ACT Shelter

Working together for housing justice

Working with People with High and Complex Needs in Homelessness Services & the ACT Housing Asset Assistance Program

Evidence Review

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Acknowledgement of Country

ACT Shelter acknowledges we live, walk and work on the lands of the Ngunnawal/Ngambri people. We pay our respects to their Elders - past, present, and emerging.

We note Canberra's significance as a meeting place for neighbouring people: the Gundungurra to the north, the Ngarigo to the south, the Yuin on the coast, and the Wiradjuri inland.

As clan nations of the oldest, continuing cultures in the world, we celebrate their enduring custodianship of the Capital Region. Sovereignty was never ceded. This land is, was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

We acknowledge the significant gap between housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the broader population, here in Canberra. There is an urgent need, to close that gap, to improve the emotional, physical, social, and spiritual health and wellbeing of Canberrans who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We respect the principles of self-determination and the need to do with, not for, or to, First Australians.

ACT Shelter was established in 1986 by advocates who were working together for housing justice.

In that spirit, we commit to amplifying community voices through our systemic advocacy and reminding elected representatives of the promises they made in the Closing the Gap agreement they signed with the Commonwealth, and the need to make good on those promises.

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Introduction

Our interest in this review and the co-design process

ACT Shelter is the peak housing body in the ACT. It is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the ACT Government to represent the interests of our members and provide advocacy and strategic advice on systemic issues affecting housing consumers in the ACT. We are an informed and independent voice on housing policy issues affecting the ability of people on low, moderate or no incomes to have an affordable, safe and secure home.

Since the release of *The Road Map* in 2009, ACT Shelter has played an active role in bringing evidence to the table to demonstrate it is both economically and socially responsible to prioritise preventing and ending homelessness, rather than *managing* it or ameliorating its worst elements through a conventional crisis based response.

ACT Shelter has a longstanding interest in this area, having contributed reports in 2014 on the *Collaboration of Homelessness and Mainstream Services*, in 2016, a proposal to assess the feasibility of implementing Trauma Informed Practice in Homelessness Service Delivery and a report stepping out the how and what needs to be done to reorient our homelessness response to trauma ware, informed or responsive, depending on the service response or the point in the system at which the response is delivered.

We view our 2014 on the *Collaboration of Homelessness and Mainstream Services,* our 2016 proposal to assess the feasibility of implementing Trauma Informed Practice in Homelessness Service Delivery, and the 2018 sector mapping and stepped implementation reports as previous contributions to the Territory specific evidence base on supporting people with higher intensity support requirements in the homelessness service system.

As a peak body whose primary reason for existing is improving access to and outcomes

from the housing system, our view is it takes a home to end homelessness, and - for some people - housing focused support to prevent its recurrence. In declaring that, we note that Canberrans who would benefit most from the service response being commissioned following the co-design process may require some degree of ongoing support requirements from multiple service systems to support them to remain stably housed. Indeed this may be the primary motivating factor for commissioning the service.

Finally, the Housing First example that features prominently in the pages below and the Canadian Cost-Benefit Analyses included towards the end of this document are examples of what ACT Shelter sought to replicate through Scoping the costs and benefits of affordable housing in the ACT which was co-funded by a dozen of our members including peaks and providers. As part of this work ACT Shelter examined the per instance cost of accommodating and treating people in similar settings in 2021. We are interested in understanding whether accounting or budget treatment of different portfolio areas in Australia and the ACT renders the cost-benefit analyses by AHURI and other researchers less relevant in Australia than in other countries. This is a genuine query. Since the White Paper, there has been a lot of effort directed at demonstrating that housing focused solutions to end homelessness and then keep people housed are best practice.

What we have not seen however, is the quantum of investment in both multiunit and scatter site housing projects to make good on promises.[1] While we are conscious that land is expensive and that property charges, sales, tax revenue is the principal own source revenue for the ACT, we are interested in getting a better sense through the Commissioning approach of why it is that these cost-benefit analyses do not appear to stack up for Treasury when formulating Budget measures. While our sample size for case studies of people experiencing homelessness was too small to be representative, what it did highlight were the high costs of involvement in health and justice systems and the retraumatising that can occur within both.

With 2023 bringing the promise of an enhanced focus on housing and homelessness at a national level, we are pleased to have been invited to make the following contribution to furthering these efforts through this Evidence Review.

Situational context

Before providing insights reports from the data and literature/evidence on contemporary good practice, we begin by providing some situational contextual analysis of housing and homelessness in the ACT using Census data.

Housing tenure in the ACT (2021)

With a population of just over 454,000 usual residents on Census night in 2021, the ACT is one of the smaller jurisdictions. Nevertheless housing demand pressures are substantial and Canberra has held a position as one of the most unaffordable housing markets in the country for many years, particularly for people who rent.

[1] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/How does a lack of access to housing undermine Housing First

In the ACT:

On Census night, about 2.1% of respondents did not state their tenure type and 0.4% were enumerated as experiencing homelessness..[2]

Currently, Canberra:

- Is the most expensive capital city in which to rent a house[3];
- The second most expensive place in the country to rent a unit[2]
- Has the highest rate of rental stress among lower income private rental households at 73%[4];
- Is the least affordable capital city for low-income households[5]; and
- Since December 2021, has the second second highest median house price, exceeding Melbourne[6].
- The high concentration of our workforce in defence, education and the public sector contributes to income quintiles that cut out at $55k, $97k, $139k.
- Between the 2016 and 2021 Census counts, the proportion of people who own or were purchasing their home remained about the same.
- Private rental continued to experience growth as a housing tenure, on the back of stronger than projected population growth and apartment clusters in the Belconnen, Gungahlin, Tuggeranong and Woden town centres.
- Of the 34%[3] of Canberrans who rent, 28.1% are in private rental or sub-market affordable accommodation, up from 25.7% in 2016. 5.9% of tenants are in social housing, either owned and managed by the public landlord, or headleased through the Housing Asset Assistance Program.

Homelessness in the ACT - Census count and use of specialist services

Like other jurisdictions, expressed demand for accommodation at One Link housing and homelessness central intake services, exceeds immediate capacity in our homelessness accommodation system.

After years of small but steady decreases in the number of people who were assisted by specialist homelessness services, use increased by about nine per cent in early to mid 2020. This increase was trackable because National Cabinet approved the requirement that service providers submit monthly data on people experiencing homelessness or presenting at imminent risk of homelessness they assisted from June onwards. There were significant concerns homelessness, particularly a consequence of abuse, domestic

[2] https://www.domain.com.au/research/rental-report/december-2022/#canberra
[3] These numbers are inferred as a significant minority of people who complete census and other forms do not state their housing tenure but do state they pay rent. The amount paid per week is a useful indicator of whether private, affordable, or social.

and family violence and family breakdown triggered by limiting valid reasons for being outside your principal residence.

This was in the aftermath of a sharp rise in unemployment triggered by Public Health Biosecurity Emergency Declaration Requirements at a National and Territory level requiring Canberrans who could work from home and businesses deemed non-essential to cease 2021 as concerns about COVID delta breaching our road border with outbreaks spreading in regional NSW culminating in detection here of the first cases of community transmission in August 2021, a week AFTER the 2021 Census of Population and Housing was conducted.

Prevalence estimates of homelessness by operational category

The Census is used to derive a prevalence (point in time) estimate of the number of people in the 5 categories of accommodation or the lack of it, it found:

- 862 of the 1,777 people counted as experiencing homelessness in the ACT on Census night were accommodated in government funded specialist homelessness services. This equates to about 48% of the total.
- In most jurisdictions about 1 in 3 people enumerated as experiencing homelessness are staying in severely overcrowded households. In the ACT that proportion was closer to 1 in 4 in 2016 and remained so in 2021, despite a small increase in the number of people in the category.
- The next largest group in the ACT were people staying temporarily with other households. As with national trend data, the number of Canberrans in this category declined slightly between 2016 and 2021.
- The number of people staying in boarding houses on Census night in the ACT increased from 97 in 2016 to 139 in 2021. ACT Shelter has sought clarification from the ABS as to the localities of people enumerated in this category. We are aware that both Ainslie Village and Havelock had few vacancies at the time the Census was conducted so it may be that the increase is confined to those two sites.
- The number of people in the improvised dwellings, and people sleeping outside remained largely unchanged between 2016 and 2021 with 53 Canberrans enumerated using short forms in 2021.

Background

Commissioning for better outcomes for people with higher intensity support needs and histories of cyclical homelessness has been identified by Housing ACT as a priority area of focus in the investment in the design of a new homelessness service delivery system. This is not a new focus for HACT or the ACT, as we will highlight as context for this work. Housing ACT is interested in examining evidence of contemporary good practice to support people to achieve better outcomes when support periods end or they are allocated a home via Housing ACT after a prolonged period without one, through institutionalisation, or a combination of structural and experiential factors.

Housing ACT provided a data snapshot drawn from reports submitted for the July to December 2022 period by ACT based Specialist Homelessness Services (summary in Appendix 6) that validates what service provider representatives articulated during the

Commissioning for Better Outcomes online co-design workshops ACT Shelter attended[4].

The data confirms a significant minority of clients with multiple and high intensity health and social support needs are presenting to homelessness services requiring accommodation and support services that may or may not be possible to provide on site or refer clients to. This is because other service systems such as alcohol, tobacco and other drugs[5], family therapeutic intervention[6], household organisation and management of expenses[7], mental and primary health[8] and trauma informed and responsive services[9] are, like homelessness and social housing, usually operating at, or above capacity, and there are waiting lists and triaging.

ACT Shelter has also been informed over a number of years about another key barrier being the need to 'speak the right language' to secure referrals. It is a criticism levelled back at housing and homelessness services by the same service systems our members contend require their workers to use clinical or health jargon that is not in their vocabulary. This Commissioning effort may provide an opportunity for buy-in from both the Community Services and Health Directorates as a means of overcoming the 'right language gap'.

ACT Shelter also notes there are planned projects under way focused on a common assessment and referral platform, expanding data collection and enhancing centralised intake we assert are all relevant to the co-design of a dedicated response for people engaged with multiple service systems with high intensity support needs who are clients of specialist homelessness services or tenants in Housing Asset Assistance Program properties. Indeed the common assessment/shared access platform body of work[10] would seem to be of significant benefit to people engaged with multiple service systems.

ACT Shelter understands Housing ACT has identified people with acquired brain injury[11], complex trauma[12], psychosocial disabilities[13], severe and enduring mental illness[14],high frequency or problematic substance use disorders[15], or combinations of some or all of the aforementioned as likely recipients of the commissioned service response for people with complex needs. We also recognise the work by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate and Housing ACT in partnership with AHURI[16] which informed the

[4] Homelessness and Housing - Commissioning
[5] Programs & Services – Directions
[6] Child, Youth and Family Services Program - Commissioning
[7] https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/financial-information-service
[8] Canberra Health Services
[9] Trauma responsive practice - Education
[10] Best Case Management Software - 2023 Reviews, Pricing & Demos
[11] Acquired brain injury (ABI) | healthdirect
[12] What is Complex Trauma?
[13] Psychosocial Disability | DACSSA
[14] What are complex mental health issues?
[15] Substance abuse | healthdirect
[16] Exiting prison with complex support needs: the role of housing assistance

Justice Reform Initiative. Noting the important role stable housing outcomes with security of tenure can play in mitigating

Methodology and source material

To inform this review, ACT Shelter undertook a web based review of contemporary findings from homelessness and housing research, policy and program evaluations and limited consultations with equivalent peak organisations in six states, and the NT. ACT Shelter has focused largely on academic research findings for this review. The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute provides volumes of information on a broad spectrum of topics, including homelessness and housing options for people the market fails. We examined relevant online portals from Aotearoa/NZ, Canada, England, The European Union, Scotland and the United States.

We also consulted with colleagues at peak bodies in other states and territories (the Shelter network, the Council to Homeless Persons in Victoria and Homelessness NSW). Relevant examples are listed under each State and Territory (page 35). Appendices include summaries of the main policy, program and research papers published between 2019 and 2023 (Appendix 4) and a summary of data from the 1 July 2022 - 31 December 2022 reporting period provided by Housing ACT (Appendix 6)

Commissioning for Better Outcomes - complexity of need

It is often posited that homelessness can happen to anyone. Homelessness Australia would characterise the majority of people who rent their accommodation as potentially 2 pay cheques and/or a significant event away from homelessness. For most people, structural factors play the biggest role in one's experience of homelessness although personal history and individual characteristics also play a role.

Structural factors include: the growing gap between the rich and the poor, a lack of affordable housing, low social assistance and other income supports, low vacancy rates and discrimination (including racism, sexism, homophobia and ageism).

Personal history and individual characteristics include: catastrophic events, loss of employment, family break up, physical or mental health issues, substance use by oneself or family members, a history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, and current or past involvement in the child welfare system. Homelessness exists in every community.

There are many pathways into and out of homelessness[17]. ACT Shelter has previously argued the only commonality amongst people experiencing homelessness is that they lack access to safe, secure and affordable housing. The complexity of need has been a consistent feature of the recent commissioning conversations. As noted in the 2022 Homelessness Commissioning Insights Report[18]:

> *Responding to complexity and individual needs*
>
> *Homelessness exacerbates other vulnerabilities and can have profound effects on mental health needing longer-term recovery.*

[17] https://demography.cass.anu.edu.au/events/pathways-out-and-through-homelessness
[18] p8 Homelessness and Housing - Commissioning

The ability of service providers to be able to respond to clients with complex needs was a consistent feature of conversations. It was clear that this did not just require a homelessness sector response but required a cross-sector response including services such as mental health, counselling (trauma) and alcohol and other drugs. This was also noted as a key requirement for people transitioning between services, such as those with disabilities accessing homelessness services as well as primary care requirements, for people transitioning between AMC and homelessness services and for young people exiting foster care.

This requires an integrated, person-centred response (remove the siloing of service providers) to support shared clients with complex needs. Discussion focused on the need for integrated services that use a trauma informed approach to provide greater flexibility and wrap around services that can recognise and respond to complexity and individual needs. Eligibility, referrals and intake featured in discussions, as did the use of multidisciplinary panels, and the need for a consistent framework both within the sector and cross-sector. This will streamline processes and create uniformity; however, it is important that complexity of individual circumstances can be responded to within these processes. A two-tier assessment approach was suggested.

Our Objective

The desire to respond to these needs has led to extensive work across the country and internationally. This work provides a sound evidence base for the development of appropriate models of housing and support in the ACT.

The objective of this research paper is to be a resource to inform the next stage of the commissioning cycle. It will provide a brief overview of previous work and where we are now for context (as detailed in Project Proposal 6 Feb 2023).

Home Territory - Building on previous efforts

Since 2004, the ACT Government has identified people with higher intensity support needs and histories of cyclical homelessness as a priority group within its public tenant profile and the total number of Canberrans supported by homelessness services. Specific interventions to better meet their needs were articulated in the 2004 ACT Homelessness Strategy, *Breaking the Cycle*. That document prepared the ACT for the three pillars that would underpin the *New Approach to Homelessness* outlined in the 2008 Australian Government White Paper, *The Road Home*.

In its 2009 response, *The Road Map,* the ACT was able to direct all of the new National Partnership funding that came with it to new initiatives. The focus of the ACT was on preventing exits into homelessness at 'transition points' known to be associated with higher risk of homelessness, and was supported by the *A Place to Call Home* Initiative, DVCS security upgrades program. The First Point Central Intake Service, Housing and Support Initiative,the Managed Exits program, Our Place and Street to Home service were examples of new service models funded to support white paper interim targets.

The diagram below is taken from the Discussion Paper *Towards a New ACT Housing Strategy and outlines key documents and policy and systemic changes preceding the 2018 ACT Housing Strategy publication*

Cohort Study – accommodation options for people with high & complex needs

This work is a useful reference for context and background. It was commissioned by the Directorate to examine future accommodation options for people with high and complex needs who were accommodated in congregate settings – like Ainslie Village, Brian Hennesy House and Havelock House. ACT Shelter was represented on the Cohort Study Reference Group together with ACTCOSS and housing and homelessness provider reps. The group provided local evidence about the service delivery system in the ACT and the characteristics of people in the aforementioned congregate settings and homelessness refuges.

This Study informed the findings of the Final Report from the Cohort Study- future accommodation options for people with high & complex needs (2019) [19] prepared by Professor Cameron Parsell and his team from the University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research. The aim of the Cohort Study was to 'contribute to the development of a conceptual framework which can guide future asset and service planning and delivery for homeless and at-risk people in the ACT community with particular attention to people with high and complex needs'. The study was commissioned by the ACT Government in 2018 and it:

- provided an overview and profile of the greater 'at-risk' and homeless population in the ACT, including different groups within that population
- identified the specialist care, support and accommodation requirements of at-risk and homeless people within that population, based on their identified risks and needs and with particular attention to the needs of people who may require tailored and sustained support
- evaluated support and accommodation models and program initiatives in terms of their suitability and success in addressing those requirements
- reviewed and assessed a range of assessment tools for conceptualising need and appropriate responses and for understanding the status and needs of individuals who require support, and make recommendations regarding the suitability of those tools for the ACT context.

The study scope included:

- an analysis of currently available qualitative and quantitative data on the at-risk and homeless population in the ACT (including people currently supported in long-term accommodation who have experienced homelessness) and the identification of significant issues (such as data linkages) or gaps which may have implications for the effective design and delivery of support and housing responses
- a profile of the characteristics of the at-risk and homeless population and of the different groups that make up that population, including an analytical framework for cohort segmentation (for example, by age, gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, physical and mental health status, history of substance abuse, or traumatic life experience, including domestic violence or imprisonment, or foster care)
- an analysis of current and future 'demand', and of 'unmet' demand, for services and accommodation by the at-risk and homeless population, including the impact on demand of the ACT as a regional centre
- an analysis of the specific support and accommodation needs and requirements of the identified cohort segments, including factors such as the duration of the need for

[19] Cohort Study Key Findings - Housing

support, and with particular attention to the needs of people with complex needs who may require tailored and sustained support of the sort sometimes called 'permanent supportive housing'

- a conceptualisation of 'high and complex needs' and the identification or development and evaluation of useful tools (for example, for prioritising assistance based on a vulnerability index) and measures for understanding the status and needs of individuals who require support
- a general overview of specialist support and accommodation (built environment and tenancy) models such as MyHome, Common Ground and various congregate and other types of supported accommodation arrangements in Australia and overseas, and an assessment of their suitability and effectiveness in terms of articulated outcomes for particular cohort segments
- a detailed overview of specialist support services and accommodation options currently available in the ACT and an evaluation of those options in relation to projections of current and future demand, identified gaps in service provision and accommodation options, and success indicators such as housing stability and community integration
- a conceptual matrix of needs and responses that can guide future accommodation planning and service provision, along with visualisations and infographics of key findings and data analyses to help communicate key messages arising from the study
- a general overview of other specialist program initiatives and community collaborations, such as 'Registry Week', which may have a role in identifying and responding to the needs of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The intention of the study was to develop a current picture of the homeless and at-risk population in the ACT, identify a range of models and options for responding to the needs of that population, and contribute to the development of methodologies and a suite of tools to create a real-time evidence base to underpin tailored responses to the needs of people on the ground.

