

# **Housing provision for women experiencing domestic and family violence in NSW during COVID-19**

## ***Abstract***

Reported domestic and family violence (DFV) increased in complexity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such crisis conditions have also created opportunities to help women escape DFV. Government responses focused mainly on injecting more ad-hoc funding to crisis accommodation, other temporary housing options, and homelessness services. However, the sustainability of these responses is still unclear. Based on policy analysis and empirical data, this paper provides an integrated discussion between the different COVID-driven responses and the experiences of specialised DFV service providers in New South Wales. It reveals the strengths and weaknesses of those responses and provides critical insights on the path needed to address the needs of women leaving DFV.

This paper highlights that existing policies and programs, and the COVID-driven responses are often very limited in scope and out of touch with the medium- and long-term housing and support needs of DFV survivors. A more holistic approach with DFV targeted housing responses, including staying-at-home programs, is needed to generate more effective policies to help women leaving DFV.

## ***Keywords***

Long-term housing; social housing; housing policy; domestic and family violence; NSW; COVID-19; private rental market; access to housing

## ***Introduction***

This paper discusses the COVID-19-driven changes in housing provision for women experiencing domestic and family violence (DFV) in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. Recent research in housing provision for DFV Australian services has examined types of accommodation support and service models (Flanagan et al. 2019, AIHW 2020b, Powell et al. 2019, Tually et al. 2008). However, research on the government responses and changes to DFV accommodation in NSW since the outbreak of COVID-19 and the access to temporary and long-term housing for women is scarce.

This paper considers domestic and family violence as a gendered phenomenon. In the context of this project, domestic and family violence is defined as an abuse of power and the domination, coercion, intimidation, and victimisation of one person by another through physical, sexual, or emotional means within intimate relationships (Australian Medical Association, 1998). Women and children are overwhelmingly the victims of domestic and family violence, and those who use violence are overwhelmingly male (ABS, 2020, AIHW, 2018). Domestic and family violence is also committed by and against people who identify in non-gender binary terms (Rosenberg et al., 2020). In addition, evidence suggests that Indigenous Australian women are more likely to experience violence and less likely to access protective systems because of institutional violence within those systems (Douglas and Fitzgerald, 2018). Outcomes for all women who have experienced violence in New South Wales, including single women, with children, and women on temporary visas, are the focus of this paper.

This study presents empirical findings and experiences of DFV service providers who work in the sector and have witnessed changes to policy and service provision in Australia during lockdown periods since 2020. Based on service providers' statements and policy research

evidence, the study seeks to address the connection (or lack thereof) between state and government responses and outcomes for women leaving violence. This study is framed by feminist standpoint theory that acknowledges and analyses power relationships, privileges the lived experience as evidence, and aims to enact change that results in more just societies (Harstock, 2019). The inclusion of service providers' statements within the structure of the text provides evidence of women's lived experience of housing insecurity during lockdowns. By adopting a feminist standpoint, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the participants' circumstances. The paper begins with a discussion of the complex relationship between DFV and the housing environment in NSW before and after COVID, followed by explaining the research methods. Finally, the analysis and findings are discussed, with concluding remarks and suggestions for change.

### ***Domestic and family violence and housing in New South Wales***

DFV against women takes a profound and long-term toll on their health and well-being, families and communities and impacts their understanding of home as a safe place (Ourwatch, 2020, DVNSW 2017). In NSW, incidents of reported DFV in 2018 had been stable in relation to recent years (BOSCAR, 2020). However, the rate of homelessness due to DFV was then steadily increasing, with the overall rate of female clients increasing from 124.4 clients per 10,000 population in 2011–12 to 136.6 in 2019–20 (AIHW, 2020b). DFV is the leading cause of homelessness for women in Australia (AIHW, 2018). During 2018-2019, 192 requests for short-term and long-term per day on average for accommodation support requested through homelessness services were not met due to a lack of available building stock. Most of these requests came from females (67%), and of these, nearly half (48%) were caring for children (AIHW, 2018). There is an indisputable link between DFV and homelessness.

Research shows that most women leaving a violent relationship move out of their own homes (ABS, 2017) and face a range of complex decisions to find safe, affordable accommodation (NSW Women Refuge Movement and the UWS Urban Research Centre, 2009, Powell et al. 2019). Many women will move multiple times before gaining access to long-term safe, secure housing (Chung et al., 2000). Therefore, DFV survivors require support for needs relating to both the experience of violence and homelessness (Flanagan et al., 2019). In NSW, DFV services are integrated through Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS). However, significant issues exist with integrating policy and service provision in a system involving three levels of government, many state organisations, and critical roles played by the state, community, market, and informal sectors in service provision (Jones, Phillips et al., 2007).

Before COVID-19, Flanagan, Blunden et al. (2019) reported an increasing gap between service provision and providers' ability to access safe, affordable, and long-term *exit points* for their clients and the need for integration between DFV response and the broader housing system, in a market where supply has never been able to meet demand. The need for long-term, affordable housing appropriate to the needs of women and other vulnerable people was reiterated in several studies as a matter of urgency before COVID-19 and during the lockdown periods was reiterated in several studies (Carrington 2021, Equity Economics 2021, Foster et al. 2020, Clarke et al. 2019). The Women's Safety NSW report (2020) noted that 71% of service providers stated the critical service gap for their clients continued to be access to ongoing affordable accommodation (Foster et al., 2020). Further, Clark et al. (2019) argue that while transitional housing is an important option for some women leaving crisis accommodation, more diverse, flexible, and long-term options are needed to suit complex user housing needs, including physical access, family types and culturally appropriate housing.

Before COVID-19, research showed that Australian service providers met 69% of short-term accommodation requests for DFV clients. However, only a meagre 3% of long-term

accommodation requests were fulfilled (AIHW, 2020a). Parsell, Clarke and Kuskoff (2020) revealed that housing policy changes due to COVID-19 contrasted with the “policy stasis and poverty of ambition” that characterised responses to homelessness during the last decade in countries such as Australia, the UK, the US, and Europe. Dallas and Power (2020) highlight the need for rapid policy change in housing provision and refer to the situation as a *housing emergency* requiring an ethical approach from housing policymakers and researchers.

Recent research continues to highlight the need for affordable housing stock to alleviate the pressures on service providers. Flanagan, Martin et al. (2019) highlight the benefits of investing in housing stock and demonstrate the effectiveness and sustainability of investing in new social and affordable housing supply rather than subsidising rental for private rental properties. Mason, Moran and Earles (2020) reveal growth in approaches modelled on *housing first* (or rapid housing) as a strategy for tackling long-term homelessness in Australia since 2020. This model prescribes safe and permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness without conditional requirements to address other health and wellbeing issues before approval. Housing First has shown significant success in countries where it is implemented as a system-wide reform. However, Australia’s lack of a national framework to mandate a Housing First approach limits it to discrete programs operating within an unchanged system (Brkic, 2020).

