



CATHERINE
HOUSE

2025
**IMPACT
REPORT**

SUPPORTING WOMEN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Front Cover Artist Statement

The Art of Becoming:

A Collaborative Woven Art Piece by the Women of Catherine House

This woven installation is a celebration of transformation: the slow, courageous art of becoming. Each vibrant circle was created by a woman experiencing homelessness, a woman carrying her own stories, her own hurts, her own dreams. No two circles are the same. Each one holds a rhythm, a breath, a moment of healing. They are the work of free souls and fierce, healing spirits who dared to sit, stitch, and imagine something beyond survival.

When these individual rounds are brought together, they form a wave, a movement, a rising, a reminder that change is never linear but always alive. The piece mirrors the circulatory nature of women's lives: cycles of loss and renewal, harm and hope, breaking and remaking. As the circles overlap, they become a visual language of connection. Thoughts, memories, and aspirations touch one another. Private stories become collective strength. Fragmented experiences find a place to rest in community.

This work stands as a testament to what happens when women gather, create, and reclaim space. It speaks to possibility, not as an abstract concept, but as something woven with hands, patience, colour, and care. In unifying these threads, the women of Catherine House offer us a vision of growth, resilience, and shared becoming.

This is more than an artwork.
It is a community rising.
A wave made of many hands.
A reminder that healing, like weaving, is something we do together.

Written by Tabitha Lean

Catherine House acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation.

Catherine House is located on Kaurna Land and we acknowledge the Kaurna people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past and present. Catherine House is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas, and their rich contribution to society.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

04	Our Supporters
05	Our History
06	About Catherine House
08	Who We Supported
09	Our Leadership
11	Intake Service
12	Waitlist Support Service
14	Accommodation Programs
16	Women's Centre
17	Education & Employment
18	Food Service & Housekeeping Support
19	Outreach Service
20	Brokerage Support
21	Our Holistic Model of Support

OUR SUPPORTERS

Government Partners



Major Service Partners



Trusts and Foundations



Corporate Supporters



Major Campaign Partners



OUR HISTORY

Catherine House was founded in 1988 by the Sisters of Mercy to address an unmet need for women experiencing homelessness in South Australia.

Originally supported by the South Australian Housing Trust and the City of Adelaide, Catherine House opened with just 12 rooms.

At Catherine House, we honour our long-standing connection to the Mercy tradition, inspired by the life and legacy of Catherine McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy. Named in her honour, our organisation carries forward her vision of compassion, dignity, and justice for women experiencing homelessness.

Catherine McAuley's unwavering commitment to walking alongside people experiencing hardship continues to guide our mission today. Her belief in practical mercy — offering shelter, education, and support — remains at the heart of everything we do.

We are proud to uphold this legacy, working alongside our community to create pathways toward hope, healing and a positive future for women who access our service in crisis.



Mercy International Centre in Dublin, Ireland

Catherine House and Housing Choices Australia

Catherine House became part of the Housing Choices Australia Group following a merger in 2021, reflecting a shared commitment to doing more together for women experiencing homelessness.

As a subsidiary, Catherine House Inc aligns to Housing Choices Australia's governance framework that ensures strong oversight, transparency and compliance across the group. Housing Choices supports the continued growth and impact of Catherine House through organisational capability and strong internal governance delivered through Housing Choices' National Supportive Services Directorate.

Being part of the Housing Choices Australia Group means:

- **Stronger housing pathways**
access to a broader range of long-term social and affordable housing.
- **Greater stability and sustainability**
shared governance, financial strength, systems and risk management that support service delivery.
- **Maintained specialisation**
Catherine House retains its strong brand, identity, values and specialist focus on supporting women.

For more about the Housing Choices Group, a link to the Group Annual Report is [here](#).



