



Department of Social Services Safe Places Inclusion Round Consultation Findings

CIRCA Findings from Victim-Survivor Interviews

10 July 2023





© Cultural & Indigenous Research Centre Australia

Developed by the Cultural & Indigenous Research Centre Australia 2023

All research conducted by CIRCA for this project was in compliance with ISO 20252:2019 Market, Opinion and Social Research

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters in which we work and the knowledge-holders of the oldest continuous cultures in the world. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

CONTENTS

1. Executive summary	1
2. Introduction	6
3. Methodology	7
3.1 Interviews	9
3.2 Data analysis	11
3.3 Limitations	11
3.4 Lessons learned	12
4. Findings	13
4.1 What are the physical design and cultural features needed within emergency accommodation to support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds?	13
4.2 What other supports or services are needed to support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds when they are in emergency accommodation? Which are most critical and at what time points?	19
4.3 What other services should be in proximity to the accommodation to fully support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds as they exit domestic and family violence?	24
4.4 What should the grant application process require applicants demonstrate to ensure they will meet the needs of victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds for emergency accommodation?	25
4.5 What should the grant application review team look out for as red flags that suggest the applicant will not do an adequate job supporting victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds in emergency accommodation?	27
5. Key themes for the Safe Places Inclusion Round	28
5.1 Overall themes	28
5.2 Themes regarding the physical design, cultural features and location of accommodation	28
5.3 Themes regarding the supports and services provided alongside emergency accommodation	29
6. Appendix 1: Organisational Recruitment Information	31

7. Appendix 2: Recruitment Screener	34
8. Appendix 3: Participant Information Statement	41
9. Appendix 4: Consent Form Women	44
10. Appendix 5: Consent Form for Caregivers of Young People	45
11. Appendix 6: Assent Form for Young People	46
12. Appendix 7: Discussion Guide	48

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1: Key features needed by all women and children victim-survivors in emergency accommodation.	1
Figure 2: Key features required by victim-survivors from all three cohorts	2
Table 1.1: Recommended application requirements and red flags	3
Table 1.2: Consultation themes	4
Table 3.1 Characteristics of interview participants	7

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CALD	culturally and linguistically diverse
DSS	Department of Social Services
FDV	family and domestic violence
Safe Places	Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CIRCA conducted 15 interviews with victim-survivors from 17 May to 6 June 2023 to explore the accessibility and cultural needs of women and children victim-survivors of family and domestic violence (FDV) who access emergency accommodation. Participants were women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) or First Nations backgrounds and/or women living with disability. At the time of the interviews the participants resided in urban, regional or remote areas of New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria or Western Australia.

This section summarises the key findings from the research.

Appropriate design features and location for emergency accommodation

- Interview participants identified physical design and cultural features needed by all women and children victim-survivors exiting FDV, regardless of background or identity. These included **homely, welcoming and clean** dwellings with **features that contribute to safety**; **self-contained spaces** with features that reduce potential tension between tenants of emergency accommodation; **access to the internet**; **spaces for children to play**; and **soundproofing** (illustrated in Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Key features needed by all women and children victim-survivors in emergency accommodation.



- Women from CALD backgrounds suggested features such as **private spaces for prayer**, and a **consideration of halal requirements**.
- Women from First Nations backgrounds, who were all from regional or remote areas, emphasised the need for **more of any kind of emergency accommodation**.
- Women living with disability emphasised the importance of **physically accessible buildings**, and consideration of **sensory preferences** when designing accommodation.
- In terms of location, victim-survivors suggested that proximity to shops, public transport, community groups and service providers was **important for emergency accommodation, but in less visible areas of the community** to ensure privacy and safety. For emergency accommodation providers in regional and remote areas, choosing a location that allows victim-survivors to **park and arrive discreetly** is essential. All victim-survivors should be **supported to think through the specific challenges and opportunities** they may face associated with the location of the service.

Supports and services required alongside emergency accommodation

- Victim-survivors emphasised **most importantly the need to be treated respectfully by staff at emergency accommodation** as well as be **consulted about what they need** (illustrated in Figure 2 below).
- Victim-survivors from all cohorts also emphasised the importance of **psychological support immediately upon entering emergency accommodation** for all women and children, as well as **access to a well-resourced, knowledgeable caseworker** who could provide support during and after the victim-survivor's time in emergency accommodation. In the period of transitioning from emergency accommodation, they requested **support to find housing** and **access to legal services**.

Figure 2: Key features required by victim-survivors from all three cohorts



- Victim-survivors from a CALD background emphasised the importance of **language support, specialised support for non-Australian citizens, and cleaning services.**
- Victim-survivors from a First Nations background underscored the need for **alternatives to presenting to the police** if help is needed after hours, **more support to access services**, better **coordination between services** and **access to on-call support by culturally safe, local Aboriginal workers or Elders.**
- Victim-survivors living with disability expressed a need for **more information about what to expect**, such as **rules and procedures while residing in the emergency accommodation service**, a system of **‘peer navigators’** to help orient victim-survivors who have just arrived, and **specialised assistance from caseworkers who understand accessibility issues.**

Grant application inclusion criteria

To ensure the needs of victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds for emergency accommodation will be met, grant applicants should demonstrate the following requirements and avoid elements that may be a red flag in applications. These are summarised in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Recommended application requirements and red flags

Applicant priorities/requirements	Applicant red flags
✓ Engage in a co-design process with potential users of the service	✗ Lack of demonstrated understanding of the backgrounds and needs of the women likely to use the service
✓ Develop strategies to reduce stress caused by sharing space with others (e.g. fewer people per dwelling, separate families and singles, offer tenants choice where possible)	✗ Inability to provide residents with self-contained spaces
✓ Demonstrate understanding of the specific cultural needs of women likely to use the service	✗ No consideration of how to facilitate support for children
✓ Demonstrate understanding of accessibility needs	✗ Unable to demonstrate that they have existing/meaningful links with service providers in the local area
✓ Demonstrate how to ensure physical accessibility of dwelling and sensory options provided to tenants	✗ Unable to demonstrate how they will facilitate access to caseworkers for women
✓ Demonstrate links to specialised services for people with accessibility needs	✗ No mechanism to support workers to learn about the cultural backgrounds of service users
✓ Demonstrate how to facilitate access to services in regional/remote areas	✗ No mechanism to provide language support

Applicant priorities/requirements	Applicant red flags
✓ Demonstrate how to facilitate access to Aboriginal workers and Elders	✗ No Aboriginal staff
✓ Demonstrate how they will enable access to information about what to expect while using their service	✗ Relying on police to provide support after hours because emergency accommodation is not staffed past 5pm
✓ Demonstrate how they will enable access to psychological support, caseworkers, language support and housing support	

Key themes to inform the Inclusion Round

- Key themes that emerged in the findings were the importance of **ensuring emergency accommodation is designed in consultation with those with lived experience**; that users of emergency accommodation can make **choices** while using the service; the need for **more emergency accommodation in regional/remote areas**; and that users of emergency accommodation require **further support to access longer-term housing**.
- Recurring themes were related to the physical design, cultural features and location of emergency accommodation; services to offer alongside accommodation; the grant assessment process; and grant support provided by DSS. These are outlined in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2: Consultation themes

Recurring themes from consultation	
Physical design	<p>The grant opportunity should encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> self-contained spaces physical safety features (e.g. cameras and fences) alongside some kind of human oversight (e.g. staff onsite) soundproofing.
Cultural features	<p>The grant opportunity should encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> private prayer spaces spaces for children separation of children and elderly/single people policies around kitchen use that respect cultural needs as much choice as is practical for tenants.
Location	<p>The grant opportunity should encourage and prioritise the development of accommodation that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> close to shops close to public transport close to community groups and service providers private and off the main street.

Recurring themes from consultation

Services

The grant opportunity should ensure organisations prioritise:

- supporting and training staff so they are equipped to treat all residents with respect
 - providing written information about what to expect within the emergency accommodation service
 - providing mental health support for all women and children
 - providing a caseworker for all women and children
 - providing access to an Aboriginal worker/Elder for all women of First Nations background
 - facilitating language support for women who require it
 - building links with services that can support non-citizens
 - support with childcare
 - regular cleaning service.
-

2. INTRODUCTION

The Australian Government has made a commitment of \$100 million over 5 years (2022–23 to 2026–27) to the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program (Safe Places), via an Inclusion Round of capital works investment that will fund the building, renovation or purchase of new emergency accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence. The Inclusion Round will focus on improving access to emergency accommodation for women and children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and First Nations backgrounds, and women and children with disability.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) enlisted CIRCA to identify the accessibility and cultural needs of these cohorts by consulting with stakeholders that service these cohorts, and with women and children who have lived experience of family and domestic violence (FDV) and emergency accommodation. The information collected through these consultations will inform: the overall design of the Inclusion Round; the grant opportunity guidelines released as part of the Inclusion Round; resources required for grant applicants; and the design specifications for construction of safe places.

This report presents the findings from interviews with victim-survivors with experience of emergency accommodation. These consultations were designed to answer the following research questions:

- ❶ What are the physical design and cultural features needed within emergency accommodation to support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds?
- ❷ What other supports or services are needed to support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds when they are in emergency accommodation? Which are most critical and at what time points?
- ❸ What other services should be in proximity to the accommodation to fully support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds as they exit domestic and family violence?
- ❹ What should the grant application process require applicants demonstrate to ensure they will meet the needs of victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds for emergency accommodation?
- ❺ What should the grant application review team look out for as red flags that suggest the applicant will not do an adequate job supporting victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds in emergency accommodation?

3. METHODOLOGY

The interviews provided a platform for victim-survivors from First Nations or CALD backgrounds, or who lived with disability or cared for children with disability, to share their experiences of using emergency accommodation, which may be used to inform the Inclusion Round.

