

# HEALTHY HOMES INITIATIVE



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## The link between housing and health

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- Cold, damp, crowded homes can increase the risk of respiratory issues and other preventable health conditions, such as throat infections, rheumatic fever, skin infections, tuberculosis and meningococcal disease.
  - This leads to:
    - increased costs to the health system (GP visits and ambulatory hospital visits)
    - greater sick days off school for children, and off work parents
    - reduced disposable income from increased heating, healthcare costs and reduced employment-related income.
  - Evidence shows that improved housing can lead to improved health outcomes ***within a few months*** (Howden-Chapman et al, 2007).
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## In 2013...

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1 in 7 children  
aged 0-14 were  
living in crowded  
homes

Of these children,  
1/3 were living in  
severely crowded  
households

Over 40% of  
Pacific children  
were living in  
crowded homes

25% of Maori  
children were  
living in crowded  
homes

*Statistics New Zealand, 2013*

## Household crowding

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- Crowding does not ***directly*** cause infectious disease
- But crowding increases exposure to pathogens (McNicholas et al., 2000)
- Children living in crowded homes are at greater risk of infectious diseases than older household members (Goodyear et al., 2011).

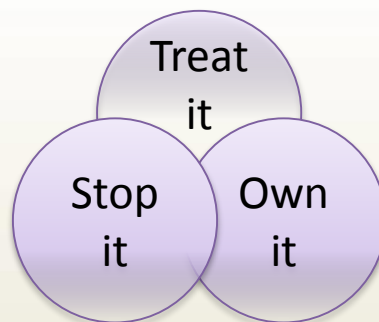


## Rheumatic Fever Prevention Programme



*Preventing Rheumatic Fever*

- There is a correlation between housing crowding and rheumatic fever and we think this is because crowded housing conditions increases the transmission rates of GAS throat infections, the necessary precursor to rheumatic fever.
- Most GAS throat infections get better and don't lead to rheumatic fever. However, in a small number of people an untreated strep throat leads to rheumatic fever.
- New Zealand has high rates of rheumatic fever.
- Māori and Pacific children and young adults (aged 4–19 years) have the highest rates of rheumatic fever.



- 40-50% of new cases do not report sore throats – so we need to stop sore throats happening in the first place. Our priority was to therefore reduce the transmission of GAS, by reducing household crowding

## Healthy Homes Initiatives across 11 DHB regions



- HHIs were established as part of the Rheumatic Fever Prevention Programme
- Started in Auckland in December 2013 and expanded to the other high rheumatic fever incidence DHBs in March 2015
- In October 2016, the breadth of the programme was expanded beyond crowding to warm, dry, healthy homes for pregnant mothers and 0-5 year olds

## HHI eligibility criteria

- Low income
- NZ citizen or permanent resident in the house

### Rheumatic fever

1. A child (0-14) hospitalised overnight with an indicator condition (Hospital); or
2. A person in the house is eligible to receive monthly penicillin injections as a result of a past episode of RF (Prophylactic Penicillin Services); or
3. 3 or more episodes of GAS pharyngitis within a household within a 3 month period (Sore throat management services);