Hostile Territory - high inflation, low rental vacancies and a growing waiting list

As we write this paper, the economic and policy context is shifting nationally. This is in response to inflation sitting at a 30 year high with rent increases reflecting the broader Consumer Price Index (8.1%) in the March quarter and nine consecutive increases to the cash rate by the RBA driving mortgage repayments higher.

The National Rental Affordability Index[20] has tracked small but consistent increases in median asking rents in the ACT and capital region since its first release in 2017. The median asking rent for a one bedroom flat was 141% of Jobseeker youth, 117% of the Jobseeker payment, and 78% of the Age Pension in the March quarter[21]. This means private rental is not a realistic housing pathway for people whose main source of income is not derived from paid work.

The regional cities and towns adjacent Canberra experienced a sharp decline in affordability between March 2020 and March 2023. The Anglicare Rental Affordability

[20] Rental Affordability Index | SGS Economics & Planning

[21] https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-03/co029-2301.pdf

Snapshot[22] measures affordability of rental properties for households on the minimum wage (with and without Family Tax Benefit) and for people on government payments. In 2022. It found there were no properties in Canberra or Queanbeyan advertised in April that were affordable for a person on Jobseeker and just 1% of properties were affordable to a single person on the age or disability pension. Only 1 in 40 were affordable for a person on the minimum wage. This was down from 2% for pensioners and 4% for minimum wage earners in 2021.

The above figures reflect a broader deterioration in rental affordability driven by factors related to the pandemic and the public health and economic responses to it[23]. These increases have been driven by several factors including relationship breakdown and an increase in single person household formation and the return to Canberra of people who had been overseas during the Public Health Emergency Declaration. These have resulted in a private rental vacancy rate below one per cent from the March quarter 2021 to December 2022[24]. With ADF cadets, APS Graduates and tertiary students adding to annual cyclical demand as this paper goes to print, it is possible we will see a private rental vacancy rate approaching zero. This makes the likelihood the private rental market can be relied upon to meet the housing preferences or needs of people experiencing homelessness, let alone the smaller group for whom better outcomes are sought from the commissioning process, impossible.

2023 has also brought some growth in the number of applicants on the social housing register and an increase in average number of days for priority, high needs and standard applicants. There has also been an increase in the number of days existing tenants are waiting for transfers. This may reflect latent flow on pressure from a hostile and inaccessible private rental market. In terms of numbers, what we have seen is an increase to just over 3,000 applicants in 2023, this is up from a fluctuating number between 2300 and 2600 which has been fairly constant between 2017 and 2022.

This is concerning in the context of looking for exit points for the group of Canberrans in Specialist Homelessness Services who may be the target group for this commissioning work.

Defining High and Complex Needs

The following definitional work was provided to ACT Shelter by *Everyman Australia*. We think it is an excellent practice-based summary of the characteristics and presenting behaviours of a significant proportion of the group this Commissioning effort will serve.

It complements the work of Professor Parsell and his team in the Cohort Study but it may be that the co-design process provides an opportunity to expand on it for workers whose client groups are primarily not single adult men. Practitioners are much better placed to advise both the Directorate and consultants about this, than ACT Shelter is.

[22] 2023: Rental Affordability Snapshot - Anglicare Australia
[23] Australia's COVID-19 pandemic housing policy responses | AHURI
[24] Domain Rental Reports

The term "high and complex needs" is used widely to refer to individuals who require a high level of support and assistance due to the complexity and severity of their physical, mental, or developmental challenges. These individuals may have multiple chronic health conditions, physical disabilities, mental health issues, or intellectual disabilities that require specialized care and support. They may also present with emotional dysregulation associated with behaviours that present a risk to other people, to support providers or the agencies that employ them, and to public property and the bottom line of the community service organisations who support them.

They may also have complex social needs, requiring assistance with:

- Managing relationships with neighbours who may be predatory or exploitative, or to whom the service user is predatory or exploitative,
- Forming relationships with partners who also have high and complex needs, particularly where there is a known risk of domestic violence,
- Staying safe in public housing sites where violence and intimidation are an everyday reality,
- Accessing support services and statutory authorities with whom they have histories of conflict, support failure and exclusion,
- Managing drug and alcohol use, including attending harm reduction programs, while living among drug users and suppliers,
- Following treatment programs for mental health or medical conditions,
- Having long standing issues of mistrust, often stemming from having had it broken by almost every adult in a person's life since birth. This makes learning to trust support providers an iterative process that can only occur over time and become willing to participate in services on offer,

The above are often co-occurring and present with intellectual, physical, psychosocial and/or sensory disability. This can mean people are bounced from one service system to another. It may also leave people in congregate settings vulnerable to exploitation by others or conversely, to exploit others.

Models of support focused on reducing the incidence of maladaptive social behaviours which impede capacity to establish sustainable connections with people able to offer companionship and support, and recognise truly reciprocal rather than exploitative relationships or difficulties managing personal finances, shopping, self-care and other everyday living skills, present in Census and service use data as '*requiring assistance with day-to-day living*'.

Lived Experience

Providing care and support to individuals with high and complex needs can be challenging and may require a team of suitably trained and experienced *professional and para-professional workers to coordinate and deliver the necessary services and support*.

People living in both Housing ACT and Housing Asset Assistance Program properties who are in scope for this commissioning endeavour, are people with co-occurring psychosocial, other disabilities and substance use disorders. Indeed, it is this group ACT Shelter hears about from tenants in a handful of multi-unit complexes who have a longstanding relationship with Shelter.

For people whose substance use is daily and exacerbates symptoms of psychiatric

disorders described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual V, a clinical response, at least in the form of an assessment of presenting features, will be required. This is necessary in order to understand whether the presenting features are enduring, as part of a severe and enduring mental illness or resultant psychosocial disability that require a regular chemical response to control, or whether the escalation is temporary and triggered by the consumption of a psychoactive substance.

Since April 2020, ACT Shelter has had regular contact with tenants in one multi unit complex in the inner north and two on Ainslie Avenue. The living situations they described have at times been confronting. They speak of violent incidents regularly occurring in multi unit complexes, resulting in ambulance and police call outs being routine occurrences. Further, they link much of the criminal and violent behaviour to a subgroup of the people likely in scope for this commissioning effort. They allege tenants with severe and enduring mental illness, psychosocial and sensory disabilities

There is an obligation on service providers working with people with high intensity support needs to match appropriately skilled workers with people in homelessness services and Housing Asset Assistance Program properties. We would see this as also important in models such as the Justice Housing Program, time-limited as they are.

Comment - flexibility is at odds with some program elements

This evidence review finds there is a need to move away from the provision of support on a time-limited basis and finds much evidence in the literature that confirms arbitrary time periods such as 7 days for step up, step down program, 90 days for post release accommodation and support via the Justice Housing Program and 180 days for Transitional Housing are inconsistent with the concept of person-centred service delivery.

In order to be person-centres, housing and support approaches should ideally be individually tailored to the needs of recipients of housing with support accompanying the housing offer for the duration of need expressed by the person.

Previous work undertaken in the ACT endorsed the adoption of a *Housing First* approach for people who we would expect would exhibit presenting behaviours and needs so as to be in scope for this work. ACT Shelter is, however, aware of the growing use of the term 'housing ready', to describe people deemed suitable for referral to the multi-disciplinary panel for consideration of priority triaging to social housing via the One Social Housing Register.

Comment - young people are a critical group for inclusion

ACT Shelter acknowledges this evidence summary draws inadequate attention to the types of accommodation and support services that are considered best practice for young people whose situational complexity meets the definitions for this review.

This may be an oversight on our part but it also reflects the evidence base that was readily available to us using generic search terms and open access platforms. There are models of good practice when it comes to outreach already in place in the ACT and we know there are examples in other states following similar good practice guidelines.

Ultimately, there is a need to prioritise young people whose homelessness has resulted from a lifetime of inadequate care and support from adults in parent or guardian roles, entry into institutional settings - be it care and protection, mental health or youth justice, or the enduring impacts of exposure to abuse, trauma and violence in early childhood, school years, or young adulthood. Some of these young people experienced what homelessness looked and felt like from early childhood onwards. They likely experienced emotionally intense events many adults will not experience comparable intensity to - outside of grief and loss, or if they are affected by a natural disaster or traumatic relationship or separation, or a life threatening event or illness later in life.

There are of course trauma informed approaches in place at the Melaleuca Unit and in ACT schools. Practitioners and service managers may have examples of good practice they will bring to the table at co-design workshops. Some from elsewhere are in our appendices.

Comment: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

ACT Shelter notes both the Census night and Specialist Homelessness Services trend data are showing an incremental but steady increase in the number and rate of homelessness among Canberrans who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. We have cited some examples in the appendices to this document.

Cautioning what might constitute good practice in Western Australia (Noonga mia mia Housing First, for example, or the *Safe Tracks* initiative in SA, may not be appropriate for people experiencing homelessness here in the ACT.

We do note commonalities to the experience, such as the greater likelihood of exposure to trauma and violence, ongoing impacts of colonisation, the phenomenon of *spiritual homelessness* and mobility between significant sites or to access health and other services.

Models

Housing First versus Housing Ready

For ACT Shelter this is a critical matter in need of resolution for this procurement.

We know that people with histories of abuse, neglect and trauma are more likely to be found in institutional settings which include child protection and statutory care, juvenile justice, mental health (secure units), and prisons. Life circumstances or trajectories, often beyond the control of individuals, at least in part, may mean some of the people, if not the majority, will have been institutionalised for the majority of their lives. Is there a danger this group will be immediately flagged as not housing ready? On what basis?

All other state homelessness strategies we canvassed prioritised *Housing First* approaches to end homelessness for people with housing and support needs. There was less consistency in terms of overall responses to homelessness but in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia, at least, the focus for people not requiring the intensity of support the group that are the subject of this review require, the focus was on rapid re-housing (particularly as the resolution for family homelessness and for women leaving

violence).

One consistent shortcoming noted across many jurisdictions, as well as in the AHURI research, was the under-supply of housing at rents people can afford to support rapid re-housing following entry into homelessness and the under-supply of social housing to support the achievement of *Housing First approaches*, relative to demand/need.

The latter is noteworthy, because *Housing First* approaches are predicated on the allocation of *permanent supportive housing* to people in a community deemed to be in highest need of housing based on an assessment made using the Vulnerability Indicator Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool.

While ACT Shelter fully endorses the concept of agency or choice over decisions relating to where people live, in what type of accommodation and with whom, we note there are two fundamental components to the *Housing First* model:

- The supportive housing tenancies are *permanent* - for life if desired, and
- Housing focused supports are availed on an opt in basis.

Axial Housing (Catholic Care & Vinnies ACT), Common Ground Gungahlin (Northside Housing First), Northside Housing First for women and Common Ground Dickson (CHC and YWCA Canberra) are *Housing First* models operating in the ACT.

ACT Shelter notes people assessed as not *housing ready* may indeed be the very people the service model being commissioned here is intended to benefit. We therefore seek to better understand what is meant by the term *housing ready:*

- Does it refer to people with histories of institutionalisation since childhood who have not had the opportunity to demonstrate independent living skills?
- Is it referring to situations in which people have been allocated homes, either through priority determinations from the social housing waiting list and have had their tenancies terminated via the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal within a relatively short period of time?
- Or does it refer to people allocated homes with the expectation support (health and human services) would accompany tenancies and remain in place to address risk factors that may place people at risk of tenancy failure. Thereby ensuring they are deemed *Housing Ready*.

ACT Shelter has been concerned by the growing use of the term *housing ready* in recent years, reflecting our own bias in terms of wanting to see all Canberrans achieve good outcomes from our housing system. Our concern arises from the use of the term to denote the opposite. In recent years we have heard it used to refer to a group of people who, once housed, reduce engagement with providers of health and human services and are identified either by neighbours, the landlord, or through breaches of the Residential Tenancies Act as *not housing ready*.

As an organisation that is not in the business of frontline service delivery, tenancy management or housing focused support, it is important that ACT Shelter not provide commentary that has no basis in fact, or does not reflect in any way the on the ground realities of housing practitioners. We are aware of recurring issues in multi unit complexes in the inner city that result in frequent contacts with our own organisation, emergency services and Housing ACT in relation to maintenance concerns, safety issues and tenant and visitor behaviour. These matters are indeed pertinent to both this Evidence Review and the service response being commissioned following the co-design

process.

We state this with a degree of caution but note the behaviour of some tenants which results in perceived and actual threats to the health and wellbeing of neighbours is in part due to their health and social support needs profile. Equally, the vulnerability of some tenants to having their flats taken over by visitors or other tenants and used for particular purposes that in turn disturb the quiet enjoyment of all tenants is also potentially because they fit the profile of 'highly vulnerable' that we understand is within the remit of this commissioning effort.

There is a third group which our consultations with providers of advocacy, health and social services have helped us to understand cannot and must not be excluded from placing front and centre of considerations in the co-design process. This group is not likely to win votes at elections. They are perhaps the tenants that make communities nervous about having public, social and supportive housing developments approved in their suburbs. They are indeed the tenants that may invite the visitors that are the source of the regular contact we have with tenants at a handful of multi unit complexes. They are people known to housing managers and the tenant engagement team at Housing ACT. They do not make good case studies for organisations like ACT Shelter that have as one of our founding aims to promote the benefits of public and community housing.

According to our obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[25], our commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals [26] and as a signatory to the Universal Declaration[27], they do however have a right to adequate housing as a prerequisite for a right to an adequate standard of living. While the right to adequate housing is conspicuously absent from the ACT *Human Rights Act 2004*[28], ACT Shelter maintains as a jurisdiction of Australia, we are bound by the international covenants and declarations the national government has made us a signatory to.

As tenants in multi unit complexes who are affected by the behaviour of neighbours impress upon us on a regular basis, with these rights should come accompanying responsibilities. Principally, they suggest, to not disturb the quiet enjoyment of their neighbours, much less behave in ways that threaten their health and/or safety.

The service offer the Directorate is seeking is one that enhances person-centred needs assessment, service coordination and planning to support better quality housing and support outcomes. Service responses that effectively respond to the needs and aspirations of individuals with a priority emphasis on breaking the cycle of homelessness by supporting people to stay housed may require a longer try, test and learn approach in order to determine whether they will meet mutually desirable objectives for better outcomes for people who need them.

ACT Shelter is conscious we are a perennial voice demanding an increase to the quantum of supply of non-market housing. This commissioning effort is by design, for a group of people for whom health and human services, delivered in tandem with housing

[25] International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights | OHCHR
[26] Sustainable Development Goals
[27] Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations
[28] The ACT was the first jurisdiction in Australia to enact a Human Rights Act (2004).

with a depth of financial subsidy, will likely be a permanent feature of their *housing experiences*.

The literature heavily focuses on *Housing First* approaches as the dominant model to end homelessness for people who are defined as *chronically homeless* in the North American context, having complex needs (the cohort study and other Australian research examples) or having co-occurring disorders or vulnerabilities (alcohol and other drug, health and mental health literature.

Our consultations with frontline service providers over the course of putting together this rapid Evidence Review however, have led us to understand that practitioners in the ACT are working with a group of people for whom the approach either has not, or they assess will not work for. It is this group of people who we understand are the group deemed *not housing ready* and who are perhaps part of the target group for the response to be commissioned following the co-design process this Evidence Review is intended to inform.

For this reason, ACT Shelter suggests the consultants are provided with a degree of clarity in relation to what the Central Intake Service, homelessness services workers and Housing ACT personnel understand is meant by the term *Housing Ready* and the enabling and inhibiting elements of a person's presenting needs and characteristics that lend them to being assessed as either *housing ready* or *not housing ready*.

Following on from there, a critical question ACT Shelter seeks an answer to is - what needs to be put in place for individuals and family groups deemed *not housing ready* to ensure they are able to become *housing ready* as soon as is practicable, noting there is no formula for this as we are working with individual and as such, this is not an exact science.

For ACT Shelter, it is in nobody's best interests for people to remain in congregate accommodation settings for a day longer than is necessary. Notwithstanding we operate in a rationed system in which demand perennially outstrips supply. Scaling up the supply of Single Room Occupancy and self-contained housing options for people is essential in order to fulfil the promise of 'Housing First.

Noting that we are in the final stage of tendering for homelessness contracts and we do not know whether 'Housing First' will remain the preferred model for people not able to enter the private rental market, the literature is consistent with respect to one thing. In order for Housing First approaches to be effective, there needs to be a commitment to scale up supply of units of housing to end homelessness for people. There is a temptation to make housing and support offers time limited to respond to churn in our homelessness demand data collated at One Link and from our homelessness services (see below). The trend data shows a significant minority of people receiving help identify multiple presenting needs in addition to accommodation (for people presenting already homeless) or advocacy to prevent homelessness occurring by stabilising at-risk accommodation or housing. These presenting needs obviously look different for each individual or family and this is difficult to capture in the aggregate data.

Young People

It must be noted here that youth workers have expressed a need to expressly consider young people. What we tend to see for young people is more complex presenting behaviours as a result of recent and early childhood abuse, neglect and sexual assault.

This can manifest as non-compliant behaviour. Refusal to follow service charter obligations, or engage in any form of case management in a congregate refuge environment, or refusal to engage one-to-one in a Housing Asset Assistance Program head-leased housing and support arrangement.

Importantly, in the provision of housing in integrity-to-model *Housing First* programs, engagement in support is voluntary, and support is provided on an 'opt in' basis. This raises the question, are the people whose housing futures this Evidence Review is intended to inform, likely to be provided a *Housing First* response?

Or, because they are in congregate settings, or multi unit complexes, in close proximity to neighbours, whose lives are affected by behaviour and activities of everyone, will there be an expectation that engagement with support services is a requirement in exchange for accommodation? This is a key question the co-design workshops will need to resolve.

If we are to pursue a *Housing First* approach, there is a set of *Housing First Principles for Australia*, that providers delivering the model in accordance with its aims and objectives as specified by the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness are guided by. These are outlined below.