Table 3.1 illustrates the breakdown of interviews by characteristic.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of interview participants

Inter-view	State	Geographic region	Cohort	Type of accommodation	Language spoken	Age	Date last used emergency accommodation
1	NSW	Urban	CALD	Multiple places, all private room, most with shared kitchen, some with ensuite	Lebanese	18+	2022
2	NSW	Urban	CALD	Private room, shared facilities	Vietnamese	18+	2022
3	NSW	Urban	CALD	Private room, shared facilities	Lebanese	18+	2022
4	NSW	Regional	First Nations	Private house (3 bdr), not shared with others	English	18+	2015
5	NSW	Urban	CALD	Shared room, shared facilities	Urdu	18+	2022
6	NSW	Urban	CALD	Private room, shared facilities	English	18+	2022
7	SA	Urban	CALD/Disability	Private house (not shared with others)	Cantonese	18+	2014
8	SA	Urban	CALD/Disability	Private house (not shared with others)	Mandarin	18+	2015
9	NSW	Regional	First Nations/Disability	Motel room, no kitchen	English	18+	2019
10	NSW	Regional	First Nations/Disability	Private room, shared facilities	English	18+	2014
11	WA	Urban	CALD	Private room, shared facilities	Vietnamese	18+	2021
12	Victoria	Urban	CALD/Disability	Motel room, private bathroom, access to kitchen	English	18+	Within last 10 years
13	NSW	Remote	First Nations	Private house, fully furnished (not shared with others)	English	18+	Within last 10 years

Inter-view	State	Geographic region	Cohort	Type of accommodation	Language spoken	Age	Date last used emergency accommodation
14	NSW	Regional	Disability	Private room, private living and dining space, private bathroom, shared laundry	English	18+	2020
15	NSW	Regional	First Nations/Disability	Motel room, no access to kitchen	English	18+	2019

Criteria for inclusion were based on:

- State or territory of residence
- Residence in urban, regional or remote community
- Age 15+
- Gender:
 - Those aged 15–17 could identify as any gender.
 - Those aged 18 or over, had to identify as women.
- Lived experience of FDV and of emergency accommodation in prior 10 years
- CALD: Language other than English spoken at home, non-Anglo background, or non-Christian religious affiliation
- Disability: self-identification as living with disability, or caring for a child with disability
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status: self-identification
- Not in acute crisis at the time of interview
- Ability to provide informed consent.

Recruitment of participants was conducted through the distribution of a document containing recruitment information to organisations with lived-experience panels of victim-survivors (who are past the crisis point in their lives) to identify women and young people who might be interested in participating (see Appendix 1: Organisational Recruitment Information). The document was distributed through various channels, including:

- CIRCA's partner, Homelessness NSW, which has a broad network across NSW and Australia. The chief executive officer, who is also the deputy chair of Homelessness Australia, drew on national networks to support the recruitment of program participants.

- victim-survivor panels of other FDV and specialist homelessness service (SHS) peak bodies across the country through CIRCA's relationships with other organisations in the sector
- organisations referred to CIRCA by DSS that were identified as willing and able to refer eligible participants to be interviewed.

A recruitment screener was used to ensure participants were eligible for the research (Appendix 2: Recruitment Screener). Recruitment aimed to include representation across states and territories, across geographical regions and a roughly even spread across cohorts.

During the recruitment phone call eligible participants were able to inform the researcher about any accommodations they required to fully participate, including:

- whether they would like to participate in-person, over the phone, or over Zoom (or other videoconference software)
- accommodations for visual or hearing impairment or cognitive or physical disabilities
- whether they would like to bring a support-person to the interview with them.

3.1 Interviews

Fifteen interviews were conducted across cohorts and geographic regions (Table 3.1). The interviews were held between 17 May 2023 and 6 June 2023. Eleven interviews were conducted over the phone, and 4 were held face to face. Each session lasted approximately 60 minutes. A psychological support worker was made available at the time of the interviews and for half an hour afterwards. Most participants did not require psychological support.

A team of CIRCA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research consultants and bi- and multilingual research consultants facilitated the interviews. Prior to the interviews, participants were offered a choice to opt in or out of an in-language or in-culture interview, and appropriate research consultants were allocated accordingly. Prior to the interview, the researcher sent the following documents to the participants:

- Participant information statement (see **Appendix 3: Participant Information Statement**)
- Consent form (see Appendix 4: Consent Form Women)
- Discussion guide (see Appendix 7: Discussion Guide)
- Support services list.

In addition, prior to the interview, the researcher:

- identified and made any disability and other accommodations to ensure victim-survivor participants felt comfortable participating fully in the interview
- arranged to have a psychological support worker from Jannawi Family Centre (a specialist agency that works with victim-survivor women from diverse backgrounds) available to provide support to participants during and after each interview.

At the start of the interview, the researcher obtained written consent from participants who were doing an in-person interview and audio-recorded verbal consent from any participants who were interviewed by phone.

Provisions were made during project planning to conduct interviews with young people aged 15–17, however no young people were referred to participate in the study, and hence no interviews with young people were conducted. See Appendix 5: Consent Form for Caregivers of Young People for the consent form that would have been provided to the parents or caregivers of young people, and Appendix 6: Assent Form for Young People for the assent form that young people would have been required to sign after consent had been collected from their parents.

During the interview, researchers used the following approach to ensure research participants had choice and control at each step of the process:

- Participants were given the choice to bring someone with them to the interview for support (a family member, friend or other supportive individual).
- Researchers did not ask participants to tell their stories of abuse.
- If referring to a particular criminal act, researchers used the specific legal description that fits best (rather than descriptive words).
- Researchers did not use words like abuse but instead spoke more broadly.
- Researchers did not audio-record or video-record the interviews.
- Researchers gave participants the option to ‘step outside’ at any point during the interview to talk to the psychological support worker, who was available at the time of the interview.
- Interviews were only facilitated by women.
- Interviewers were trained in creating space for victim-survivors to have choice and control and be engaged with respect throughout the interview process; and were provided with a distress protocol and a list of support services to give to the participant.
- The discussion guide was kept short (approximately 10 questions) to allow 20–30 minutes for introductions and give participants the opportunity to describe themselves, outside the context of being a victim-survivor.

- Where necessary, interviewers took extra time to repeat and explain questions to participants to help them understand and answer the questions.
- After the interview, the psychological support worker was available for 30 minutes, if participants needed her.
- Three days after the interview the interviewer, or another woman at CIRCA, called to check in with the participant to make sure they had the supports they needed, and if not to direct them to appropriate supports. One participant requested information about supports and was sent this information.
- Five days after that, CIRCA contacted the participant again to make sure they had the supports they needed (if needed) and if not, directed them to appropriate supports.

The discussion guide (Appendix 7: Discussion Guide) used by CIRCA research consultants covered topics including physical design and cultural features that victim-survivors needed to feel fully supported while in emergency housing; and the supports and services victim-survivors most needed at various time points during and immediately after their time in emergency housing. Each participant received an incentive payment of \$80 to thank and compensate them for their time.

3.2 Data analysis

Focus group notes and transcripts were analysed using Excel. A coding framework was generated based on the research questions, complete with definitions. The coding framework was then reviewed and approved by the CIRCA research director.

The data was then coded in Excel and analysed aligning to each of the research questions.

3.3 Limitations

Qualitative research can provide rich descriptions of how people experience and feel about a given issue or topic. However, the results of qualitative research are not representative of the overall target population due to relatively small sample sizes and selection methods. In qualitative research, a rich and complex understanding is prioritised over collecting data that can be generalised more broadly. Qualitative enquiry also allows researchers to incorporate non-verbal cues, interactions and observations into the research process to add meaning to the results.

Timeframe constraints and challenges identifying prospective consultation participants meant that most of these consultation participants were NSW based. In addition, all CALD victim-survivors who participated in interviews were from urban or regional areas and all First Nations victim-survivors were from regional or remote areas. Finally, we were not able to recruit any young people (15–17). These sample limitations mean that our findings do not include the experiences of: First Nations victim-

survivors from urban areas, CALD participants in regional or remote areas, or any young people, and that our findings are skewed towards NSW-based victim-survivors.

3.4 Lessons learned

Some of the difficulties encountered in recruitment provided lessons for future projects.

- ❶ **Factoring in more time for ethics approval:** Ethics approval for such a sensitive topic is essential, but also potentially time consuming. Allowing at least 55 working days for the ethics process is essential for future consultations with victim-survivors.
- ❷ **Building more robust communication channels with service providers who can potentially refer participants:** The complexity of the recruitment criteria and the sensitivity of the topic, as well as the time and resource constraints of organisations and individuals in the domestic violence and emergency accommodation sector, indicate that robust communication with service providers is essential. Future consultations should include time for: phone calls to services to explain the study, phone calls and emails to follow up, and email follow-ups with updates on how recruitment is progressing.
- ❸ **Decoupling ethics approval from elements of recruitment:** The process of building relationships with service providers relied on ethics approval being provided. The ethics process took considerable time, which meant less time was available for building relationships with service providers that could refer participants. A process which allows for building relationships with service providers prior to receiving ethics approval would potentially result in a larger number of referrals from a more diverse geographic range. Alternatively, a similar result could be achieved by factoring in a period of 10–15 working days for recruitment after ethics approval has been received, prior to data collection starting.

4. FINDINGS

This section presents the research findings organised according to the research questions guiding the consultations.

4.1 What are the physical design and cultural features needed within emergency accommodation to support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds?

4.1.1 Physical design and cultural features

4.1.1.1 Physical design and cultural features relevant for all women and children

For all victim-survivors, **feeling safe** in the accommodation was paramount. Those who did not feel secure in the accommodation talked about the anxiety and fear they felt, even while staying in the accommodation.