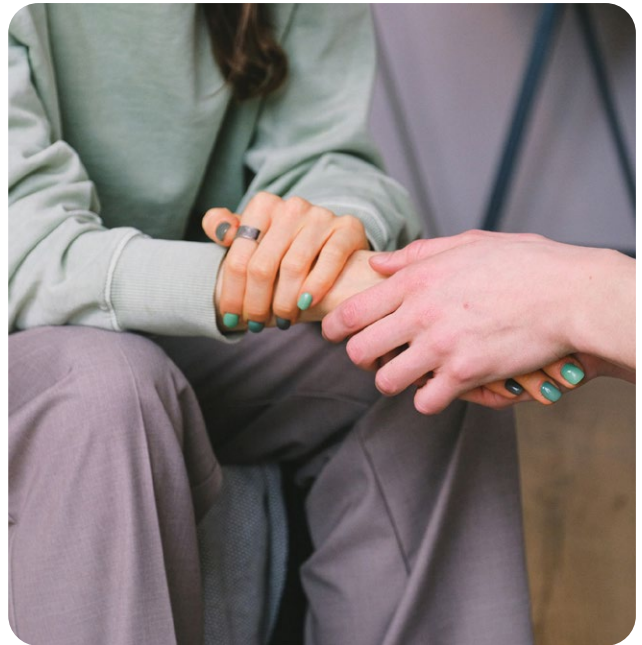
ABOUT CATHERINE HOUSE

Catherine House is South Australia's only homelessness and recovery service for women.

Our aim at Catherine House is to end homelessness for every woman who walks through our doors.

Catherine House offers person-centred support and trauma-informed care, focusing on clients' existing strengths and knowledge. Catherine House walks alongside women to address the immediate issues created by homelessness, and assists women in planning a future that helps them sustain housing and financial security, and build purposeful lives.

In addition to our accommodation services, Catherine House offers a number of support services to ensure each woman has the opportunities she needs to recover from a period of homelessness.



Our Support Services

When you are part of one of Catherine House's programs, you can also gain access to the following additional services:



Health services

On-site visiting dental and chiropractic services and referrals to partner services for other health needs.



Counselling services

Including drug and alcohol support through DASSA and Uniting Communities Streelink Plus.



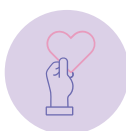
Mental health & NDIS support

Rehabilitation and support with chronic mental health conditions.



Legal and financial services

Immediate and ongoing financial management guidance and on-site visiting lawyers.



Brokerage support

A range of practical supports designed to remove barriers.



Wellbeing and personal development

Offered through our Women's Centre and Education & Employment Program.



CATHERINE HOUSE IS SO MUCH MORE THAN A **SAFE BED** AND A **MEAL**



Intake Service

A first point of contact for women in crisis. It involves compassionate listening and providing strategies and referrals to support women's immediate needs.



Waitlist Support Service

Support provided to women on our waitlist to minimise the impact of or prevent homelessness.



Crisis Accommodation Service

A safe and secure place where women work together with their case worker to access housing.



Supported Bail Program

Partnership with the Department for Correctional Services to provide supported accommodation for women on bail.



Mental Health Programs

Supported accommodation for women experiencing homelessness with a diagnosed mental health condition.



Women's Centre

A wellbeing space designed for women to engage in various courses and activities.



Education and Employment

Skill development, resume support, tutoring, opportunities to access TAFE, WEA, university or employment.

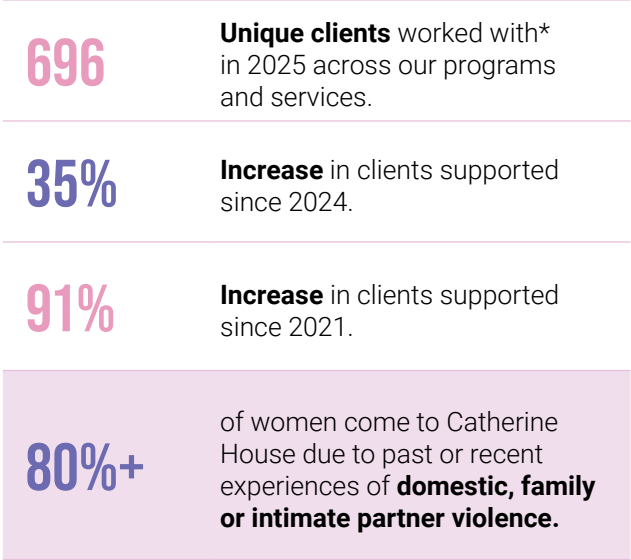


Outreach Support

Additional support for women leaving Catherine House, supporting their transition to living independently.

