

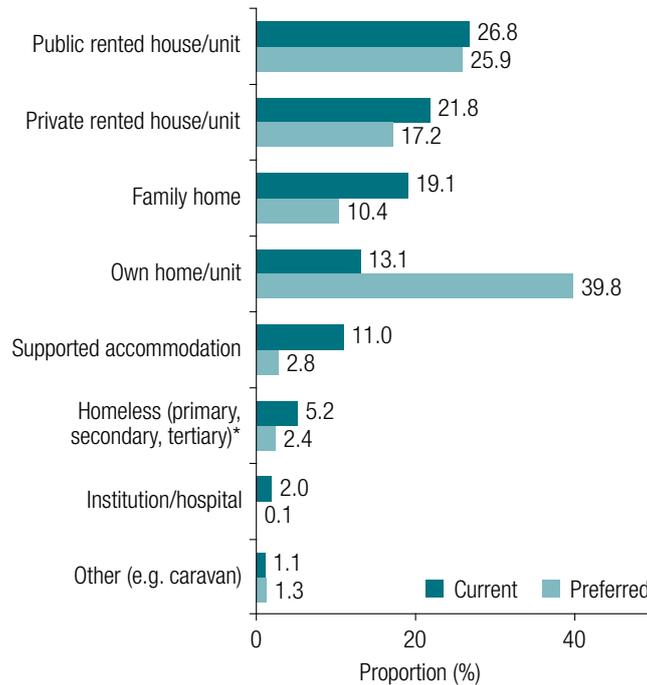
## 12 HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

### 12.1 Type of accommodation

The most common current accommodation type reported by participants was public or private rented housing (48.6%), with 26.8% in publically rented houses or units and 21.8% in privately rented houses or units at the time of interview. One-fifth (19.1%) were living in a family residence that was not their own and a further 13.1% were in their own home or unit (Figure 12-1). One in ten (11.0%) were in supported accommodation and 2.0% in an institution or hospital.

Almost one quarter (22.7%) of participants was on a public housing waiting list.

**Figure 12-1. Current and preferred accommodation**



\* Homelessness. Primary: living on the streets, in parks or in deserted buildings; secondary: living in temporary shelters such as refuge, emergency accommodation or sleeping on friend's couch; tertiary: private boarding room<sup>23</sup>.

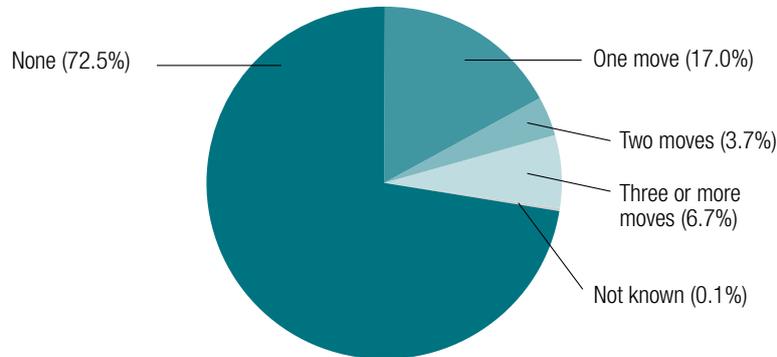
Half (51.5%) said they were very satisfied with their current living situation, a further quarter (27.8%) were somewhat satisfied and 12.5% were somewhat or very dissatisfied.

Participants were also asked about their preferred accommodation types (Figure 12-1). There were a number of key differences in their preferred option compared with their current housing. Two-fifths (39.8%) would prefer to live in their own home or unit, however, only 13.1% were currently doing so. Almost one in five were living in a family residence, but this was the preferred option for only 10.4%, and 11.0% were living in supported accommodation, while only 2.8% would prefer to be doing so.

## 12.2 Housing stability

Just over one quarter of participants (27.4%) had changed accommodation at least once in the past year, not including admissions in and out of hospital, with 3.7% of all participants moving twice and 6.7% moving three or more times (Figure 12-2).