'You're sort of terrified. You never feel easy. You still have that fear...that they may get in the building, and you sleep with one eye open.' (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Disability, Regional)

The features of emergency accommodation that contributed to victim-survivors across cohorts feeling safe included:

- presence of staff on site preferably overnight, or at least until 8pm
- no visible house number on the dwelling
- cameras in and around the dwelling
- secure and high fencing around the dwelling
- discreet parking close to the dwelling
- sign-in/sign-out process to enable staff to monitor and call victim-survivors if they do not return to the accommodation as planned.

Victim-survivors did not specify what their minimum requirements for feeling safe would be but their responses indicated that it was the combination of physical safety features (e.g. cameras, fences) alongside some form of human oversight (e.g. staff on site, proximity to police station) that contributed to them feeling safe.

There were mixed opinions about the use of pin codes to access accommodation. Some victim-survivors felt this was a safer option, whereas others felt concerned as they believe these are easier to circumvent than a lock and key.

Victim-survivors across all cohorts expressed a preference for **more self-contained spaces**, whether this be a fully self-contained unit or, at minimum, a room with an ensuite. Victim-survivors explained that this would allow them more privacy, more control over cleanliness, more freedom in how to use the space, as well as control over lighting and other sensory factors.

‘I would like it if this house had an ensuite in all the rooms. People could have more privacy and cleanliness.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘Because it was just one room, and didn’t have a kitchen, I couldn’t cook meals. So I had to rely on either family or takeaway. Flats or self-contained apartments would have been great. One with at least 2 bedrooms and cooking facilities.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Disability Regional)

‘Would have preferred a self-contained unit, like how families were housed. Self-contained, as everyone is different, their conditions, mental health or autism.’ (Victim-Survivor, Disability, Regional)

The need for more self-contained spaces was reinforced by the challenges victim-survivors encountered with other tenants in the accommodation. For some victim-survivors, their interactions with other tenants could, at times, be quite stressful.

‘The first room I was given was a bit spacious but I always felt uncomfortable sharing it with someone because everyone coming to these accommodations were coming with trauma so you are never sure how they will respond or what they are going through.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘Felt like I was walking on eggshells in regards to other people staying there. Sometimes it was really calm, but sometimes you would have the police there, and ambulances there.’ (Victim-Survivor, Disability, Regional)

In addition to providing more self-contained spaces as a way of reducing the stress associated with interacting with other tenants, victim-survivors made several **suggestions for features or design elements to minimise tension between tenants of emergency accommodation** who shared the same dwelling. Generally, having fewer people in a single dwelling was considered fundamental to reducing interpersonal conflict or other forms of stress associated with a number of traumatised people living under the same roof.

‘More people [in a dwelling] means more problems.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Another suggestion was to group tenants according to their age or cultural background. Some tenants felt it would be less stressful if families with children and single/older women were in separate dwellings, as the way these 2 groups use space differs considerably. Another tenant suggested keeping people of similar cultural backgrounds together.

‘Having people from the same background or same continent living in the same house can make it easier for them to share and socialise with each other.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

A final suggestion was to allow victim-survivors some level of choice – such as whether to stay with others, whether to share a room, and where in the accommodation their room is located – so they could regulate how much interaction they had with others.

‘I would have chosen accommodation in a corridor, next to other people, but in a room by myself.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

Victim-survivors also described their **need to engage with other people** for safety and/or social reasons, as well as articulating how being with other women could be helpful for their wellbeing.

‘Because it’s a small town, I was worried that my partner would know where I was and come there looking for me. I didn’t feel safe staying there by myself. I would have liked if there were more women or some staff staying there.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Remote)

‘I had a real longing to connect with people. I felt quite alone and unsure.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘All of the rooms were fully occupied when I was there. Other mothers and kids were nice and friendly; we were like a family.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘I met people with a similar situation. That has helped me a lot. I felt for the first time that I’m not the only woman with this situation.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Having **access to the internet and/or a computer** and **support to use technology** was raised by several interviewees as important, both in terms of staying connected to people and to facilitate access to services.

‘The house needs to have wi-fi so I can talk to my friends back home.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability Urban)

‘The big problem was sending emails. I saw people who couldn’t use a laptop or smart phone. It was very hard for me and them.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Victim-survivors across the cohorts also talked about how the physical design of the space should incorporate **spaces for children to play**.

‘Also a big backyard for the children to play, and some toys for them.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘I recommend it be a house not an apartment, with [a] garden and a little space for the children to play.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘Being in a motel is a bit much and it’s hard to settle or relax. I think the self-contained units is a better option, especially for women who have a few kids with nowhere to go. Kids particularly really need the chance to play.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Disability, Regional)

Across all cohorts, victim-survivors identified sounds in the accommodation as causing them stress or worry. **Soundproofing of accommodation** was identified as an important feature, in terms of both comfort and feelings of safety. In addition, it was of particular concern to autistic victim-survivors and those with sensory sensitivities.

‘The room did not have soundproofing. So [in] the room next to me...the family talked very loudly, and mum shouted at her kids all the time even at night. My son and me could not sleep at all. It caused me more stress and my baby was crying.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘Soundproofing...noise sensitivity is a big thing for me.’ (Victim-Survivor, Disability, Regional)

‘The downside was there was a lot of noisy children walking past every day being quite loud on their way to and from school.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Regional)

Victim-survivors across the cohorts were not concerned whether the accommodation was modern or in an older building, if it was **safe and clean**. Some CALD victim-survivors expressed a preference for new bedding and linen.

‘It looked like an old house from outside, probably more than 20 years old house. But inside, it was quite big and clean with 4 bedrooms. My room had 2 single beds for me and my son. It was big enough for us.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘[It was] an older building but I wasn’t concerned about how modern it was, just that it was safe’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Regional)

‘I think as long as a house...[has] new bedding, [is] clean and comfortable. With all the necessity, such as kitchen utensils and toiletry, will be good’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Victim-survivors across cohorts also talked about the need for the space to **feel homely and welcoming**. In describing their ideal accommodation, victim-survivors used terms like ‘bright’, ‘cosy’ and ‘comfortable’. These words contrasted with the sometimes ‘depressing’, ‘worn out’ and ‘clinical feel’ of accommodation that many had experienced.

'It should be a happy, beautiful, sunny place. Open space.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

'[I would prefer if it] doesn't look like crisis accommodation. Doesn't feel clinical or like an outdated motel. Feels café-like.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

'[My ideal emergency accommodation would be a] nice little one-bedroom unit, bedroom and lounge room all separate, just like a little cottage.' (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Disability, Regional)

4.1.1.2 Physical design and cultural features relevant for women and children from CALD backgrounds

Victim-survivors from certain CALD backgrounds noted the need for **private spaces for prayer and worship**. Women who were in a private room in emergency accommodation felt comfortable using their room as a prayer space, and some also noted how they were supported by staff to practice their faith.

'As part of my faith, I did not pray but I always had quiet time, the light on and an incense stick in my room almost every day.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

'I haven't had any problem in practicing my faith. The woman who works in the office installed for me an app for praying times.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

'I can do my praying inside the room, so no one asks or knows what I'm doing.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Conversely, women who shared rooms did not always feel secure praying in their room and expressed a need for better arrangements for practicing their faith.

'I am a practicing Muslim so I always was a bit scared of how they will respond to me praying or performing my religious activities. Later I had been moved to a room where I shared the space with another Muslim lady. It was a smaller and congested room but at least I was more comfortable praying.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

The other issue raised by victim-survivors of Muslim background was the need for **consideration of halal requirements in kitchen spaces**. Women noted that when food was provided, it was not always halal. Additionally, some women noted that they felt uncomfortable using the kitchen to cook their own food with utensils that had been used by other tenants to cook pork.

'They need to provide halal food for Muslim people.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

'Also [I] couldn't use utensils because some were used to make pork and all sorts of things.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

These experiences suggest that emergency accommodation providers consider having dedicated dwellings for Muslim women and, where this is not possible, be mindful of the need for women to have access to halal food and kitchens they are comfortable cooking in, with some utensils reserved for cooking halal food.

4.1.1.3 Physical design and cultural features relevant for First Nations women and children

Due to the lack of availability of emergency accommodation in regional and remote communities, the First Nations women we spoke to were not particularly focused on the physical or cultural features of emergency accommodation, because just **having access to a place they could go was the bigger and more immediate priority**.

‘If only there were better things in place, where I could have stayed in my own community where I had family support.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Remote)

These women more clearly articulated the services they needed that would meet their particular cultural needs, which are outlined in Section 4.2.2.

4.1.1.4 Physical design and cultural features relevant for women and children with disability

Interviews with victim-survivors living with disability highlighted the importance of accessible dwellings. This included being mindful that generally, **2-story properties would not be accessible** to those with mobility issues, as well as considering the **sensory preferences** of some users of the accommodation.

‘Lighting, sounds, and textures of bed sheets. These things can be really overwhelming, just being able to dim the lighting would be such a wonderful thing, so empowering to be able to control that function.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD Disability, Urban)

‘Consider the light for safety and security as well for trauma victims.’ (Victim-Survivor, Disability, Regional)

4.1.2 Location

Across all cohorts, victim-survivors identified that **proximity to the following locations is important** in emergency accommodation:

- shops
- public transport
- community groups
- service providers.

At the same time, some victim-survivors expressed a need for their **accommodation to be located in less visible areas of the community** for safety and privacy reasons. For example, one victim-survivor staying in a motel explained that the easily visible car park was stressful for her as it meant community members driving by could easily see where she was staying. Emergency accommodation that is located away from main roads and not in town centres and shopping districts would allow victim-survivors more privacy while retaining easy access to amenities.