WHO WE SUPPORTED

Clients



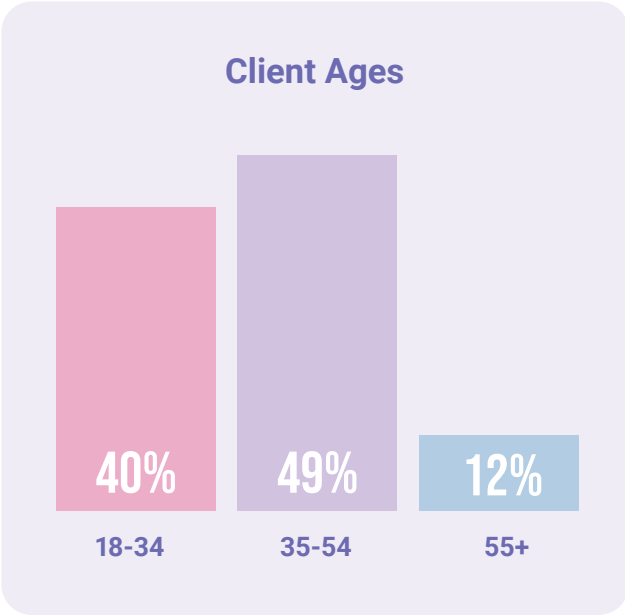
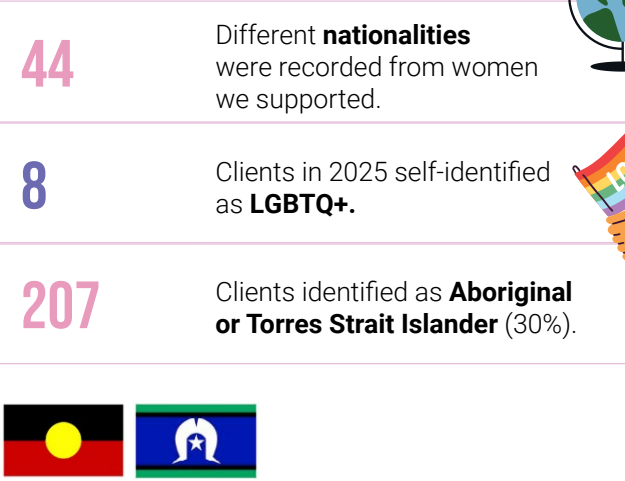
*"Worked with" is defined as having a Case Session recorded, following a meeting, interaction or service provided to, or on behalf of a client.

Enquiries

The chart below tracks how many individual women have reached out to our intake service at least once, showing a clear increase in our demand.



Client Demographics



Client Referrals

In 2025, **108 clients** received a referral to an external organisation. Clients were referred to a total of 186 different organisations, businesses, government departments, and support groups.

This highlights the person-centred, unique support and care plans of clients.

OUR LEADERSHIP



L–R: Jaylee Cooper, Julie Duncan, Deirdre Flynn

Julie Duncan

A passionate advocate for finding people homes and supporting people to keep a home and build a future, Julie has led Catherine House for the past 5 years. With a focus on securing long-term operational sustainability and a deep commitment to delivering more for women, Julie is currently overseeing the transformation to New Generation Catherine House – a flagship project re-imagining the delivery of accommodation and support for women experiencing homelessness in South Australia.

As the National Director of Supportive Services in the Housing Choices Group, Julie leads the supportive housing responses for the Group, including Common Ground Adelaide, supportive housing programs in Western Australia, and a National Tenancy Support Service. Prior to this, for nearly a decade, Julie was the General Manager of Housing Choices South Australia, overseeing two mergers, a social housing stock management transfer, and portfolio expansion from 192 properties to over 1,100 properties. Connecting homelessness responses to housing solutions is a driving passion.

Julie holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Graduate Certificate in Housing Management and Policy, a Graduate Diploma in Urban and Regional Planning, and a Graduate Certificate in Business Management.

Deirdre Flynn

Deirdre's personal values of social justice, integrity, and authenticity, along with her compassionate, reflective mindset, continue to provide the impetus to create change and opportunity for women not adequately supported and protected by society.

In her current role as Manager of Client Services at Catherine House, Deirdre has been able to influence the standards and ethos of all client services, creating a culture where clients are able to understand their past in ways that reveal their strengths, skills, and purpose for their future, enabling new meaning to be made of and in their lives.

Over a 20-year career, Deirdre has held key leadership roles in organisational oversight, service design, strategic and operational work, WHS, quality, risk management, and recruitment.

Deirdre holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Social Work, and an Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management.

Jaylee Cooper

Jaylee has worked in the not-for-profit sector for more than 20 years and has a deep passion to make a difference in the community.