Intersectionality further complicates access to housing for women leaving violence. Women encounter discrimination from multiple sources when it comes to finding housing.

Discrimination from landlords, real estate agents, and some neighbours can mean single women and women with children do not have equal access to available housing. Domestic violence creates an additional barrier for women whose oppression is often multiplied by their location at the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and immigrant systems of oppression and discrimination (Crenshaw 1994, Ghafournia and Easteal, 2018). Seymour (2017) argues that current Australian policies to support domestic and family violence policies fail to address critical questions concerning gender, violence,

and vulnerability. The impact of the pandemic on existing inequalities is discussed in Maestriperi's (2020) study revealing multiple and interrelating structures of inequality for individuals and the community.

Gender has a complex and interactive relationship to ethnicity, class, age, and physical ability, creating multiple axes of inequalities and impacting the analysis of social and economic consequences of COVID-19 (Berkhout and Richardson, 2020; Eaves and Al-Hindi, 2020; Ryan and El Ayadi, 2020).

### ***COVID-19 impacts on DFV and housing***

The increase of DFV incidents experienced during COVID-19-related lockdowns across Australia is in proportion to the escalation of DFV on a global scale during the same period (Fitzgibbon, True and Pfitzner, 2020, Boxall, Morgan and Brown, 2020, Sri et al., 2021).

Lockdowns had a devastating effect on women living with gender-based violence. Boxall, Morgan and Brown (2020) found that police reports showed an increase in incidents of domestic violence-related behaviour in every state in Australia, with reported incidents rising between 10 and 16% and a marked increase in first-time offences. This situation has been called the *shadow pandemic* (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon, Meyer and True, 2020), but unlike the virus, there is no vaccine or radical increase in funding to support those affected.

The effects of COVID-19 on the ability of DFV services to provide support and accommodation has been globally highlighted, revealing increased complications in the allocation of housing (Sharma and Borah, 2020), social distance requirements in crisis accommodation (Jarnecke and Flanagan, 2020), the increased economic pressure on women affecting their ability to find alternative housing (Krishnadas and Taha, S. 2020) and the lack of access to support for women on temporary visas (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

International literature reflected similar advocacy from service providers working for housing security through policy change, additional support through hotel accommodation, and the need for legislative and funding frameworks for women leaving violence (Nnawulezi & HacsKaylo, 2021, Mantler. et al., 2021, Yakubovich & Maki, 2021).

Despite the increase in reported DFV cases, Fitzgibbon, True and Pfitzner (2020) highlight that service providers in NSW did not report a parallel increase in requests for crisis accommodation. However, additional emergency accommodation was provided during lockdown through Government assistance by allocating hotel rooms and available holiday rentals for people facing homelessness (McKeown, 2020). Such pop-up accommodation has been promoted as a good solution (NSW Department of Communities and Justice, 2020). Still, its suitability as an ongoing housing option was yet to be determined (Smith, 2020). Martino and Bentley (2020) suggest that the temporary nature and ongoing pressures on funding remain obstacles for service providers who need to ensure safe, secure housing that women need to transition to better lives.

Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW) reiterates that Federal and State incentives and emergency relief packages for DFV services are not specifically focused on providing new housing stock and have complex restrictions on the use of funds (Women's Safety NSW, 2020). This is particularly an issue in NSW, where funding for building and maintaining accommodation is not a priority in the social services sector. DVNSW calls for an investment in the construction of 5,000 social housing properties every year for the next ten years (DVNSW, 2020).

Current Australia-focused research discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the changes in incidences of violence, the impact of COVID-19 on crisis accommodation services, and

responses to homelessness during periods of lockdown. Few studies, reports and news articles focus on the support and policies that have directly impacted accommodation for DFV services and what housing outcomes new support and policies have enabled that were not being addressed before COVID-19. In response, this paper addresses this gap by providing an integrated discussion on the COVID-19-driven federal and NSW DFV-housing responses and the related experiences of DFV services and housing providers.

### ***Materials & Methods***

This paper adopts a qualitative approach combining two research methods: descriptive analysis of NSW and Australian policies and initiatives that affect housing pathways available to women leaving DFV (see Figure 1) and semi-structured interviews with DFV services and housing providers in the Sydney metropolitan area.

The policy analysis was informed by Rein and Schön's *frame reflexive policy analysis*, which recognises the way a situation is perceived (the framing) informs how stakeholders "make different interpretations of the way things are, and support different courses of action concerning what is to be done, by whom, and how to do it" (Rein and Schön 1993, p.147). Applied here, this paper looks at the framing behind Government responses to housing provision and access for women leaving DFV during COVID-19. It compares it with government's approach before the pandemic. The policy selection criteria were focused on housing targeted to DFV survivors or that indirectly benefited this cohort (both at federal and NSW government level). Additionally, federal and state COVID-19 driven responses targeted to DFV and homelessness were included. The exclusion criteria included other states, and policies and programs that were not directly related to housing.

Ten in-depth interviews with six 10+-years-experience leaders of DFV focused service, and housing providers across Sydney occurred in two stages. The first set of interviews took place



in June-July 2020 when COVID-19 restrictions were fully implemented, and the second in March 2021, when restrictions had been relaxed in NSW. Participants were selected through purposeful and snowball sampling; they were all women with ages 30-70. Interview data was interpreted through qualitative content analysis by coding the participants' accounts in themes using NVivo. The data reached a point of saturation, demonstrating that housing and service providers across the sector share similar experiences (on occasions from different perspectives), as well as their perspectives on the various government policies and initiatives.

Ethics was approved on 4 June 2020 by the UTS Human Research Ethics Committee for the project "Determining current housing demands resulting from COVID-19 for people leaving violence through a provider's perspective"; approval number ETH20-5250.