Insights from the Literature and Examples of Contemporary Good practice in Australia and Overseas

The following outline and commentary is complemented by the data document provided to ACT Shelter by Housing ACT which draws selected insights from reporting to the Specialist Homelessness Information Portal by services for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022.

Further to the below, tables in Appendices 1 and 2 summarise Australian and overseas resources that are pertinent to the intent of the Directorate to commission better outcomes for Canberrans with high intensity, long duration support needs within homelessness services, or who are Housing ACT and Housing Asset Assistance Program tenants.

Housing First Principles for Australia

Housing First was brought to Australia from North America in 2006 when CEO of Common Ground (New York) Rosanne Haggerty was invited to be one of SA Premier Mike Rann's *Thinkers in ResIdence* and her recommendation to establish *Common Ground Adelaide - whatever it takes*. The 40 unit mixed tenure sub-market affordable/permanent supportive housing development was fitted out as part of a redevelopment in keeping with the recommendations from the New York founder who renovated apartment buildings in New York that were disused. From there, a second Common Ground was established in Light Square just as the newly elected Rudd Government highlighted the model as an innovative model to *break the cycle* of homelessness in its 2008 Discussion Paper *Which Way Home*.

Following a side meeting at 2008 National Homelessness Conference in Adelaide, a group of service managers who were delegates congressed and decided to establish the

Australian Common Ground Alliance[29] which would eventually be successful in securing funding for Common Ground sites in the eastern states. It would also catch the attention of Liz Dawson, who formed a lobby group which would eventually bring the model to the ACT. By the end of this year, there will be two sites in Perth and one in Mandurah in WA. |

While it is the most well known brand of *Housing First,* there are a plethora of Housing First sites in every state and after a decade of the model operating in Australia, the decision was made to bring accredited training in housing first principles and practice to Australia.

The Housing First Principles for Australia[30] have been developed to tailor this model to the Australian context and promote the implementation of Housing First Australia-wide. These principles are intended to be used in the Australian context to train staff, and to design services with fidelity to Housing First. The principles are outlined below:

People have a right to a home

Access – Immediate access to a permanent, self-contained home which meets people's cultural and social needs.
Eligibility – No treatment or behavioural eligibility pre-conditions.
Tenancy – People enjoy full tenancy rights and standard rental conditions with security of tenure.
Suitability – Location, affordability, access to services and quality of property meets the specific needs of the individual or family that are housed. Considerations include safety and community connections, and for people with physical disability - maximising their capacity to live independently.
Sustainability – People are able to keep their homes if they have absences for family, cultural or other reasons (eg. hospital or prison stays) and are assisted to quickly find a new home if a tenancy fails.
Safety – The housing provided must be safe and secure.

Housing and support are separated

Separation – While they work closely together to maintain and support tenancies, the provision of housing and support must be functionally separate. This is to ensure housing and support are not contingent upon one another and unwavering advocacy is provided for the individual or family.
Tenancy – There are no additional requirements to participate in support or treatment as part of the tenancy and people are able to maintain their home regardless of their engagement in support services.
Continuity – The offer of support stays with the person if they choose to move home or if a tenancy fails. The support is available to people in their new living situations including a return to homelessness or to an institutional setting where support will actively assist people secure new homes.
Security – People are supported to follow the terms of their tenancies in the same way as anyone else renting a home. Support services work to maintain tenancies while understanding the critical part a home plays in the wellbeing of both individuals and families.

[29] Welcome to the Australian Common Ground Alliance | National Library of Australia
[30] Housing First Principles and National Webinar series – Homelessness Australia

Flexible support for as long as it is needed

Continuity – Support does not have a fixed end date and people can return to or continue support for as long as needed.

Holistic – Support is directed by the people receiving the support, and is available across a wide variety of domains being sensitive to people's family context, cultural identity and past trauma.

Intensity – Support intensity can rise and fall with individual or family need so services can respond positively when people need more or less support on a day to day basis.

Accessibility – People are able to quickly re-engage with support without needing to undergo a new assessment or intake process.

Relationship – Support is built from an authentic relationship and it is practical, flexible and creative – responding to each unique set of circumstances as required**.**

Choice and self-determination

Home – People define for themselves what makes a place a home which may include connection to particular land. People are given a choice of where they live and the type of housing in which they want to live.

Support – People are able to make real choices about how they live their lives and these choices determine the support they receive including how, where, when and by whom it is provided**.**

Household – People are able to choose with whom they live, who they invite into their own home and whether visitors are able to stay**.**

Person-centred – Support acknowledges that the best way to understand and respond to people's needs, is to listen to their views and questions, so that any planning is directly responsive to their particular concerns and dreams. This approach respects each individual and that person's strengths rather than focusing negatively on each person's limitations.

Active engagement without coercion

Responsibility – The onus is on workers to maintain the relationship and employ creative and imaginative approaches to ensure their work is engaging rather than blaming people for "disengaging".

Persistence – While individuals and families can refuse support, staff persist without intruding and use their relationship to make ongoing and regular offers in ways that show care and respect for people.

Compassion – A deep understanding of people, means that support is designed to fit the individual rather than the individual being required to fit the service.

Availability – Caseloads are small and support is available outside normal working hours. This allows workers to be persistent and proactive in their approach, doing "whatever it takes" and not giving up and closing when engagement is low.

Trust – Because of people's past experiences of trauma, extended homelessness and exclusion, it is critical that services build trust and have a strong commitment to "doing what they say", so they are experienced as trauma and gender informed, reliable and transparent.

Recovery Oriented Practice

Recovery – Understanding that recovery is not about an expectation that people be symptom free. Rather recovery focuses on people being able to recover a sense of themselves and their place in their community.

Hope – Support offers hope and actively encourages people to dream and imagine a future for themselves, a future focusing on gaining a sense of purpose with the prospect of enjoying a good and secure life.
Dignity of risk – A process of trial and error involving small steps forward and backward celebrating successful experiences but also learning from experiences of pain and frustration without a sense of shame.
Strengths – Celebrating and working with people's capacity and abilities that are quite separate from any diagnosis they may have.
Appropriate – To developmental stage, cultural and gender identities

Social and Community Inclusion

Belonging – Social and community inclusion is an integral part of support as it rebuilds a sense of self and connection to others, which in turn is a protective factor for people's tenancy, health and well-being.
Relationships – People are supported to build friendships and relationships within their community, and where possible to reconnect with family, culture and those who are important to them.
Participation – People are supported to participate in a wide range of pursuits including education, employment and volunteering opportunities as well as cultural, artistic and recreational activities**.**
Community – Homes exist as part of a community. Support not only helps people connect to that community, but also uses strategies to build acceptance amongst neighbours of people with different experiences, lifestyles, and appearances.

Harm Reduction Approach

Safety – Support uses a wide range of proactive strategies to assist people to reduce the negative impact of substance use, gambling, self-harm and potentially high-risk behaviours.
Education – Factual information is provided in a non-judgmental style to enable people to make informed choices about their health, tenancy and relationships with others.
Change – Support is guided by individual choice and for those who choose it, connections are made to specialist services that are accessible and culturally appropriate. Support is also mindful that recovery is not a linear journey and does not necessarily require abstinence.
Inclusion – Housing and/or support are not withdrawn from people who choose to continue to drink, use, self-harm, gamble or participate in high-risk activities.

Housing practitioners and workforce development & training

Our consultations with peaks in other jurisdictions and providers locally cemented our view that to effectively support people who are interacting with multiple health and human service systems, or were and have disengaged, there is a need to ensure an appropriately qualified workforce exists to work with this population.

ACT Shelter is not an expert in workforce training and development. One thing we noted in our examination of online resources was the importance of it in order to effectively implement a number of ways of working with people who require higher intensity, longer term engagement and support or who frequently disengage or are refused service by agencies due to abusive, threatening and violent behaviour.

The Directorate may wish to consider the broader Community Services Industry Strategy and examine opportunities in the next phases of the commissioning cycle in

both community services and health to embed opportunities to upskill workers and managers to broaden the overall capability of health and human services to meet the needs of the client group we understand Housing is seeking to commission better outcomes for.

Assessing and Providing Services to People with Complex Needs
Our online research led us to understand working with people with complex needs is a unit of competency that has recently been updated with a view to strengthening practice requirements for people working in a range of relevant community based health and human services settings.

- training.gov.au - CHCCS504B - Provide services to clients with complex needs
- training.gov.au - CHCCS416B - Assess and provide services for clients with complex needs

These units are a component of the Certificate IV in Social Housing and ACT Shelter references the training package here in the event the Commissioning co-design work envisions a workforce development and training component or whether there is an appetite among providers to examine its content and advise ACT Shelter as to its value in the service delivery environment local providers operate within.

Trauma Informed and Responsive Practice
The Trauma Aware, Trauma Informed and Trauma Responsive Practice modules outlined on the Training.Gov.Au website are worth listing here as our online scan found trauma informed practice has yielded positive results when its principles are applied to working with people with co-occurring disorders. Indeed, co-occurring psychosocial disabilities and substance use disorders are disproportionately present among people with complex trauma.

Trauma Informed Practice - the need for whole of system stepped implementation
A trauma-informed approach begins with understanding the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on the individual, as well as on the professionals who help them. It is about changing the way we perceive the client we serve, the way our staff interact with the client, the delivery and type of services being offered, and the physical environment in which services are delivered from. This approach requires adhering to a number of principles including promoting safety for clients; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; and empowerment, voice, and choice.

- Practitioners have the knowledge and understanding they require in order to respond appropriately to people who have experienced trauma (consistent with their scope of practice and reflecting the intensity and duration of their relationship with people with complex trauma presentation) (P = Practitioner level);
- Practitioners are able to recognise and respond to vicarious trauma (P);
- Managers and executives have the skills and knowledge they require to embed trauma-informed practice at the organisational level (O = organisational level), and support frontline workers including in relation to vicarious trauma (P);
- Connections with specialist therapeutic services are improved, as are relationships with complementary human service sectors involved in responding to people who have experienced trauma (S = Systems level);
- SHS organisations have access to practical tools and advice to embed a trauma-aware approach (O); and

- There is an enabling environment for trauma-informed practice (including through contract reporting and a sector-led governance mechanism) (S).

The report prepared for ACT Shelter by consultants Rebecca Vassarotti and Sarah Spiller clearly emphasised the need for progressive, stepped implementation of Trauma informed Practice with resourcing to enable it to be rolled out to practitioners, service managers, peaks and public service agencies.

The literature and evaluations note the importance of ensuring the implementation occurs at a whole of organisation and whole of system level, notwithstanding this process may take several years and that different organisations will determine whether they need to be *trauma aware (e.g peaks and policy makers), trauma informed (housing and support providers), or trauma responsive (domestic family and sexual violence services, providers of accommodation, providers of services to people with homelessness trajectories that are cyclical or prolonged, workers whose people have histories of instiotutionalisation where abuse and violence are likely and refuges for young people in complex situations*

The importance of professional development

ACT Shelter is aware of the pooled funding model in the ACT for providers of services funded through the Child, Youth and Family Services Program. We are not experts in professional development or training and the following examples are not included here as a platform for fulfilling a role as broker of training.

While undertaking this review, we were made aware of the seminal importance of ensuring appropriately skilled practItioners with the right mix of personal characteristics and professional capabilities are matched to people with higher support needs. Noting there are services with few staff and essential one or two support workers for HAAP properties, there are limitations to this in practice.

Other State Peak Bodies play a role in facilitating access to learning and development

Peaks in other states are funded to broker and in some cases develop and deliver training for homelessness and housing practitioners. This is not a role ACT Shelter has played and we are not a Registered Training Organisation in any case. We are well networked with the following peaks however as well as with the Australasian Housing Institute.

It may be, however, that there is professional development or training offered by those organisations that is tailored to working with complexity in the contexts in which homelessness and housing practitioners work. One stumbling block will of course be the e-learning and face-to-face training is state government funded.

Where relevant, given the likelihood of fee for service, we thought the following links were worthy of inclusion in this review, in case future training opportunities present themselves that could be brokered for provision to workers in the ACT.

- **Homelessness NSW**
  The skill and capability of the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) workforce underpins all aspects of the SHS sector. A highly skilled workforce, including specialist skills, is more able to provide quality support and work with people at risk of or experiencing homelessness to achieve positive outcomes.

  Homelessness NSW brokers learning and development opportunities for

managers and frontline workers in homelessness services across the state. - Learning and Development – Homelessness NSW

- **Victoria - Council to Homeless Persons**
  The SHS Learning Program is designed to educate and inspire practitioners in Victoria's Specialist Homelessness Sector through the provision of quality learning, training, and practice resources.
  There are two primary modes of learning within the SHS Learning Program: live training sessions and self-directed eLearning.
  Browse this page to discover current opportunities within the SHS Learning Program - **SHS Learning Program - Council to Homeless Persons website**

- **Queensland Shelter**
  Queensland Shelter works to build the capacity of the housing and homelessness sector workforce to deliver lasting solutions to homelessness and amplify the voices of lived experience. Workforce development | Q Shelter: Because home matters

- **Shelter Tasmania**
  Shelter Tasmania's Workforce Development Program (2018-2023) delivers specialised professional development for the Tasmanian housing and homelessness sector. Funded by the Department of Communities Tasmania, training topics are chosen in consultation with the sector, resulting in a diverse suite of subsidised training opportunities for our members' highly skilled workforce.Training | Shelter Tasmania

- **Shelter WA**
  Shelter WA is funded to produce resources for housing and homelessness practitioners and manages an online knowledge hub which provides an invaluable suite of resources on a range of housing and homelessness policy, practice and program matters: Resources - Shelter WA

Selected examples of relevant models of contemporary good practice in other jurisdictions

NSW

- **Healthcare and Homelessness Partnership**
  The South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) has some of the highest rates of homelessness in NSW. People experiencing or at risk of homelessness may have a number of ongoing, chronic and complex health conditions that are often undertreated. In response to this, the Homelessness Health Program coordinates initiatives that aim to improve health outcomes for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness across SESLHD.
  The program works through:
  - Delivery of workforce capacity building and training
  - Development of district-wide strategies that support the delivery of accessible and equitable health services
  - Collaboration with other SESLHD Health Services
  - Collection of data to better understand health needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness

- Development of partnerships with other government and non-government agencies that enable the coordinated delivery of health services district-wide

More information can be found here: Homelessness Health | South Eastern Sydney Local Health District

- **Housing, Accommodation and Support Initiative**
  No exits from Government Services into Homelessness: A framework for multi agency action. The Framework outlines agreed service principles for effective and coordinated planning across NSW government agencies to support people to move into stable accommodation.

  A key aim of the Framework is to improve partnerships between agencies, Housing Pathways providers, Specialist Homelessness Services and other non-government support providers. This includes building understanding of the role of Australian Government services, such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Primary Health Networks, in providing essential supports to vulnerable groups.

  The Framework supports initiatives under the Premier's Priority to reduce street homelessness by strengthening cross agency cooperation to deliver positive, sustainable outcomes. No Exits from Government Services into Homelessness: A Framework for Multi-Agency Action

- **Specialist Homelessness Services Case Management Resource Kit**
  Case management is the key to assisting and working effectively with people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness and have a range of complex needs.

  The SHS Case Management Resource Kit is designed to assist NSW homelessness practitioners to integrate case management into their practice. SHS Case Management Kit - Program specifications and protocols | Family & Community Services

- **High Needs Packages**
  In a unique collaboration housing and homelessness peaks in NSW are members of an assessment panel that examines proposals for high needs housing packages which are then administered by Homelessness NSW. Together Home: High Needs Packages – Homelessness NSW

Victoria

- **The Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative**
  Getting it together – A guide for individuals, carers and services on accessing the Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative

- **Victoria's Royal Commission into Mental Health** - Recommendation 25
  The Royal Commission recommended the Victorian Government prioritise people living with mental illness in Victoria's 10-year strategy for social and affordable housing. It called on the Victorian Government to allocate a continuing substantial proportion of social and affordable housing to people living with mental illness during the next decade.

Further recommended reforms include:

- Revise the Victorian Housing Register's Special Housing Needs 'priority access' categories to include people living with mental illness, including people who need ongoing intensive treatment, care and support.
- Ensure that the 2,000 dwellings assigned to Victorians living with mental illness in the Big Housing Build are delivered as supported housing and prioritised for people living with mental illness who require ongoing intensive treatment, care and support, with Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services assisting with the selection process.
- In addition to the 2,000 dwellings, invest in a further 500 new medium-term (up to two years) supported housing places for young people aged between 18 to 25 who are living with mental illness and experiencing unstable housing or homelessness.

The Royal Commission also recommended that the supported housing homes for adults and young people living with mental illness are:

- Delivered in a range of housing configurations. This includes stand-alone units, self-contained units with shared amenities and various forms of clustered independent units on a single-site property;
- Appropriately located, provide for the requirements of people living with mental illness and are co-designed by Homes Victoria, representatives appointed by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Division and people with lived experience of mental illness; and
- Accompanied by an appropriate level of integrated, multidisciplinary and individually tailored mental health and wellbeing treatment, care and support.

The Royal Commission recommended the Victorian Government periodically review the allocation of supported housing homes as part of new statewide and regional planning processes and audit the outcomes.

- **An Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework for the Specialist Homelessness Sector**
  A third document, ACT Shelter determined was worth highlighting from Victoria, was the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework for the Specialist Homelessness Sector.

  Purpose: The Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework for the SHS (the SHS Framework) is specifically designed to assist specialist homelessness service providers to reflect on their practices and adopt strategies and actions that will improve the way they engage with and address the homelessness needs of Aboriginal Victorians. It does not set competency or accreditations standards. It has been designed as a tool to guide organisations as they work through the steps to become culturally safe organisations. How each organisation does this and the questions they ask of themselves will vary according to their history, traditions, internal and external cultures, location, scope, and community.