Working across both small and large not-for-profits in South Australia, she has a deep understanding of the ongoing challenges charities face, particularly in the areas of day-to-day operations, finance, risk management, funding, and brand management.

She believes in the importance of having a strategic approach that aims to include positive government and supporter relationships, staff and volunteer satisfaction, financial and risk management, best practice fundraising, sustainability, and, importantly, growth.

Jaylee is a fellow of the Governor's Leadership Foundation.



INTAKE SERVICE



In 2025

988

Women reached out to our intake service **at least once**. This is 253 more enquiries than in 2024 (a 34% increase). Showing higher demand for our service since 2024, due to the rising cost of living and worsening housing crisis.

854

People downloaded our online **referral form**, an increase of 7.42% from 2024.

4,632

Times the **"need help" page** on our website was viewed, an increase of 15% from 2024.

8-12

Weeks is the average wait time before a bedroom is available.



At any given time,
there are approx
40-60 WOMEN
on our waitlist.

“

The intake worker was very friendly and made me feel understood. She was essential to making me feel welcome.

—Susie, Catherine House Client

WAITLIST SUPPORT SERVICE

In 2025, Catherine House saw a substantial increase in demand for our services, with more women seeking support because of the ongoing housing crisis.

In response to this growing need, in April 2024 we commenced a new pilot service to better assist women on our waitlist.

Now in its second year, the Case Worker has been able to assist more women. The service includes outreach support, referrals to relevant services, provision of emergency food or personal care items and brokerage funding to address specific needs, reducing hardship from homelessness and, where possible, preventing or shortening periods of housing instability.

Clients have expressed that they felt safe and that the Waitlist Support Worker was easy to talk to.

In 2025:

500

Intake/waitlist clients were provided with a **service**.

55%

Increase in demand from 2024 (323 clients).

138

referrals were made to 57 different organisations for 33 unique clients.

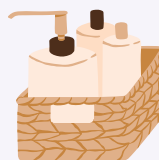
Women on our waitlist received:



Moving on packs



Mobile phones



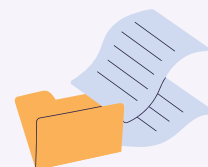
Toiletries



Personal alarms



Dental referrals



Housing application support



This innovative service was made possible by the generous support of the **Lang Family Foundation**. Their continued commitment to Catherine House has played a crucial role in ensuring women can be supported through what is often their greatest times of need.



ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMS



Our Support

40,071

Case Sessions were conducted in 2025. This is an increase of **4,028 sessions** from 2024.

13,603

Hours of support* were provided to clients.

266,832

Hours of support by client-facing staff in 24/7 accommodation settings.

543

Product orders were fulfilled for our clients.

295

Gift cards were provided to clients with a total value of \$15,180.

*'Support' in this context refers to direct time spent with a client or indirect time spent on tasks related to a client and their goals. It does not include the hours spent maintaining our 24/7 residential environment and any administration, food or cleaning services

Crisis Accommodation Program

Our Crisis Accommodation Service offers 24/7 support in a communal residential setting. It is a place of safety, rest, and renewal. Staff provide holistic, trauma-informed care, helping women rebuild hope and envision a future beyond crisis.

70%

of women **exited Catherine House** into stable housing.

“

When I first came to Catherine House, I couldn't believe how much support was on offer to me. I hadn't felt that supported in a very long time. My case worker spent so much time with me finding out about what I needed, what I wanted. It's hard for me to explain just how much that meant to me.

—Amanda, Catherine House Client



Permanent Supported Accommodation Program

Our Permanent Supported Accommodation Program is a distinctive service providing long-term housing in a communal residential setting and tailored support to women who are participants of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and living with mental health diagnoses.



As soon as I arrived, I felt a sense of belonging and security and thought this was my home and where I wanted to live. The shared meals and companionship have become pillars of my daily life, finally feeling a sense of community I thought I had lost. I am now reconnecting with my children and rebuilding my self-confidence.

– Anita, Catherine House Client

Recovery Program

Our Recovery Program is a unique service that provides individualised support and medium-term transitional accommodation for women experiencing homelessness, or unsustainable housing, who are living with a diagnosed mental health illness and complex needs.



I'm in an environment where I can flourish. It sort of feels like a domino effect on my life, improving in every aspect. At Catherine House, I know I always have someone in my corner, and I know I can ask for help when I need it. I have faith that if I fall down, I'm always going to get back up.