## ***Results***

### ***Housing Assistance in Australia***

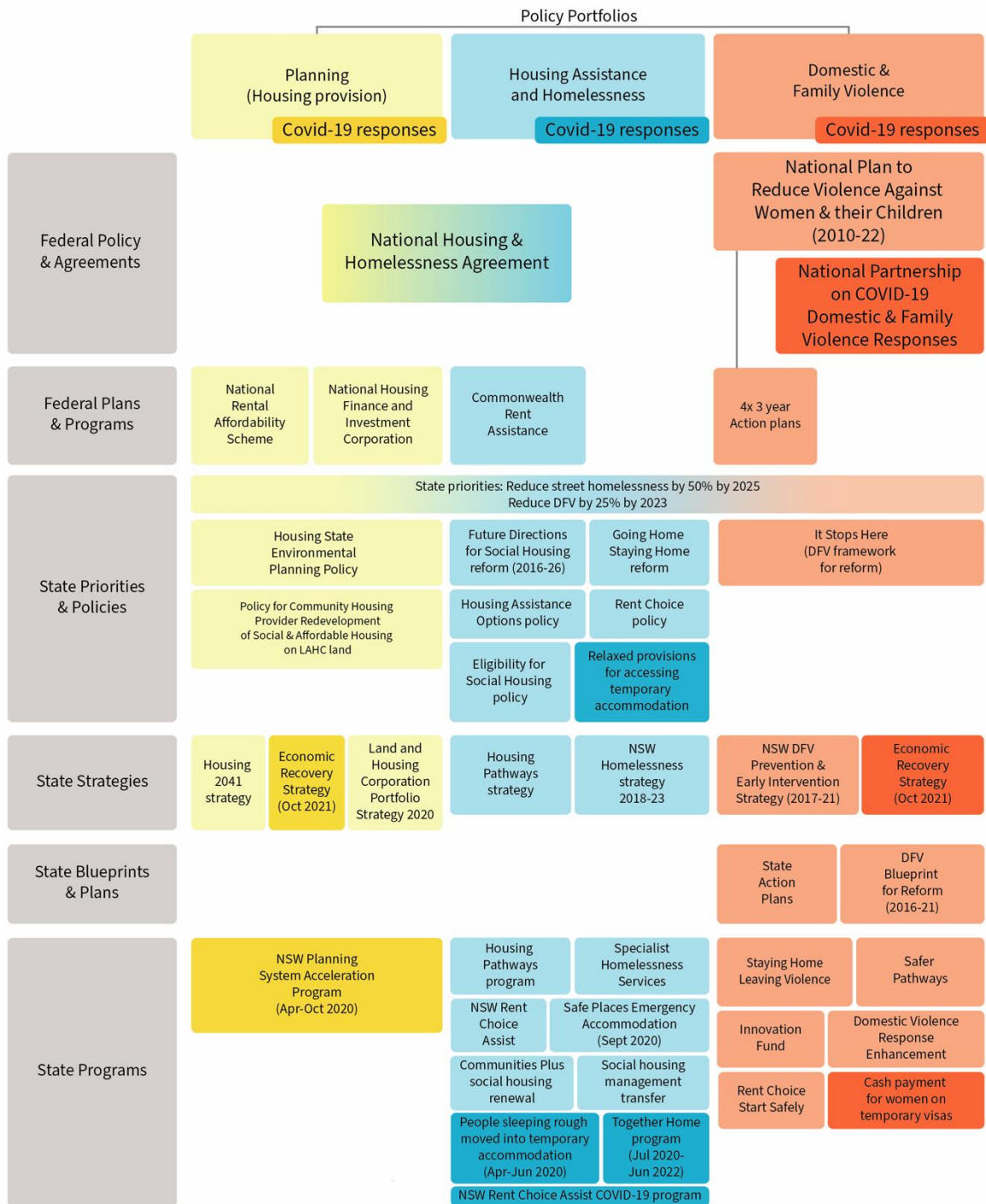
Housing assistance, as defined by housing policy in Australia, comprise the following:

- Short term or crisis accommodation, many incorporating wrap-around services (casework, counselling, legal and medical support services, for example)
- Subsidised private rental
- Social housing – rental housing provided by the government and community sectors for very low to low-income households unable to afford private rental. It includes public, community, and Aboriginal housing.
- Affordable housing – aimed at low to moderate-income households unable to afford private rentals. This type of housing may be provided by a range of operators and is usually facilitated by some Government support.

The intended purpose and clientele of these options vary between states – for instance, Victoria describes its social housing as *long-term rental*, while NSW emphasises social housing as a *pathway to independence* (NSW Government 2016). By extension what is viewed as long term accommodation also varies by state but may be understood as housing arrangements sustained by individual households largely without Government support.

In addition, supporting women to remain in their home while the perpetrator is relocated has emerged in the last decade as a favoured policy direction, with each state establishing its own “Keeping Women Safe in their Homes” program (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2021).

Key policies concerning housing for DFV survivors sit across three portfolios: housing, housing assistance and homelessness, and DFV. The respective contexts of these portfolios are complex, each an area requiring governance “through networks with Australian Government, state/territory governments and local agencies working alongside non-governmental actors.” (Mason et al. 2020, p. 28). In NSW, homelessness and DFV are key priorities for the NSW State government, with commitments to reduce homelessness by half by 2025 and reduce DFV reoffending by a quarter by 2023 (NSW Government, 2021a). A visual mapping of these policies and programs is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Mapping of Australian and NSW policies and programs providing supply or access to housing assistance for women and children leaving DFV. Source: authors

*Existing Housing, Housing Assistance and Homelessness Policy*

The Housing and Homelessness portfolio is heavily driven by each state, where state governments are tasked with enacting government policy “according to local circumstances”

(Commonwealth of Australia 2020, p. 6). The Australian government acts as a funding contributor and coordinator through the *National Housing and Homelessness Agreement* (NHHA) which articulates the role of each level of government, funding arrangements and lists broad policy priorities and desired outcomes. Within this agreement, social housing is listed as a policy priority, and women and children affected by FDV are considered a priority homelessness cohort.

NSW homelessness policy reform introduced in 2012 through the *Going Home Staying Home reform plan* sought to weave together a more integrated approach to linking specialist homelessness services clients with accommodation and support suited to their individual needs, whether provided through government, not for profit or private. The NSW Housing Pathways' *No Wrong Door Protocol* illustrates this intent to integrate across government and service providers, where clients are linked in with an appropriate provider regardless of where they request assistance.

P5: I work predominantly within the specialist homelessness services space. So (*name of DFV provider*) has a partnership with Homelessness NSW and *X foundation*, and we are known as the three homelessness peaks in this area. So, [I provide] advice to government in relation to specific reports as they affect the SHS sector.

The NSW Homelessness Strategy acknowledges that “people’s differing circumstances and needs (...) influence the range of supports and housing options needed in the service system” (NSW Government 2018, p.19), along with the critical impact that urgent housing can have on preventing chronic homelessness. Housing options with specific consideration to women and children leaving DFV also focus on crisis accommodation models and capacity. Beyond the construction of crisis accommodation, there are no specific federal or NSW policies that

articulate the longer-term housing needs nor the overall vision for helping women in this group towards long term suitable and sustainable accommodation.

