



Homelessness and housing distress for people from refugee backgrounds

QPASTT housing survey findings (September 2022)

QPASTT (Queensland Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma) collected survey data from front line staff about the experience of homelessness and housing distress for our clients. Our data showed that **12% of our clients (people seeking asylum and from refugee backgrounds) have experienced a form of homelessness in the past 12 months.**

The most vulnerable clients were **single parent households and young people**. Only 6% of single parent households were able to transition from homelessness/temporary housing to secure housing in the same 12 month period. Cultural needs specific to these vulnerable groups include:

- studio or single sex shared accommodation with appropriate prayer rooms and dietary options for young people;
- and secure, private 3+ bedroom homes for single parent households with large families.

People with refugee backgrounds frequently need multicultural service support to access secure housing due to unique challenges such as temporary or changing visa status, language barriers, trauma symptoms and discrimination impacting their housing journey.

The housing and homelessness experience of people with refugee backgrounds is currently undocumented in Australia.

Our asks:

- A grass roots study to understand the true scope of homelessness and housing distress experienced. Grass roots approach is necessary considered reluctance to engage in formal government data collection processes such as the census, and stigma/shame of homelessness.
- Sector upskilling in engaging with people seeking asylum and from refugee backgrounds; specifically use of interpreters, cultural competence and safety, and trauma informed practice.
- Urgent housing solutions which include studio or single sex shared accommodation for young people and large homes for single parent households with large families.
- Funding to provide multicultural housing support to people seeking asylum and from refugee backgrounds.
- Engagement with cultural community and faith group leaders to identify gaps, respond to housing needs while at the same time building service understanding of community needs in this particular sector.

QPASTT is eager to collaborate with the housing sector to ensure the specific and often nuanced needs of people seeking asylum and from refugee backgrounds are understood and addressed adequately.