged 25+

The main reasons for seeking assistance given by single women aged 25+ were:

- Domestic and family violence (40.1%) and financial difficulties (10.7%).

Single males aged <25

The main reasons cited by unaccompanied young men for seeking assistance were:

- Family breakdown/conflict (20.9%), financial difficulties (12.5%) and needing time out from family (10.5%).

Single females aged <25

The main reasons cited by unaccompanied young women for seeking assistance were:

- Family/relationship breakdown (21.8%) and domestic and family violence (18.6%) and needing time out from family (11.8%).

Couples without children

The main reasons for seeking assistance cited by couples presenting without children were:

- Eviction/being asked to leave previous accommodation (22.7%), financial difficult/rent too high (12.9%) and problems with budgeting (8.8%)

Couples with children

The main reasons for seeking assistance cited by couples with children were:

- Financial difficulties/rent too high (25.8%), eviction/being asked to leave (16.6%) and overcrowding in previous accommodation (10.1%).

Single females with children

The main reasons for seeking assistance given by women presenting with children were:

- Domestic and family violence (45.2%) and financial problems/rent too high (11.1%).

Single males with children

The main reasons for seeking assistance given by men presenting with children were:

- Eviction/accommodation ending (23.9%), financial difficulties/rent too high (16.8%) and relationship breakdown (16.1%).

Changes in funding over time

Table 2: Funding to agencies, by reporting period, 2006–07 to 2010–11

Reporting period	Funded agencies (number)	Agreement funding (\$'000)	Additional state/territory funding (\$'000)	Total allocation (\$'000)	Mean funding per agency (\$'000)
2006–07	1,539	340,821	26,440	367,261	239
2007–08	1,562	356,456	27,491	383,947	246
2008–09	1,532	397,823	8,070	405,892	265
2009–10	1,559	438,399	4,197	442,596	284
2010–11	1,547	482,094	12,385	494,479	320

As table 2 (above) illustrates, the number of Government funded specialist homelessness services declined from 1,559 in 2009/10 to 1,547 in 2010/11.

Overall funding for specialist homelessness services increased from \$442.6 million in 2009/10 to \$494.5 million in 2010/11 an increase of almost \$52 million or almost 12%.

The decline in the number of agencies funded, coupled with the increase in overall funding meant that the average level of funding provided to each agency increased from \$284,000 in 2009/10 to \$320,000 in 2010/11.

Met and unmet needs

- Specialist homelessness services were able to meet the needs of their clients in 92% of cases. They were able to refer clients to external services that could not be provided on-site in 5% of cases and needs were not able to be met in 3% of cases. This is the same in percentage terms as in 2009/10.

For further information

For further information, the full report can be accessed via the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737420853>

State and territory reports can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=10737420853&tab=3>