### *Existing DFV policies, programs and responses*

In contrast to the above, government efforts in DFV are coordinated at a national level.

Government priorities on DFV and sexual assault are set out in the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022* (The National Plan). The National Plan acts as a policy framework, setting out the vision, principles and policy guidance and coordinating State initiatives' alignment to build and mature the capability of all DFV services actors. Initially focussed on building “architecture to support long term change” through primary prevention and service delivery, priorities over time have come to acknowledge and incorporate the role of housing, one of the actions being to “improve access to suitable and safe accommodation within their communities for women who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence” (Australian Government, 2021, n.p.). State initiatives linked with this objective aim to either improve services that connect women with appropriate accommodation, establish crisis accommodation, or support women to remain at home. Access to or provision of long-term housing is not addressed.

Beyond crisis accommodation, women experiencing DFV have access to similar housing assistance options available to other clients facing homelessness, such as social housing and subsidised rental. They are considered a group with priority needs. Thus, they are given greater consideration on waitlisting for social housing and greater discretion regarding some aspects of eligibility, such as assets (NSW Government 2021d, ch.3). Women may also be eligible for financial assistance for private rental through the *Rent Choice Start Safely* program, which is considered a transitional form of support with a length capped at three years with the expectation women can “afford the private market rental after the subsidy

period ends” (Family and Community Services, 2020). Affordable housing policy in NSW does not prioritise women and children surviving DFV. Instead, Community Housing Providers who manage affordable housing tenancies are given the discretion to approach and select prospective tenants “according to their own allocation policies” (NSW Government 2021c, p.10). Such policies recognise the gendered experience of DFV by women so far as providing access to emergency accommodation; they do not go so far as to recognise DFV as a “violation of the right to housing” (Paglione 2006) requiring a gender-sensitive consideration for the standards of adequacy, legal security and habitability.

### ***Institutional Responses to COVID-19 and DFV housing***

DFV services and housing providers highlighted the fundamental, enabling role that long-term housing plays in the process of leaving violence. Since their inception, they have dealt with several systemic issues related to access to funding and housing options for DFV survivors. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these phenomena.

Federal and State Government interventions announced over 2020-21 as a direct response to housing conditions for women leaving DFV during COVID-19 pandemic conditions were observed to fall broadly within two key phases: as an emergency response to the first lockdown in NSW (March-June 2020), and then as transitional and recovery responses following (July 2020-present).

#### ***First phase: emergency response to the first lockdown in NSW***

Service providers saw an increase in cases and their severity; on the contrary, housing providers saw a decrease in referrals because of health safety concerns. There also was a change in the cohort of women, including more “older homeless single women [and less] women with children” (P2, 2020). The NSW lockdown restricting the movement of people

from their homes occurred from late March to mid-May of 2020. COVID-19 initiatives announced in March and April 2020 focussed on addressing the expected rise in women experiencing DFV brought on by lockdown conditions.

By the end of April 2020, under the *National Partnership on COVID-19 Domestic and Family Violence Responses*, the federal government pledged an additional \$130m in funding to enable support services to:

respond to expected increases in demand and care complexity, and deliver those services in the context of measures in place (such as self-isolation and social distancing) that aim to minimise the spread of covid-19 in the Australian community (Australian Government 2020, p.D-3).

This funding was directed towards boosting initiatives on the National Plan, of which the COAG Women's Safety Council determined the distribution of funding across the states and territories. On the ground, this amounted to \$21m in joint funding by the NSW and Australian governments for frontline services, emergency accommodation such as a pop-up safe house in Manly, and the *Staying Home, Leaving Violence* program implemented as part of the National Plan (NSW Government, 2020a).

The responses initiated during this period focused on addressing physical safety and health safety by increasing the capacity of emergency housing and supporting services that were not equipped for the level of demand anticipated or social distancing now needed to prevent outbreaks amongst residents in these facilities. Table 1 details the responses. Many of these target not just women escaping DFV but those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Other federal and NSW governments' financial, housing and DFV responses to COVID-19

over 2020 show an initial focus on immediate concerns with the virus outbreak. In most cases, existing programs were given additional funding or fast-tracked.

<b>Date of introduction</b>	<b>COVID-19 Initiative</b>	<b>Response Type</b>	<b>Housing Type Targeted</b>	<b>Response Mechanism</b>
2019 - 21	Keeping Women Safe in their Homes	Federal Program	Remaining at home	Funding for service providers to support women who chose to remain at home
April - June 2020	(*) People sleeping rough moved into temporary accommodation	State ad hoc response	Transitional accommodation	Funding from federal used to purchase temporary accommodation
April 2020	Temporary Accommodation Register	State Program	Transitional accommodation	Open call out to hotels to register for use as temporary accommodation for women and children.
April – July 2020	(*) Relaxed policy provisions for accessing temporary accommodation	State Policy	Transitional accommodation	Longer allowable stay in transitional accommodation for people at risk of homelessness
April 2020 – March 2021	National Partnership on COVID-19 Domestic and Family Violence Responses	Formal agreement across government		Increased federal \$130m funding to the states and territories to increase capacity of frontline services
April – October 2020	(*) NSW Planning System Acceleration Program	State Program	Social Housing	Expedite social housing construction approval process
April – July 2020	(*) NSW Rent Choice Assist COVID-19	State Program	Transitional (Private rental)	Private rental assistance for households on low income
July 2020		Ad hoc Federal response	Transitional (Private rental)	Cash payment for women on temporary visas leaving DFV to cover accommodation, food, and medical care

**Table 1:** Government responses to housing for women leaving DFV during COVID-19, initial lockdown. (\*) Initiatives not targeted at women experiencing DFV, but that indirectly benefited them. Source: authors

However, some service providers reported that, with some exceptions, this emergency

housing support did not seem to fully achieve the intended effects in this initial stage of the



pandemic as women kept on feeling unsafe, now not just of their perpetrators but also of getting COVID. This fear of the disease often resulted in women staying in the violent environment.

P3: ... we have found that where women are able to access services which provide counselling or safety planning there has been a large increase. And this is not recorded in police crime figures because these aren't reports that are going to police. (...) [Women] feel that there is nowhere safe to go, their perpetrator might use the fact the virus is in the community to stop them from leaving the house. (...). So those March [2020] figures didn't necessarily surprise us, but I don't think we have really got an accurate picture of the abuse and violence which is happening based on police reports.

P1: I've had a few people who have been desperately unsafe (...) but they have been very firmly not willing to accept a placement in refuge accommodation. Largely because they are very concerned with COVID with the safety of the shared housing model.