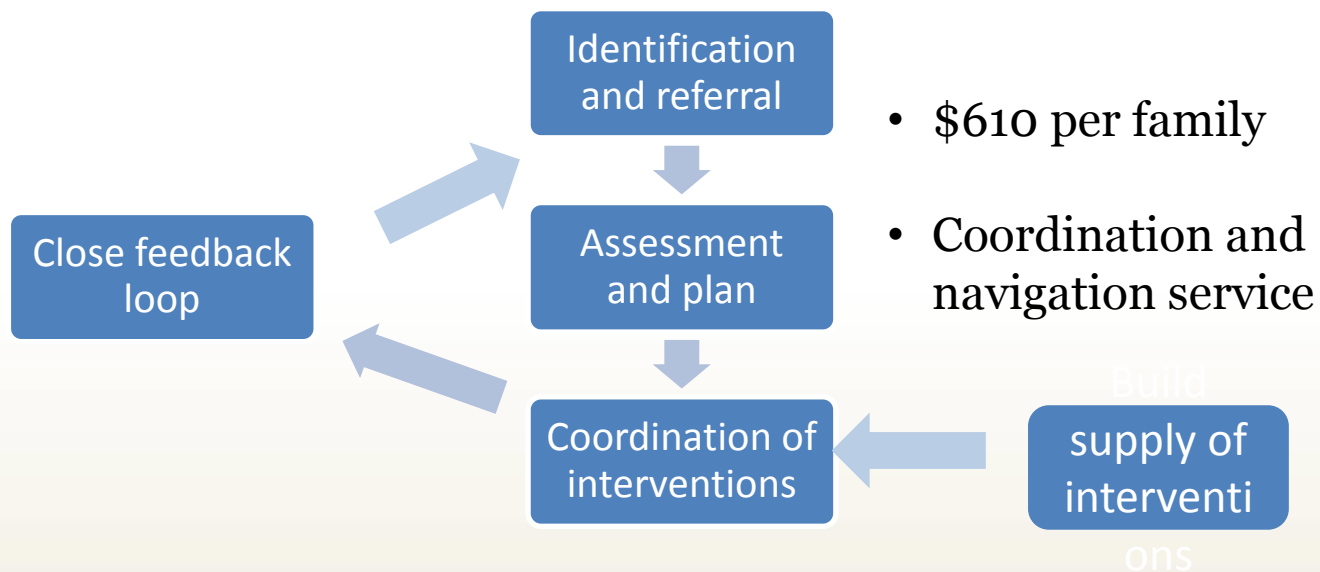
#### **AND:**

- At least one other child/young person (0-19 years) living in household; and
- Evidence of ***structural or functional crowding***

### At-risk 0-5 year olds

1. Those aged 0-5 hospitalised for an indicator condition; or
2. Priority population of 0-5s (families with children aged 0-5 for whom at least 2 of the following risk factors apply: CYP finding of abuse or neglect; caregiver with a Corrections history; mother has no formal qualifications; and long term benefit receipt); or
3. At risk pregnant women/ new mothers

## The role of HHIs





## A comprehensive approach to housing

### *Improving how people live in the house (including affordability)*



- Warmer, drier homes
- Creating space between sleeping children
- Budgeting support