‘From a location point of view, I would have felt better if it was more secure and more hidden. Would have preferred more privacy.’ (Victim-Survivor, Disability, Regional)

For some victim-survivors, there was a **tension between needing to put physical distance between themselves and their ex-partner, and the need to be close to their support networks**. For example, one victim-survivor from an urban area explained that she felt safe because the emergency accommodation was far away from her partner, but she had to deal with the challenge of accessing childcare and work, which were both closer to her partner’s home than to the emergency accommodation.

‘My partner did not know about this place, and we were safe. It was an hour away from my previous house where I used to live with him, so it was safe.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

For victim-survivors in regional areas this tension was particularly acute. Some participants explained that being located in their community was helpful because of access to family support, but it also meant feeling the need to keep a low profile so that their partner would not know where they were.

‘Because it’s a small town, I was worried that my partner would know where I was and come there looking for me.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Remote)

These tensions indicate that it is important that emergency accommodation providers **consult with victim-survivors when they arrive about how to negotiate the particular challenges and opportunities** they might encounter related to the location of the service. For emergency accommodation providers in regional and remote areas, **choosing a location that allows victim-survivors to park and arrive discreetly** is essential.

4.2 What other supports or services are needed to support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds when they are in emergency accommodation? Which are most critical and at what time points?

Across all the cohorts, victim-survivors who had experience living in emergency accommodation indicated that **being treated respectfully by staff at emergency accommodation** was very important. For women from CALD backgrounds it was critical that staff have patience and the skills to work with women with limited English to enable them to settle in and feel safe in the accommodation. Victim-survivors living with disability expressed a similar requirement that emergency accommodation staff be

understanding of their needs and take a strengths-based approach to providing support. For women from First Nations backgrounds, access to workers from a similar cultural background was identified as a key element to feeling safe.

'[Something that was] not nice [about the accommodation] was the staff. They treated me like a number to fill the quota and they were not friendly at all, always rushed me to move out.'
(Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

'With the language barrier, I don't know what to say and how to express my feelings, so it is important the staff can be more compassionate and warmer.'
(Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

'[I'd like] having culturally appropriate workers in place. I feel more at ease when I am supported by other Aboriginal people. I always worry about what I can say when I am talking to non-Aboriginal workers. I know workers have mandatory reporting.'
(Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Remote)

'Be more understanding. Ensuring that the client is looked at from a strengths-based approach.'
(Victim-Survivor, Disability, Regional)

'I felt confused and frightened because I did not understand what the staff was talking about. Due to my mental illness, I needed staff who were more patient and explained things to me.'
(Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

'[I] want someone to understand, not just coordinate.'
(Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

In addition to being treated respectfully, many women interviewed for this consultation said they would like to be **asked what they need** in terms of both support and information while in emergency accommodation and services they need access to.

'You don't have to have all the answers, but you can be the connection point. Ask people what they need, and then explore together with other services to see how you can best support the person.'
(Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

'Give us options to choose rather than asking us to do something. Or ask us if we want access to certain services or not.'
(Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Victim-survivors from all cohorts also emphasised the importance of **psychological support immediately upon entering emergency accommodation**. Many expressed an urgent need to address the trauma they had experienced as soon as arriving at the accommodation. For women from CALD backgrounds, it was important that this psychological support be provided in a way that accommodates their language barriers.

‘Understand where people are coming from...understand what they have been through. It’s hard for people to flee domestic violence. It mightn’t always be physical, but half of it’s emotional, and that’s what scars you the most. Bash me and I’ll heal, but emotionally drain me...I won’t heal from that.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Regional)

‘The thing I felt missing was to have a psychologist. I felt I needed it badly, but no one helped me. I had a very bad depression; I couldn’t sleep for months.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘I think some of the services to address our trauma will help us a lot. We need it right at the time of reaching these safe spaces and during the course to overcome our stress and trauma.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Victim-survivors also acknowledged the importance of **caseworkers** to support them during their time in emergency accommodation. The victim-survivors from CALD backgrounds who had caseworkers found them to be helpful immediately upon arriving, through to when they went to alternative accommodation. These caseworkers assisted in linking victim-survivors to Centrelink, organising bank accounts if needed and access to other forms of welfare. First Nations victim-survivors tended not to have had caseworker support but expressed a need for it.

‘The caseworker was the best thing I had, very helpful. From there she showed me other services like victim service and Centrelink.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘I was very lucky because from the first day they provided a caseworker for me to look after my case, which was extremely helpful. She managed everything I needed – furniture for my new house, food – as my English is very limited. She was with me all the time to translate when I needed to do something or if I had a phone call and needed help with translation.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

‘[Ideally, I would have had a] caseworker who could provide more intensive support. Someone I could have a yarn to, show support, write letters of support and advocate for me.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Disability, Regional)

There was a strong emphasis among those who had received support from caseworkers that all caseworkers be suitably resourced so that they could provide meaningful support, and that they be provided regular professional development to ensure they are kept up to date with new research and resources.

‘Caseworkers would offer support, but they were limited with what they could offer due to the high number of clients they had.’ (Victim-Survivor, Disability, Regional)

Across the cohorts, women also identified a need for **more support for children** while in emergency accommodation. This could be either psychological support to help children address the trauma they have experienced, or entertainment to give their caregivers a break.

'[I] would like some sort of focus on the kids, and what they witnessed their mother going through.' (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Regional)

'The more important thing is to have someone who looks after the children. These children need more support, for example a psychologist every week for them.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

'Kids who are less than 4 years old usually stay home with mum most of the time. So if the house can organise some program once a week for example: exploring the zoo, in-home art and craft program, or a day out program so that mums can be free of kids for a couple hours, they can go shopping and go out for a fresh air and have a cup of coffee to balance their mental health and wellbeing.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

4.2.1 Services relevant for women and children from CALD backgrounds

Victim-survivors from CALD backgrounds emphasised the importance of **language support** during their time in emergency accommodation. When they received support in their language, or assistance to access interpreters, it made a marked difference to their experience. When they did not have language support, their experience of emergency accommodation could be very isolating and confusing.

'One thing especially useful for me was that one of the employees spoke Arabic. She helped me understand what they wanted me to do. That was a powerful help for me. Because of my limited English, it wasn't easy to talk over the phone. I needed to wait for the caseworker or the other office lady to help me send emails or talk over the phone.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

'I could not really be myself when I was there. I did not know the rule of the house due to the language barrier. Nobody told me that I could go for a walk to the local park if I wanted. My baby and I stayed in the house for 3 months without going anywhere because I thought I was not allowed to leave.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Victim-survivors who were **not Australian citizens struggled to access any services**, including housing. One victim-survivor interviewed explained that she was housed long term in emergency accommodation because her visa status excluded her from accessing public or social housing.

'I think because I am a citizen of [country] I don't have any access to any extra support.' (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

Victim-survivors from CALD backgrounds who had lived in emergency accommodation with shared kitchens, living spaces and bathrooms also expressed a need for **better cleaning services within emergency accommodation**. They found that poor systems within the dwelling for managing cleaning would increase the stress they experienced, and some felt that if they wanted a clean environment they would have to clean up after others.

‘The common area was cleaned once a week by [a] community worker. And we took turn to clean up the house. But other kids could be quite messy, and their mum forgot to clean up after the mess. If I want a clean and hygienic place, I must clean up myself.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

4.2.2 Services relevant for women and children from First Nations backgrounds

A key challenge faced by women from First Nations backgrounds in regional or remote areas was the **lack of after-hours support** if they required emergency accommodation. These women reported that their only other option was to present to the police. This limited the likelihood that women would seek help for a range of reasons, including dealing with other issues that made them reluctant to present to the police, and because of the lack of privacy in police stations in small towns.

‘Because [name of town] is a small town, if they drive past the police station, and people see you, they know why you are there and what you are experiencing, causing feelings of shame.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Remote)

This suggests that providers of emergency accommodation in these areas need to strongly consider how to provide support outside of usual work hours.

A major theme that emerged in the interviews with victim-survivors from First Nations backgrounds – all of whom were in regional or remote areas – was the need for **more support in accessing services**. Several of the women interviewed explained that they had to do all the work themselves, with no support on how to navigate the various services.

‘I struggled. Everything I did, I did myself. I was forced to become strong as no one else was going to help me.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Remote)

‘When you put people in emergency accommodation, don’t just leave them there. Do what you can to help support them in every way. More needs to be done to help people. Link them in with services and make sure the services provide more intensive support.’ (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Disability, Regional)

Victim-survivors from First Nations backgrounds suggested that better **coordination between services** would make it easier for women to navigate the system. One suggestion was that victim-survivors be

given access to a centralised hub where services provide wrap-around supports so that victim-survivors don't have to visit many different services and tell their story multiple times.

'Keep in mind what women have experienced. Put yourselves in her shoes and consider what she has been through, and how she is feeling, both emotionally and physically as she is battered, black and blue. The last thing she needs is to have to speak to 4 or 5 different workers, retelling her story time and time again.' (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Remote)

Another suggestion made by a First Nations victim-survivor was **having access to on-call support by culturally safe, local First Nations workers or Elders** who could provide wrap-around practical support. This might include caring for children and providing food. These people may also act as mentors and would live in the accommodation to help victim-survivors feel more supported and at home.

4.3 What other services should be in proximity to the accommodation to fully support victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds as they exit domestic and family violence?

One of the key services required by victim-survivors across cohorts as they exit emergency accommodation is **support to find housing**. When this support was provided, it had a positive impact on the experience of victim-survivors. However, several victim-survivors, largely those from First Nations backgrounds, explained that they had to do the work themselves to acquire housing and often had to wait several years before they secured stable accommodation.

