

ALL NEW ZEALANDERS WELL-HOUSED



CHA Newsletter 20 July
2020

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CHA Newsletter 20 July 2020

Welcome to the fortnightly newsletter of Community Housing Aotearoa *Nga Wharerau o Aotearoa*.

Included in this issue – opening of a new community housing complex, meetings to discuss guidelines on the right to a decent home, and an update on public housing assessments.

Where are we heading?

The following two articles are emblematic of the nature of working toward our vision of *All New Zealanders well-housed*. It sometimes seems we are going in two directions at once.

CHA has long advocated for a clearer understanding of the extent of homelessness and we are pleased to see the release of the Severe Housing Deprivation in Aotearoa New Zealand 2018 report. We applaud HUD for commissioning this work from the He Kāinga Oranga / Housing & Health Research Programme. The report builds upon research from the 2013 Census. The authors are Dr. Kate Amore, Helen Viggers, and Distinguished Professor Philippa Howden Chapman from the University of Otago. Their expertise in this field is well known and this information from the latest Census begins to provide insights on our progress – or lack thereof.

The results show severe housing deprivation increased from the prior Census by about 4,400 people. The report documents the disproportionate impact on the young, especially Māori and Pacific. The report reflects the situation in 2018 and does not include the impact of Covid-19. The response from providers and government to households lacking housing was swift and decisive. That it took a global pandemic to react with such urgency is a fact we should all reflect on. With the expected economic impact from Covid anticipated to still increase, our will to continue responding swiftly and decisively may be tested.

The second article reports on the progress of the Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill. CHA began investigating how the

transitional housing and emergency housing programmes operated in 2017, with information collected from providers. Of concern was the wide variety of agreements entered into between providers and residents regarding their housing. The purpose was to support the development of best practice in the use of these documents. We shared the information gathered with the Ministry of Social Development and Tenancy Services (within MBIE) and worked with them to clarify the status of the programmes under the RTA. In May 2018 we published a guidance document to share what we had learned and to provide an education resource for providers. We advocated for the principles of the RTA (rights and responsibilities on both sides) to be used and a fit-for-purpose tenancy solution to be developed. With the introduction of the Bill we were hopeful that the status of the programmes would be clarified, but no changes were originally introduced. The Select Committee has now decided to exempt transitional and emergency housing which meet set requirements. HUD is proposing to establish a new Code of Practice that will sit outside of the legislation to ensure clients still have adequate protections.

While the exemption may be welcomed by some, it comes at a price; the loss of the legal rights of whānau in emergency and transitional housing under the RTA. Without a clear legal framework, it could be argued that providers are no better off either!

The rights of whānau are proposed to be protected under a Code of Practice linked to contract requirements. This means that they are not legal rights and that enforcement will lie with the contracting agency, taking away the independent ability for whānau to assert their (human) right to housing.

The new Code of Practice provides an opportunity to agree and establish a consistent operating model for transitional housing and CHA will request that the sector is involved from the start in developing this. The involvement of Te Matapihi and the many iwi and Māori providers will be critical to developing an appropriate Code. We'd also like providers to consider how the Code of Practice could sit alongside an assessment and audit function that encourages best practice.

Chris Glaudel, Deputy Chief Executive

Severe Housing Deprivation in Aotearoa New Zealand 2018 report

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) made available the [Severe Housing Deprivation in Aotearoa New Zealand 2018](#) report on Friday 17 July.

In their announcement, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development welcomes the report and the useful understanding of the level of homelessness (severe housing deprivation) experienced by New Zealand that it provides.

At a high level the estimates indicate that on 6 March 2018 there were at least 41,600 people experiencing severe housing deprivation. This is a minimum estimate, as it is expected to be an underestimation of the homelessness population. This underestimation is likely to be driven by the lower rates of Census

completion in 2018 among Māori and Pacific populations, who experience higher rates of household crowding.

Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill and transitional housing

The Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill (the Bill) is currently before Parliament. The Social Services and Community Committee has now reported back to the House. The Committee decided, by majority, to recommend the Bill to the House, and to make a number of changes to the Bill.

Helen Potiki, Deputy Chief Executive at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has advised that the Bill is expected to clarify that the Act does not apply to premises used for transitional and emergency housing. She provided the summary below of the situation.

The Bill clarifies that transitional and emergency housing are exempt from the Act because they are intended as temporary accommodation while people find longer-term housing.

What is included in the exemption

The proposed exemption provides that the Act does not apply where premises are used to provide emergency or transitional accommodation that is either funded wholly or partly:

- under the Special Needs Grants Programme; or
- by a government department as emergency or transitional accommodation for people in need of housing; or
- where the accommodation provider is a person, or kind or class of person, prescribed by regulations made under the Act.

Providers may still choose to adopt standards or provisions in the Act that are appropriate to their service.

Next steps

To ensure that transitional housing clients still have adequate protections, a Code of Practice will be developed that sets out the Government's expectations of providers. The contents of the Code will be reflected in HUD's contracts with providers.

The new exemption will come into force on the day after the Bill receives Royal Assent. It will apply from that date to all people in qualifying transitional and emergency housing, including both existing and new clients. Once the Bill is passed, HUD will engage with the sector and other agencies to develop the Code of Practice that will be reflected in our contracts.

There is more information about the report back from Parliament on the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's website: <https://www.hud.govt.nz/news-and-resources/news/residential-tenancies-amendment-bill-select-committee-report-back/>. For more information on the Residential Tenancies Act reform in general, visit: www.hud.govt.nz/RTA-Reforms.

In the news

- [New Housing Development Gets Underway In Flaxmere](#)
- [Have your say: ComVoices Covid-19 and State of the Sector survey 2020](#)
- [First Off The Blocks For Healthier, More Energy-efficient Housing](#)
- [\\$55m Funding For Rotorua Supports Iwi Housing Aspirations And District's Economic Recovery](#)

Housing Development and Property Manager role at Wesley Community Action

Wesley Community Action (WCA) - Housing Development and Property Manager

Wesley Community Action have an opportunity for a new Housing Development and Property Manager to join their team. The role is responsible for the establishment and leadership of the social housing capacity.

For more information please contact **Isabel MacDonald** imacdonald@wesleyca.org.nz. Closing date for the position is **Monday 27th July 2020**.

EVENTS

Upcoming Australasian Housing Institute Training 2020

July 2020

22 July 2020 - Industry Connect: The road to a brighter future.
28 July 2020 - Preventing Debt and Recovering Arrears - Online Workshop.
29 July 2020 - Industry Connect: Building a Better Tender.

August 2020

11 August 2020 - Preventing Debt and Recovering Arrears - Online workshop.
13 August 2020 - Having Difficult Conversations - Online Workshop.
19 August 2020 - Coaching Essentials - Online Workshop.

September 2020

02 September 2020 - Having Money Conversations with Tenants - Online Workshop.
03 September 2020 - Wellness - Online Workshop.

08 September 2020 - The 6 Thinking Hats: Problem Solving Skills - Online Workshop.

For more information click [here](#) to see all the details on the Australasian Housing Institute website.

Zavanti software for NZ social and affordable housing - web demonstration

You are invited to see Zavanti in action in a short lunchtime web demonstration.

Zavanti says it offers an intuitive, user-configurable 'all-in-one' system and everything today's housing providers need to meet and exceed regulatory requirements, gain insights into their business operations, mitigate risk and provide advanced tools to staff and exemplary service to customers.

Demonstration details:

12 noon until 12.45pm, Friday 24 July - you can register [here](#).

HuiE Resource: Running a Webinar Toolkit

Are you planning to host an online webinar but not sure where to start?

HuiE! recently developed a webinar toolkit free for anyone to use.

Click [here](#) to access the toolkit from their resources page.