



**NEW SOUTH WALES NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION**  
**AUSTRALIAN NURSING AND MIDWIFERY FEDERATION NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH**



---

# POSITION STATEMENT ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

---

**Re-Endorsed by Annual Conference 2019**

**NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association**  
50 O'Dea Avenue Waterloo NSW 2017

P 02 8595 1234 (metro) • 1300 367 962 (regional)

**[www.nswnma.asn.au](http://www.nswnma.asn.au)**

# Position Statement on Affordable Housing

For the purposes of this position statement the term 'affordable housing' refers to housing that is "appropriate for the needs of a range of very low to moderate income households; and priced so that households are able to meet other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education. As a rule of thumb, housing is usually considered affordable if it costs less than 30% of gross household income"<sup>1</sup>.

## THE NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES ASSOCIATION RECOGNISES THAT:

- Housing affordability is a growing concern as Australian house prices have become increasingly unaffordable over the last 10 years<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, rents in many areas are increasing at twice the rate of inflation<sup>3</sup>. Australia's current private rental market is not meeting the needs of all low to medium income households. These households may experience significant trouble securing affordable and appropriate housing<sup>4</sup>.
- This problem has the potential to impact on quality of life for families and undermines community cohesiveness. Many nurses and midwives find it increasingly difficult to access suitably priced housing of an acceptable standard within a reasonable proximity to their workplace.
- Housing affordability is a major concern for many nurses and midwives in many areas, including metropolitan, rural and regional areas, where the income of the household is not sufficient to pay market rent close to where they work<sup>1</sup>.
- People may require access to affordable housing at different times, depending on factors such as under-employment, caring responsibilities, family breakdown and localised economic influences.

## THE NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES ASSOCIATION ADOPTS THE POSITION THAT:

- Public policy and planning must address the need for affordable housing for all workers in key service areas.
- Nurses and midwives should be able to rent or purchase housing that is suitable for their needs, that is secure and priced so they can meet other living expenses<sup>4</sup>.



- Access to affordable housing within reasonable proximity to centres of health care delivery should be considered as an important factor in recruitment and retention of nursing and midwifery workforce<sup>5</sup>.

## REFERENCES

1. NSW Government, What is affordable housing?, Family & Community Services, viewed 12 April 2019 <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/providers/housing/affordable/about>
2. Phillips, B. (2011), The Great Australian Dream – Just a Dream? AMP.NATSEM Income and Wealth Report, Issue 29, July, AMP Sydney.
3. National Housing Supply Council, *State of Supply Report*, Commonwealth of Australia, 2010.
4. The Senate Economics References Committee 2015, Out of Reach? The Australian housing affordability challenge, Commonwealth of Australia.
5. Armstrong, F. (2009). Ensuring quality, safety and positive patient outcomes: Why investing in nursing makes \$ense. Melbourne: Australian Nursing Federation. Downloaded 09/11/12 from: [http://anf.org.au/documents/reports/Issues\\_Ensuring\\_quality.pdf](http://anf.org.au/documents/reports/Issues_Ensuring_quality.pdf).