**Figure 12-2. Changes in housing in past year**



## 12.3 Homelessness

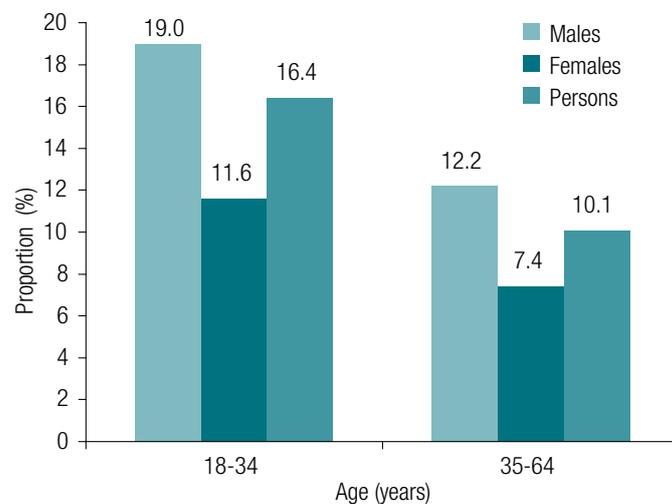
At the time of interview, 5.2% of participants (7.3% of males and 2.0% of females) reported being homeless (Figure 12-1). In comparison, in the 2006 census, the prevalence of current homelessness was estimated as 53 per 10,000 population or 0.5% of the Australian population.<sup>23</sup>

As people with psychosis are known to move in and out of homelessness, the survey collected information on the periods of homelessness in the 12 months prior to interview. Over the past year, 12.8% of participants had experienced at least one period of homelessness.

The proportion of those who were homeless in the past year was higher for males than females (15.4% for males compared with 8.9%). It was also higher in the younger age group (16.4% for 18-34 years compared with 10.1% for 35-64 year olds), with one in five younger males having been homeless at some time in the past year (Figure 12-3).

Twice as many, that is one quarter (25.0%) of participants, expressed a fear of homelessness.

**Figure 12-3. Homelessness in past year by sex and age group**



Homelessness can be disaggregated into three levels:

- primary homelessness – living on the streets, in parks, in deserted buildings;
- secondary homelessness – living in temporary shelters such as refuges, emergency accommodation or sleeping on a friend's couch; and
- tertiary homelessness – living in a boarding room.

Marginal accommodation describes living in a caravan park due to financial necessity, not lifestyle choice.<sup>23</sup>

Over the past year, 5.1% of participants reported primary homelessness (Table 12-1). A further 6.8% reported secondary homelessness and 5.1% reported tertiary homelessness, while 0.9% had lived in marginal accommodation.

**Table 12-1. Homelessness types currently and in past year**

	Proportion (%)
Homelessness, current	
Any	5.2
Homelessness, past year*	
Any	12.8
Primary (on the streets, in parks, in deserted buildings)	5.1
Secondary (temporary shelters such as refuges, emergency accommodation, a friend's couch)	6.8
Tertiary (boarding room)	5.1
Marginal accommodation, past year	
Living in a caravan park due to financial necessity, not lifestyle choice	0.9

\* Total for any homelessness is less than sum of primary, secondary and tertiary as some people experienced more than one form of homelessness over the past year.

The average number of days of homelessness, for those reporting any over the past year, was 155 days. The average was higher for males than females, at 170 days and 117 days respectively.

Although younger participants aged 18-34 years were more likely to be homeless than those aged 35-64 years, the average number of days of homelessness was higher in the older age group (146 days compared with 167 days).

Almost one in five (18.5%) of those reporting homelessness had been homeless for the full year.

## 12.4 Accommodation on discharge from hospital

Participants who had had a psychiatric inpatient hospital admission in the year prior to interview were asked if their accommodation needs had been discussed with them prior to discharge. Half (52.8%) recollected discussing accommodation options with staff at the time. Two thirds (64.2%) reported not needing further help as they already had somewhere to live and one-fifth (21.4%) needed and received help finding accommodation. However, 6.9% reported that they had not been given any help and had nowhere to live on discharge.