'For me the most useful service was helping to find a suitable house to move out as this emergency accommodation was just temporary. And I need to move out with a limited budget, and I had no supporting document. I did not know where to find a suitable house within my budget and my circumstance. The shelter staff helped me looking for a suitable accommodation and supported me with \$1,000 incentive for the first time I moved out. They also assisted with household things like food spices, rice, salt, bread, nappy, milk bottle.'
(Victim-Survivor, CALD, Urban)

'Housing didn't help secure long-term accommodation. Not much support for women suffering from domestic violence. There needs to be more so women can access immediate accommodation through housing. Nothing long term. Had to wait for a few years.' (Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Disability, Regional).

'[Ideally we would have] someone that would have been able to help get us into housing.'
(Victim-Survivor, First Nations, Disability, Regional).

Finally, women from CALD backgrounds also consistently expressed a need for **access to legal services** during their time in emergency accommodation and afterwards. Some were able to gain access through the support of their caseworker but others struggled considerably.

4.3.1 Services relevant for women and children living with disability

Victim-survivors living with disability expressed a need for **more information about what to expect, rules and procedures** up-front when arriving in emergency accommodation.

‘I needed more awareness/certainty of what was next. I would have liked more of an Air BnB experience for the supported housing. Like a bit of a guide as I was new to the area...some recommendations/reviews from other people who had stayed there. Like an online support forum that was anonymous but gave tips on where things were.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

‘I felt like I needed someone to tell me that what I was doing was right or wrong.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

One suggestion was to introduce a **system of ‘peer navigators’**, or other people with experience of emergency accommodation who can help orient victim-survivors who have just arrived.

‘Peer navigators should be implemented. Someone who understands what you have been through and can explain things to you in a way that you can understand and hold space for you.’ (Victim-Survivor, CALD, Disability, Urban)

Victim-survivors with disability also expressed a need for **specialised assistance from caseworkers who understand accessibility issues** and who can provide links to services that specialise in various issues related to disability.

[It would be good to have] someone who can assist and link you with services, especially having an understanding of access issues, people with a disability, vision impairment and complex mental health issues.’ (Victim-Survivor, Disability, Urban)

‘I would have liked access to a service that is disability focused and also trauma informed.’ (Victim-Survivor, Disability, Urban)

4.4 What should the grant application process require applicants demonstrate to ensure they will meet the needs of victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds for emergency accommodation?

To ensure the needs of victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds for emergency accommodation will be met, grant applicants should demonstrate:

- that they have engaged in some form of **co-design process** with women from the three cohorts who have experience of emergency accommodation in the locality where they plan to build the

emergency accommodation. For example, this may be a simple survey asking these women about their preferences, or could involve interviews, focus groups or other forms of consultation.

- strategies to **reduce stress caused by sharing space with others**. These may include:
 - How they will meet women's need for both **privacy** and the **option for engaging socially** with others
 - How they will meet the needs of women who are **caring for children** (in terms of space and layout, play space and psychological support for children).
- an understanding of the specific **cultural needs** of the women from CALD backgrounds who are likely to require their service. For example, if women of Muslim background are likely to require use of their service, they should demonstrate how they will facilitate safe and private prayer spaces and meet halal dietary requirements.
- an understanding of the **cultural needs** of First Nations women who are likely to require their service, including facilitating support to access services, better coordination between services, and access to on-call support by culturally safe, local First Nations workers or Elders.
- an understanding of the variety of **accessibility needs** of women living with and/or caring for children with disability, and how they will meet these needs through physical design and facilitating access to specialist services for those with accessibility needs. For example, they should demonstrate the **physical accessibility of the dwellings**, the **sensory options** they will provide for tenants and **their links with services** that understand the accessibility needs of women and/or children with disability.
- that they have **relationships with services nearby** and that they **have strategies in place to fill essential service gaps themselves** if required. This is particularly important in regional areas where there are limited emergency accommodation services.
- how they will enable all women and children using the service to access:
 - **information about** what to expect while residing at their service
 - **psychological support** immediately upon arrival at the accommodation, and during their stay
 - **caseworkers** or other forms of wrap-around support to enable women to access services while they are residents and for a period after they leave
 - **language support** for women and children from CALD backgrounds
 - support to find longer-term housing.

4.5 What should the grant application review team look out for as red flags that suggest the applicant will not do an adequate job supporting victim-survivor women and children from First Nations, CALD and disability backgrounds in emergency accommodation?

Table 4.1 outlines a list of red flags that suggest the grant applicants will not do an adequate job supporting women and children from the three cohorts.

Table 4.1 Red flags indicating grant applicants will not do an adequate job supporting the three cohorts

For services supporting...	Red flags
All women and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of demonstrated understanding of the backgrounds and needs of the women likely to use the service Inability to provide residents with self-contained spaces No consideration of how to facilitate support for children
Women and children in regional/remote areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to demonstrate that they have existing/meaningful links with service providers in the local area Unable to demonstrate how they will facilitate access to caseworkers for women
Women and children from CALD backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mechanism to support workers to learn about the cultural backgrounds of service users No mechanism to provide language support
Women and children from First Nations backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No First Nations staff Relying on police to provide support after hours because emergency accommodation is not staffed past 5pm
Women with disability/caring for children with disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No consideration of accessibility and sensory needs in design of building No consideration of accessibility needs in terms of linking to services

5. KEY THEMES FOR THE SAFE PLACES INCLUSION ROUND

5.1 Overall themes

Across all cohorts, victim-survivors were enthusiastic about sharing their experiences and ensuring that the situation of others could be improved as a result of their participation. This underscores the **importance of consulting with users of emergency accommodation** in the design of the policy as well as in the physical design of the accommodation and its internal policies and practices. The importance of **providing choice while in emergency accommodation** was also frequently raised across the cohorts.

Victim-survivors in regional/remote areas emphasised the importance of being able **to access any kind of emergency accommodation**, as the lack of such services forces women to choose between seeking refuge far from their community or returning home to a violent partner.

Victim-survivors also emphasised the challenges associated with **accessing affordable longer-term accommodation**. The grant funding for the Inclusion Round is for emergency accommodation, however themes from consultation with victim-survivors support the need for longer-term secure housing, including transitional, social and affordable housing options.

Further detailed themes are listed below.

5.2 Themes regarding the physical design, cultural features and location of accommodation

The grant opportunity process should encourage applicant organisations and successful grantees to meet the **physical and cultural needs** of women they service by requiring them to provide:

- homely and welcoming self-contained spaces for women with, at minimum, an ensuite for each room, but preferably fully self-contained accommodation
- safety features such as cameras, fences, staff on site until late in the evening or overnight, and opt-in systems of monitoring victim-survivors' movements in and out of the accommodation
- buildings designed to be physically accessible to all women and children
- soundproofed spaces
- spaces for children to play and/or housing women with children separately to older/single women
- private spaces for prayer (if self-contained spaces are not present)
- policies around kitchen use that respect the need for halal or other dietary requirements

- options for victim-survivors, where possible, about whether to stay with other people, where in the dwelling they will be located, what type of food they are given (if food is provided), and control over sensory factors (lighting, texture of bed sheets).

The grant opportunity process should ensure that the **location** of developed emergency accommodation meets the needs of clients, and women and children of CALD, First Nations and disability backgrounds by:

- being located near shops, public transport, community groups and service providers
- being in less visible areas of the community
- ensuring that victim-survivors who use the service are consulted about how the location will affect their ability to access work/childcare/family support, and discussing how to balance the need for these supports against being able to easily access work, childcare or other services.

5.3 Themes regarding the supports and services provided alongside emergency accommodation

The grant opportunity guidelines should encourage and support organisations to provide the following services in-house or via partnerships, or through proximity and availability to the emergency accommodation:

- well-supported, trained and resourced emergency accommodation staff equipped to treat victim-survivors of all backgrounds with respect
- information in writing, or orally through a support or peer worker, about what to expect while residing in the accommodation
- immediate psychological support for victim-survivors and their children
- access to caseworkers who can provide support to victim-survivors during their stay at emergency accommodation and in the weeks and months following
- for victim-survivors from First Nations background: access to local First Nations people or Elders to provide practical and emotional support
- for victim-survivors living with disability or caring for children with disability: access to specialised assistance from caseworkers who understand accessibility issues
- for victim-survivors who cannot speak English fluently: access to language support
- for victim-survivors who are not Australian citizens: links with services that can provide legal, visa and other advice, as well as welfare support

- for victim-survivors with children: access to childcare while at the emergency accommodation
- regular (preferably daily) cleaning services at the emergency accommodation.

6. APPENDIX 1: ORGANISATIONAL RECRUITMENT INFORMATION

We'd like to hear from victim-survivors of family and domestic violence with lived experience of emergency/crisis accommodation. We'd like to speak with women and young people who are either:

- From **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse** backgrounds (including non-Christian religious backgrounds),
- Who identify as **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander**, or
- Are living with or caring for a child living with **disability**.

Who are not currently experiencing acute challenges around personal or family safety.

What is this about?

The Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) has been engaged by the Department of Social Services (DSS) to consult with women and young people (aged 15+) who are victim-survivors of domestic and family violence to better understand:

- **How emergency/crisis accommodation can be better designed to meet their needs, including accessibility and cultural needs; and**
- **The barriers they have faced using emergency accommodation in the past.**

These interviews will inform the design of housing for women and young people leaving domestic and family violence. Participants' identities will NOT be disclosed in CIRCA's report. We take the confidentiality of participants seriously.

What does it involve?

Participation will involve a **confidential, 60-minute interview** over telephone, Zoom or in-person. To make sure that victim-survivors can participate comfortably and safely, we will:

- Not ask participants to share any personal details or stories that they don't want to
- Not audio- or video-record the conversation
- Have a trained psychological support worker to support during and after the interview, if needed

All participants who take part will be paid \$80. The interview will happen in April or May 2023.

