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Mental illness exacerbated by housing pressure

Mental Health Australia is concerned housing affordability stress is negatively impacting the mental health of low income Australians, following the release of Anglicare Australia's Rental Affordability Snapshot.

"There are clear connections between unstable housing and poor mental health," CEO of Mental Health Australia Frank Quinlan said.

"Together with other life stresses, housing stress reduces psychological wellbeing and exacerbates mental illness.

"Affordable housing for low income earners is extremely important - safe, stable and secure accommodation is vital to the mental health and wellbeing of people and families living with mental illness.

"This is the seventh Affordability Snapshot from Anglicare Australia, which again shows that low income earners are often unable to secure rental accommodation or are being pushed out of the housing market."

The Anglicare Australia report confirms the findings of the 2012 National Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention that housing stress along with financial stress, and the stress of unemployment or living with poor health, can be contributing factors to mental illness.

"We know for many people who are living with mental illness, owning and keeping their home can be harder to achieve compared to the general community – fewer own a home, or are paying off a mortgage, with more people renting or needing housing support."

Anglicare's Snapshot describes a severe housing crisis for people on low incomes, and calls on governments to put a national plan in place to resolve it as a matter of urgency. This must be part of mental health reform.

The Rental Affordability Snapshot can be read here - <http://www.anglicare.asn.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/rental-affordability-snapshot-201635b6d5309d6962baacc1ff0000899bca.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

Media Contact: Peter O'Rourke – 0409 558 723

