

Mental health resources

Want to learn more? The following are some excellent resources around mental health and housing in Australia:

The ***Mental Health Coalition*** is the peak body representing the interests of South Australian non-government organisations supporting people with a psychiatric disability

www.mhcsa.org.au

Headroom: mental health issues for young people, children, adolescents, teachers, professional and parents based in Adelaide

www.headroom.net.au

The ***Multicultural Mental Health Australia Program*** provides national leadership in mental health and suicide prevention for Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

www.mmha.org.au

Shelter SA is the state's peak housing body, so if you have a query related to housing and don't know who to ask, just give us a call and we will assist you

www.sheltersa.asn.au



STAY INFORMED

Why not stay informed about housing and related issues by becoming a member of Shelter SA.

Individual (unwaged)	\$5
Individual (waged)	\$15

You will receive our monthly newsletter, updates on what is happening in South Australia, and invitations to our public forums and events. Just complete the membership form and send to us at the address below!

Shelter SA

Torrens Building
220 Victoria Square
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Shelter SA

*GET INFORMED
ABOUT*

MENTAL HEALTH

Housing: a basic human right



Tel: 8221 6488

What is Shelter SA?

We believe that everyone has the right to affordable accommodation that is appropriate to their needs. As the state's peak housing body, we work to actively promote and inform the general public, non-government and government organisations about housing and related issues.

We do this via public forums and presentations at conferences, schools and community groups on a range of topics – from mental health issues to affordability and the decrease in public housing stock, from youth homelessness to caravan park residents. And the list goes on...

We respond to government policies, produce our own monthly newsletter, facilitate the annual Homelessness, Health and Housing Expo and carry out small South Australian-specific research projects. Our latest research project focused on developing a youth housing strategy for the Southern Fleurieu region.

And finally, we actively seek to engage with and provide opportunities for vulnerable groups to raise their housing concerns. We do this via one-on-one interviews for the *Telling Stories* feature in Sheltershortz Newsletter, consultations and via our branches. We currently have two branches; the Women's Housing Caucus and ASHRA (Agencies Supporting Housing for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) who meet regularly and hold events. Shelter SA is always interested in forming new branches.

MENTAL HEALTH

It is estimated that one in five Australians suffer from some form of common mental illness in any year. Another 3% will suffer from a psychotic disorder like schizophrenia or bipolar disorder during their life-time. This means that around 250,000 South Australians and their families are affected by mental illness. Episodes of mental illness can come and go throughout a person's life. Some people experience their illness only once and fully recover. For others, it recurs throughout their lives.

The recognition of the early symptoms, access to appropriate and timely medical assistance, the support of family, friends and colleagues, and opportunities for recovery and transitioning back into the workforce and their lives are integral to effectively addressing mental health concerns.

MENTAL HEALTH AND HOUSING

Many people with a mental illness have a job, a family and are in good health because of the right mix of support, medication and understanding. However, due to the episodic nature of mental illness, maintaining stable accommodation can be difficult. This can include:

Getting a correct diagnosis (many individuals describe a period of denial and need time to come to terms with the diagnosis); **learning about the illness and how to manage it** (this may involve educating yourself, your friends and family, accessing community supports and finding the right medication); and **identifying the triggers and warning signals**, all take time.

In the process, individuals may isolate themselves from family and friends, fall behind in employment and financial obligations, and/or behave in ways that may put their accommodation at risk.

MENTAL HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

Many people believe that the reason people become homeless is because of the poor choices they make, or because they have a drug or alcohol addiction or mental illness. While it is true that around half of those who are homeless have a mental illness, recent studies have shown that more than half had developed a mental illness *after becoming homeless*.

Getting out of homelessness after a long term mental illness is complicated and can require collaboration between a variety of health, community service and non-clinical supports. The current affordable housing crisis, lengthy waiting periods for public housing, and lack of short term and emergency accommodation, have meant that many are unable to secure safe and affordable accommodation.

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