Do you know someone who may be eligible and interested?

Please pass this information on to any women (aged 18+) or young people (aged 15-17). If they are interested, please ask their consent to pass their details on to us. Below are some instructions on how to have the conversation with potential participants, and what information we will need from you.

How do you have the conversation with potential participants?

1. Choose a suitable time and set aside about 10 minutes to talk about the interview with them.
2. Explain what the interview is about, from the details above.
3. Check that the individual is eligible, confirming the following:
 - a. That they are aged 15 years or over
 - b. That, if aged 18 or over, they identify as a woman.
 - c. That they self-identify with at least one of the following:
 - i. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (Language other than English spoken at home, non-Anglo background, or non-Christian religious affiliation)
 - ii. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
 - iii. Living with a disability or caring for a child with disability
 - d. Have a lived experience of domestic and/or family violence, and of emergency accommodation, in the last 10 years (since 2013) either with their mother/carer or by themselves.
 - e. That they are not currently experiencing acute challenges with personal or family safety
4. Ask the participant if they consent to be contacted by a researcher. They are not under any obligation to participate in the interview.
5. If the participant is under 18, explain that CIRCA will need to contact their parent or guardian to get consent that they be invited to participate in the research.
6. Pass on the individual's details to CIRCA. And if the participant is a young person aged 15-17, we will also require the contact details of their parent or guardian.
 - a. Name
 - b. Age
 - c. Phone number
 - d. Email
 - e. State/territory of residence

- f. Urban/regional/remote
- g. Language spoken/religion/ethnic background
- h. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Status
- i. Disability status (of themselves and/or children if relevant)
- j. Number of years since using emergency accommodation
- k. Whether they would prefer to be contacted by someone of their cultural or linguistic background, or someone else:

- l. Whether they would prefer to be interview face-to-face, online or by phone:
- m. Name of parent/guardian (for those aged 15-17)

- n. Phone number of parent/guardian (for those aged 15-17)
- o. Email of parent/guardian (for those aged 15-17)

Please contact Thushara Dibley, on 02 8585 1323 or thushara@circaresearch.com.au with the above information of those that agree, or if you have questions.

7. APPENDIX 2: RECRUITMENT SCREENER

Recruitment Specifications:

15 online, in-person or over-the-phone, in-language, in-culture, supported interviews with women and children (aged 15-17) victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, with lived experience of emergency accommodation.

Each participant will receive \$80, paid via cash after signing the Participant Sign-Off Sheet.

Cohort	Jurisdiction	Urban geographic context	Regional geographic context	Remote geographic context	Total interviews
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Mix of states/territories	2	2	1	5
CALD (including religious diversity)	Mix of states/territories	3	2	-	5
Disability	Mix of states/territories	3	1	1	5
Total					15

Inclusion criteria:

- Participant resides in the target geographic region (urban, regional, or remote)
- Are aged 15+
- Those 17 and under, who are the child of a victim-survivor mother, may identify as any gender
- Those 17 and under who are victim-survivors must identify as women
- Those aged 18 or over, must identify as women
- Have a lived experience of Domestic and Family Violence, and of emergency accommodation, in the last 10 years
- CALD: Language other than English spoken at home, non-Anglo background, or non-Christian religious affiliation
- Disability or caring for a child with disability: self-identification
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status: self-identification
- Not in acute crisis at the time of the interview

Exclusions (Please exclude the following people):

- People who do not reside in the target geographical regions

- People who do not identify as any of the targeted cohort
- People under the age of 15
- Anyone who does not have lived experience of Domestic and Family Violence, and of emergency accommodation, in the last 10 years
- Anyone who is in acute crisis at the time of the interview
- Anyone who has a degree of cognitive impairment, intellectual disability, or mental illness that prevents them from giving informed consent

Telephone protocol – instructions for researchers

Please have the **Participant Information Statement** on hand for this telephone call and, in case you need it, the **Distress Protocol** as well.

1 day after emailing the Participant Information Statement to prospective participants and the relevant Consent/Assent forms, do the following:

1. Dial the number provided

If answered -> Go to Q2

If no answer/engaged:

- send a text (**Hello. My name is [researcher name] and I'm a researcher from the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre of Australia - CIRCA. I'm calling to see if you are interested in participating in some interviews we are doing. If you could phone or text me back on [phone number] it would be much appreciated. If I don't hear back from you, I will try calling you again at [TIME/DATE] and [TIME/DATE].**)
- Re-dial this number later. Enter 'Recontact' on contact record spreadsheet.
- If no response after 3 calls, tell CIRCA this number does not work and it should no longer be contacted. Enter 'Refused' on contact record spreadsheet.

If **not connected**: Note on the spreadsheet, then check with CIRCA for correct number.

If **answering machine** leave the following message:

- "Hello. My name is [researcher name] and I am a researcher calling from the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre of Australia – CIRCA. I am calling to about some interviews we are doing. If you could phone or text me back on [phone number] it would be much appreciated."
 - Send a follow up text as above, do not text more than once.
 - Note on the spreadsheet and re-dial number later, do not leave more than one message.
 - If there is no response after 3 calls, tell CIRCA this number does not work and it should no longer be contacted. Enter 'Refused' on contact record spreadsheet

2. Good [morning/afternoon]. My name is [researcher name] and I am a researcher calling from the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre of Australia – CIRCA. I'd like to speak with [participant name OR name of young person's parent/guardian]

If not available, find out good time to recontact -> Go to Q6

YES, speaking -> Go to **Q3 if speaking to parent/guardian**; Go to **Q9 if speaking to the prospective participant**

3. **IF SPEAKING TO PARENT/GUARDIAN OF YOUNG PERSON** → How are you today? You spoke to someone at [organisation] about your child, [name of young person], participating in a confidential interview about how emergency accommodation, sometimes referred to as crisis accommodation, can be made more appropriate and accessible. They passed on your phone number to me. Is it OK to talk briefly now?

NO, I'm not interested in my child participating in the research at all. -> GO TO Q8 to finish call

NO, I haven't got time now. -> GO TO Q6

YES, tell me more -> GO TO Q4

4. CIRCA, on behalf of the Department of Social Services (DSS), is speaking with women and young people from a range of different backgrounds, to better understand how the design of emergency accommodation can best suit the needs of people who are on the path to leave circumstances of family and domestic violence. If you're interested in allowing [name of child] to participate, it would involve an interview of about 60 minutes, and they will be given \$80 to thank them for their time, via cash in hand or electronic funds transfer (EFT). Before we talk to them about possibly participating, we want and need to check with you to get your consent to let them participate. Please note that participation is voluntary and will be completely confidential. Are you interested in allowing [name of child] participate?

NO, I'm not interested in letting my child participate in this at all. -> Go to Q8 to finish call

I'M NOT SURE -> Ask: Do you have any questions you would like me to clarify for you?

▪ *YES... -> Answer questions.*

- *YES, now I'm interested in letting my child do the interview -> Go to Q5*
- *NO, now I'm not interested in letting my child participate in this -> Go to Q8 to finish call. Enter 'Refused' on contact record spreadsheet*

YES, I'm interested in letting my child do the interview -> Go to Q5

5. Great – you may remember the email I sent you earlier that had the Participant Information Statement about this research as well as a Consent Form for you to review and sign. That Consent Form is what I'm required to get back from you, signed, if you are ok with [name of child] participating in an interview. Could you please review that form and send me back a signed copy, please, today? Only once I've gotten that signed form back from you will I be able to reach out to [name of child] to invite her/him to participate.

Yes, I've got it. I'll get that sent over to you now -> Go to Q7

I can't find the Consent Form -> OK, I'll resend it to you now. Could I just confirm I've got the right email address for you, please? [CONFIRM email] -> Stay on the line until email is received -> Go to Q7

6. I'm sorry that now is not a good time, when would be a better time for me to ring [you/them] back?
RECORD TIME AND DATE FOR CALL-BACK -> Thank you very much, I'll be back in touch on [day] at [time].
Goodbye. -> End call. -> Ring back at agreed time (start with Q1).

7. Thanks so much, I'll look out for your signed consent form. If I don't receive it in the next day or two, I'll call or email you back with a gentle reminder to please get it to me. It's really important that we're able to include the voices of young people in this research, so we really appreciate you and your child's participation.

8. I understand. Thank you for your time anyway.

End call

Enter "refused" into the spreadsheet.

9. ONLY AFTER SIGNED CONSENT RECEIVED FROM PARENTS SEND ASSENT FORM AND PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT TO THE YOUNG PERSON.

10. IF SPEAKING TO YOUNG PERSON for whom parental consent has been received OR TO ADULT WOMAN PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANT → How are you today? You spoke to someone at [organisation] about participating in a confidential interview about how emergency accommodation, sometimes referred to as crisis accommodation, can be made more appropriate and accessible. They passed on your

phone number to me [for young people: explain you got signed informed consent from their parent].

Is it OK to talk briefly now?

NO, I'm not interested in participating in the research at all. -> Go to Q26 to finish call

NO, I haven't got time now. -> GO TO Q25 to schedule call back

YES, tell me more -> GO TO Q11

11. CIRCA, on behalf of the Department of Social Services (DSS), is speaking with women and young people from a range of different backgrounds, to better understand how the design of emergency accommodation can best suit the needs of people who are on the path to leave circumstances of family and domestic violence. If you're interested in participating, it would involve an interview of about 60 minutes, and you will be given \$80 to thank you for your time, via cash in hand or electronic funds transfer (EFT). Participation is voluntary and will be completely confidential. Are you interested in participating?

NO, I'm not interested in participating in this at all. -> Go to Q26 to finish call

I'M NOT SURE -> Ask: Do you have any questions you would like me to clarify for you?

▪ *YES...* -> Answer questions.