P6: ... And then you throw COVID into the mix, and life becomes even more challenging for the people on the ground and the women and kids. I went to work each day. The workers worked from home. (...) reception rang us and said, "you've got mum and five kids out the front." So, I was able to bring them in and attend to their needs (...) in the end we got her and the kids into the private women's shelter, which was lucky because "what are we going to do with them?" The bigger families (usually) find it more difficult; single women find it more difficult. All the women find it difficult.

P6 explains how some women did choose to leave home and find shelter during COVID. However, *being lucky* to find availability resulted from other women not accessing the crisis accommodation service during lockdown. Governments provided extra financial support to refuges and crisis accommodation initiatives without genuinely understanding the survivors' perspectives and concerns. Women deciding not to access crisis accommodation resulted in an even lower and more inaccurate official record of cases, which are based on police reports. It has been proven that police reports represent a small percentage of all domestic violence cases (Voce & Boxall, 2018). On the other hand, service providers mention the historical effectiveness of the NSW Staying Home Leaving Violence program since its inception in 2009 and during COVID.

P6: One of the programs we have at the centre is *Staying Home, Leaving Violence*, and that's where we and the courts and the police try to keep mum and the kids in their own home if she's willing to do that and have the perpetrator out. And that's worked really well too. (...) if there are kids involved, it's a matter of weeks before he finds out where they're living, so, why not stay where you're comfortable and you've got your support and neighbours around you, and the kids can stay in their own bed (...) (and) again, in this crisis period, let's just keep everyone as stable and in a routine as we can. So, that program has been good. It comes along with dollars to do security upgrades to the home. (...) Staying Home Leaving Violence is the flavour of the month, and they have been around since about now 2009 and (...) I don't ever feel that that funding is at risk.

P6's reflection on the Staying Home Leaving Violence is not the most known path. However, this program is a housing solution to keep survivors in place whilst leaving the violent situation, providing an alternative to leaving home and potential homelessness.

*Second phase – post- 2020 lockdown transitional and recovery responses*

After the 2020 lockdown, the next wave of initiatives broadened to all homeless people and was less targeted toward DFV survivors. In late May, the NSW Government pledged \$36m to provide longer-term support for those in temporary accommodation due to rough sleeping, estimated at 1,500 people as of July 2020 (NSW Government, 2021b). The Together Home program was launched in July 2020 to extend their existing head leasing initiative – the Community Housing Leasing Program. It provided \$14m for emergency accommodation and \$20m for private rental subsidies to community housing providers to lease private rental properties. This funding also aimed for service providers to supply wrap-around support, with a key focus on helping clients identify a “long term sustainable housing pathway” (NSW Government, 2021b, p. 6).

<b>When introduced?</b>	<b>COVID-19 Initiative</b>	<b>Response Type</b>	<b>Housing Type Targeted</b>	<b>Response Mechanism</b>
July 2020 – June 2022	Together Home	State Program	Private rental and community housing	Financial and service to support people to transition from temporary to long term accommodation. Included homeless clients as well as women leaving DFV.
September 2020	Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program	Federal Program	Emergency accommodation	\$60m to expand build of emergency accommodation facilities
October 2021	Economic Recovery Strategy	State Plan	Social Housing, Emergency accommodation, Private rental	A range of interventions including: Upgrade and build of social and affordable housing in areas of high need;  \$484m for new and replacement of existing refuges (for women leaving DFV);

				Expansion of Start Safely rental assistance program for women leaving DFV
--	--	--	--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------

Table 2: Government responses to housing that indirectly supported women leaving DFV during COVID-19, transition, and recovery

Despite government responses focused on homelessness as a whole and not specifically on DFV, after the initial hard lockdown and the lifting of restrictions around June-July 2020, services and refugees started seeing the effects of COVID then. This brought a bit more awareness to the DFV pandemic, and some of the government funding, especially the homelessness-focused Together Home program in Table 2, helped address this crisis.

P3: ...during the first wave of COVID when the lockdown occurred, the government provided funding so that all of the rough sleepers who were able to move into hotel accommodation (...) It wasn't a case of going into a hotel and then back out onto the streets. This is where the funding for Together Home came from. (...) \$3.5M of the funding was designated for highly vulnerable people (...) Interesting every referral we have had through for a woman has had an extreme history of domestic violence.

P4: there is a lot more government support for temporary accommodation at the moment, so women have more options. They can secure temporary accommodation, have their own space, (...) because of the increase to the Job Seeker payment, women are in a period where they are taking on leases because they can afford to pay more rent, but when that finishes, they are going to be in a situation where they are paying most of their income in rent and that sort of situation is not sustainable (...) That may result in a period in crisis accommodation.

Together Home, in addition to other supports, “it's working well where private rentals are available” (P3, 2021), highlighted by the government's extra support in early 2021.

P4's quote highlights the importance of funding and following up on women's housing path. Again, the importance of adequate data and information and continued financial support for women are evidenced. When the funding and additional supports ends, if women do not have employment or means to cover basic needs such as housing, the options then are homelessness, emergency/crisis accommodation or going back to the perpetrator. Thus, women assess these options even before leaving, and they often stay in the violent (known) environment.

Late 2020 saw a shift to initiatives intended to deliver longer-term housing impact through expanding crisis and long-term accommodation capacity (see Table 2). In the November 2020 budget, the NSW Government announced \$812m in social housing spending, of which \$350m (approx. 4,600 homes) was spent on maintenance/renewal, \$250m on new (approx. 580) social homes across metropolitan and regional NSW, and \$212m on 200 new Aboriginal homes and maintenance (NSW Government, 2020b). However, none of these is focused on explicitly addressing the DFV crisis. Women leaving violence would have to apply for access to these alongside all other disadvantaged applicants.

In October 2021, the NSW Government announced further spending as part of its economic recovery strategy – an economic stimulus package with an emphasis on supporting business and spending on infrastructure. An additional \$183m was committed on 1,400 new social and affordable housing dwellings, including \$10m on rental assistance for women leaving DFV and refurbishment/construction of 80 refuges for women in DFV situations.

Over the course of the pandemic thus far, policy and program responses to DFV related housing appeared to begin being more targeted to specific groups considered vulnerable to COVID-19, which included women experiencing DFV. As crisis conditions eased and the space for more strategic commitments were possible, the state of NSW reverted to its broad-brushed approaches to supply and support access to housing in accordance with its existing policies. While the investments in social and affordable housing are significant, they make only a small difference in the large shortfall left from decades of investment neglect. With a large portion of funding pledged to maintaining or renewing existing stock, the total expected number of new homes is only a portion of the current shortfall in NSW, estimated at 19,200 as of 2016, with a projected shortfall of an extra 8,400 over 2017-36 (Lawson et al., 2018). Such responses have been framed primarily as economic responses to recovery. Thus, the measure of policy success will be a return to financial “business as usual” rather than improved housing conditions for women leaving DFV or the broader homeless population.

