

**Until there's a home for everyone**

# **Housing and Health: reality check**

Polly Neate,  
Chief Executive

Shelter

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# Health risks of a housing crisis

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- **300,000 people are homeless today, including 128,000 children – primarily because of the drastic housing shortage**
- **A million households at risk of homelessness by 2020 due to Housing Benefit freeze – more than a fifth are receiving disability benefits**
- **8 million people in England have had a housing issue in the last five years which affected their mental health**
- **GPs spontaneously cite poor housing conditions and homelessness as contributing to poor physical and mental health**
- **Royal College of Paediatricians/CPAG found two thirds of paediatricians said housing problems were a cause of health problems of their patients**
- **Half had found it difficult to discharge a child from hospital (two-thirds for neonatal doctors) because of poor housing**

# What is being done?

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- **Housing First**

Shelter Housing First in Manchester saves the NHS £564K over five years (the biggest saving of any agency)

- **Advice on Prescription**

Maximised income, resolved housing problems, improved wellbeing

- **Support on discharge from hospital**

89% of patients where lack of accommodation was delaying discharge had somewhere suitable to go

- **Homelessness Reduction Act**

Earlier advice and assessment of need

# What more can be done locally?

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- **Joined up commissioning of early advice and support services, including by health commissioners – as urged by Public Health England and the Marmot Review**
- **Roll out of successful innovations**
- **Investment in "floating support" to bridge the gap between advice and intensive services like Housing First**
- **Joined-up local vision for housing, mental health, domestic abuse, "troubled families", children's services, social care**

# **But leadership from government is urgently needed**

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- **Only a tiny proportion of the 300,000 homeless people are rough sleepers or potential first-time buyers**
- **An acute shortage of affordable homes for rent, coupled with the impact of welfare reform, is leaving people on low incomes destitute**
- **This emergency can only be relieved by**
  - Increasing supply
  - Increasing incomes
  - Reducing cost of renting
  - or all three of these

**Government needs to open its "too difficult" box**