

**Submission
No 23**

**OPTIONS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO EXISTING AND ALTERNATE
ACCOMMODATION TO ADDRESS THE SOCIAL HOUSING SHORTAGE**

Organisation: Nova for Women and Children

Date Received: 11 August 2021

Ms Wendy Lindsay, MP

Chair, Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services

NSW Parliament

**Options to improve access to existing and alternate accommodation to address the
social housing shortage**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the committee on this matter.

Nova for Women and Children is a Specialist Homelessness Service based in the Newcastle West and Lake Macquarie LGA's. The lack of affordable, appropriate housing for our clients is the primary reason that we are unable to end the homelessness of our clients.

Last year we saw 1583 clients. This was 51% percent more than we are funded to work with. Since 2015 the number of clients we see has increase with no real increase in funding.

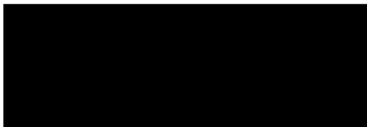
In our community it is not unusual to see more than 50 people/families viewing properties and with one of the lowest vacancy rates in the State, there simply just isn't enough affordable housing out there.

The inaction on social housing, has created waiting lists that can be as long as a decade, this is simply not good enough. The increase in demand for housing is placing people and families extremely vulnerable and at risk. Immediate action is required to prevent people and families cycling into homelessness.

We cannot stress enough the importance of building more social housing. Moves around in between use of property and other such measures while useful come no where close to providing the level of housing required for us and other homelessness services across the state. Last year the number of applicants on the priority list for housing increased by over 800. We are sure this is a figure that the Committee believes to be unacceptable.

Unfortunately, during the current pandemic and shut downs we do not have the capacity to provide a fuller submission, but broadly support the one done by our peak body Homelessness NSW.

Regards



Kelly Hansen

CEO of Nova for Women and Children