



MEDIA RELEASE

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Housing and mental health go hand in hand, and Canberra's frontline knows it

Both [World Homeless Day](#) and [World Mental Health Day](#) are approaching, with these recognised days coinciding this coming Saturday 10 October 2026. And local frontline service, [Havelock Housing](#) marks both by calling for greater recognition of the critical connection between safe, secure housing and mental health and wellbeing.

World Homeless Day focuses global attention on preventing and ending homelessness, while World Mental Health Day raises awareness and mobilises action in support of mental health.

For Havelock Housing CEO Kylie Maidens, the shared date provides an important opportunity to recognise that housing and mental health cannot be considered in isolation.

“A safe home isn't simply a roof over someone's head. It provides stability, dignity, security and a place from which people can begin to rebuild their lives,” said Havelock Housing CEO, Kylie Maidens.

“When someone doesn't know where they are going to sleep tonight, or whether they will still have a home next month, it is incredibly difficult to focus on anything else, including their mental health and wellbeing,” Ms Maidens continued.

The intersection between homelessness, housing insecurity and mental health is significant. In 2024-25, Specialist Homelessness Services across Australia supported around 88,800 people with a current mental health issue, representing 31 per cent of all clients. This was an increase from 72,100 people in 2015-16.

Safe and secure housing is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of individuals and families, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Ms Maidens said the figures demonstrate why responses to mental health and homelessness need to recognise the whole person and the circumstances in which they are living.

“We cannot have a serious conversation about mental health without also talking about housing.”

“Housing doesn't solve every challenge a person may face, but having somewhere safe and stable to call home creates the foundation from which recovery, connection and independence become possible.”

This year's Australian Mental Health Month theme is *Together We Thrive*, recognising the importance of connection in supporting mental health and wellbeing. The official 2026 World Mental Health Day theme is

Lived Experiences Heard: Real Voices, Real Change, highlighting the importance of ensuring people with lived experience have a meaningful role in shaping mental health systems and services.

Ms Maidens said those principles are equally important when addressing homelessness.

“People experiencing homelessness are not statistics, and they are not problems to be solved. They are people with strengths, experiences, aspirations and a right to have their voices heard.”

“If we genuinely want to reduce homelessness and improve mental health outcomes, we need to listen to people with lived experience and ensure they are part of developing the solutions.”

She goes on to say that homelessness can result from a complex combination of social, economic and health factors. Mental health issues, trauma, disability and family and domestic violence can increase vulnerability, while structural factors including inadequate income and limited access to affordable and available housing also contribute to the risk of homelessness.

Havelock Housing has more than 40 years' experience delivering social, affordable and specialist disability housing across the ACT. Since 2015, Havelock has supported more than 2,000 people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and currently manages 406 active tenancies across the Territory.

Ms Maidens said World Homeless Day and World Mental Health Day should be an opportunity not just for awareness, but for action.

“Today is about reminding ourselves that behind every discussion about homelessness or mental health is a person.”

“A person deserves more than somewhere to survive. They deserve somewhere they feel safe, somewhere they belong and somewhere they can build a future.”

“Housing is not the entire answer to homelessness and mental ill-health, but without safe, secure and affordable housing, too many people are being asked to rebuild their lives without the most fundamental foundation beneath them.”

“On World Homeless Day and World Mental Health Day, our message is simple: everyone deserves a safe place to call home, everyone deserves to be heard, and everyone deserves the opportunity to thrive.”

If you or someone you know is experiencing or at risk of homelessness, contact Havelock Housing on (02) 6257 2277 or email info@havelock.org.au.

For more information about Havelock Housing's affordable, social and specialist disability housing across the ACT to donate, visit havelockhousing.com.au.

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MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

About Havelock Housing

As the oldest and largest frontline community housing provider in Canberra, Havelock Housing has more than 40 years' experience delivering social, affordable and specialist disability housing across the ACT.

Since 2015, Havelock has supported more than 2,000 individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, across circumstances including rough sleeping, domestic and family violence, mental health challenges, disability and youth homelessness. Havelock currently manages 406 active tenancies providing stable and affordable housing to residents across the Territory.

Havelock's services are built on the belief that safe housing is a fundamental foundation for wellbeing, independence and community connection.

More information: havelockhousing.com.au

About World Homeless Day

World Homeless Day is observed internationally on **10 October each year** and aims to draw attention to the needs of people experiencing homelessness, encourage action in local communities and advocate for policies and funding that prevent and end homelessness.

About World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day is held on **10 October each year** to raise awareness of mental health issues globally and mobilise efforts in support of mental health. The 2026 global theme is **Lived Experiences Heard: Real Voices, Real Change**.

About Australia Mental Health Month October 2026

Australian Mental Health Month is recognised throughout October and provides an opportunity to raise awareness of mental health, reduce stigma and encourage people to seek support when they need it. In 2026, the Australian theme, Together We Thrive, highlights the importance of connection, community and the everyday acts of care that support mental health and wellbeing.

Sources

- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, *Specialist homelessness services: Mental health*.
- Mental Health Australia, *World Mental Health Day 2026*.
- World Homeless Day.
- Australia Mental Health Month