

Health Impact Report 2017/18

Housing is widely recognised to be a social determinant of health. Our first Health Impact Report demonstrates the impact that our services have on people's mental and physical welfare.

You can also read about the wider impact that our services have on people's housing, finances and employment at https://england.shelter.org.uk/what_we_do/our_impact

88% of Shelter clients with **mental health** issues thought their mental health was being affected by their housing

31% of clients reported having **physical health** issues affected by their housing or affecting where they could live

Shelter's impact

53% of clients who had previously reported mental health issues saw a positive improvement in their mental health



(40% of all clients saw their mental health improving).

37% of clients who had previously reported physical health issues saw a positive improvement in their physical health



(25% of all clients saw their physical health improving).

What improves mental health?



Resolving benefit issues

62% of clients felt their mental health improved due to help from Shelter to resolve their welfare benefit issues



Providing one trusted point of advocacy

62% felt Shelter dealing with other organisations and people on their behalf helped their mental health



Consistent, reliable support

61% said that having ongoing support from Shelter helped their overall mental health



Help with debt and rent arrears

58% said having Shelter help them to resolve their debt and arrears issues helped their mental health

Shelter's services relating to health

Our services are designed to advise, guide and support people with all types of housing needs; whether that means a short conversation or intensive support over several months.

Helping clients to address the physical and emotional impact of housing problems and homelessness is an integral part of our work.

We see a range of health problems in our clients:

64% Depression	31% Anxiety	15% Back & spinal injuries	15% Breathing problems
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Multiple and Complex Needs (MCN)



Shelter can provide intensive, long-term and highly specialist casework for MCN clients, made possible by coordinated support from local partners. This includes using the Housing First model and adopting a 'tenancy-first' approach, whereby clients are given access to housing before their wider mental health issues are addressed.

Specialist Advice and Support



Our housing, debt and welfare advice can help people address their housing problems and recover from experiences of bad housing or homelessness. We support and empower people to find ways out of housing situations that are negatively impacting their health, as well as building resilience.

Hospital Discharge



Research* shows that in projects where health and housing organisations collaborate, 93% of homeless patients have suitable accommodation to be discharged to (as opposed to 69% otherwise). We give housing advice and resettlement support to give patients a better chance of recovering to the best possible health.

*Evaluation of the Homeless Hospital Discharge Fund, Homeless Link, 2015

Family Health and Housing



Shelter works with family health professionals to identify families with housing and health related needs. We'll then help the families find, keep and improve a home, working in partnership with other agencies in order to achieve the best results.

Social Prescribing



In GP practices, doctors can refer patients to us for advice, once it's been identified that their issue is caused or exacerbated by a housing situation. This protects the patient from their medical issue worsening.

Spotlight on Hospital Discharge, Birmingham

This service works with families whose children are ready to be discharged from Birmingham Children's Hospital, but whose homes are unsuitable for their continued care. Our Peer Mentor – who uses her lived experience of housing problems to provide family support – describes a recent case:

'A young girl's meningitis diagnosis became life-changing when she had to have her foot amputated. Her family's current council property with no wheelchair access was no longer suitable, so we intervened by making an application for housing with the local council. We then liaised to make sure that a suitable place was offered and applied for grants to adapt the house. Just before Christmas, the family was reunited as one in a safe, affordable and suitable home.'

Feedback on Social Prescribing, Newcastle

'[I appreciated] knowing I wasn't on my own when it comes down to finances'
Client

'Staff report back that when they refer to Shelter they get so much more than a referral to other organisations. The work you do really improves the situation and health of the person we've referred.'
Chief Executive, Ways to Wellness