  The SHS Framework aims to provoke thoughtful, deep, and informed thinking about what is needed to reach cultural safety. The framework can be accessed via the Council to Homeless Persons: An Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework for the Specialist Homelessness Sector

- **Wintringham - Wicking Project - Acquired Brain Injury, neurobehavioural and neurocognitive disorders among older people with histories of homelessness - residential aged care provision**
  ACT Shelter is conscious there is a dearth of places in residential aged care in the ACT and that there are few pathways in for people without a family home to sell. The Aged Care Funding Instrument is designed for middle class eighty five year olds, not people who start to need assistance with care and housing thirty years prior to that. We therefore looked at the work of Wintringham and recommend that the following project be considered when commissioning further work for older people with life trajectories that have led to the need for multiple service system interactions and the loss of housing: The Wicking Project - Residential Aged Care Funding

Queensland

- **Brisbane Alliance to End Homelessness - A partnerships approach**
  More than thirty organisations have now joined a community partnerships approach under the umbrella of the Brisbane Alliance to End Homelessness. While Brisbane and Canberra are in many ways very different cities, there are lessons from the roadmap that could be applied here in the ACT: https://micahprojects.org.au/assets/docs/Publications/20161129_Housing-First-Roadmap-WEB.pdf

- **Micah Projects Integrated Healthcare and Housing Response**
  Micah Projects is one of the founding members of the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness. While there are a number of housing, homelessness and healthcare partnerships we could have drawn attention to, we felt this was a good example from Queensland because of its longevity.
  More information about Micah Projects Integrated Healthcare response can be found here: https://micahprojects.org.au/partnerships#integrated-health-link and https://micahprojects.org.au/services#integrated-healthcare

- **The Service Integration Initiative**
  The Service Integration Initiative designs or enhances place-based, multi-disciplinary care coordination frameworks in nine locations across Queensland. The initiative is part of the Queensland Government's Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Response initiative.
  The Service Integration team works to help strengthen systemic structures through regional networks and leadership groups. Each location involved in the initiative has its own Care Coordination Facilitator, who focuses on bringing services and agencies together to respond to people seeking housing or homelessness support. This allows the support to extend to other needs, if required.

  Informed by Collective Impact principles, each location is also supported by a Backbone Support role. This role provides leadership, facilitation, tools and resources, as well as measurement and reporting frameworks.
  More information can be found here:
  https://qshelter.asn.au/what-we-do/sector-support/service-integration/

- **Queensland Mental Health Alliance and Queensland Shelter Position Statement**
  The shared position statement from Queensland Shelter and the Queensland Alliance for Mental Health contains a useful appendix of examples of successful models of housing and support for people in that state with multiple and complex

needs where psychosocial disability or severe and enduring mental illness are part of a person's presenting story. Mental Health and Housing

Western Australia

- **WA Alliance to End Homelessness**
  Noting some of the 5 core principles of the WA Alliance to End Homelessness Approach are already being applied here in the ACT, ACT Shelter understands it has a robust methodology and significant buy-in from a number of providers in that state. We therefore felt it was worth including as an example from WA: Our Approach | endhomelessnesswa

- **The Street Doctor**
  One of the longest running health partnerships for people experiencing homelessness in Australia is the Street Doctor which provides general practice, mental and primary health care services to people experiencing homelessness in Freemantle and Perth. Street Doctor Perth + WA | Mobile Doctors | 360 Health + Community

- **St Barts Comprehensive Care model**
  Over the past two decades St Barts has expanded its services to include aged care, community housing and supported accommodation for adults experiencing homelessness including people with complex support needs not readily funded through the Aged Care Funding Instrument. Like Wintringham,. we thought it was worth including here as an example of a provider that has grown its services over time and leveraged Commonwealth funding in order to meet changing and ongoing presenting needs St Bart's

South Australia

- **Advance to Zero**
  Functional Zero homelessness is reached when a community's average monthly housing placement rate is more than the number of people sleeping rough at any given time. A community proves it can sustain Functional Zero if it maintains this for at least three consecutive months. Any community, working with any type of homelessness, can use the Functional Zero model to measure and improve their local system.

  The Functional Zero model recognises that homelessness is a dynamic challenge— even when a community has achieved and sustained Functional Zero, people will still fall into homelessness, but the approach works to ensure that people's experience of sleeping rough is rare, brief, and non-recurring. It requires a community to know the number of people experiencing homelessness on any given night. Armed with such data, the homelessness system can then adapt and change to ensure there is enough housing and support to help people end their experience of homelessness, and, ideally, to also prevent people who are at risk from experiencing homelessness in the first place.

The Adelaide Zero Project's public Dashboard helps the community to actively measure and respond to homelessness and stay accountable, by reporting these figures in as close to real time as possible.

The Australian Alliance to End Homelessness has a comprehensive set of Advance to Zero resources on its website. Importantly the agencies working locally on the Axial Housing and Street to Home led response to rough sleeping, are already using the *Vulnerability Indicator Service Prioritsation Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT)* which Advance to Zero cities use. The tool has also been adapted for use in Australia: Advance to Zero – AAEH

One caveat is that the Advance to Zero work targets homelessness only and primarily *absolute homelessness* - where people are sleeping unsheltered. For this commissioning effort, there may therefore be limitations on its applicability to people with high intensity support needs who are tenants of Housing ACT or Housing Asset Assistance Program properties.

- **The Aspire Social Impact Bond**
  Arguably too much of this paper has been directed as Housing First. That said, in 2022, Flinders University evaluated one of only four successful housing focused social impact investment measures with an evidence base, we are aware of in Australia.

  Evaluation approach - The evaluation of Aspire addresses the overarching question: To what extent does Aspire optimise outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in a way that is cost-effective for government and attractive to social impact investors? The evaluation has four components:
  - Process evaluation.
  - Outcome evaluation.
  - Innovation evaluation.
  - Investor evaluation.

  The Aspire evaluation takes a mixed methods approach involving analysis of datasets provided by a range of government agencies and service providers, and in-depth interviews with 30 Aspire participants, staff, key stakeholders and investors. The final evaluation report can be found here: Evaluation of the Aspire Social Impact Bond: Final Report

- **Youth 110**
  Youth110 is the innovative service operated by St John's Youth Services that provides a crisis response to the most vulnerable young people in South Australia.

  Located in the UNO Apartment complex in the heart of Adelaide, youth110 provides 30 self-contained apartments over four floors, with office space for St John's Youth Services to operate 24 hour care and case management support. Youth110 is able to accommodate young people in crisis aged 16 to 21 including singles, couples, single parents, young families and siblings. In addition, youth110 is

the first youth crisis accommodation service in Australia that can provide apartment-style accommodation and support to young single dads.

Youth110 provides an empowering and therapeutic approach to supporting young people. Young people identify their needs and goals, and workers provide guidance and support to reach their goals while providing coaching to develop independent living skills. Case Management support focuses on life domains such as education, employment, health, finances, child care, and relationships, while the focus is kept on what keeps the young person strong emotionally and mentally.

Youth110 is a crisis response. While the duration of a young person's stay is generally short, the service is able to respond to the complex needs of each young person and the length of stay may be varied accordingly.

Tasmania

The Commissioner for Children and Young People was tasked with providing the following analysis and assessment of needs and gaps in that state for unaccompanied minors under the age of 16. Feedback to us from youth services was, when we talk about complexity, we often think only of the 'chronic homeless' adult population discussed at length in the functional zero, case management and Housing First literature. The following correspondence from the Commissioner reminds us the pathways begin in the early stage of life:
https://www.childcomm.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021-08-02-Comment-Draft-Policy-Framework-Under-16-Homelessness-.pdf

Northern Territory

The Housing and Support Initiative
The Northern Territory Housing Accommodation Support Initiative (NT HASI) is a partnership between the Northern Territory Department of Health (NT DOH); Northern Territory Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); Top End Mental Health Service (TEMHS) and the non-government organisation (NGO) sector. The aim of the NT HASI program is to support people with mental illness in public housing to sustain their tenancies and avoid becoming homeless.

NT HASI will provide services that are individualised, holistic, integrated, culturally responsive, safe and flexible, to enable people with mental illness to remain living in the community. The primary target group for the service is individuals who are case managed by TEMHS adult teams who are living in public housing in Darwin, Palmerston and Casuarina. TEMHS will be in the initial primary referral source.
TEMHS will provide specialist clinical mental health care, DHCD will provide public housing and the NT HASI NGO will provide psychosocial support. All services will work with people in an integrated and recovery focused way.

NT DOH will develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to analyse outcome measures of individuals who access the services over time and to measure the service quality. The trial will be completed in December 2020. A final evaluation report will be

developed by NT DOH to determine the success of the program and what type of service model should be funded in the future

Examples from comparable countries

Canada

A range of Canadian initiatives prioritising what North American discourse refers to as chronic homelessness can be found on the Homelessness Hub website. Some of these were referenced in an earlier document provided to ACT Shelter and updates are referenced in Appendices one and two.

Of interest, are the creation of provincial and city based 'Community Profiles' where homelessness is routinely monitored and targets are set to drive progress: https://www.homelesshub.ca/CommunityProfiles

One of the main drivers of the community-level approach has been robust cost-benefit analysis of the cost of managing homelessness by institutionalising and warehousing people or responding primarily to homelessness as a crisis - rather than approaching it as a process - during which there are multiple opportunities for mainstream and specialist services to intervene, prevent or resolve.
The Canadian CBA is here: Cost Analysis Of Homelessness

- ***Built for Zero***
  The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness is Canada's equivalent of Homelessness Australia, but it receives sizable project funding from their national government. This funding has been used for a range of initiatives that collectively form Canada's *Built for Zero* initiative. The Advance to Zero efforts in Adelaide, Melbourne and Perth follow a similar logic to the Canadian models. Importantly though, there is both a housing component to end homelessness for people and then unlimited, housing focused support services are put in place to prevent its recurrence. Built For Zero Canada
  This intent echoes that of Minister Vassarotti who has stipulated to the sector that her vision is for homelessness in the ACT to be: "...Brief, rare and non-recurring..."

- **Workforce Development and Training**
  ACT Shelter has long been keen to see housing and homelessness practitioners access funded professional development and training opportunities that are incorporated into quality assurance and other frameworks so that the work of our colleagues is recognised as a professional discipline where future graduates of TAFE and University want to work. Canada may provide a template for us to follow though it is important to recognise the Australasian Housing Institute has also sought to professionalise our work. CAEH Training and Technical Assistance

United Kingdom

The most important component of the response to homelessness in the UK is the recognition of the Right to Shelter in legislation and requirements this places on the national government and on councils. Crisis UK is the equivalent of Homelessness Australia but is publicly funded. The link below takes to a list of some seventy-five resources for homelessness practitioners. The common thread is that the legislative basis is the right to shelter in English, Scottish and Welsh legislation. This is something the ACT could look at incorporating in our *Human Rights Act:*

Homelessness prevention guide

At a national level, the UK also has the ALL Parliamentary Party Working Group for Ending Homelessness which provides for multi-partisan engagement and commitment to housing solutions to end homelessness beyond electoral cycles. This would be a wonderful thing to have here in Australia: APPG for Ending Homelessness | Crisis UK

Intensive Support Models for Young People – Comparative Analysis
ACT Shelter acknowledges there has been limited focus on young people in this report.

We found the following comparative analysis of three models in the United Kingdom which may be of value to informing this work.

United States

There has already been extensive commentary in this paper on the Housing First approach, arguably, too much attention has been paid to it. It remains the dominant model of intervention discussed in literature from the United States in relation to meeting the needs of people with backgrounds involving complex trauma and presenting needs such as co-occurring mental health, disability and problematic substance use disorders.

The work by the National Alliance to End Homelessness on systems approaches to create the conditions necessary to end homelessness at a community level is a noteworthy contribution that could aid this commissioning effort. Other examples froim North America can be found in the Excel spreadsheets

https://endhomelessness.org/ending-homelessness/solutions/

Appendix 1 - Examples of Contemporary Good Practice

Practice Example	Details
Case Management, Case Coordination (already used by practitioners in ACT SHS)	The process through which case managers provide health and human services to clients/support systems. The process consists of several phases that are iterative, cyclical, and recursive rather than linear and that are applied until clients' needs and interests are met. The phases of the process are: • Screening • Assessing • Stratifying Risk • Planning • Implementing (Care Coordination) • Following-Up • Transitioning (Transitional Care) • Communicating Post Transition • Evaluating Practitioners in SHS in the ACT already use case management to establish shared goals with clients, identify and prioritise meeting presenting needs and report to the Specialist Homelessness Information Portal. ACT Shelter notes there are four main types of case management identified in the literature as exemplifying contemporary good practice and we are confident practitioners are already employing elements of all of them in their engagement with and support provision for people in SHS. The Brokerage Model Case Management The Clinical Case Management Model The Strengths-Based Clinical Case Management Mode IThe Intensive Case Management (ICM) Model

Practice Example	Details
Common assessment and intake platforms and case coordination (Proposed for implementation as part of the commissioning process).	1. **Intake** : This is the preliminary meeting between a case manager and a new customer. The case manager benefits from this time to collect demographic data about the client, recognize any instant needs, and start to establish trust and build a rapport. This first communication stage is obliging for a case manager to ascertain if a client would take advantage of the services your organization provides. If they would, they then move on to measuring the client's discrete needs. If their needs fall outside your organization, the case manager works to recognize and refer the customer to an external community resource. 2. **Needs Assessment**: This stage builds on the information gathered during the Intake stage, going into greater detail on the client's separate challenges and objectives. During this stage, a case manager's key goal is to recognize a client's glitches, interests, and risks to success. While every client undergoes this stage when they first come to an organization, it's significant to reevaluate over time as needs and situations often change. 3. **Service Planning:** This stage is mainly significant to the success or failure of a client. A case manager sets up explicit objectives and the actions that will be taken to meet those objectives. The outcome of this object-setting procedure is a case strategy complete with productions and results that will evaluate a client's success. A service plan should be both attainable and quantifiable. 4. **Monitoring and Assessment:** Appraisal is key to understanding the effect specific programs and services have on a client. Benefiting from the yield and outcome metrics explained in the preceding stages, a case manager should constantly supervise and assess a clients progress using a baseline measure derived from the needs assessment ACT Shelter notes there is a separate body of work proposed to examine the requirements for a common platform for assessment, case coordination, case planning, and outcomes measurement. We found several examples in the process of reviewing contemporary models of good practice for people with high intensity support needs. Unsurprisingly when key workers from, health, housing, mental health and social services agencies working with a family or individual are able to access a singular client information management portal, it is easier to coordinate responses and undertake shared case management that is person centred and outcome focused.

Practice Example	Details
Place Based Responses and Service Coordination (highlighted by Housing ACT in an earlier paper provided to ACT Shelter). The Belconnen Local Area Service Network is an ACT example of a place based response, but there has been previous work in Tuggeranong evaluated by the University of Canberra too.	Placed based responses involve the provision of local services that keep people connected to their local services. This line of system thinking shifts away from state-wide programs implemented in (top-down) specified locations to more place-based approaches which work within a geographical community, mobilising community stakeholders and leaders to address specific issues and social problems in their community. Centrelink has been the leading agency in Australia that has been funded to deliver placed based responses to address long term unemployment and multi-layered disadvantage in identified sites in Adelaide's northern suburbs, Bankstown in Western Sydney, Logan, south of Brisbane, Shepparton in Victoria and Tasmania's north-west. The Department of Social Services has also implemented place based responses to particular locally identified complex disadvantage. These initiatives have been in place for close to a decade now and are the Australian Institute of Family Studies provides a useful explanatory paper on the different forms and purposes of place based responses, including as they relate to housing and homelessness: Commonwealth Place-Based Service Delivery Initiatives | Australian Institute of Family Studies **Closer to Home (Scotland)** The Closer to Home initiative in Scotland is a well established place based response to homelessness that may be worth canvassing. Briefly: • understand the evidence on what drives and causes homelessness and what reduces the risk • why a place-based response to prevention is important, and what the limitations are gain an understanding and takeaway examples of the specific interventions that can prevent homelessness explore methods to identify community assets that can help protect people's homes • know when to ASK about housing and ACT on what they are told to prevent homelessness • become familiar with the local landscape that can prevent homelessness closer to home. • Closer to home: a place-based approach to preventing homelessness - Homeless Network Scotland: we are all in

Practice Example	Details
First Nations Culturally Responsive Approaches to Ending Homelessness Drawn from AHURI evidence review on the characteristics of urban Indigenous homelessness published in 2021.	In brief, the evidence review on the characteristics of urban Indigenous Homelessness and responsiveness to it found: ● Indigenous homelessness is culturally distinct. The drivers of Indigenous homelessness and the entry and exit points to accessing services are different. The notion of 'home' and 'homelessness' are culturally mediated terms. ● A continuity of dispossession, racism, profound economic disadvantage and cultural oppression shapes the lived experience of many Indigenous Australians today ● There is a lack of dedicated services for Indigenous Australians experiencing homelessness in urban areas, despite their acute over-representation. This combines with other systemic barriers to explain their acute overrepresentation among specialist homelessness services ● Indigenous-led services need to be supported and enabled to work more closely with housing and homelessness organisations.There is a policy tension between prioritisation of adequate supply of housing and the services and supports needed to assist people retain housing ● Family violence, community dislocation and economic pressures combine to escalate issues of sleeping rough, overcrowding and intermittent or cyclical homelessness. ● Wraparound trauma-informed holistic support is needed for up to a year for Indigenous women and children impacted by family violence ● The over-representation of Indigenous people in Australian prisons increases the risk of homelessness post-release. Indigenous people transitioning out of prison need secure and culturally safe accommodation support, as well as wraparound services that provide pathways out of vulnerability and risk. ● A strengths-based approach focussing on the interplay between Indigenous-controlled support services and homelessness support can generate more holistic and culturally safe responses. ● Indigenous-led responses to urban Indigenous homelessness are culturally appropriate and thus likely to have greater impact and be lasting. Urban Indigenous homelessness: much more than housing

AHURI Report 383 – Urban Indigenous Homelessness	Homelessness among Indigenous people arises from a clustering of vulnerabilities that easily spiral out of control. Minor problems, such as a broken fridge or a parking fine, can rapidly escalate to a major problem of rent arrears, court appearances and failed tenancies. This breakdown places a further barrier to housing access as a failed tenancy means individuals can be placed on the Tenant Information Centre Australia list, which landlords access to check on the status of housing applicants. Poverty is part of this vulnerability, as a proportion of the homeless Indigenous population have 'nothing but the clothes they are standing in…' (RD1, Manager Community Service Organisation), are unable to pay bonds, or meet their basic needs. • As crisis beds become more difficult to find, frontline workers must spend excessive time placing their clients. Hostel managers and shelters describe turning people away, leaving clients with little option but to sleep on the streets. For legal services, finding appropriate accommodation for individuals exiting custody or jail is 'their number one problem, right across the state' (RQ2, CEO Indigenous SHS) • Inadequate funding for homelessness services, limited crisis and transitional accommodation, the shortage of affordable housing, barriers to housing access and inadequate attention to tenancy sustainment, create a revolving door of housing and homelessness for many Indigenous people. Although problems of discrimination, mental illness and poverty make it difficult for Indigenous people to access and sustain housing, it is the barriers resulting from problems and limitations of the housing and homelessness system that merit greatest attention Other barriers to accessing priority housing (and waiting lists), include: • lack of identity documents • low incomes • problematic housing histories, including rent arrears and other housing debts, warnings for disruptive behaviour • criminal history • lack of a tenancy history • low tolerance for completing forms as well as low literacy—which makes it difficult to understand forms • lack of a stable address, making it difficult to keep appointments. • One of the characteristics of Indigenous homelessness is the extent to which some people move between different forms of housing insecurity and homelessness, effectively cycling through the system rather than progressing through it towards long-term housing. Addressing their needs requires more housing and a more assertive approach to sustaining tenancies. • While issues of overcrowding may have a cultural dimension, we note that while connection is cultural, abuse is not. • Funds available to housing managers make no provision for the intensity of support required to manage unapproved occupants, who are often highly transient and with complex needs. The pressures of managing