### *Improving the things in the house*



- Curtains and curtain rails
- Floor coverings
- Heating source
- Beds/bedding

### *Improving the quality of the house*



- Repairs
- Insulation (ceiling and underfloor)
- Mechanical ventilation

### *Clarifying the needs of who lives in the house*

- Identifying the needs of multiple families
- On-referrals

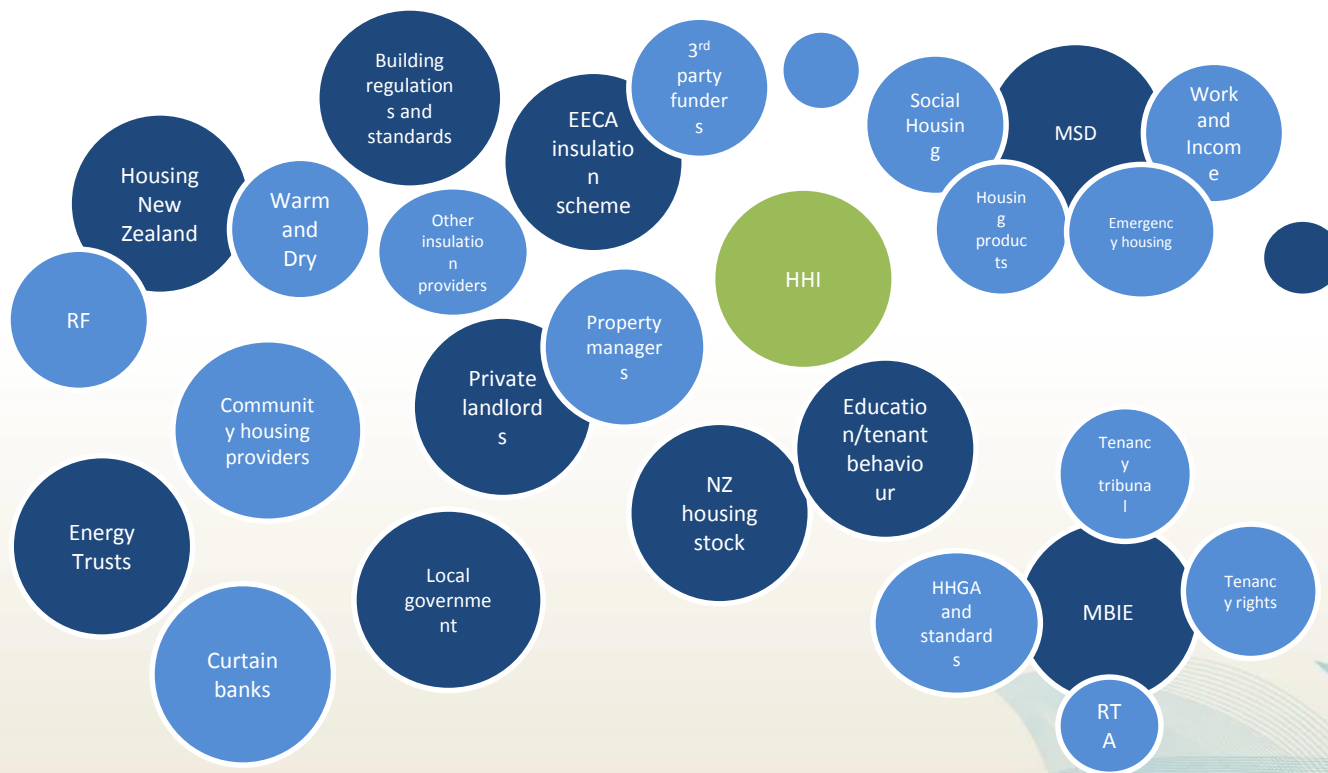


### *Getting another house if required*







- Own home
- Suitable private rental
- Social housing
- Temporary housing
- Emergency housing

