

About Wellways Australia

- Established in 1978, Wellways is a provider with over 40 years' experience
- 2,000-plus staff across over 100 offices throughout eastern Australia (including Tasmania)
- 158 people working in peer support roles (189 volunteers contributing over 14,000 hours)
- Our services reach thousands of people every year

Wellways in Western Victoria

Since the early 1980s, Wellways has worked with communities from Barwon to the Great South Coast and across to the Grampians. We currently provide support to over 800 people in the region.

Wellways provides mental health and housing support services to young people aged 16-25 years including two youth residential rehabilitation programs and a housing program for young people experiencing mental health and drug and/alcohol issues. We also provide assertive outreach, peer support and group programs to people aged 16-65 years; family and carer services; NDIS services; suicide prevention services and a number of specialist LGBTIQ+ programs.

Wellways Response to Homelessness

Wellways advocates that a whole of community response is required to effectively address homelessness in Victoria; this requires community to be viewed as consortium of public and private health and housing sectors, as well as general community (public) members.

Wellways believes:

1. the resolution to homelessness requires a "Whole of Community" response
2. alternative housing responses must be implemented to effectively resolve homelessness, and
3. tailored recovery and tenancy capacity building support is vital to housing tenure for people who have experienced homelessness.

Demand for housing is compounded by a lack of affordability housing for people on a low income, particularly for those that are homeless. Quite simply, the demand for housing is exceeding availability for this population group. Therefore, an alternative rapid housing solution is desperately required, and in addition, solutions that are tailored appropriately to the person's needs.

Wellways advocates that subsidised housing models delivered in conjunction with the private housing market is one effective solution to provide housing to people experiencing homelessness.

Wellways has achieved success' through our tailored private rental housing and support model, the Doorway Program. Doorway has been supported by the Victorian Government since 2010.

Doorway has worked alongside 70 real estate agents to house 143 people who were homeless with mental health issues in the private rental market across Victoria. But it's not just positive housing outcomes this program has evidenced, it's also economically viable.

An economic evaluation of Doorway indicated governmental cost savings of \$133 per person, per day for people engaged in private rental through the Doorway program when compared to service utilisation costs of others experiencing homelessness in the community. This type of model evidences faster housing outcomes for people experiencing secondary homelessness, improved health, and cost effectiveness for Government.

Doorway reduces the reliance on the social housing system. The advantage to this approach is that the person can live in a community of their choice. Evidence suggests choice is an imperative ingredient to housing success and tenure, i.e. people living in a community where they feel safe and connected and have full opportunity to citizenship (e.g. obtain employment).

For further information contact:

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