Practice Example	Details
	the service mean that managers have little choice but to implement a regulatory response rather than a social justice response. • The introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has been counterproductive for many homeless people for multiple reasons, as plans cannot be accessed unless the individual has a fixed address. The NDIS is predicated on residence at a stable, fixed location and makes no provision for those in unstable housing circumstances. If you have no home, NDIS support plans are of little value • Cultural safety and cultural awareness training are imperative to good practice in the homelessness sector. • A specifically Indigenous approach to service provision—including the affirmative approach to Indigenous employment—means the experience of clients accessing the service can be distinct from mainstream services, overcoming barriers of distrust and establishing reputational credibility • Instead of a one-size-fits-all model, services need to adapt to local requirements. Strategies and practices need to be adjusted to fit local client socio-demographics, such as ethnic or language group mix and local service profiles • Partnering with Indigenous community-controlled organisations is key to ensuring good practice for clients. • The intersectional nature of Indigenous homelessness means people are doubly hard to reach, as both homelessness and Indigeneity can be characterised by a distrust of formal institutions. This lack of trust requires an awareness that, as well as ensuring cultural safety, it may be necessary to work with clients long-term. • The very high rate of Indigenous incarceration is a critical area for policy attention. There is insufficient coordination between specialist homeless services and the criminal justice system. A formal protocol for advising crisis accommodation services is needed, as is support for sustaining tenancies. • Developing and maintaining strong networks with local and peak Indigenous health, welfare, legal and financial services is critical to providing effective services. • To provide an appropriate and culturally safe service to homeless Indigenous individuals and families requires services to establish strong relationships with Indigenous/mainstream services, and to find ways to work together rather than be siloed. • One way to strengthen Indigenous homelessness services is for Indigenous community health services to play a greater role in the housing and homelessness sector. Indigenous-led services are critical to the success of initiatives to address Indigenous urban homelessness

Practice Example	Details
Research from Canada (2023)	Homelessness among Indigenous peoples is an important issue in Canada and internationally. Research was conducted in seven metropolitan areas in the four western provinces of Canada to explore current services with the aim of developing a best practices framework to end homelessness for Aboriginal peoples. Sequential mixed methods were used. Key results found agreement that Aboriginal peoples were overrepresented among the homeless and policy determined the approach to and comprehensiveness of services provided. Funding, lack of time, and lack of resources were highlighted as issues. Gaps identified included a lack of partnership, cross-cultural collaboration, cultural safety, and evaluation and research in service provision. Best practices included ensuring cultural safety, fostering partnerships among agencies, implementing Aboriginal governance, ensuring adequate and sustainable funding, equitable employment of Aboriginal staff, incorporating cultural reconnection, and undertaking research and evaluation to guide policy and practices related to homelessness among Aboriginal peoples. Tools | The Homeless Hub
Collective Impact Models	The Geelong Project was referenced in earlier work by the Directorate on Contemporary Models of Good Practice. The Geelong Project is based on an innovative COSS model ('community of schools and services'), created by Dr. David MacKenzie. This model represents a suite of innovations to create an effective system of early intervention for youth at risk of school drop-out and youth homelessness. With 8 years of experience, The Geelong Project has reduced school dropout by 40% and reduced youth homelessness by 40% (McKenzie, 2018). Our understanding is chief protagonist and leading Australian homelessness researcher David Mackenzie is already working with Belconnen Community Service to examine the requirements needed to bring about a community of schools and services and broader systems led, place-based response to the ACT. Collective Impact Models have five core conditions. These elements are illustrated in a handy diagram at Appendix 3. David Mackenzie from Upstream Australia has agreed to share intellectual property relating to the Community of Schools and Services projects under way in Geelong, Albury and Mount Druitt. Projects – Upstream Australia

Practice Example	Details
Health, Housing & Human Services Partnerships (Commissioning provides intent for service integration and systems reform viewing social & supportive housing through an infrastructure lens, in contrast to a deficits based 'place of last resort' lens)	Viewing public expenditure on bricks and mortar and housing assistance as an investment rather than a cost, changes the narrative but it is still a narrow lens through which to view the role that an affordable, accessible, safe, secure home of decent amenity plays as a determinant of life outcomes. While housing is seen as a commodity people by and large are expected to fund themselves, despite a multitude of demand and supply side interventions, a minority of people (upwards of twenty per cent in the ACT) cannot afford what the market asks, nor live independently in what the market offers. On top of this, many are compromising on emotional and social wellbeing, location and work/life balance because the only housing they can afford does not meet their needs, is crowded, or a lengthy distance from where they work or study. On top of this, the 2020 and 2021 Public Health Emergency Declaration and economic fallout from COVID reminded us housing, or more accurately housing amenity, quality and safety are determinants of better or poorer physical health and security of tenure and affordability - are prerequisites for housing to be an enabler of better emotional and social wellbeing ACT Shelter is the Territory representative on the Australian Health, Housing and Homelessness Alliance. Through this membership we have become aware of a number of multidisciplinary housing, homelessness and health partnerships in other jurisdictions which we see value in examining with the view to ascertaining whether the ACT Health Directorate and Community Services Directorate could undertake cost-benefit analyses and scope the applicability of potentially replicating in the ACT. Some are in the document you can link to above. Others are in our evidence summaries. There is also this helpful document on models of integrated healthcare and housing from the Aged Care Royal Commission: Of note is section three on community focused integrated care. ACT Shelter is aware the most common pathway into aged care for older people without homes to sell, is through a serious fall or illness and to wait months or years in hospital where many die before an aged care place is available to them. While off-topic for this commissioning objective, there are other models of housing and support the Commonwealth could and should be encouraged/pressured to co-fund.

Practice Example	Details
	These include integrated models of care for veterans, hospital transitions programs, healthcare and housing case coordinators and system navigators and early intervention focused independent housing and support clusters for younger people with disability through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, tied to the domains in our wellbeing indicators. There is also a case to be made for Commonwealth social determinants of health funding for Aboriginal people in cities.

Appendix 2 - Contemporary good practice – what are the common elements?

ACT Shelter is conscious the Directorate recently undertook an internal review of contemporary models of good practice that summarised what has been found to achieve better outcomes for people who are engaged with multiple service systems. Its findings are summarised below.

Findings from research conducted for the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI)

Wide-ranging research conducted by AHURI has found a number of key general features that are linked to an effective homelessness services system.

These include:

- A better balance between prevention, early intervention, and crisis services: Research findings indicate that the existing homelessness service system in Australia is predominantly a crisis response to homelessness.
- Experiences from other countries including Finland, Norway, and the United Kingdom have shown that these countries have managed to reduce homelessness rates by concentrating on preventing homelessness and intervening early before homelessness becomes chronic
- Client- centred approach: A client-centred approach ensures that all aspects of support and engagement with the client or family are tailored to their needs, preferences and goals.
- Culturally appropriate support: Good practice responses seek to preserve and enhance connections to culture and leverage cultural strengths to assist clients.
- Housing First approach: Both international and Australian research clearly demonstrates that Housing First models are effective in enabling people sleeping rough and those experiencing chronic homelessness and acute needs to sustain tenancies.
- Assertive outreach is often combined with a Housing First approach - core features of assertive outreach models include:
    - Multidisciplinary teams to support people to transition out of rough sleeping
    - Persistent and proactive street-based engagement of rough sleepers
    - Targeting through a 'Vulnerability Index Tool'
    - Client centred practice (Individually focused housing and support provision with no arbitrary or fixed timeframes for withdrawal of housing offer or support provided.
    - Long-term support to sustain housing
- Integrated response involves 'joint working' and can involve system-level or service-level integration, with the ultimate aim of creating linkages and connectedness among services to meet the needs of clients. Integration can be developed on a system-wide basis and be centrally managed or be generated at a service level involving the coordinated delivery of individual services within and/or across different sectors (service-level integration).

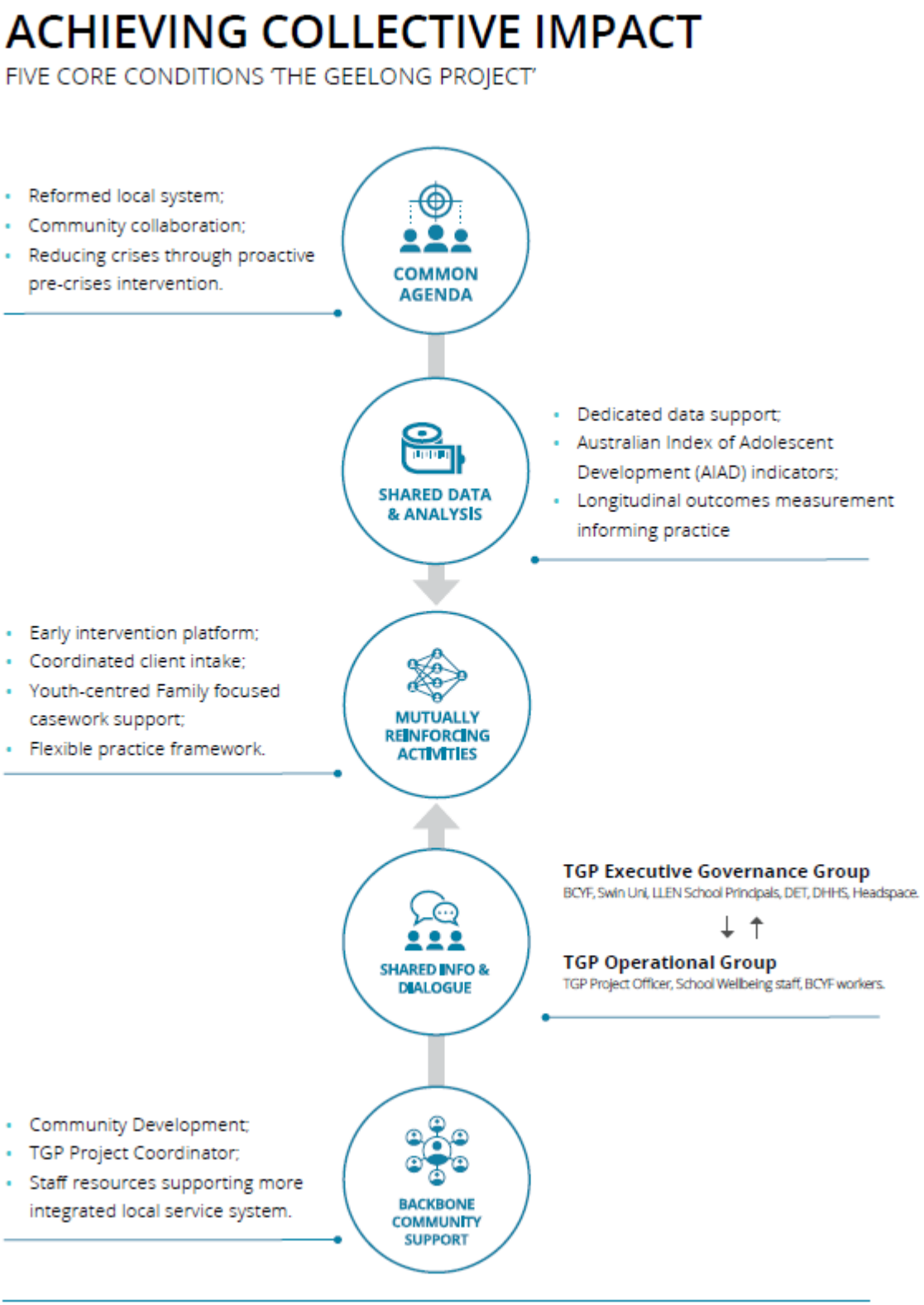
The above remain directly relevant to this commissioning endeavour.

- There are a plethora of Australian and international resources relevant to the commissioning of better outcomes for Canberrans with life histories that have

culminated in their need for higher intensity, higher duration support needs both within homelessness services and to support people to sustain tenancies. These can be found in the Excel spreadsheets attached separately to this document.

Finally, ACT Shelter would thank Huyen Trong for her analysis of the data provided to the Directorate and in turn the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare that demonstrates that while comprising a minority of clients, there is evidence in the reporting from frontline services that the proportion of clients whose main reasons for seeking assistance meet the definitions that formed the basis for the ACT Government commissioned *Cohort Study,* have increased since that time.

Appendix 3 - The Collective Impact Model



Appendix 4 - Summaries of Australian and Overseas Findings

Summaries of Australian and Overseas Research and Resources			
Title and link	**Author/s Publisher**	**Publication date**	**Summary/comments/Additional information**
A plan to end homelessness	Homelessness Australia	Aug 2022	Australia is facing a perfect storm of factors driving increased homelessness, with rents skyrocketing, a tight rental market making it much harder to find an affordable home, and the continuing scourge of domestic and family violence driving victim survivors into homelessness. But homelessness can be solved. People at risk of losing their home, or who don't have a home need safe, appropriate, and affordable housing; enough income to manage the cost of housing and other essentials, and for some, support to gain or sustain their housing. Key recommendations: • Building 25,000 social housing properties a year. • Providing a housing guarantee to women and children fleeing family violence • Providing homes and support to people who have been homeless multiple times to help them stay housed. • Providing young people who can't live at home with the support they need to succeed. • Increasing Jobseeker to at least $70 a day and boosting Commonwealth Rental Assistance by 50 per cent
an Aboriginal cultural safety framework for the Specialist Homelessness Sector	Jenny Samms | APO Council to Homeless Persons	April 2022	The shocking levels of Aboriginal homelessness in Victoria require a broad-based systematic and multi-sectoral response with solutions that are co-designed with Aboriginal people and informed by Aboriginal culture and experiences. This document responds to the priorities of Manan-na worn-tyeen maar-takoort and the SHS Transition Plan. It is designed to assist specialist homelessness services achieve Aboriginal cultural safety. It is organised in four sections: Self-determination and Aboriginal cultural safety, Aboriginal people's experience of homelessness, Aboriginal cultural safety framework for the specialist homelessness sector, and an Aboriginal cultural safety reflection tool.

Summaries of Australian and Overseas Research and Resources			
Title and link	**Author/s Publisher**	**Publication date**	**Summary/comments/Additional information**
A plan to end homelessness in Victoria	Council to Homeless Persons I APO	Sept 2022	This document maps out the housing and support needed to end homelessness in Victoria, tailored to the differing needs of particular groups. These groups, include young people, people who have been sleeping rough or who have had repeated experiences of homelessness, victim survivors fleeing violence, and First Nations Victorians. The authors identify the investments needed to prevent homelessness before it occurs, and to deliver the amount of social housing needed to provide homes for Victorians squeezed out of Victoria's increasingly unaffordable rental market. Key recommendations: • End homelessness for women, children, and other victim-survivors of family violence by providing a housing guarantee for all victim-survivors; deliver 6,000 new social housing properties every year for the next ten years. • Prevent homelessness at both access points, and by increasing TenancyPlus. • End rough sleeping and recurring homelessness by extending H2H and Homes for Families and delivering new peer-worker and outreach programs. • End youth homelessness with a youth homelessness strategy, housing and support options for young people, and increased case management and family mediation resources • End Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander homelessness by delivering 600 new social housing properties each year into Aboriginal community control and implementing the Blueprint for an Aboriginal-specific Homelessness System in Victoria • Implement the SHS Workforce Development Strategy to address skills shortages in the SHS. • Improve the legal system's treatment of people without homes with fairer treatment, bail reform, and by recognising the human right to housing.
Ending homelessness in Western Australia 2022	Centre for Social Impact Paul Flatau, Leanne Lester, Michael Kyron, Coco Lai, Melodie Li	August 2022	In 2018, the Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (WAAEH) released a 10-year strategy to end homelessness through a community-based response. Since 2010, a number of homelessness agencies working with the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness, have adopted a methodology used internationally, but adapted to the Australian environment, to measure the needs of those experiencing homelessness, particularly those rough sleeping, and develop a framework for reporting on ending homelessness in the regions within which they work.

Summaries of Australian and Overseas Research and Resources			
Title and link	**Author/s Publisher**	**Publication date**	**Summary/comments/Additional information**
			This report builds on CSI UWA's previous work by presenting an analysis of homelessness in Western Australia, presenting a comprehensive analysis of Western Australia's Advance to Zero data from 2012 onwards (a decade of data collection in Western Australia), undertaking an analysis of Western Australia's homelessness policy and service context, and detailing the important systems and service initiatives that are on the ground now to end homelessness in Western Australia
Also see - Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness Dashboard	Paul Flatau, Leanne Lester, Michael Kyron, Flatau P., Lester L., Kyron M. (2022). The Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness	July 2022	The Advance to Zero database includes responses from those experiencing homelessness to a question contained the following question "What do you need to be safe and well?" This was posed as an open-ended question, leaving respondents able to articulate any needs that were salient to them. A total of 2,774 responses were recorded for Western Australian participants. Respondents overwhelmingly mentioned housing and a home but also refer to physiological needs (e.g., food/water), safety and health needs, belongingness and love needs (e.g., friends and family, social support) and esteem needs (e.g., independence and employment).
The faces of homelessness	Sharon Hoogland, Marilyn Judd-Smith, Annemarie Maizey	April 2008	People experiencing homelessness: their voice on what they need to be safe and well. How to care for homeless people is an urgent and extremely important challenge to the Australian community. Homelessness and the issues surrounding it have been a reality of our community for many years. However, whilst we may have become 'immune' to a certain extent, to the plight of the alcoholic on the park bench, as a community we are inadequately resourced to meet the current reality, which is the changing face of the homeless. In 1989, Australia was called to attention with the publication of "Our Homeless Children", a report of the National Inquiry into Homeless Children, also known as the Burdekin Report. This report provided staggering proof of a desperate situation: the large number of young Australians, who were homeless, disillusioned, and damaged, and who despaired of any future. In 1997, "Shifting the Deckchairs", a joint report 18 by five major Sydney charities, revealed that increasing numbers of homeless people in Sydney had mental illnesses, despite the steady withdrawal of mental health services to homeless people accommodated in hostels and refuges. A further report by the same coalition of charities in 1998, "Down and Out in Sydney", produced evidence of continuing depletion and deterioration of services. The report highlighted "an indictment of government policies which have been directed towards saving money rather than the preservation and nurturing of damaged lives. To ignore the stark realities of mental disorder and trauma affecting homeless people is to perpetuate a grave injustice."