– Jasmine, Catherine House Client

Department for Correctional Services (DCS) – Bail Program

In partnership with the DCS, Catherine House offers a program for women exiting Adelaide Women's Prison.

The program includes:

- 4 live-in places within our accommodation service.
- 24/7 support.
- 3 months of outreach support.

Participants are assigned a case worker to help with their goals in housing, wellbeing, legal matters, relationships, education, employment, and community connection. This program offers a transformative opportunity for women to rebuild their lives.

Outreach Program

Our Outreach Service supports women transitioning from Catherine House into community housing, including eight nearby units. Eligible clients receive short-term outreach support to help establish stable tenancies and connect with their new communities.

Case workers collaborate with women to develop personalised goal plans, continuing progress made during their stay and supporting long-term success.

WOMEN'S CENTRE

Established in 2006, the Catherine House Women's Centre provides a safe space where women can learn, find friendships and engage in activities that support their health, wellbeing, confidence and overall recovery.

The Women's Centre features a kitchen, computer room, outdoor gardens and a large multi-purpose room. It creates a positive atmosphere that encourages women to take healthy 'risks', to try something new, extend their vision of what is possible for them, and build their confidence and self-belief.

In 2025:

354

Activities were held at the Women's Centre.

1,925

Attendances were recorded.

Activities we offer at the Catherine House Women's Centre:

- Meditation & mindfulness.
- Yoga & stretching.
- Art & music courses.
- ESL tutoring.
- Mentoring for public speaking.
- Financial literacy workshops.
- Computer & IT skills.
- Physical fitness classes.
- 'Staying Safe' workshops.
- Cyber security workshops.
- Sewing & weaving activities.
- Bingo.



“

I feel welcome. Whenever I come to the Women's Centre, it energises me to go and do things. Even today, if I walk in and I'm having a bad day, I will walk out having a great day.

– Raya, Catherine House Client

EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

Our education services develop skills such as literacy, numeracy, communication, critical thinking and job seeking.

Our life-changing course, Live Your Best Life & Plan for Your Future (LYBL&PFYF), enables women who have experienced trauma to learn that their voice matters. They build confidence and personal power to make decisions that will assist them to plan for a more positive future.

In 2025:

59

Clients worked with the Education & Employment Pathways Officer for education, employment or volunteering opportunities.

14

Clients received **laptops** for their education or employment needs.

86

Instances of our **Education Fund brokerage** utilised, to the value of \$8,688.

\$10,000

Kym Adey UniSA **Scholarship** awarded.

90%

of LYBL&PFYF course participants said they were **“very satisfied”**.

Client goals:

- Complete University Foundation course
- Obtain driver's licence
- Perform volunteer work
- Purchase a car
- Find paid employment
- Perform public speaking
- Gain custody of children

Employment Supporters

- John Holland Group
- Torrens To Darlington Alliance
- City of Adelaide
- Calvary Care
- RSPCA

Education Partners

- UniSA Scholarships and Grants Partnership – Kym Adey Catherine House-University of South Australia Scholarship
- Lyn Sarah Education Fund
- MumKIND

Education Supporters

- Skills SA
- CYBR
- TAFESA
- Adelaide Symphony Orchestra
- Ignition Foundation
- WEA

“

It's a transformation! I have gone from not seeing much good in the world to having pathways to what is good. Now I walk through life confidently, able to make good decisions for myself and able to advocate for myself. I trust I can make good decisions for myself. I'm able to say No. I'm able to recognise what doesn't sit right for me.

– Elisha, Catherine House Client

FOOD SERVICE & HOUSEKEEPING SUPPORT

At Catherine House, it is a priority for us to provide the women we support with fresh, nutritious food.

Ensuring women have access to high-quality food is incredibly valuable for their mental and physical health as well as their overall wellbeing.

In 2025, we provided:

37,000 **Meals** for the women we support across all programs and services.

5,508 Litres of **milk**.

1,796 Kilograms of **meat**.

825 Kilograms of **fruit and vegetables**.

665 Kilograms of **yoghurt**.

180 Frozen **meals**.

Food support:

88 Clients were able to collect **fresh fruit and vegetables**.

47 Clients received **a dry food hamper**.

70 Clients received **a Christmas hamper**.

143 **Outreach clients** received collections of food.