• *YES, now I'm interested in doing the interview* -> Go to Q12

• *NO, now I'm not interested in doing the interview* -> Go to Q26 to finish call

YES, I'm interested in doing the interview -> Go to Q12

12. Great - If you have a few moments now, I just have some questions to check how you would like to participate, and because we want to ensure we have a good cross-section of people taking part in the discussions. Do you have 5 minutes now?

Yes, I've got 5 minutes now -> Go to Q13

No, I don't have time right now -> GO TO Q25 to schedule call back

13. Thanks for your time now. You may remember the email I sent you earlier that had the Participant Information Statement about this research. Have you had a chance to read it?

Yes, I've read it. -> Go to Q15

No, I haven't read it yet -> Go to Q14

No, I can't find the Participant Information Statement -> OK, I'll resend it to you now. Could I just confirm I've got the right email address for you, please? [CONFIRM email] -> Stay on the line until email is received -> Go to Q15

14. If you could take a moment now to read it, I'd appreciate it.

OK, I'm reading it now -> Go to Q15

No, I don't have time to read it now -> Go to Q25, to schedule call back

15. Based on what you read in the Participant Information Statement, can you briefly summarise what the study is about and what the interview will involve?

Allow participant to summarise for you, and check if they include these things:

- Conducted by CIRCA, for Department of Social Services
- About emergency/crisis accommodation/housing for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence
- Participation is voluntary
- Participants can withdraw at any time
- Will be paid \$80 for time

If participant did not include those things in their summary, read aloud the Participant Information Statement, and ask again if they can summarise what the study is about.

- If they are still unable to summarise the study, ticking all of those boxes -> say: Thank you for your time, but you are no longer needed for this study, we have all the information we need.
-> Hang up the phone -> Record as 'Unable to give informed consent' in the spreadsheet

IF ABLE TO SUMMARISE STUDY -> Go to Q16

16. Great. Thanks. As you know we're looking to run interviews with women and young people who have lived experience of family and domestic violence, and of emergency accommodation, including: Women and young people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and young people; and women and young people living with a disability, and/or caring for a child with a disability. As I mentioned earlier, these discussions are relaxed and informal. They last around an hour. Once you have completed the interview, we will give you \$80 as a thank you for your time. We want this interview to be a safe and comfortable experience for you, so we will:

Give you the choice of how you'd like to participate

Not ask you to share any personal stories or ask you to retell anything you don't want to

Not audio or video record the discussion

Have a trained psychological support worker on hand to provide you support during or after the interview if you'd like, and then check in with you a few days later

17. How would you like to participate in this interview? In-person, over the phone, or over Zoom?

In-person

Phone

Zoom/other videoconference software

18. [If CALD or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander] Would you like to be interviewed by someone from your language or cultural background?

Yes

No, someone else

19. In the interview, we'll talk to you about when you lived in emergency housing, what the housing was like, what you wish the housing had been like, and what services you needed when you lived in the emergency housing. Do you think talking about any of this with us is likely to cause you discomfort or distress?

Yes – TERMINATE → Thank you for your time, but you are no longer needed for this study, we have all the information we need. → Hang up the phone

No

20. Would you like to bring someone along with you to the interview? They can be a family member, a friend, or someone else who you'd like to support you.

Yes

No

21. We can also arrange a psychological support worker from Jannawi Family Centre to attend the interview with you. Is this something you would like?

Yes

No

22. Do you have any accessibility requirements you would like us to arrange for you?

Yes

No

23. [IF PARTICIPANT WOULD LIKE TO DO INTERVIEW IN-PERSON] Do you have any dietary requirements you would like to share with us?

Yes

No

24. Thank you for that. What is a suitable date and time for you to do the interview? [IF FACE-TO-FACE] What is a suitable location? [RECORD DATE AND TIME OF INTERVIEW, and email to CIRCA so psychological support worker can be scheduled for that time]

If you need to contact me for any reason, including if you are unable to come on the day or are running late, my number is **[SAY PHONE NUMBER]**.

I will send you an email with

- the Discussion Guide
- Participant Information Statement
- Consent Form (for adult participants) or Assent form (for young people aged 15-17)
- Support Services List

for you to look through before the interview

and I may telephone you to re-confirm your attendance closer to the date. May I confirm your email address and phone number? **[VERIFY EMAIL / SUITABLE PHONE NUMBERS.]**

Just to recap, my name is **[INSERT NAME]** from CIRCA. This research will be carried out in compliance with the Federal Privacy Act and the information you provide will be kept completely confidential and used only for research purposes. Thank you for your time today and in anticipation of your participation in this important research study.

25. I'm sorry that now is not a good time, when would be a better time for me to ring [you/them] back?

RECORD TIME AND DATE FOR CALL-BACK -> Thank you very much, I'll be back in touch on [day] at [time].

Goodbye. -> End call. -> Ring back at agreed time (start with Q1).

26. I understand. Thank you for your time anyway.

End call

Enter "Refused" into the spreadsheet.

8. APPENDIX 3: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

Participant Information Statement

What is this research about?

The Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) want to talk with women and young people (aged 15+) who are victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. The reason for this is because DSS wants to hear from women and young people about how emergency (or crisis) housing should be built or remodelled to meet their needs when leaving domestic and family violence.

The aim of the project is to learn how emergency housing could be better for women and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women and young people, and those living with a disability or caring for a child with disability.

The interviews will be used to help the government decide how to give out money to organisations that are building, remodelling, or purchasing emergency accommodation for women and young people leaving domestic and family violence. Your identity will NOT be shared in CIRCA's report. CIRCA takes the privacy and confidentiality of its interview participants seriously.

Who is taking part?

As part of this project, CIRCA will be doing 15 interviews with women and young people who have gone through domestic and family violence and have lived in emergency housing. We will interview women and young people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, are from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities, are living with a disability, or caring for a child living with disability.

The people we interview will have been passed to us from organisations that work with victim-survivors.

You may also bring someone along to the interview for support, such as a family member, friend, or someone else.

What does it involve?

Taking part in the study will involve a 60-minute interview. The interview can be done through a Zoom call (audio-only or videoconference), by telephone, or as in-person interview. It's up to you to decide.

In the interview, we will:

- Give you the choice on how you'd like to participate
- Not ask you to share any personal details or stories that you don't want to
- Not audio- or video-record the conversation

- Have a trained psychological support worker available to help you during and after the interview, if needed

How long will it take?

The interview will take about an hour.

What happens to the information I provide?

The information you give us will be stored safely through every part of the research process. We will keep notes from your interview in locked cabinets, inside a secure building and on a computer that uses password protected electronic folders. We will keep the interview notes for up to five years and then delete them, except if we discover that our research findings have community, cultural or historical value, and then we will keep your information safe forever.

Why is it important?

We think it is important that women and young people who have lived in emergency housing can share their stories about this housing. It is important for people designing future emergency housing to hear these views. We will make suggestions to government about how to design emergency housing based on what we learn in these interviews.

Do I have to participate?

No, you do not have to participate if you don't want to. Participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate, there will be no negative impact on your relationship with the Department of Social Services.

If you don't want to or can't answer any question, we will move on to another question. All comments are welcome – there are no right or wrong answers.

If you agree to participate, and then change your mind, you can tell us that you no longer agree to being part of the research. There will be no negative impact on your relationship with the Department of Social Services or any other stakeholders associated with this research if you choose to do this.

Will I be paid for my time?

We will pay you \$80, either cash in hand, or by Electronic Funds Transfer [EFT] via your bank details or PayID, to thank you for the time you have taken to participate in the research.

How will my personal information be treated?

Your personal information will remain private. We will not tell anyone that you did an interview with us. We will not use your name in any of CIRCA's reports. We will not talk about you in our reports in a way that other people could find out we were talking about you. Your name/identity will not be used by CIRCA in any written or verbal reports to DSS or anyone else outside of the CIRCA research team.

Will I find out the results?

We will share a short report of the results of the study with people who agreed to be interviewed.

Avenue for addressing concerns

If you have any concerns about the research, please raise them with any member of the CIRCA research team in the first instance, and we will be happy to try and address them for you. We can be reached on (02) 8585 1353 or via e-mail: info@circaresearch.com.au

In case of any serious concerns, please contact Lena Etuk, Research & Evaluation Director at CIRCA: (02) 8585 1330, lena@circaresearch.com.au

This form has been reviewed by the St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Ph: 03 9231 6970 or email: research.ethics@svhm.org.au

9. APPENDIX 4: CONSENT FORM WOMEN

Participant Consent Form – Interviews with Women and Young People

Project DSS Safe Places Engagement
Name of researcher
Date

(Participant statement)

I understand:

- The purpose of this interview and how my feedback will be used.
- That this interview will not be audio-recorded, but interview notes will be taken instead.
- That I am being asked for my honest feedback.
- That I don't have to participate if I don't want to. I agree to participate in this interview.
- That my personal information will remain confidential. My name/identity will not be used by CIRCA in any written or verbal reports to DSS or anyone else outside of the CIRCA research team.
- That, if I requested it, a psychological support worker will be present for the interview, and they will be made aware of some details of my situation.
- That, if I requested it, a support person of my choosing will be present and hear details of the interview.
- That I will receive \$80 for participating, as thanks for my time.

Participant name

Participant signature

10. APPENDIX 5: CONSENT FORM FOR CAREGIVERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Consent form for the DSS Safe Places Inclusion Round Interviews

Focus: Understanding how emergency accommodation can be more appropriate and accessible for women & children who are victim-survivors of family and domestic violence

Child interview consent from primary caretaker/parent

1. I consent to allow _____ (the child, first and surname) to participate in this research, the details and purpose of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement.
2. I understand that the child's participation in this project is for research purposes.
3. I understand that the child's interview will not be audio-recorded, and interview notes will be taken instead.
4. I understand that the child's participation is voluntary, and they don't have to participate if they don't want to.
5. I understand that my child's personal information will remain confidential, and their name/identity will not be used by CIRCA in any written or verbal reports to DSS or anyone else outside of the CIRCA research team.
6. I understand that if they requested it, a psychological support worker or support person of my child's choosing may be present and hear details of the interview.
7. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form, it will be retained by the research team.