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			How far have we come in the past twelve years? The reality is, we're not doing very well. In the year July 1996 - June 1997 an estimated 147,000 people used homeless services across Australia, some more than once. A further 304,000 requests for support or accommodation were not met over that period, mainly due to the lack of accommodation places. Statistics from the organisations that work with the homeless show that the problem is getting worse every year- an overall increase of 340% in 4 years. Meanwhile, Shelter NSW in 1999 reported that "In the last five years, over $231m has been cut from the supply of public housing with $99m of those cuts this year alone - a cut of nearly 50% from last year." It was in 1999 that the new Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement (CSHA) took effect. It reduced the amount of funding available to the States by approximately $10 million per year over the period from 1999 to 2003.
The Specialist Homelessness Sector transition plan (2018-2022) - Building a path to our future	Council to Homeless Persons | APO	Oct 2018	"This Transition Plan is designed to assist the SHS, both as organisations and as a workforce, to build on its strengths and prepare to deliver the contemporary suite of services, to meet growing demand and complexity, and to achieve effective outcomes."
Australian homelessness monitor 2022	Hal Pawson, Andrew Clark, Cameron Parsell, Chris Hartley Launch Housing	Dec 2022	The Australian Homelessness Monitor 2022 (AHM 2022) is the third report in Launch Housing's Homelessness Monitor series and covers the period 2018 – 2022. The AHM 2022 undertakes the first major analysis spanning the COVID crisis years and contains in-depth examination of the changes in the scale and nature of housing markets and homelessness in Australia, including the social and economic drivers impacting homelessness. While the COVID-19 pandemic prompted a swift response in the cities of Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane, to eliminate rough sleeping, other pre-existing trends continued to persist – the growing scale of homelessness nationwide; increases in older Australians experiencing homelessness; and family and domestic violence as the key driver for women and children seeking assistance from specialist homelessness services. Key findings: Rising homelessness has continued to outstrip Australia's growing population. The average monthly number of people using homelessness services increased by 8 percent in the four years to 2021-22, double the national population increase over that period; Cost of living and housing stress are impacting everyday Australians. The average number of people accessing homelessness services because of their inability to pay rent, rose by a staggering 27 percent in the last four years; Recent rental market

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			trends have significantly contributed to this growth in homelessness. Between 2020 – 22 there was sizeable spike in rent inflation in the private market across Australia, with rental prices at rates unobserved since 2008. This is having the greatest impact on low-income households, pushing many into homelessness.
Ending homelessness in Western Australia 2022	Paul Flatau, Leanne Lester, Michael Kyron, Coco Lai, Melodie Li Centre for Social Impact	Aug 2022	In 2018, the Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (WAAEH) released a 10-year strategy to end homelessness through a community-based response. Since 2010, a number of homelessness agencies working with the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness, have adopted a methodology used internationally, but adapted to the Australian environment, to measure the needs of those experiencing homelessness, particularly those rough sleeping, and develop a framework for reporting on ending homelessness in the regions within which they work. This report builds on CSI UWA's previous work by presenting an analysis of homelessness in Western Australia, presenting a comprehensive analysis of Western Australia's Advance to Zero data from 2012 onwards (a decade of data collection in Western Australia), undertaking an analysis of Western Australia's homelessness policy and service context, and detailing the important systems and service initiatives that are on the ground now to end homelessness in Western Australia.
The funding of Western Australian homelessness services	Paul Flatau, Leanne Lester, Zoe Callis, Michael Kyron Centre for Social Impact	May 2022	This report provides comprehensive evidence of the funding of specialist homelessness services, mainstream services, and Aboriginal services, which assist those experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness in Western Australia. The report presents: • an overview of the state of homelessness and the policy environment that Western Australian homelessness services operate within, and • a comprehensive overview of the funding of homelessness services in Western Australia based on the extant literature, findings from a survey of 73 representative homelessness services operating across Western Australia and outcomes from focus groups comprising service managers. Western Australian homelessness services have provided much-needed evidence of the type, mix, and level of funding for services that support those experiencing homelessness and those at risk of homelessness, as well as the barriers in attracting funding, the extent to which services are able to meet needs, and commissioning/contractual issues.

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Technical paper: Alignment of the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) and the ABS Census definitions of homelessness	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare | APO	March 2022	This technical paper outlines the alignment and differences between the AIHW Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) and the ABS Census definitions of homelessness, including key concepts and derivation code logic of both collections. It does not contain any homeless data.
Ending homelessness in Australia: an evidence and policy deep dive	Paul Flatau, Leanne Lester, Ami Seivwright, Renee Teal, Jessica Dobrovic, Shannen Vallesi, Chris Hartley, Zoe Callis	Feb 2022	The objectives of this report are twofold. First, to collate and assess the current evidence base on the state of homelessness in Australia and its key drivers. Second, to set out an evidence-informed policy and practice agenda towards ending homelessness in Australia. This examination of the current state of homelessness draws on publicly available Australian Census and Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) data and national data sources on the drivers of homelessness. The report also presents the first detailed examination of the consolidated national Advance to Zero database for the decade 2010-2020. The database is a community organisation led and controlled database built on advance to zero homelessness projects (the Zero Projects). Homelessness is a complex problem. If we are to end it, we need to understand and engage all levers available to us. The rapid and varied responses to homelessness during COVID-19 come with positive and negative lessons; documenting these lessons will help to leverage the facilitators and avoid the pitfalls in future efforts to end homelessness. Part I of the report provides a heuristic ending homelessness model, a brief outline of the history of homelessness policy in Australia, and an overview of the state of homelessness in terms of the size, structure, and nature of Australia's homeless population. Part II provides insights into the circumstances of people experiencing homelessness in Australia and their journeys through homelessness and into housing, utilising the Advance to Zero database.

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			Part III reflects on progress towards ending homelessness in the policy and practice environment by examining policies and initiatives that drive towards an end to homelessness in Australia.
The wisdom of women and workers: practice considerations for designing assertive outreach services for women experiencing homelessness	Tamara Blakemore, Louise Dean, Graeme Stuart, Joel McGregor, Kelly Hansen, Kate Davies, Marette Gale, Lara Turley	March 2022	Policies shaping assertive outreach with those experiencing homelessness have long lacked gendered and cultural inclusivity in approach or application. This has resulted in responses that are inherently focused on the visible, and hence male, experience of crisis and related housing impact(s). It has also resulted in a fundamental gap in female focused understandings of the practices that can (and should) underpin effective assertive outreach for women experiencing homelessness. In response, Nova for Women and Children, in collaboration with the University of Newcastle, have sought the wisdom of women and their workers in designing a specialist assertive outreach program for women experiencing homelessness in the Hunter region of New South Wales. Lessons learned highlight assertive outreach with women experiencing homelessness should intentionally focus on targeted engagement to build relational rapport, trust, and safety. Acknowledging the acute and often complex experiences of trauma for women with chronic or cyclic experiences of homelessness, women and their workers argue assertive outreach needs to be flexible in providing the type of support women want, where and when they are ready, especially in the context of often inflexible policy parameters. Women and workers noted policy and programme responses can be re-traumatising for women seeking to exit homelessness, often through their lack of responsiveness and sensitivity to experiences and circumstances that contextualise homelessness, especially for women. Stories of women experiencing homelessness and the workers who support them add to and enhance evidence for practice by emphasising voices that have been notably missing from the existing evidence base.
Urban Indigenous homelessness: much more than housing	Selina Tually, Deirdre Tedmanson, Daphne Habibis, Kelly McKinley, Skye Akbar, Alwin Chong, Kate Deuter, Ian Goodwin-Smith AHURI	Aug 2022	This research examines the causes, cultural contextual meanings, and safe responses to homelessness for Indigenous Australians in urban settings, using Australian policy, practice, and academic literature, together with interviews with stakeholders in four case-study sites Two interrelated factors underpin experiences of chronic Indigenous homelessness: • the continuing legacy of colonisation on the physical and mental wellbeing of Indigenous individuals and families, evident in high levels of trauma, often linked to lateral violence within the home and repeated experiences of loss extended across the generations. • the impact of poverty on access to the private rental market.

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			The most important failure of service delivery to Indigenous populations is lack of housing options. A revolving door of housing and homelessness for Indigenous people is created by: inadequate funding for homelessness services; limited crisis and transitional accommodation; the shortage of affordable housing; barriers to housing access; inadequate attention to tenancy sustainment Other barriers to accessing priority housing (and waiting lists) include a lack of identity documents; low incomes; problematic housing histories, including rent arrears and other housing debts and warnings for disruptive behaviour; criminal history; lack of a tenancy history; low tolerance for completing forms as well as low literacy—which makes it difficult to understand forms; and lack of a stable address, making it difficult to keep appointments.
Homelessness amongst older people aged over 55 in New South Wales	Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues (NSW) | APO	October 2022	Access to safe and secure housing is a human right. Unfortunately, older people in New South Wales are increasingly finding themselves without a home, or at risk of becoming homeless. Not only is this situation personally devastating for the individual but most often, it has ongoing consequences for the broader community and the government. Sadly, while traditional stereotypes of people who experience homelessness persist, it is increasingly older people, particularly older women, who are the 'face' of homelessness of New South Wales today. This cohort may not sleep on the streets but may find themselves couch surfing among family and friends or sleeping in their cars, living in highly precarious situations. While the 'greying' of homelessness is occurring across Australia, the committee heard that due to a range of structural and individual factors, including feelings of shame and embarrassment, the true extent of homelessness amongst this cohort is unknown. It was evident during the inquiry that older people are experiencing homelessness later in life. While each individual's journey to homelessness is unique and driven by a confluence of complex and diverse factors, such as domestic and family violence, including elder abuse, the primary drivers are financial difficulty, housing crisis and housing affordability stress. Chapter 1 explores the experience of homelessness in New South Wales. It considers not just the incidence of homelessness, but the stories of individuals with lived experience. The evidence of these stakeholders offered essential insight into the complex and multifaceted nature of homelessness and the challenges people face accessing services. Their journeys provided the context for the key issues raised throughout this report.

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			Chapter 2 outlines the government policies in place across all levels government to address homelessness amongst older people in New South Wales. It first considers how the NSW Government approaches homelessness and its associated concerns, including housing, older people, and family and domestic violence. Chapter 3 considers the decline of home ownership before examining the consequent impact on the private rental market and the concerns stakeholders have over securing housing in this market, such as rental housing supply, affordability, evictions, accessibility, and discrimination. Chapter 4 first considers older women, who are the fastest growing group to experience homelessness in Australia. It then considers the experiences of other vulnerable groups of older people, including First Nations people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability and chronic health conditions, carers, LGBTQ+ people, and people living in rural, regional, and remote areas. The homelessness service system is vast and comprises a range of services including government services, Specialist Homelessness Services, place-based services, and prevention and early intervention services. Chapter 5 considers these services, from the NSW Government service Link2Home to Specialist Homelessness Services, which include the provision of temporary accommodation and transitional housing.
Indigenous mental health, housing, and homelessness	Allen and Clarke Consulting | APO AIHW	March 2022	Evidence exists that the provision of housing and the prevention of homelessness is important for the prevention of mental ill-health and suicide among Indigenous Australians. The relationship between housing and mental health is bi-directional. A person's mental health can be negatively affected by the lack of safe, affordable, and good quality housing, and the existence of a mental illness can affect an individual's access to suitable housing. This paper also acknowledges that mental health issues and suicide among Indigenous Australians result from cumulative historical, cultural, and social factors. These factors arise from the process of colonisation and its aftermath, which includes dispossession of land, racism, social exclusion, socioeconomic disadvantage, exposure to violence, and the forced removal of children from families (including the Stolen Generations), and the resulting trauma.

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			The authors examine the evidence of what works and does not work in mental health and suicide prevention programs and policy initiatives associated with housing and homelessness for Indigenous Australians. They report key information about research, evaluation, program, and policy initiatives, identify best-practice approaches and critical success factors for implementation, and outline limitations and gaps in the evidence.
Evaluation of the Aspire Social Impact Bond: final report	Veronica Coram, Leanne Lester, Selina Tually, Michael Kyron, Kelly McKinley, Paul Flatau, Ian Goodwin-Smith Centre for Social Impact	August 2022	Aspire is informed by a Housing First approach and the program design draws on learnings from prior research and practice wisdom about what does and doesn't work in responding to homelessness, particularly chronic or recurrent homelessness experienced by people with so-described 'complex needs' (such as co-occurring mental or physical health issues, trauma, disability and/or problematic drug or alcohol use). While Aspire was not specifically designed for people with complex needs, participants often fit this category as these needs are strongly associated with experiencing chronic and recurrent homelessness. The Aspire program design aligns with previous findings that effective homelessness interventions are based on person-centred, flexible, holistic, and coordinated case management over a sustained period, with rapid (re)housing and wraparound post-housing supports to increase the chances of people staying housed. Aspire aims for caseloads of around one to 15 (rather than the common one to 25 or more in other case management programs) and offers participants up to three years of supports (rather than the common three to six months). The evaluation findings indicate that Aspire is a highly effective homelessness intervention, especially for people with complex needs and/or experiencing chronic or recurrent homelessness, for whom more conventional service delivery approaches may not deliver sustainable benefits. The quantitative data analysis indicates that Aspire participation is associated with people successfully exiting homelessness and sustaining their tenancies over the medium term, alongside a reduction in accessing emergency accommodation services, decreased use of hospital services and less interaction with justice services, delivering significant cost savings to government.
The wisdom of women and workers: practice considerations for designing assertive	Tamara Blakemore, Louise Dean, Graeme Stuart, Joel McGregor, Kelly	Mar 2022	Policies shaping assertive outreach with those experiencing homelessness have long lacked gendered and cultural inclusivity in approach or application. This has resulted in responses that are inherently focused on the visible, and hence male, experience of crisis and related housing impact(s). It has also resulted in a

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outreach services for women experiencing homelessness	Hansen, Kate Davies, Marette Gale, Lara Turley University of Newcastle		fundamental gap in female focused understandings of the practices that can (and should) underpin effective assertive outreach for women experiencing homelessness. In response, Nova for Women and Children, in collaboration with the University of Newcastle, have sought the wisdom of women and their workers in designing a specialist assertive outreach program for women experiencing homelessness in the Hunter region of New South Wales. Lessons learned highlight assertive outreach with women experiencing homelessness should intentionally focus on targeted engagement to build relational rapport, trust, and safety. Acknowledging the acute and often complex experiences of trauma for women with chronic or cyclic experiences of homelessness, women and their workers argue assertive outreach needs to be flexible in providing the type of support women want, where and when they are ready, especially in the context of often inflexible policy parameters. Women and workers noted policy and programme responses can be re-traumatising for women seeking to exit homelessness, often through their lack of responsiveness and sensitivity to experiences and circumstances that contextualise homelessness, especially for women. Stories of women experiencing homelessness and the workers who support them add to and enhance evidence for practice by emphasising voices that have been notably missing from the existing evidence base.
Housing First: an evidence review of implementation, effectiveness and outcomes	Christian Roggenbuck | APO AHURI	August 2022	Housing First originates from the Pathways to Housing program in the United States. The Pathways to Housing program has become an often replicated model to support people experiencing chronic homelessness by providing immediate access to permanent housing integrated with support services. The Pathways to Housing program has been articulated through a set of principles that guide the delivery of other Housing First programs. At the heart of Housing First lies rapid housing access, consumer choice, the separation of housing from support, holistic recovery and harm minimisation, and community integration. A key finding from the research is that Housing First is highly effective in providing housing stability for people with a history of chronic homelessness and complex needs. Evaluations of Housing First programs consistently report high levels of tenants sustaining their housing (typically ranging from 66% to 90%), which is significantly higher compared to 'treatment as usual' approaches. In addition, as Housing First programs provide access to health, mental health and other support services, tenants are less likely to be admitted to hospitals and emergency departments and are less involved with

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			the criminal justice system. Ultimately, while Housing First is a resource-intensive intervention, it is most cost-effective for people experiencing chronic homelessness who have complex and high needs.
Enhancing the coordination of housing supports for individuals leaving institutional settings	Cameron Duff, Sean Randall, Nicholas Hill, Chris Martin, Robyn Martin AHURI	June 2022	This research developed policy recommendations for enhancing housing assistance for individuals leaving institutional settings of residential treatment for mental health and/or substance use problems, the criminal justice system and out-of-home care. The inquiry also offers recommendations for enhancing the ways Specialist Homelessness Services address the unique support needs of diverse cohorts moving between these institutional settings. Failure to adequately plan for and support safe transitions from institutional settings into secure and affordable housing can have catastrophic consequences for individuals leaving these settings, with strong impacts on their housing security, health and wellbeing, and economic and social participation in the community. The research finds individuals at risk of experiencing housing insecurity following discharge from institutional settings should be formally integrated into discharge planning processes, and that assertive case management, while resource intensive, is an effective means of supporting vulnerable individuals with complex needs to access and maintain stable housing. In addition, it is important to increase funding support for the provision of new social housing to guarantee access to safe and secure housing for all Australians who require it. For people exiting prison social housing is a stable base on which to receive and engage with support services and helps to desist from offending.
Exiting prison with complex support needs: the role of housing assistance	Chris Martin, Rebecca Reeve, Ruth McCausland, Eileen Baldry, Patrick Burton, Rob White, Stuart Thomas AHURI	Aug 2021	One of the classic metaphors for exiting prison is 'going home'. However, more than half of people exiting Australian prisons either expect to be homeless or don't know where they will be staying when they are released. The connection between imprisonment and homelessness presents special risks for people with complex support needs: that is, people leaving prison who have a mental health condition and/or a cognitive disability. People with complex support needs are often excluded from community-based support and services because they are deemed 'too difficult', and so end up entangled in the criminal justice system. Post-release housing assistance is a potentially powerful lever in arresting the imprisonment–homelessness cycle and breaking down the disabling web of punishment and containment in which people with complex support needs are often caught.