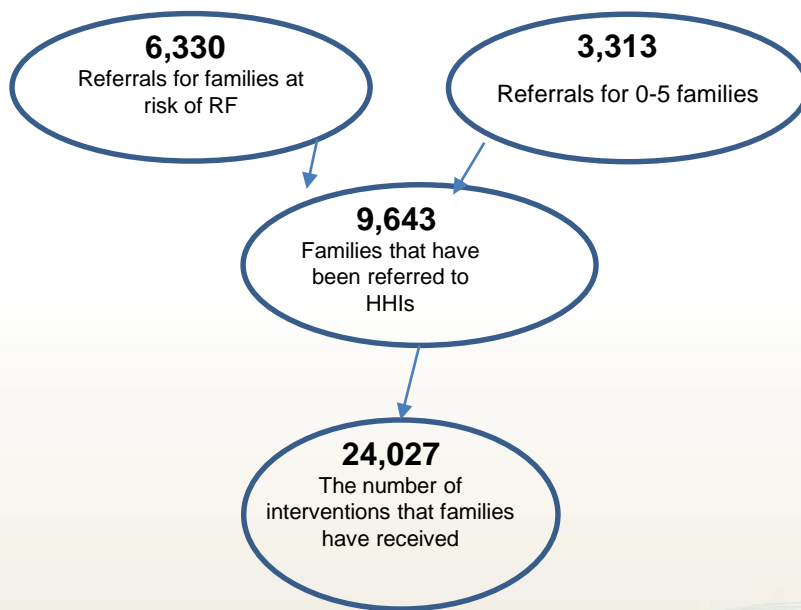
## The wider housing system is complex



## Cross-agency collective impact

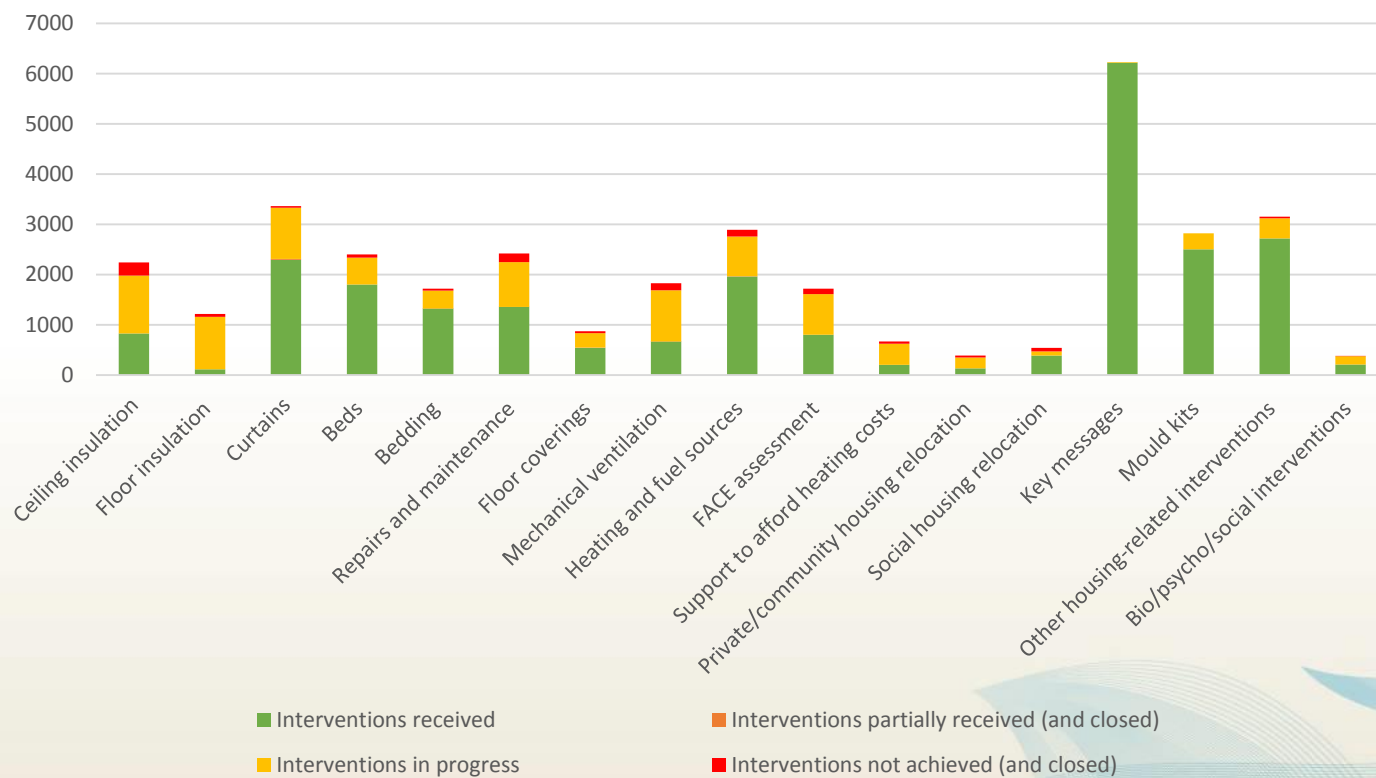
 <p>MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA</p>	 <p>Housing New Zealand Housing New Zealand Corporation</p>	 <p>MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION &amp; EMPLOYMENT HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI</p>	 <p>EECA Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority Te Tari Tiaki Pūngao</p>
<p>All HHI families are entitled to a Full and Correct Entitlement (FACE) Assessment with Work and Income</p> <p>Some families are eligible for the Rheumatic Fever Fast Track into social housing</p>	<p>Families living in HNZ properties are able to access (usually within 90 days):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insulation</li> <li>• Heating sources</li> <li>• Curtains</li> <li>• Mechanical ventilation (kitchen and bathroom)</li> <li>• Floor coverings</li> </ul> <p>Minor repairs via 0800 number</p>	<p>Referral processes to the MBIE compliance team for tenancy information, advice and escalation</p>	<p>Access to insulation under the current scheme</p>

