



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 28th December, 2020

Mallee Family Care Applauds Investment Announcement

Today, after seven years of advocacy, lobbying and research, Mallee Family Care has received formal notification from the Victorian Government that air conditioning will be installed in existing public housing across northwest Victoria.

In responding to the announcement, Chief Executive Officer of Mallee Family Care, Ms. Teresa Jayet, said the news validated the voices of people across the region who had bravely shared their stories as part of the campaign for the installation of cooling in public housing.

“This is a landmark moment for our Mallee communities. The announcement tells all those people, those families, who have lived in unbearable conditions, over successive and increasingly hot summers that they matter.

“By committing to an immediate and ongoing investment in cooling for both existing and future public housing in northwest Victoria, the State Government is acknowledging that place-based decision making is critical to ensuring the best outcomes for people.

“We have long maintained that the climate and conditions in the Mallee are vastly different to those in Melbourne and to have a one-size-fits-all funding framework is wholly inappropriate – investment initiatives must reflect the communities they impact and today’s commitment is a welcomed advance.”

Mallee Family Care has been campaigning for cooling in public housing in northwest Victoria since 2013 and over the ensuing seven years, the Agency’s research, conducted in partnership with the University of Sydney, clearly identified the impact of extreme heat on the region’s public housing tenants.

Prolonged heatwaves proved to have detrimental effects on the health, mental wellbeing, education and safety of tenants who had no respite from the heat and there were also clear impacts on the broader community. More recently, further concerns were being raised about the likely impact restrictions linked to COVID-19 would have on tenants, should they be ordered to stay in their uncooled homes during the height of summer.

Ms. Jayet commended the Minister for Housing The Hon Richard Wynne and the Andrews Government for their notable investment in social and public infrastructure.

“I thank the Government for listening to the voices of the Mallee, for understanding that all people, regardless of background, deserve not just to survive but to thrive.

“This announcement is about supporting our more disadvantaged and vulnerable community members and it’s about progress. To all those people for whom this news will be life-changing, my message is clear; your health, wellbeing and future are valued.”

ENDS



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