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			Key points: • Imprisonment in Australia is growing, and ex-prisoner housing need is growing; but at the same time, housing assistance capacity is declining • Ex-prisoners with complex support needs who receive public housing have better criminal justice outcomes than comparable ex-prisoners who receive private rental assistance only. • In dollar terms, housing an ex-prisoner in a public housing tenancy generates, after five years, a net benefit of between $5,200 and $35,000, relative to the cost of providing them with assistance in private rental and/or through homelessness services. • The evidence strongly supports the need for much greater provision of social housing to people exiting prison, particularly for those with complex support needs.
Inquiry into homelessness in Victoria: final report	Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee (Vic) | APO	March 2021	There are just as many causes of homelessness as there are different faces. Homelessness can affect anyone; however, some people are more at risk of experiencing episodic or recurring homelessness due to personal and structural risk factors. Personal risk factors may include, for example, mental health issues or experiencing family violence. Structural risk factors are social factors that can lead to disadvantage and increased vulnerability to homelessness, for example housing affordability or unemployment rates. In 2018–19, one in 57 Victorians accessed a government-funded homelessness service, a high figure but one which is likely to underestimate the extent of the issue. This problem of understanding who and how many people are homeless is compounded further by the transitory nature of homelessness, where the total number of people experiencing homelessness can change on any given day. The Committee believes that more work needs to be done to improve reporting strategies for recording Victoria's homeless population. Report structure: This report has been structured to first provide an overview of homelessness in Victoria and then follow the service pathway of the homelessness sector from early intervention and prevention to crisis, transitional and long-term accommodation, and support. • Chapter 1 provides information about the inquiry. • Chapter 2 provides an analysis of the current picture of homelessness in Victoria. • Chapter 3 gives an overview of the governance structure of the housing and homelessness portfolio as well as of the homelessness sector. • Subsequently, Chapters 4 to 6 follow the homelessness service pathway. There are many intersecting issues across the pathway and not all people will enter at the same point. However, following the pathway from its earliest point (early intervention) towards longer term outcomes

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			demonstrates that the ideal pathway is one from early intervention directly into long-term, secure housing—but that the reality facing vulnerable Victorians does not always match this linear pathway. Instead, people accessing housing and homelessness services very rarely move through it in a linear fashion. Rather, they enter, exit and sometimes re-enter at different points and for different periods of time. In the Committee's view this speaks to the complexity of homelessness and housing precariousness faced by thousands of Victorians.
Home at last: solutions to end homelessness of older people in NSW	Ageing on the Edge NSW Forum | APO Housing for the Aged Action Group	Dec 2021	Housing is critically important for physical and mental health, and general wellbeing of older people. With a decline in home ownership at retirement age, unprecedented increases in housing prices and a reduction in social and affordable housing stock in NSW, older people are experiencing significant housing challenges and are at increased risk of homelessness. Given the scarcity of resources, service responses to homelessness often rightfully focus on people with high and complex needs. These services are crisis-oriented and do not meet the needs of older people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, many of whom have had traditional housing histories, do not recognise their experience as homelessness, or they have had minimal interaction with social services and are unlikely to present at a homelessness service for assistance. Instead, older people on low incomes live in precarious, untenable housing situations, with associated costs to their mental and physical health. It is critical that there are specialist supports in place for these people. This report is advocating for the NSW Government to adopt the Home at Last program running in Victoria, which provides advice, support and advocacy for older people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness
At risk of homelessness: preventing homelessness in older culturally and linguistically diverse communities	Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, Housing for the Aged Action Group	Dec 2015	This research is a collaboration between Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) and Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG). The project is a response to an increasing awareness of housing issues for older migrant and refugee communities. This report makes recommendations based on a detailed and targeted process of community consultation with specific ethnic communities as well as through the examination and analysis of case studies from Home at Last clients and Home at Last service data.

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			The recommendations are designed to assist decision makers in planning inclusive services and to encourage the development and implementation of housing policies and diversity mechanisms that ensure equitable access for older members of culturally diverse communities. 11 Recommendations - including resources in languages, specialist staff and use of translating and interpreting services, community education, training for service staff,
A qualitative study of Sacred Heart Mission's Journey to Social Inclusion (J2SI) Phase 2 Program: experiences and perspectives of J2SI study participants	Monica Thielking, Bronte McLeod, Jessica Mackelprang, Jude Spiers, Zoe Callis, Ami Seivwright, Paul Flatau Swinburne	Aug 2020	One of the most critical challenges faced by the homelessness service system is determining how to effectively address the complex needs experienced by its clients. Many clients, particularly those with a history of chronic homelessness, have multiple unmet health and social needs. They may have complex trauma histories and mental health conditions, engage in risky substance use, face barriers to employment, and experience social relationship problems. Sacred Heart Mission's Journey to Social Inclusion (J2SI) Phase 2 program is an attempt to exit adults out of chronic homelessness by employing four service principles: 1. Service delivery is relationship-based, individualised and client-driven 2. Service users experience a trauma-informed, strengths-based recovery model of care that promotes hope, builds trust, and feels safe 3. Service providers recognise that sustained housing and management of complex health issues are key enablers of recovery and inclusion 4. Service delivery supports service users to build capacity for independence and skills for inclusion - the fostering of independence and encouragement of help seeking through services is critical to an individual's success beyond the support period. This report presents the experiences of individuals involved in the qualitative component of a randomised controlled trial to evaluate the Journey to Social Inclusion (J2SI) Phase 2 program.
Ending chronic homelessness in Melbourne: outcomes of the Journey to Social Inclusion Phase 2 study - snapshot	Sacred Heart Mission	Aug 2020	Journey to Social Inclusion (J2SI) Phase 2 successfully supported people to exit homelessness through rapid access to housing and supporting people to settle into and sustain their housing. Participants in the program realised improvements in their mental health, increased employment, and a reduction in substance use. The evaluation also evidenced a large reduction in participants' use of public services such as hospitals and drug and alcohol facilities, which created significant cost savings to government.

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Design guide for refuge accommodation for women and children	Samantha Donnelly UTS	Mar 2020	The relevance of architecture and design for social impact is important in this project. The quality of space matters enormously for those working with and those experiencing trauma, particularly for the long-term goal of rehabilitation and healing. Tailored spatial design can address user needs and complex issues of safety, dignity, and flexibility beyond the pragmatic needs of a temporary place to stay. Attention to aesthetics and a nuanced approach to furnishing, lighting, and fitting out spaces can make a difference to time spent in the refuge. The purpose of this design guide is to assist those working towards improving refuge accommodation for vulnerable women and children escaping violence in the home. It provides a foundation for developing fit-for-purpose accommodation and aims to: • establish an understanding of the needs of refuge residents, workers, and managers to assist those who seek to improve existing or provide new accommodation; • outline how this type of accommodation will positively contribute to urban/regional streetscape and communities; • provide practical design and construction ideas for future pilot studies and tailored design projects that address the issues faced by women and children leaving domestic and family violence; • assist funding bodies, supervisory boards and interdisciplinary services requiring more specific briefs for fit-for-purpose facilities. • inform councils and other consent authorities assessing new refuge facility proposals and building upgrades. • provide recommendations to improve design outcomes for refuge services in the longer term; • potentially support women leaving crisis accommodation to better understand the attributes of well-designed spaces in future permanent housing. This guide includes research findings on the potential of tailored design projects to address issues faced by women and children leaving domestic and family violence
An effective homelessness services system for older Australians	Andrew Beer, Charmaine Thredgold, Carole Zufferey, Andrew Peters, Angela Spinney	Nov 2019	This study investigated the issues affecting older Australians who are experiencing or facing homelessness including the capacity to access Specialist Homeless Services and other government supports, and potential ways to escape homelessness for older people. The research also considered appropriate, successful international practices for older people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Research outcomes:

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	AHURI		• Where once homelessness in older age was seen to be limited to men, increasing numbers of women are affected. This reflects the ageing of the baby boomer generation and societal changes, including the increasing incidence of divorce. • A growing number and percentage of people are experiencing homelessness for the first time in older age. • Service providers and people who are homeless alike report that the current system of supporting older people who experience homelessness is fragmented, too poorly resourced and unable to provide long-term solutions. • International experience shows that homelessness needs to be addressed through long-term policies and programs that focus on prevention, early intervention, the provision of 'housing first', and the supply of 'wraparound' services. • Training for staff so that they are empathetic and well equipped to deal with the complexities of providing homelessness support is central to better solutions. • Expansion of the Assistance with Care and Housing program (ACH) would offer a simple first step to better support this vulnerable group.
People in short-term or emergency accommodation: a profile of Specialist Homelessness Services clients	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Mar 2019	On Census night in 2016, around 21,200 Australians were in supported accommodation for the homeless (ABS 2018)—living in hostels for the homeless, night shelters, or refuges. This number has increased over the past decade, from around 17,300 in supported accommodation for the homeless in the 2006 Census. These estimates, derived from the Census, are likely to underestimate the extent of homelessness, and there are no data available to determine the magnitude of the underestimation (ABS 2018). This report presents, for the first time, a comprehensive analysis of people experiencing homelessness in Australia living in short-term or emergency accommodation, over a 4-year period, using the Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC). Those in short-term or emergency accommodation were more likely to be female, aged 15–34, not in the labour force and present alone. As a group, the 20,400 clients in short-term or emergency accommodation who sought the assistance of specialist homelessness services (SHS) upon their first presentation to services in 2011–12, had different demographic characteristics to all other adult SHS clients (136,200). More than half (54% or 11,000) were female compared with 63% (85,800) of other SHS clients; almost half (48% or 9,700) reported they were living alone, compared with 36% (36,900) of other SHS clients, and most (92% or 17,700) were unemployed or not in the labour force, compared with 87% (82,300) of other SHS clients.

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			Analysis of the service use patterns of clients in short-term or emergency accommodation in 2011–12 revealed 3 cohorts. • Persistent service users: 2,900 clients (or 14% of clients in short-term or emergency accommodation) accessed services every financial year from 2011–12 to 2014–15. • Service cyclers: 8,800 clients (or 43% of clients in short-term or emergency accommodation) accessed services in 2 or 3 years of the 4-year period. • Transitory service users: 8,700 clients (or 43% of clients in short-term or emergency accommodation) accessed services in 2011–12 only. Service use increases with increasingly complex needs. Those in short-term or emergency accommodation showed increasing service use according to their needs or 'vulnerability conditions'. In this analysis, vulnerability is based on whether someone had ever reported: a mental health issue, problematic drug and/or alcohol use, and/or domestic or family violence.
Trajectories: the interplay between mental health and housing pathways	Nicola Brackertz, Jim Davison, Alex Wilkinson AHURI	May 2019	The evidence clearly identifies a complex bi-directional relationship between mental health, housing, and homelessness. However, our understanding remains incomplete in how major life events and a person's circumstances (e.g., mental health status, employment, income, mental health and housing system engagement, support from family and carers) interact and affect their long-term trajectories for housing and mental health and their ability to access the services and supports they require. Our understanding of the risk and protective factors for people who experience moderate to severe mental ill-health, but who remain housed, remains underdeveloped. Nor are we clear on the factors that enable or prevent people from accessing the services and supports they need and the effectiveness of these services and supports. It is also not clear how the housing and mental health systems interact, what the failure points are and what the opportunities for early intervention are. A lack of research on the role of carers and families and qualitative research from the point of view of people with mental ill-health is a critical knowledge gap. To address these issues, we need to better understand people's transitions through the housing and mental health systems including their housing histories and the range of factors that have influenced their aspirations for and choices of housing

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The construction of social housing pathways across Australia	Abigail Powell, Ariella Meltzer, Chris Martin, Wendy Stone, Edgar Liu, Kathleen Flanagan, Kristy Muir, Selina Tually AHURI	Jul 2019	Housing pathways describe the changing experience of housing by tenants and their households over time and space. The impact of the transformation of social housing in recent years on these pathways is not well understood, and we investigate it in this report. Accessing and securing social housing is dependent on a range of eligibility criteria, with housing allocated on a priority needs basis. In some jurisdictions, having a low income alone does not guarantee eligibility for social housing. Living in social housing means that one's housing can be subject to periodic eligibility reviews, which can also be triggered by (mis)use of premises or by changing household circumstances. For example, an increase in household income, the expansion of a household or when a household member needs to leave due to family violence. The way these issues are monitored and assessed across jurisdictions directly shapes the housing pathways of social housing tenants. Moves within social housing can be tenant-initiated or landlord-initiated. Tenant-initiated transfers are most likely to result from changing household circumstances, and landlord-initiated transfers from portfolio or tenancy management. Both tenant and landlord-initiated transfers are constrained by the wider policy context, specifically, a shortage of suitable alternative housing stock to transfer households to. Moves out of social housing may also be tenant or landlord initiated. Previous research has demonstrated that regardless of who initiated the move, tenants often return to the social housing system. Returns to social housing are compounded by the increasing proportion of tenants with complex needs who are likely to require support to live in private housing. The lack of affordable and appropriate housing alternatives to social housing also increases pressure on the sector, including from tenants returning to the sector who have previously left. Many of the operational policies that shape housing pathways have been introduced in the context of sustained high demand and a lack of supply. They are therefore arguably designed to manage wait lists by rationing supply. While we are yet to explore the tenant experience of social housing pathways, reimagining social housing pathways likely requires a greater policy focus on ensuring positive outcomes for households. "... the main pathway into social housing is via homelessness or risk of homelessness ... " Associate Professor Abigail Powell, Centre for Social Impact, UNSW.
Climate chaos, cannabis, housing scarcity and	Sally Hussey	Dec 2019	Climate chaos, cannabis, housing scarcity and deliberation. These were the confronting issues in public engagement in 2019.

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deliberation: public engagement in 2019			To represent the span of a year through these issues might seem reductive. But their complexities share a common theme: How does community engagement navigate current global challenges? Equally, how can engaged communities meet the real demands and urgencies of our catastrophically changing environment? This is not to lay a blind spot bare. But serves to underpin a pivotal intersection between public engagement and the intractable issues facing our communities and our habituation in the twenty-first century. Reading against the perceived pitfalls of public engagement in climate action, Community engagement steps up participation in climate action demonstrates how, at a local level, community engagement has the power to communicate the irreversible risks that climate chaos poses in a tangible way. This can impact the at 'arms-length' thinking that obfuscates the urgency of climate chaos competing with seemingly more immediate issues. Online engagement rises to the global affordable housing challenge looks at the inefficacy of tackling supply as a one-fix solution to housing stress, working poverty, unstable accommodation, homelessness, and swelling population growth. For the narrow criteria simply doesn't reflect the array of community needs, reflections, ideas, and input into housing issues. And, turning specifically to Canada - the first G7 country and only second in the world to fully legalise cannabis consumption – Why Canada's Cannabis Act is a green-field opportunity for online engagement identifies that coupling the volatility of an issue like cannabis with the requirement that local municipalities engage their communities presents fertile ground for online community participation. The need for increasing public participation – not to mention increasing the pathways to its augmentation – remains paramount to challenges communities face globally. Squarely facing issues of climate chaos and affordable housing through the lens of public engagement, for instance, local level engagement cuts through swathe of government inaction and the failure to communicate environmental urgency. Equally, with 7.7 billion people on earth, a figure that has increased threefold since the 1950s, working with communities to improve housing affordability for vulnerable populations becomes a priority as equity-seeking residents and communities will be the most vulnerable to impacts of climate chaos. Evidence-based with case examples from the UK, Canada, USA and Australia, this e-book not only serves as a commentary on issues that have challenged public engagement in 2019. But it brings together the transformative potential of engaged communities. Too often, in relation to themes as big as climate chaos, cannabis laws and housing scarcity, public discourse around community engagement is not developed and

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			questions fall away. This is not to insist on their abiding connection. But to actively, and reflectively, comprehend their intractable intersection
Young adults' experiences with Australian public services: final report	Brady Robards, Steven Roberts, Ben Lyall, Barbara Barbosa Neves, Zareh Ghazarian, Jonathan F. Smith, Jacqueline Laughland-Booÿ, Verity Trott, Jo Lindsay, Chiara De Lazzari, Madeleine Ulbrick, Sarah Hewitt, Patrick Marple, William Lukamto, Callum Jones Monash University	Nov 2022	In 2020, Monash University and the Australian Catholic University partnered with the APS Reform Office in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to research young Australians' perceptions about and experiences with public services. The researchers' work engaged with almost 3,000 young people through surveys and focus groups and was supported by secondary data sources from surveys and social media. The report also featured in the development of Australia's Youth Policy Framework (2020). This report presents the findings of a large-scale, mixed-methods study of youth transitions in Australia, with a particular focus on young people's experiences with public services. This research was undertaken during an unprecedented global pandemic, but also in a broader context where for the last few decades young people have been following increasingly complex, non-linear, and uncertain pathways towards adulthood. Today's young people navigate combined stresses of education, employment, housing, and relationships, and public services are essential to support young people during these transitions. Work can be done to improve how young people enter, transition between, and exit services, to empower them on their paths into adulthood. Young people were keen to participate, and from March to September 2020, our study involved: • 47 focus groups with 155 young adults from around Australia, aged 18-30. • 2,261 responses to a national survey of young adults, aged 18-30. • 30,000 social media posts, collected from Twitter, Reddit, and Whirlpool. The findings highlight nine focus areas where there is room for the APS to improve service-delivery to young Australians: 1. Young people want to learn more about public services, so they are better prepared to engage with them. The quality of outcomes for young people - and the level of compliance for the APS - depends upon the level and reliability of information they receive. 2. Information about services isn't gathered from a single, APS source. Young people feel services could communicate better to avoid misinformed expectations about service interactions; 3. Young people value digital services but can find them depersonalising. This can leave young people feeling like they are invisible and can see them look for assistance to interpret information;

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			4. Young people want flexible service touch points. Along with digital options, they want the flexibility to engage on more complex issues – online, by phone, and in-person; 5. Young people's knowledge and experience of the APS varies by social characteristics and cultural background. This can lead some young people to feel services don't speak to them, leading to confusion or disengagement with services; 6. Young people who need consistent support report initial and ongoing barriers. This can lead to some vulnerable young people feeling disenfranchised and isolated – negatively impacting service interactions and outcomes; 7. Young people report mixed experiences with third-party service providers. Because of this, young people have less confidence in service programs and are less likely to fully engage; 8. Young people report stigma as a barrier to service engagement. As a result, young people may wait until they are in crisis before seeking support from services, or not may not access services at all; 9. Young people feel mental health needs greater recognition. Without acknowledgement or awareness of the mental health pathways available, young people are less likely to engage with and trust services, delaying access to mental health support. Editor's note - This research was conducted with funding from the Australian Public Service and was primarily intended for use by Australian public servants to improve services for young people. The report was made publicly available in November 2022.
Ageing well in public housing	Debbie Faulkner, Julia Verdouw, Peta Cook, Selina Tually, Edgar Liu, Bruce Judd, Helen Barrie, Veronica Coram AHURI	Nov 2021	This research examines the policy and practice issues raised by increasing demand for public housing among older Australians, and how public housing authorities (PHAs) can support older tenants to age well. Although most Australian states and territories have strategies in place to support ageing well among their older citizens, the explicit place of public housing policy and practice for older people within ageing well frameworks is limited. People aged 55 years and over now comprise 35 per cent of public housing tenants nationally. In the coming years it is expected the demand on the public housing system from lower income older households will increase significantly, with demand for housing far exceeding supply; an ageing population; inappropriate and inefficient stock; and increasing complexity in the needs of current and prospective tenants.