***Discussion and conclusions:***

The findings of the COVID-19 driven responses government responses and interview analysis reinforce the conclusions discussed by Flanagan, Blunden, Valentine, and Henriette (2019). The authors highlighted the effectiveness of immediate and crises responses and the deficiencies in providing long-term housing solutions for DFV survivors, which continue to be translated into subsidies to access the private rental market. During COVID-19, government commitments have focused on ramping up capacity for crisis support and accommodation and raising community awareness of DFV and support available. The pandemic conditions spurred greater investment in emerging solutions such as adapting unused accommodation and stay-at-home options. These commitments to an underfunded sector have been critical for service providers and DFV survivors alike.

DFV responses appeared well-coordinated between levels of government and swiftly implemented, particularly between March 2020 –April 2021. Service providers indicated that some clients felt the benefit of these policies – for example, women had more purchasing power in the rental market thanks to JobSeeker/Keeper payments. However, such broader instruments still excluded some marginalised groups, such as women on temporary visas, highlighting the vulnerability of these groups. In response, a few COVID-driven DFV responses targeted them. However, these were only temporary and insufficient.

Housing responses driven by COVID-19 focused primarily on homelessness, mainly as a health response to aid rough sleepers in lockdown. The link between DFV and homelessness was further emphasised during the pandemic outbreak. The NSW government shifted emphasis to more long-term strategic initiatives in late 2020. In this context, programs such as Together Home, targeting rough sleepers, provided women leaving DFV with an opportunity to access the private rental market through community housing providers. This program continues to help provide women with the flexibility and support they need and the ability to tailor the funding allocation to suit their needs. However, despite the effectiveness of this program, **women need to be homeless** to access this support. Therefore, this program is far from being an optimal and adequate response to support women experiencing violence.

The lack of DFV-focused responses to house women leaving violence entails a fundamental systemic issue that leaves women unprotected and stigmatised, hampering their recovery path. Interviewees argued that the absence of targeted policies was the main factor preventing access to long-term housing for women, particularly a lack of social housing. Similarly, the modest supply of new affordable housing is insufficient to address the significant gap accumulated over time. The lack of availability reported in the literature review is also highlighted by the interviewees when discussing emergency and crisis accommodation and

when thinking of transitional and long-term housing. Affordable housing continues to be a significant roadblock for women looking to escape domestic violence.

The need to respond to immediate housing needs during COVID lockdowns has enabled the opportunity to trial novel solutions for short term housing. For long-term housing, the government prioritised and streamlined the implementation of existing policy solutions and programs. However, these policies still primarily rely on non-government operators to facilitate, thus, not solving the current systemic housing affordability issues. The critical issue of funding and providing long-term housing continues to suffer from the absence of national investment and leadership. Additionally, these initiatives facilitating long-term housing supply are aimed at a broad group of users. Unless there is significant progress in making up the estimated shortfall of affordable and social housing stock, there is little to suggest that long-term housing options for women leaving DFV will improve despite being considered a group with priority needs.

COVID-19 brought to light the shadow pandemic of DFV that Australia has experienced since before 2020 and extended some existing initiatives. However, there is no clear outlook on the future of these policies and their sustainability nor an understanding of their effects on systemic issues of DFV. There is a sense that policymakers continue to view DFV as a crisis rather than a process of transitioning to new and safe life with a stable home as its core.

Policy and decision-makers need a more holistic approach and understanding of what is required to provide adequate safe long-term housing specific to DFV survivors, keeping in mind the distinct challenges and variety of individual circumstances that distinguish them from other people in need of housing assistance.

A lesson that COVID left leading to the future is that funding is fundamental, and this research highlighted where that funding needs to be targeted. Consistent investment in social



and affordable housing is needed more than anything and a once-off economic recovery package is not enough. There is also a call to raise awareness that leaving violence does not equal leaving home and finding other accommodation. Stay-at-home programs have highlighted alternative paths that may reduce the struggle that DFV survivors experience when moving out of their homes and may also help reduce homelessness cases. Finally, there needs to be further research on inter-agency collaboration, which was highlighted as one of the hindering factors in finding housing for DFV survivors.

Although the current study addresses a knowledge gap in COVID-19 related DFV housing policy and responses in Australia, there are several limitations. This is a cross-sectional study, and the findings do not assume to represent all service providers' experiences in New South Wales. This study focuses on DFV services provided in the greater Sydney area and does not reflect the situation for regional, rural, or remote services. Finally, although the cross-section of services invited to participate was purposely broad in type, a limited number of services were available to be interviewed during the data gathering process. Additionally, this paper did not address the consequences of and actions driven by the second lockdown in 2021, which was longer and had harsher conditions. It does not address the NSW government *coming back to normal* approach of 2022. Further research is required on overcoming these data gaps to further understand what is needed to help women experiencing violence more effectively.

### ***Acknowledgements***

This research was conducted with funding from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, in collaboration with UTS Design Innovation Research Centre. We also like to

acknowledge and extend our gratitude to all the participants in this research for their time and assistance with this project.

## References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2017). *Personal Safety Survey 2016*. ABS cat. no. 4906.0. Canberra: ABS. Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/1OgLEWS>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2020). *Recorded crime – victims*, Release 24 June 2021, Canberra: ABS. Retrieved from: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/recorded-crime-victims/latest-release#key-statistics>
- Australian Government (2020), *National Partnership on COVID-19 Domestic and Violence Responses*, accessed 2 Mar 2022, <https://federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/agreements/covid-19-domestic-and-family-violence-responses>
- Australian Government (2021), *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children - Actions and priority areas*, Canberra, Accessed 1 Jul 2021, <https://plan4womenssafety.dss.gov.au/implementation-plan/actions-and-priorities/>
- Australian Government Department of Social Services, *Keeping Women Safe in their Homes*, accessed 2 Mar 2022, <https://www.dss.gov.au/women-programs-services-reducing-violence/keeping-women-safe-in-their-homes>
- Australian Institute of Housing and Welfare (AIHW) (2018). *Specialist Homelessness Services 2016–17*, Canberra. Retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/2PJ3MMH>
- Australian Institute of Housing and Welfare (AIHW) (2020a) *Specialist Homelessness Services 2019-20*. Canberra. Retrieved from: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/summary>
- Australian Institute of Housing and Welfare (AIHW) (2020b) *Specialist homelessness services annual report*, Accessed 1 June 2021, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/clients-who-have-experienced-family-and-domestic-violence>
- Berejiklian, G. (2020) *Accelerated planning projects to deliver jobs and boost the economy*, media release, accessed 28 April 2020, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/accelerated-planning-projects-to-deliver-jobs-and-boost-economy>
- Berkhout, S. G., & Richardson, L. (2020). Identity, politics, and the pandemic: Why is COVID-19 a disaster for feminism(s)?. *History and philosophy of the life sciences*, 42(4), 49. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40656-020-00346-7>

