

Hon Paula Bennett

Minister for Social Housing



Media Statement 2 March 2016

\$2 million boost to help homeless Aucklanders

Social Housing Minister Paula Bennett has today announced details of the Government's \$2 million contribution to increasing the emergency housing supply in Auckland.

Specialist provider Emerge Aotearoa will provide 30 places for individuals or families, for a stay of up to 12 weeks.

"This means we can house at least a further 120 people each year, including parents with children, on top of the emergency housing that is already available with other community organisations," says Mrs Bennett.

"Homelessness is a complex issue, with the actual accommodation being only one piece of the broader puzzle of a vulnerable person's needs.

"A big part of this service is linking people up to other social services, like ensuring they are receiving the right welfare support, addiction counselling, and access to education or training."

Emerge will also develop a plan to help them move into suitable, sustainable housing after their stay. "The support continues when they leave with social support providers working with them for up to three months to help them settle into their new property and adjust to independence," Mrs Bennett says.

"While this announcement will make a real difference for those who find themselves without a home, the Government's number one priority remains to increase the supply of social and affordable housing in Auckland."

The emergency housing boost is being implemented in partnership with Auckland Council which has set aside \$250,000 in each of the next two years for emergency housing providers, bringing the joint contribution to \$2.5 million.

The service will be in place well before winter, with 17 of the new places available from 14 March and the further 13 available from mid-May.

It will run for two years, and further announcements about a more long-term funding model for the emergency housing sector nationwide will be made in the first half of 2016.

Today's announcement is another boost for the emergency housing sector with \$500,000 granted last year to 16 emergency housing providers across New Zealand, eight of which deliver services in Auckland.

Media Contact: Clark Hennessy 021 873 466