



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 20th August, 2019

PUBLIC HOUSING HOT HOUSE – HAVE YOUR SAY

With winter almost over, many of us will be getting our air-conditioners serviced, ready to deal with the hot days that are undoubtedly ahead. But spare a thought for the many people living in public housing in the Mallee region, with no air-conditioners to service.

While the Mallee now struggles with three times more heatwaves than it did 20 years ago, government policy around cooling in public housing has not been changed since 1997.

“During summer we are now having numerous days where temperatures soar into the 40s and when this happens, the department’s ‘one size fits all’ approach to air-conditioning in public housing is woefully inadequate and puts the health and wellbeing of tenants at risk,” Chief Executive Officer of Mallee Family Care, Ms. Teresa Jayet says.

In collaboration with the University of Sydney, the Victorian Tenants Association and the Jack Brockoff Foundation, Mallee Family Care has been conducting a research project into the impacts of extreme heat on residents living in non-air-conditioned public housing, in Mildura.

Information gathered so far has revealed no surprises but it is painting a very sobering picture.

Studies have shown that there is a spike in family violence, drug and alcohol abuse, emergency call outs, hospitalisation for mental health issues and absenteeism during periods of extreme heat.

“The impact on people, who have no relief from the heat, is unacceptable,” Ms. Jayet says.

As part of the next stage of the research project, Mallee Family Care is inviting members of the community, who live in public housing in Mildura, or work for organisations who support public housing tenants, to share their experiences of surviving summer with no home cooling.

“Essentially, this is their story and the research won’t be complete without including the lived experiences of people in our community. Their voices need to be heard.



For all media enquiries:

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“We would also like to hear from local service providers on this issue as we know they will have valuable input.”

Sessions are being held during the week of August 26:

Tenant’s Group Meetings

Monday 26th August

10am - SMECC, 107 Twelfth Street

2pm - East End Community House, 8 Dove Place

Tuesday 27th August

10am - SMECC, 107 Twelfth Street

2pm - East End Community House, 8 Dove Place

Wednesday 28th August

10am - Mallee Family Care, 122 Ninth Street

Researchers will be available to see you individually

Service Provider Session

Wednesday 28th August

12pm - Mallee Family Care, 122 Ninth Street

Anyone who is interested in attending a session, or wants more information, can phone or text Michelle on 0484 940 715.

“I strongly encourage people to come along and have their say because the more stories we have, the stronger our case for change will be,” Ms. Jayet says.

ENDS



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