75 Boxes of food donated by **Adelaide's Finest Supermarket** for Christmas / Winter Food Drive.

63 Frozen meals supplied by **Adelaide's Finest Supermarket**.



Trin Beer, our in-house chef at Catherine House, preparing a meal for our residents.

Our team would not be able to complete their work without the wonderful partnerships that support our accommodation sites, kitchen, and client special events, these are (not limited to):



OUTREACH SERVICE

The Catherine House Outreach Service provides additional support to women exiting our programs to support their transition to living independently and connecting to their new community.

In 2025, our Outreach Service supplied:

47

Moving-On Packs,
to a total value of \$22,410

29

**Wyatt Trust Housing
Packages,** to a total value
of \$39,828



“

A year ago, I moved into my current house, a house I would not have without the help of Catherine House. I am so incredibly grateful for everything they have done and continue to do for me and vulnerable women in our community. The work they do is life-changing, and in a lot of cases, life-saving. I honestly don't know what my life would look like if it wasn't for Catherine House.

– Hailey, Catherine House Client



L–R: Julie Duncan, Zoe Heacock, Jaylee Cooper and Noah Yang.

We Are Mobilise partnership

Women who have left Catherine House have received financial assistance through the Kickstarter and Mobilise Pay programs. These programs have provided women with the opportunity to strengthen their financial independence as they continue their journey out of homelessness.

In 2025, We Are Mobilise supported:

35

Women supported,
with 26 dependents.

378

Weeks of housing covered
from Kickstarter distributions
(7+ years).

\$55,000+

Kickstarter distributions.

\$70,000+

Total distributions.

 **MOBILISE**

BROKERAGE SUPPORT

At Catherine House, brokerage refers to the flexible use of funds to purchase or arrange goods, services, or supports that are not otherwise available through mainstream funding, but are essential to a woman's safety, stability, wellbeing, or transition out of homelessness.

Brokerage is used to respond to individual needs in a timely, person-centred way, removing barriers and enabling access to practical supports that support independence and long-term outcomes.

Clients supported by Catherine House have access to a range of practical supports designed to remove barriers, increase safety, and build stability.

These supports can be provided through brokerage funding (where Catherine House purchases goods or services on behalf of the client) or through pro bono partnerships (where a service provider offers their goods or services at no cost).

504

Instances of **brokerage** accessed in 2025.



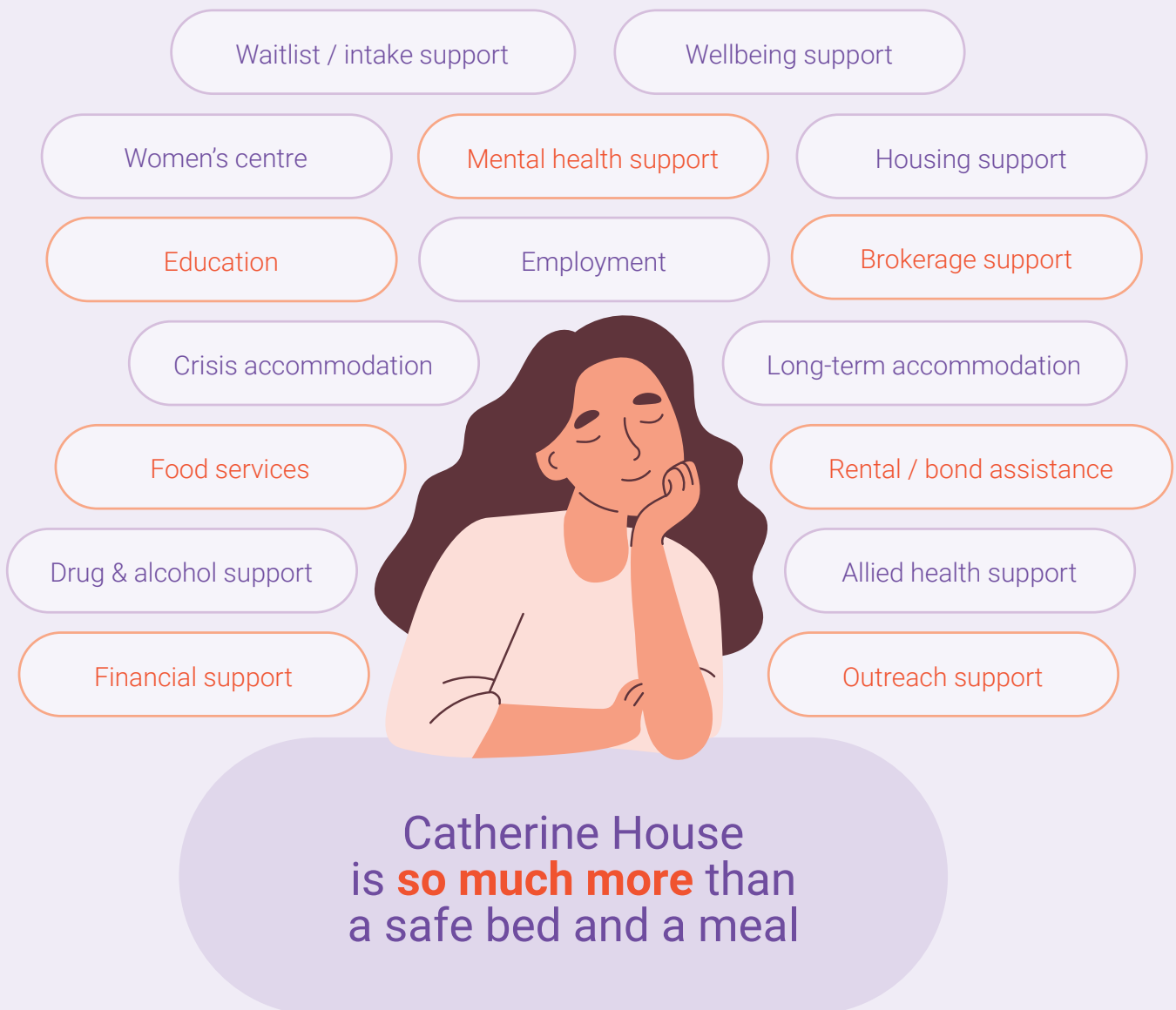
Brokerage support can be provided through:

- Safety and crisis support
- Housing and accommodation support
- Household essentials
- Vehicle and transport costs
- Communication and technology tools
- Identification documentation costs
- Medical appointments
- Health and wellbeing expenses
- Education, skill development and recreational expenses
- Infant and children's expenses

With thanks to our supporters:

- Electrical Whitegoods Centre
- DV Safe Phones
- Good 360
- Electranet
- Health Partners
- Orbe
- Community Outreach Dental Program
- Adelaide Plastic Surgery
- Australian Chiropractic College
- We Are Mobilise

OUR HOLISTIC MODEL OF SUPPORT





The 'What Women Hold' Exhibition – Kerry Packer Civic Gallery

This collaborative exhibition celebrated the resilience, creativity, and courage of women who have experienced homelessness. Through art and storytelling, we provided the opportunity for participants with lived experience to challenge stigma, foster empathy, and inspire collective responsibility for change.

Catherine House will continue to champion the voices of women, advocate for systemic and community change, and work collaboratively with partners to ensure every woman has the opportunity to live safely, with dignity and hope.



Weaving Artwork

This year, Catherine House hosted a collaborative weaving project led by a First Nations woman with lived experience of homelessness, domestic and family violence, and incarceration. The project centred Aboriginal weaving techniques and ways of making, creating a calm, creative space where women could gather, learn, talk, and connect at their own pace. Each participant contributed a woven circular piece, reflecting her own story, energy, and creativity, to the collaborative art piece.

As the sessions unfolded, the weaving became more than an art activity. It became a place for conversation, cultural exchange, and community building. Working with Aboriginal weaving practices opened space for women to yarn about culture, and to ask questions they may not have felt comfortable raising in other settings. These informal, peer-led conversations supported understanding, respect, and connection between the women attending.

The project also provided space for honest and meaningful discussions about domestic violence, incarceration, homelessness and life after prison. Women spoke openly about their concerns and assumptions, and these were met with care, insight, and lived experience knowledge. Through these conversations, participants gained a deeper understanding of the systemic challenges faced by women in different circumstances to theirs and reflected on how compassion and solidarity strengthen shared living spaces.

The final collaborative artwork brings together dozens of individually woven circles into a flowing, wave-like form. Each piece is unique, yet together they form a unified whole, symbolising resilience, healing, and collective strength. The weaving project highlights the power of culturally grounded, peer-led programs that foster belonging, learning, and connection, and reflects Catherine House's commitment to community-centred, trauma-informed practice.

Written by Tabitha Lean

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in **February 2026**.



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