## National overview to date\*



\*as at 31 December 2017

## Status of HHI Interventions



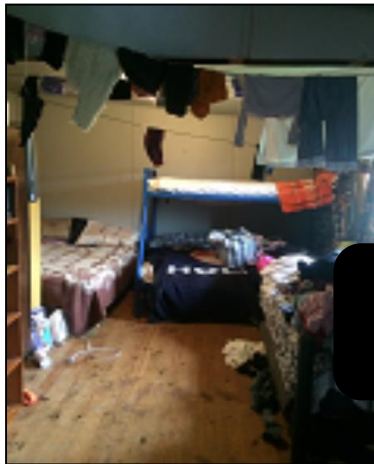




Mould



Broken  
gutters



Drying  
washing  
inside



Holes in  
roof

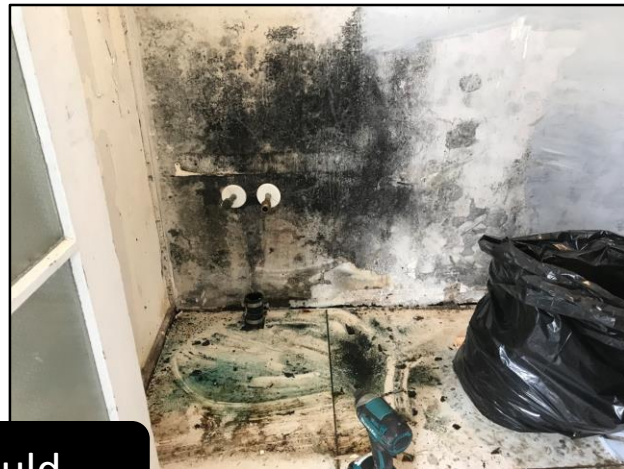
Broken windows



Blocked gutters



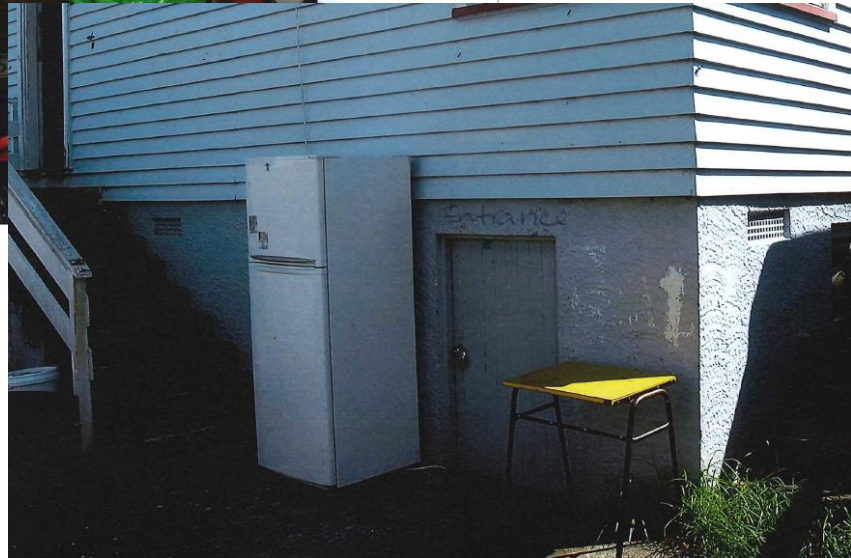
Black mould

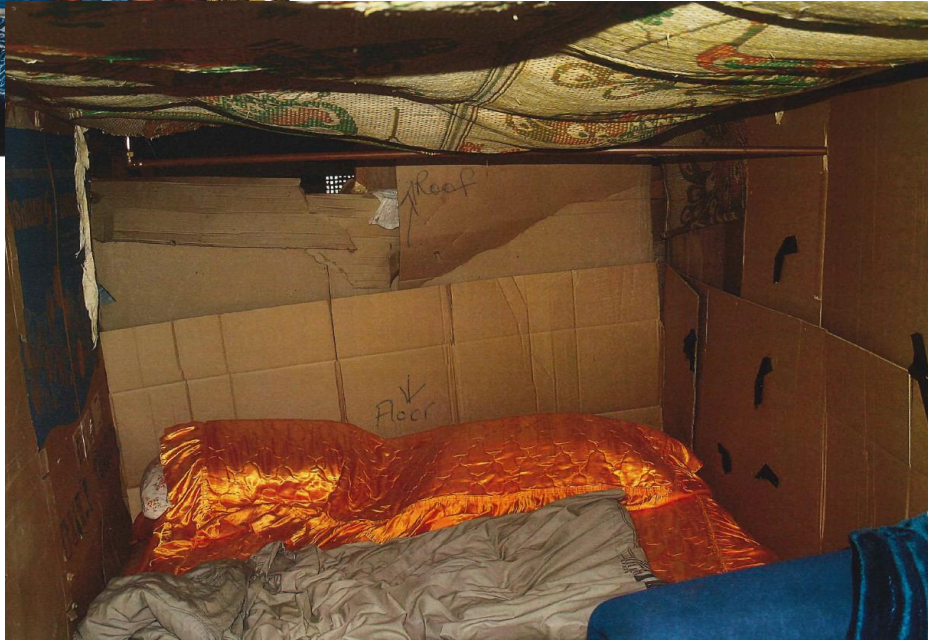
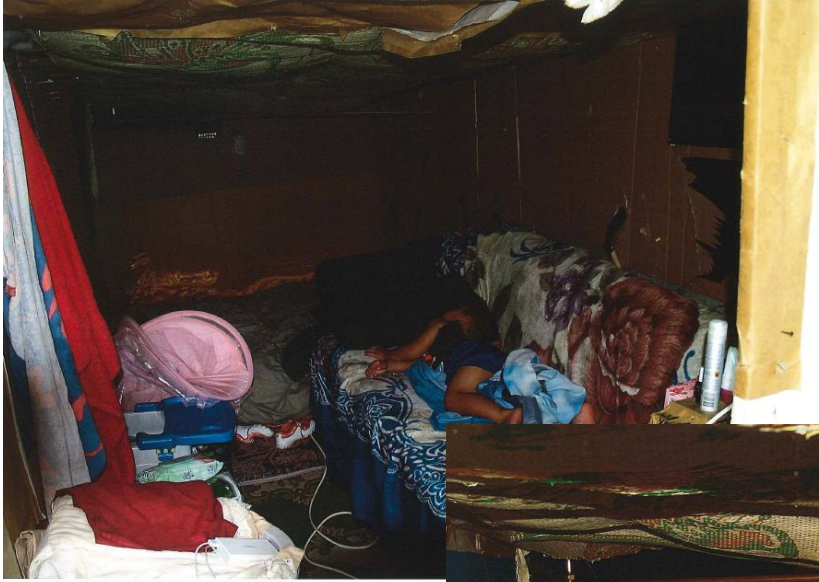




Rotten and mouldy  
floors





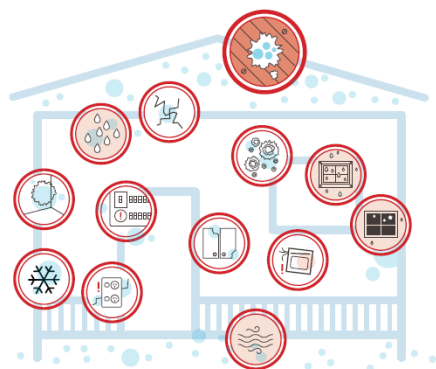




## Learnings from co-design process

### Healthy Homes Initiative – Auckland

Co-design: making Auckland homes warmer and drier



The  
Southern  
Initiative

Report on Stage 1  
October 2015 – September 2016

- Legislation will not be enough to spur some landlords into action...early trends show that some landlords will need to be “managed into compliance”
- Many landlords are reluctant to undertake regular property maintenance and will need considerable help and advice to achieve standards
- Tenants are scared to speak out for fear of eviction or rent rises
- Some families don’t think they deserve a warm and dry home, and some have stopped asking for repairs