- Boxall H, Morgan A & Brown R 2020. *The prevalence of domestic violence among women during the COVID-19 pandemic. Statistical Bulletin no. 28.* Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <https://www.aic.gov.au/publications/sb/sb28>
- Brkic, N. (2020). COVID-19 demonstrates why Australia needs a 'housing first' approach to homelessness. <https://www.humanrights.unsw.edu.au/news/covid-19-demonstrates-why-australia-needs-housing-first-approach-homelessness>
- Carrington, K., Morley, C., Warren, S., Ryan, V., Ball, M., Clarke, J., & Vitis, L. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Australian domestic and family violence services and their clients. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 56, 539– 558. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.183>
- Chung, D, Kennedy, R, O'Brien, B & Wendt, S (2000), *The Link Between Domestic and Family Violence and Women's Homelessness*, Wesnet and the Department of Family and Community Services, Adelaide, 46, <https://wesnet.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/homesafehome.pdf>
- Clark, D.L., Wood, L. and Sullivan, C.M. (2019). 'Examining the needs and experiences of domestic violence survivors in transitional housing', *Journal of family violence*, 34(4), pp.275-286. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-018-0010-4>
- Commonwealth of Australia (2020). *Shelter in the storm – COVID-19 and homelessness. Interim report of the inquiry into homelessness in Australia*, Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, viewed 1 Jul 2021, [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportrep/024523/toc\\_pdf/Selterinthestorm-COVID-19andhomelessness.pdf](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportrep/024523/toc_pdf/Selterinthestorm-COVID-19andhomelessness.pdf)
- Crenshaw, Kimberley W. (1994). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Color. In *The Public Nature of Private Violence: The Discovery of Domestic Abuse*. Edited by Martha Albertson Fineman and Roxanne Mykitiuk. New York: Routledge, 93–118
- Douglas, H. & Fitzgerald, R. (2018). The domestic violence protection order system as entry to the criminal justice system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 7(3), 4
- [DVNSW \(2020\) 2020 Economic Stimulus & Budget Submission, 7](https://www.dvnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Economic-Stimulus-and-Budget-Submission.pdf)
- DVNSW (2017) Good Practice Guidelines for the Domestic and Family Violence Sector in NSW, Accessed 5 Feb 2022, <https://www.dvnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/DFV-Practice-Guidelines-1.pdf>
- [Eaves, L. & Al-Hindi, K. F. \(2020\). Intersectional geographies and COVID-19. \*Dialogues in Human Geography\*, 10\(2\), 132–136. https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820620935247](https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820620935247)
- [Equity Economics \(2021\) Nowhere to go - The benefits of providing long term social housing to women that have experienced domestic and family violence: report, released July 2021. http://www.equityeconomics.com.au/nowhere-to-go](http://www.equityeconomics.com.au/nowhere-to-go)
- Family and Community Services (2020) *Rent Choice Start Safely*, viewed 2 Mar 2022, <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/ways/start-safely>
- Fitzgibbon, K., True, J. & Pfitzner, N. (2020) "More help required: the crisis in family violence during the coronavirus pandemic," *The Conversation*, 18 August 2020,

accessed <https://theconversation.com/more-help-required-the-crisis-in-family-violence-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic-144126>

- Flanagan, K., Blunden, H., valentine, k. and Henriette, J. (2019) *Housing outcomes after domestic and family violence*, AHURI Final Report 311, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/311>, doi: 10.18408/ahuri-4116101.
- Foster, H, Boyle, C, Psomoulis H, Nguyen V, Sternberg R, Mann J (2020) *Women's Safety NSW: Continued Impacts of COVID-19 on Domestic and Family Violence*, 4 September 2020, [https://www.womenssafetynsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Continued-impacts-of-COVID-19\\_WSNSW-1.pdf](https://www.womenssafetynsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Continued-impacts-of-COVID-19_WSNSW-1.pdf)
- Ghafournia, N., & Eastal, P. (2018). Are Immigrant Women Visible in Australian Domestic Violence Reports that Potentially Influence Policy? *Laws*, 7(4), 32. MDPI AG. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/laws7040032>
- Hartsock, N. C. (2019). *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited, And Other Essays*. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis.
- Human Rights Watch (2020) *UK Failing Domestic Abuse Victims in Pandemic: Enact Legislation Protecting Those Most at Risk*, 8 June 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/08/uk-failing-domestic-abuse-victims-pandemic>
- Jarnecke, A. M., & Flanagan, J. C. (2020). 'Staying safe during COVID-19: How a pandemic can escalate risk for intimate partner violence and what can be done to provide individuals with resources and support', *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 12(S1), S202–S204. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000688>
- Jones, A., Phillips, R., and Milligan, V. (2007) *Integration and social housing in Australia: challenges and options*, AHURI Positioning Paper No. 102, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/position-papers/102>
- Krishnadas, J., & Taha, S. (2020). 'Domestic violence through the window of the COVID-19 lockdown: A public crisis embodied/exposed in the private/domestic sphere'. *Journal of Global Faultlines*, 7(1), 46-58. doi:10.13169/jglobfaul.7.1.0046
- Lawson, J., Pawson, H., Troy, L., van den Nouwelant, R. and Hamilton, C. (2018), *Social housing as infrastructure: an investment pathway*, AHURI Final Report 306, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/306>, doi:10.18408/ahuri-5314301.
- Maestriperi, L. (2021). 'The Covid-19 Pandemics: why Intersectionality Matters', *Frontiers in Sociology*, 6:2021, <https://www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fsoc.2021.642662>
- Mantler, T., Veenendaal, J., & Wathen, C. N. (2021). Exploring the use of hotels as alternative housing by domestic violence shelters during COVID-19. *International Journal on Homelessness*, 1(1), 32-49.
- Martino, E. & Bentley, R. (2020) 'As demand for crisis housing soars, surely we can tap into COVID-19 vacancies', *The Conversation*, 12 August 2020, <https://theconversation.com/as-demand-for-crisis-housing-soars-surely-we-can-tap-into-covid-19-vacancies-143815>
- Mason, C., Moran, M. and Earles, A. (2020) *Policy coordination and housing outcomes during COVID-19*, AHURI Final Report No. 343, Australian Housing and Urban

- Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/343>, doi:10.18408/ahuri5125801.
- McKeown, R. (2020) 'Hotels Provide Rooms for Domestic Violence Survivors During Covid-19', *The Urban Developer*, 20 April 2020, <https://theurbandevolver.com/articles/hotels-provide-rooms-to-domestic-violence-survivors-during-covid-19>
- Nnawulezi, N., & HacsKaylo, M. (2021). Identifying and responding to the complex needs of domestic violence housing practitioners at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of family violence*, 1-11.
- NSW Government (2016), Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW, viewed 02 Mar 2022, <http://www.socialhousing.nsw.gov.au/?a=348442>
- NSW Government (2018), NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023, viewed 02 Mar 2022, <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/download?file=590515>
- NSW Government (2021), *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Strategy*, viewed 02 March 2022, [https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-10/economic-recovery-report\\_211021.pdf](https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-10/economic-recovery-report_211021.pdf)
- NSW Government (2020a), *Covid-19: Funding to boost domestic violence support*, media release, viewed 1 Jul 2021, [https://www.dcj.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/780626/covid-19-funding-to-boost-domestic-violence-support.pdf](https://www.dcj.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/780626/covid-19-funding-to-boost-domestic-violence-support.pdf)
- NSW Government (2020b), *Almost \$900 million investment takes total social housing budget to \$4.4 billion*, media release, accessed 1 Jul 2021, <https://www.budget.nsw.gov.au/system/files/budget-2020-11/PAVEY%20-%20Almost%20%24900%20million%20investment%20takes%20total%20social%20housing%20budget%20to%20%244.4%20billion.pdf>
- NSW Government (2021a), *Premier's Priorities*, viewed 1 Jul 2021, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/premiers-priorities>
- NSW Government (2021b), *Together Home Program – Program Guidelines*, accessed 27 Jan 2021, <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/download?file=812695>
- NSW Government (2021c), *NSW Affordable Housing Ministerial Guidelines 2021/22*, accessed 2 Mar 2022, [https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/332789/NSW-Affordable-Housing-Ministerial-Guidelines-2021-22.pdf](https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/332789/NSW-Affordable-Housing-Ministerial-Guidelines-2021-22.pdf)
- NSW Government (2021d), *Social Housing Eligibility and Allocations Policy Supplement*, accessed 2 Mar 2022, [https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/policies/social-housing-eligibility-allocations-policy-supplement?merge\\_chapters=true#chapter-637401](https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/policies/social-housing-eligibility-allocations-policy-supplement?merge_chapters=true#chapter-637401)
- NSW Women Refuge Movement and the UWS Urban Research Centre (2009), *The impact of housing on the lives of women and children - post domestic violence crisis accommodation*, accessed at [http://www.uws.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/69590/Microsoft\\_Word\\_-\\_Finalreport.pdf](http://www.uws.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/69590/Microsoft_Word_-_Finalreport.pdf)
- Our Watch, (2018) *The impact and cost of violence against women*, Accessed 12 Jan 2022, <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/quick-facts/>
- Paglione, G. (2006) 'Domestic Violence and Human Rights: An Reinterpretation of the Right to Housing', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 28:1, 120-147

- Parsell, C., Clarke, A. and Kuskoff, E. (2020) Understanding responses to homelessness during COVID-19: an examination of Australia, *Housing Studies*, 1-14 DOI: 10.1080/02673037.2020.1829564
- Pfitzner, N., Fitz-Gibbon, K., Meyer, S., and J. (2020): *Responding to Queensland's 'shadow pandemic' during the period of COVID-19 restrictions: practitioner views on the nature of and responses to violence against women*. Monash University. Report. <https://doi.org/10.26180/5ef9b6ab3f5a1>
- Powell, A., Meltzer, A., Martin, C., Stone, W., Liu, E., Flanagan, K., Muir, K. and Tually, S. (2019) *The construction of social housing pathways across Australia*, AHURI Final Report No. 316, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/316>, doi:10.18408/ahuri-7118101
- Rein, M and Schön, D. (1993) 'Reframing Policy Discourse', *The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning*, edited by Fischer, F. and Forrester, J., London: UCL Press Limited, 145-166
- Rogers, D. and Power, E. (2020) Housing policy and the COVID-19 pandemic: the importance of housing research during this health emergency, *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 20:2, 177-183, DOI: 10.1080/19491247.2020.1756599
- Rosenberg, S., Riggs, D. W., Taylor, N., & Fraser, H. (2020). 'Being together really helped': Australian transgender and non-binary people and their animal companions living through violence and marginalisation, *Journal of Sociology*, 56(4), 571-590
- Ryan, N. E., & El Ayadi, A. M. (2020). A call for a gender-responsive, intersectional approach to address COVID-19. *Global public health*, 15(9), 1404–1412. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2020.1791214>
- Seymour, K. (2017). (In)Visibility and recognition: Australian policy responses to 'domestic violence.' *Sexualities*, 22(5-6), 751–766. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460716681465>
- Sharma, A., & Borah, S. B. (2020). 'Covid-19 and Domestic Violence: an Indirect Path to Social and Economic Crisis'. *Journal of family violence*, 1–7. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-020-00188-8>
- Smith, C. (2020) "'Meanwhile" building use: another way to manage properties left vacant by the COVID-19 crisis', *The Conversation*, 25 August 2020, <https://theconversation.com/meanwhile-building-use-another-way-to-manage-properties-left-vacant-by-the-covid-19-crisis-144056>
- Sri, A. S., Das, P., Gnanapragasam, S., & Persaud, A. (2021). 'COVID-19 and the violence against women and girls: "The shadow pandemic."' *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764021995556>
- Tually, Faulkner, D., Cutler, C., & Slatter, M. (2009). Women, Domestic and Family Violence and Homelessness: Putting Housing Back in the Equation. *Parity*, 22(10), 36–38. <https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.589460713557312>
- Voce, I., & Boxall, H. (2018). Who reports domestic violence to police? A review of the evidence. In (pp. 1-16). Woden: Australian Institute of Criminology.

- Voce, & Boxall, H. (2018). Who reports domestic violence to police? A review of the evidence. *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, 559, 1–16.  
<https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.982229837445814>
- Women's Safety NSW, *Continued Impacts of COVID-19 on Domestic and Family Violence Report*: September 22, 2020,  
<https://www.womenssafetyNSW.org.au/impact/publication/continued-impacts-of-covid-19-on-domestic-and-family-violence/>
- Yakubovich, A. R., & Maki, K. (2021). Preventing gender-based homelessness in Canada during the CoViD-19 pandemic and beyond: the need to account for violence against women. *Violence against women*, 10778012211034202.