

# Strengthening Housing First to tackle homelessness

As part of the Wellbeing Budget we are strengthening the Housing First programme to tackle the long-term challenge of chronic homelessness in New Zealand.

## Budget 2019

- **Increase the Housing First programme to a further 1,044 people and whānau in high need areas.**
- In total, the Government is investing \$197 million to strengthen the Housing First programme in existing high need cities and regions.
- Housing First was launched in Auckland by a collective of providers in 2017, in Christchurch and Tauranga in 2018 and has been fully funded in Hamilton from August 2018. By 31 March 2019, the Housing First programme had housed 720 people and whānau in both public and private housing.
- Housing First is also being mobilised and led by an iwi provider in Rotorua to provide up to 105 places for homeless people and whānau.
- Housing First services for 200 people and whānau in Wellington, including the Hutt, will begin during June 2019.
- Housing First in Whangarei and mid-far North, Nelson, Blenheim, and Hawke's Bay are on target to commence delivering services in July 2019.
- Budget 2019 funding ensures that these existing Housing First programmes are sustainable and can continue to deliver services for more than 2,700 people and whānau over the next few years.
- The amount of funding and the number of Housing First places in each area will be determined over the next few months by working with providers and stakeholders.

# Budget 2019

**Budget 2019 provides funding to strengthen the Housing First programme in Whangarei, mid-far North, Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua, Tauranga, Hawke's Bay, Wellington and the Hutt, Nelson, Blenheim, and Christchurch.**

## What is Housing First?

**Housing First is a programme to house and support people who have been homeless for a long time or who are homeless and face multiple and complex issues.**

Housing First recognises it's much easier for people to address issues, such as poor mental or physical health, substance abuse and unemployment, once they are housed.

The approach is simple: provide housing quickly then offer tailored support for as

long as it's needed to help people stay housed and lead better lives.

Housing First aims to end homelessness for people, not just manage it. The goal is that homelessness should be brief, rare and non-recurring.

- **Since 2017 Housing First has taken 720 people and whānau off the streets and into permanent homes.**

## How do we know it works?

**Housing First is based on extensive international evidence, where it has proven to be highly effective in supporting people who are chronically homeless to stay housed and improve their lives.**

Housing First has operated in Hamilton since 2014 and was launched in Auckland by a collective of providers in 2017.

The Government is already funding Housing First programmes across New Zealand in Auckland, Christchurch, Tauranga, Hamilton and Rotorua, and is working to establish the programme in several other regions.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's role in Housing First is to bring together local health and social service providers, housing providers, local government, iwi, and other agencies to develop a localised community response to homelessness.