Name of Parent/Primary Caretaker:

Parent/Primary Caretaker signature:

Date:

Chief Investigator contact for the research

Lena Etuk (CIRCA)

Tel: 02 8585 1330

Email: lena@circaresearch.com.au

Online version available here:

<https://culturalperspectives.snapforms.com.au/form/consent-form-for-the-dss-safe-places-inclusion-round-interviews>

11. APPENDIX 6: ASSENT FORM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Research Assent form for the DSS Safe Places Inclusion Round Interviews

Focus: Understanding how emergency accommodation can be better and easier to use for women & children who are victim-survivors of family and domestic violence

Child interview assent

The Cultural & Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) is inviting you to take part in an interview. You do not have to do the interview if you do not want to. You can also decide to do the interview now and change your mind later.

We would like you to ask us questions if there is anything about the interview that you do not understand. After all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to do this interview or not.

We are trying to understand how emergency accommodation can be better and easier to use for women and young people who have experienced family and domestic violence. We will be speaking particularly to women and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women and young people, and those living or caring for someone living with disability. We want to know what works and what doesn't, so that we can tell the people who decide how emergency accommodation works what to do in the future.

We are asking you if you want to do this interview because you have an experience of emergency accommodation, either with your mum, a carer, or by yourself. We are talking to women and young people, aged 15 and over, all across Australia.

If you take part in this interview, we will ask you to talk for about 60 minutes with us, in an interview, about your experiences with emergency accommodation, what worked for you, and what didn't work so well. The interviewer will ask you questions, but you can choose to answer or not. What you tell us will be combined with what all of the other people we talk to tell us, and when we report that information to government, we won't use your name or talk about your experience specifically, we'll talk about the general experiences of all the people we talked

to. We may quote you, but if we do, we will make sure that no one will be able to tell it was you who said it.

You can choose to take part in this interview how you like. You may want to do it in-person, over the phone, or over Zoom. You can also choose to have someone in the interview with you to support you, or we can provide a psychological support worker to attend as well.

If you take part in this interview, you may feel sad, uncomfortable, angry, or stressed when we talk about things related to your current or past situation or how your situation has changed over time. If that happens and you want to talk about something else, you can tell your interviewer to change the subject.

We will write a report when the study is over, but we will not use your name in the report.

Write your name here if you want to be in the study:

Write the date here:

Name of Researcher Obtaining Assent:

Signature of Researcher Obtaining Assent:

Date Signed:

Chief Investigator contact for the research

Lena Etuk (CIRCA)

Tel: 02 8585 1330 Email: lena@circaresearch.com.au

12. APPENDIX 7: DISCUSSION GUIDE

4 April 2023

(To be read aloud to participants at start of interview)

Introduce Yourself

I am from the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA), and we are conducting research on behalf of the Department of Social Service (DSS).

The Study

CIRCA has been engaged by DSS to engage with stakeholders to inform the design and development of emergency accommodation for women and young people. The purpose of our engagement is to better understand how emergency accommodation can be more appropriate and accessible for women and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women and children, and those living with a disability.

The results of the study will be used to inform the design of the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Inclusion Round.

Your Participation

Participation in the interview is voluntary and you can choose not to participate in all or part of the interview. If you would like to take a break at any point during the interview, you can let me know. You can also choose to withdraw your participation at any time.

If you don't want to or can't answer any question, we will move on to another question. All comments are welcome – there are no right or wrong answers.

A psychological support worker is also available during the interview, and for 30 minutes after the interview. I'm going to give you her phone number now, so please make note of it in case you need to call her at any point during our interview, or in the 30 minutes after our interview. Her phone number is: [READ OUT PHONE NUMBER]. You can also choose to step outside (or leave the chat) at any point during the interview and can return when you feel ready.

Confidentiality

Your personal information will remain confidential. Your name/identity will never be used by CIRCA in any written or verbal reports to DSS or anyone else outside of the CIRCA research team.

Audio recording

This interview will not be audio recorded. However, I will ask you in a moment if you consent to participating in the interview, and I will record your response. I will stop recording after we have recorded your consent.

Instead of audio-recording I'll be taking detailed notes as we speak, so my apologies in advance if I ask you to repeat something – I just want to make sure I capture everything.

Avenue for addressing concerns

If you have any concerns about the research, please raise them with any member of the CIRCA research team in the first instance, and we will be happy to try and address them for you. We can be reached on (02) 8585 1353 or via e-mail: info@circaresearch.com.au

In case of any serious concerns, please contact Lena Etuk, Research & Evaluation Director at CIRCA: (02) 8585 1330, lena@circaresearch.com.au

Questions

Do you have any questions about this interview? *(If Yes, answer questions)*

Now that I've explained the study and answered any questions you had, in just a moment I'll ask you if you agree to do the interview.

[If obtaining verbal consent for interview over the phone or Zoom] Before I do that though, I'll start the audio recording just to document your consent or refusal, and I'll stop the audio recording if you decide not to do the interview or do not wish to be recorded.

Record consent

(Start the audio-recording)

Do you agree to do this interview? Yes/No

[If obtaining written consent in in-person interview] If yes, have adult participant(s) sign the consent form or if interviewing a young person aged 15-17, you must sign the assent form on their behalf. If no, ask participant(s) to leave the interview.

Once consent has been received, stop recording

Distribute cash incentives

If in-person: hand cash to participants

If online or phone: Ask for their bank details or PayID, and send the payment now

BSB: _____ & Account #: _____

▪ PayID #: _____

! Field researcher to check:

- [In-person] Sign off sheet has been signed by the participants and retained by Researcher
- [Phone or online] Audio-recorded consent obtained from participants
- Participants each have a copy of the Participant Information Sheet
- Participants have received their cash incentive

DSS Safe Places Engagements - Discussion Guide

OBJECTIVE: Getting to know participants and breaking the ice (20 minutes)

- ***Facilitator to introduce themselves, with a little bit about where they're from, their work, hobbies etc.***
- **If you could also please introduce yourself (you don't need to use your full name). You can tell me about where you're from, your hobbies, your work, or any other things about yourself.**

OBJECTIVE: Understand participants' experiences with emergency accommodation, the physical design features needed for victim-survivors to feel fully supported when they exit emergency accommodation and continue on their journey to being safe (30 minutes)

If you're happy to, I'd like to ask you some questions about your experience of emergency or crisis accommodation that you lived in, after leaving a situation of family or domestic violence. Is that all right?

- **When did you live in emergency accommodation? Which year or years?**
 - How long did you live there? Did you move between different emergency housing places?
- **Did you live there with anyone else? If so, how did that go?**
 - PROMPT: enough space, the right type of spaces, privacy, safety concerns or issues?
- **What was the housing like? Was it a house, an apartment, a hotel?**
 - Was it nice or not so nice?
 - If nice, what made it nice?
 - PROMPT: layout, size of the rooms, number of rooms, number of beds, safety features, location in the community, how near or far it was to shops or places you needed to go, staff, the way access to the building was set up, the way the rooms were laid out, the people who lived nearby, age of the building
 - If not so nice, what made it not so nice?
 - PROMPT: layout, size of the rooms, number of rooms, number of beds, safety features, location in the community, how near or far it was to shops or places you needed to go, staff,

the way access to the building was set up, the way the rooms were laid out, the people who lived nearby, age of the building

- Did you feel like you could be yourself while living there? Like you could practice your faith if you wanted to, you could connect with the people you needed and wanted to connect with, you felt comfortable just being you, or other things like that.
 - If yes, how so and what helped you feel that way?
 - If no, how so and what made you feel that way?
- **If you could design housing that would have been just perfect for you at the time, when you were leaving that circumstance of family or domestic violence, what would it have looked like? What would it have been nice to have?**

OBJECTIVE: Understand what other services are needed to support women and children from these cohorts in emergency accommodation, and what barriers might have prevented access (10 minutes)

Next, we're going to talk about supports or services you might have used, or might have needed, while you were in emergency accommodation. These can be things like employment services, legal services, childcare, cultural services, disability support, health services, or language support. Is that all right?

- **Were there any support services that you or your family needed while you were living in emergency accommodation?**
 - Which of these services were most important during this time?
 - When did you want or need access to these services? For example, all the time, just when you arrived, or just when facing certain challenges?
- **What kinds of supports and services did you feel you had good access to while in emergency accommodation?**
 - Were these services accessed face-to-face, or remotely, like over the phone or internet?
- **What kinds of supports or services did you feel that you needed or would have liked at the time, but didn't have access to?**
 - What do you think kept you from accessing those services?

OBJECTIVE: Summing up

- **Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience of emergency accommodation that you think is important for people in charge of designing emergency accommodation to understand?**

Closing:

Thank you so much for your time today. This has been a really helpful conversation and we really appreciate you sharing your experience with us.

Please remember that we've got a Support Specialist available to you for around 30 more minutes if you would like to chat about anything that may have come up for you in this interview. Her phone number, again, is: [READ OUT NUMBER]

I or one of my colleagues at CIRCA will check in with you in 3 days, and again 5 days after that, with a quick phone call to see how you are doing and if there's any support we can give.

A reminder that we provided a list of support services with phone numbers and websites, should you feel like you would like to contact any for some extra support. *[If needed, provide Support Services list again]*



Tenancy 1, 16 Eveleigh Street

REDFERN NSW 2016

Tel: +61 2 8585 1353