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			The various housing strategies of the states and territories recognise that governments, through their PHAs, have a responsibility to cater to the needs of their older residents. To age well across the life course, it needs to be remembered that tenants or prospective tenants have rights, desires, needs and, for the most part, reasonable community-aligned expectations for their housing. It is both important and necessary to have frontline workers in the system (housing/property officers and tenancy practitioners) who are resourced and allowed to provide one-on-one support to address older people's needs and issues. Key points: • Older people comprise a significant proportion of public housing tenants, including more than a third of tenants nationally; • The results of this study, however, suggest that there are systemic issues impacting on whether the sector is an appropriate option for older people at the current time, as well as into the future. • The public housing system is under great pressure and facing multiple challenges. These include demand for housing far exceeding supply, an ageing population, inappropriate and inefficient stock, and increasing complexity in the needs of current and prospective tenants. These pressures are impacting lower income older households and the ability of the system to support an ageing well philosophy; • Older tenants' experiences in public housing are variable. For some tenants, the tenure provides a range of qualities, supports and experiences that they highly value and which promote ageing well. For other tenants, particularly people in less well functioning or disruptive communities (where antisocial behaviour issues are prevalent), their public housing experience has been detrimental to their quality of life.
Specialist homelessness services annual report 2021–22, Unmet demand for specialist homelessness services -	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare	Dec 2022	Specialist homelessness services annual report 2021–22, State and territory summary data and fact sheets - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare HOU331_Factsheet_ACT.pdf.aspx.pdf "Housing data https://www.housingdata.gov.au/visualisation/homelessness/homelessness-services-housing-outcomes"
Trajectories the interplay between housing and mental health pathways | AHURI	Nicola Brackertz Luc Borrowman Christian Roggenbuck Sarah Pollock Elise Davis	Feb 2020	Mind Australia in collaboration with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) have conducted a national study, "Trajectories: the interplay between mental health and housing pathways", to develop a clearer understanding of the housing and mental health pathways of people with lived experience of mental ill-health.

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	AHURI		The research project aimed to identify typical housing and mental health pathways, the intersection of these pathways, and potential points of intervention. The research found that safe, secure, appropriate, and affordable housing is critical for recovery from mental ill-health and for being able to access appropriate support services. Yet, there is a shortage of appropriate housing options for people with lived experience of mental ill-health. The quantitative analysis showed that poor and deteriorating mental health directly impact housing stability (as measured by forced moves and financial hardship). People who experienced severe psychological distress had an 89 per cent increased likelihood of financial hardship in the following year and a 96 per cent increased likelihood of financial hardship within two years. People with a diagnosed mental health condition had a 39 per cent increased likelihood of experiencing a forced move within one year. The quantitative analysis showed that mediating factors, such as social support, good general health, and accessing mental health and other health services, can reduce the likelihood of housing instability and shorten the length of time a person experiences mental ill-health. Conversely, an absence of mediating factors and experience of negative life events can amplify the relationship between housing instability and mental ill-health. Housing and mental health policies use 'ideal pathways' to conceptualise how people travel through systems. Contrary to the ideal social housing pathway circumscribed by policy, actual social housing pathways are rarely linear and are shaped primarily by eligibility criteria, a need to ration social housing and target it to those most in need, and the way in which social housing policies are operationalised. Similarly, mental health policies do not accurately reflect the real-life trajectories of many people with mental ill-health. Rather, people experience non-linear trajectories.
Leaving no-one behind: a national policy for health equity, housing and homelessness	Australian Alliance to End Homelessness	Jan 2020	"Trust is a major issue for people experiencing homelessness. The current the practice of offering service providers with 12 months' funding at a time undermines the capacity of those organisations to build and maintain this trust and reliability. Securing existing funding through Primary Healthcare Networks for five-year periods would give service providers greater operational and strategic efficiency, benefiting clients and generating a greater return for government."
Evaluation of the Homeless Youth	David Taylor, Sangita Chakraborty,	Nov 2020	Unaccompanied 12- to 15-year-olds experiencing homelessness are an extremely vulnerable group who have traditionally had few service options for support in New South Wales. The Homeless Youth Assistance

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Assistance Program: final report	Jonathan Ng, Vanessa Rose, Alex Gyani, Jessica Roberts, Susy Harrigan, Aron Shlonsky Centre for Evidence and Implementation96		Program (HYAP), a $54 million, six-year initiative from the Department of Communities and Justice (NSW), aims to reunify children and young people with their families and broader support networks, or enable this group to transition to longer-term supported accommodation. An evaluation consortium used a hybrid effectiveness-implementation evaluation design to examine the effectiveness of the HYAP model. Extensive consultation from a range of sources was undertaken and, for the first-time, administrative data from the homeless and child protection sectors was linked. Researchers found that while HYAP was designed as an early intervention service to prevent homelessness, the group who sought the most help from the program were highly vulnerable children and young people who had already had contact with the child protection system. NGOs adapted HYAP where possible to meet the diverse (and often complex) needs of this group but were often limited by a lack of appropriate services in their area. This meant that the help children and young people received was driven more by the availability of local services rather than the problem for which they had sought support.
Supporting the housing of people with complex needs	Michael Bleasdale AHURI	Sep 2007	This report focuses on the issue of providing housing and support to people with complex needs, specifically people with physical disability, people with intellectual disability, and people with mental illness. It builds on the extensive literature review undertaken in a AHURI Positioning Paper, which highlighted some problems with conceptualising this issue as a matter of finding and applying particular housing and support models to address the particular needs of people within these groups . The report provides some broad principles of practice that are worthy of description are: • the development of strong local area initiatives, based on cooperation and the capacity to know the individuals who require specific solutions, and the ability of collective action to provide housing and provide creative support arrangements. • the delivery of flexible support arrangements, which in turn have the capacity to drive individual housing options in the private rental and purchased housing areas, due to the control the client has over those supports, and the willingness of support agencies to accommodate the client's wishes in establishing housing and assisting the client to remain there; • the capacity to oversee the evolution of programs and initiatives, such as HASP and HASI, to a more locally responsive set of arrangements among housing and support providers, which in turn

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			can contribute to the achievement of broadly agreed benchmarks in the provision of housing and support to people with complex needs. (p65)
The outcomes of individualized housing for people with disability and complex needs: a scoping review	Stacey Oliver, Emily Gosden-Kaye, Di Winkler, Jacinta Douglas Disability and Rehabilitation		Purpose: Worldwide, disability systems are moving away from congregated living towards individualised models of housing. Individualised housing aims to provide choice regarding living arrangements and the option to live in houses in the community, just like people without disability. The purpose of this scoping review was to determine what is currently known about outcomes associated with individualised housing for adults with disability and complex needs. Methods: Five databases were systematically searched to find studies that reported on outcomes associated with individualised housing for adults (aged 18–65 years) with disability and complex needs. Results: Individualised housing was positively associated with human rights (i.e., self-determination, choice, and autonomy) outcomes. Individualised housing also demonstrated favourable outcomes regarding domestic tasks, social relationships, challenging behaviour, and mood. However, outcomes regarding adaptive behaviour, self-care, scheduled activities, and safety showed no difference, or less favourable results, when compared to group homes. Conclusions: The literature indicates that individualised housing has favourable outcomes for people with disability, particularly for human rights. Quality formal and informal supports were identified as important for positive outcomes in individualised housing. Future research should use clear and consistent terminology and longitudinal research methods to investigate individualised housing outcomes for people with disability.
Cross-sector service coordination for people with high and complex needs: harnessing existing evidence and knowledge	Rosamond H. Madden, Nicola Fortune, Susan Collings, Richard C. Madden, Bronwyn Morkham, Alan Blackwood	Aug 2014	People with high and complex needs will generally need an array of supports to enable social and economic participation as envisaged by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). As participants, these people will receive funding from the NDIS to purchase services and supports from a range of different disability sector providers but will also need to access various 'mainstream' services including health, education, housing, justice, and transport in order to pursue the life they choose. The complexity of the services system, and the interfaces between sectors, create gaps and barriers that are challenging for participants, service providers and for policy makers alike to navigate. Cross-sector

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	Centre for Disability Research and Policy		coordination is a critical scheme design element to ensure that NDIS participants get the range of services and supports they need to pursue their goals and participate in society and the economy. Any failure of other sectors to provide access to quality services will increase the costs of disability support and risk the sustainability of the NDIS. Coordination can thus also be seen as a way of addressing this fundamental risk facing the NDIS. For these reasons cross-sector coordination should be a core element in NDIS design. The disability field is actively discussing these challenges and this paper aims to provide evidence to inform policy directions now being developed.
A sustaining tenancies approach to demanding behaviour in public housing: a good practice guide	Daphne Habibis, Rowland Atkinson, Terry Dunbar, Dan Goss, Hazel Easthope, Paul J. Maginn AHURI	July 2007	Changes in the profile of public housing tenants in recent decades have seen growth in the number of tenants with complex needs. Many tenants who engage in demanding behaviour fit within this category. These tenants are especially susceptible to the cycle of homelessness and its damaging effects. The public housing sector is in a unique position to break this cycle by integrating a sustaining tenancies approach to routine housing management practice. This paper reports on a study funded by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute into positive housing management approaches to demanding behaviour in public housing. It describes strategies which seek to balance the rights of those in acute housing need with those of the broader community to safety and security from behaviour which may be threatening, difficult or just unconventional. The research identified examples of existing good practice in this area using an international literature review and interviews with housing and other relevant agencies in New South Wales, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and South Australia. Indigenous issues are a specific focus of the research.
Evaluation of the Sustaining Young People's Tenancies Initiative	Nicola Brackertz AHURI	Feb 2018	An independent evaluation of the Queensland Government Department of Housing and Public Works pilot project with Brisbane Youth Service which provides mobile support services to assist young people aged 16–25, who are in social housing and are at risk of losing their tenancy and becoming homeless, to sustain their social housing tenancy. Includes recs at policy and program level as well as service provider level (p60)
Social Housing Systemic Issues for Tenants with Complex Needs	Qld Mental Health Commission	May 2015	Social housing plays a vital role in providing safe and affordable accommodation for those who are experiencing mental illness, mental health difficulties and substance use problems (complex needs) in supporting their recovery and participation in the community and the economy.

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			There are a number of programs which seek to support those living with mental illness to secure and maintain social housing. However, these programs cannot meet the needs of those who may not have a severe mental illness or who have an undiagnosed condition. Recent reforms in social housing, including the Housing 2020 Strategy, acknowledge that people experiencing complex needs require support and assistance. Part of these reforms was the introduction of the Anti-social behaviour management policy (ASB policy) three strikes approach to managing tenant behaviour. Since its introduction just over one year ago, very few social housing households have been issued strikes under the ASB policy, however the impact on tenants, particularly where strikes result in a tenancy being terminated, can be significant. This report identifies and makes 12 recommendations regarding systemic issues arising from the implementation of the ASB policy one year after its introduction. It also seeks to inform the community housing sector when managing social housing tenancies where tenants are experiencing complex needs. The recommendations are informed by research undertaken by The University of Queensland's Institute for Social Science Research Review of systemic issues for social housing clients with complex needs and based on four policy principles: ● Social housing supports recovery and reduces demand on acute mental health services. ● Social housing supports other government priorities such as reducing homelessness. ● Social housing tenants have a responsibility to not engage in disruptive or 'anti-social' behaviour but may need support to meet their tenancy obligations.Policies need to consider stigma and discrimination which may be experienced by people with complex needs. Developed as an ordinary report under the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 20131, this report was prepared in consultation with the Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council and relevant government agencies including the Department of Housing and Public Works and the Department of Health. The recommendations support efforts to provide more effective government services as part of the Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2014–2019 within the context of existing legislation. The recommendations focus on the need to: ● plan for future housing needs, provide alternative housing solutions and monitor outcomes for social housing tenants who are subject to the ASB policy. ● improve communication about the ASB policy. ● combine strikes with prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation supports.

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			• adopt a more systemic approach to providing support to social housing tenants with complex needs including better service integration.
Housing, homelessness and mental health: towards systems change	Nicola Brackertz Alex Wilkinson Jim Davison AHURI	Nov 2018	This research progresses the priority areas identified by the National Mental Health Commission (Commission) and provides evidence about the systemic issues and policy levers that need to be addressed to provide more and better housing and more and better services for people with lived experience with mental ill health. A number of effective models delivering consumer and recovery-oriented housing operate in Australia. However, most are pilot programs, are small in scale, localised, or have time limited funding. The evidence showed that existing programs that integrate housing and mental health supports are effective in generating government cost savings (especially in health) and reduce hospital admissions and length of hospital stay. They also contribute to tenancy stability, improve consumer mental health and wellbeing, social connectedness, and lead to modest improvements in involvement in education and work. The evidence does not point towards one particular program approach that is suitable for all circumstances or consumers (one size fits all); there is a place for a variety of programs accommodating specific needs. Successful initiatives have in common certain factors and principles that are essential to facilitating good outcomes. Critical success factors include effective mechanisms for coordination at the state and local levels, cross sector collaboration and partnerships, immediate access to housing (social housing or private rental), and integrated person-centred support.
'A pathway to where?' Inquiry into understanding and reimagining social housing pathways	Kristy Muir Abigail Powell Kathleen Flanagan Wendy Stone Selina Tually Debbie Faulkner Chris Hartley Hal Pawson AHURI	July 2020	This research seeks to understand how social housing pathways are conceptualised and constructed by operational housing policies in Australia; who is moving into and out of social housing; and what is the lived experience of people who have moved into, within or out of social housing. Social housing pathways are not linear and may refer to changes in tenure, household form, experiences, and attachment. Policy implementation has largely been driven by a need to manage the social housing waiting list rather than ensuring positive housing outcomes (such as housing stability, affordability, security, and safety) for tenants and their households. Policies for entry into, movement within and out of social housing are predominantly shaped by eligibility criteria, which increasingly have prioritised people with complex needs.

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			Research found that the largest group of social housing tenants (33.9%) had remained in social housing for the full 10-year period and were more likely to be older, in receipt of an aged pension or a disability pension and out of the workforce. For all tenants who exited social housing, around 1 in 10 made transitional exits (i.e., returning at least once to social housing). National transfer rates within public housing and SOMIH have been limited; only at 2.7 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively in 2016–17. Positive housing outcomes for social housing tenants requires using a preventative model that aims to prevent people from becoming homeless; accepting that long-term social housing is a legitimate (and cost-effective) way to provide social housing assistance and that supply needs to increase; and recognising that social housing provides an infrastructure of care for other tenants/households with long-term complex needs.
Evaluation of the Homelessness Industry and Workforce Development Strategy	Nicola Brackertz Jim Davison AHURI	June 2022	The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) has been contracted by Homelessness NSW to evaluate the Homelessness Industry and Workforce Development Strategy 2017-2020 (Strategy 2017-2020). The evaluation used a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. It conducted a survey of both managers and practitioners in the NSW specialist homelessness services (SHS) workforce, examined administrative and secondary data relating to homelessness programs, consulted with key representatives of Aboriginal homelessness service providers, and conducted focus groups of managers to discuss the needs for a future strategy. 29 Recommendations relating to: • Service quality, sustainability, and good practice • Service integration, networking and collaboration • Outcomes indicators and measurement tools • Workforce development • Providing culturally appropriate services • Growing the capacity of Aboriginal organisations
How can Aboriginal housing in NSW and the Aboriginal Housing	Nicola Brackertz Jim Davison Alex Wilkinson	Oct 2017	The purpose of this Issues Paper is to support the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) in developing a new 10-year strategic plan and in outlining a vision for the Aboriginal Community Housing Sector (ACHS).

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Office provide the best opportunity for Aboriginal people?	AHURI		The central research question is: How can housing in NSW provide the best opportunity for Aboriginal people?
Improving housing and service responses to domestic and family violence for Indigenous individuals and families	Kyllie Cripps Daphne Habibis AHURI	Aug 2019	This research focuses on the housing needs of Indigenous women and children who are severely over-represented in rates of both homelessness and domestic and family violence (DFV). These programs need to be consultative, co-designed and integrated initiatives that respond to domestic and family violence holistically. This means that they will first and foremost provide safety and support to victims, but that they will also provide support to perpetrators so that they can reflect on and change their behaviours. Housing is critical to these responses, ensuring that both parties are appropriately housed in the short, medium, and long-term. This research has also demonstrated the need for policy to have a focus on the empowerment of Indigenous women. It is critical that policy makers hear their voices, their experiences, and that they accept that Indigenous women are the 'experts of their own lives'.
Social housing legal responses to crime and anti-social behaviour: impacts on vulnerable families	Chris Martin Daphne Habibis Lucinda Burns Hal Pawson AHURI	June 2019	This research examined social housing landlords' legal responses to crime and anti-social behaviour by tenants, household members and visitors. The research reviewed residential tenancies law and social housing policies in five Australian jurisdictions and national policy principles and frameworks relating to the four types of vulnerable persons and families: women, particularly as affected by domestic violence and other male misconduct; children; Indigenous persons and families; and people who problematically use alcohol and other drugs.\Social housing in Australia is targeted to households with low incomes and complex support needs. Lately, social housing policy has sought to give social landlords (i.e., government housing authorities, community, and Indigenous housing providers) a larger role in relation to crime and non-criminal anti-social behaviour. Recent developments include 'three strikes' policies and legislative amendments intended to facilitate termination proceedings and evictions.

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Title and link	**Author/s Publisher**	**Publication date**	**Summary/comments/Additional information**
			There are tensions between terminating tenancies and social housing policy objectives relating to individuals and family wellbeing. Termination proceedings may be brought in response to the misconduct of an individual person, but the outcome may affect a household, including partners, children and other persons not involved in the misconduct. Indeed, it may be that the tenant is not the instigator of the misconduct but is made liable for the misconduct of an occupier or visitor. Policy development options include: • separating offers of support from threats of tenancy termination, with referrals made earlier in a tenancy and support delivered by services at arm's length from the landlord. • giving tenants more certainty through commitments that no-one will be evicted into homelessness; • ensuring proper scrutiny is applied to termination decisions and proceedings, and to sector practice; and • reforming the law regarding tenants' extended and vicarious liability for other persons.
Housing assistance need and provision in Australia: a household-based policy analysis	Wendy Stone Sharon Parkinson Andrea Sharam Liss Ralston AHURI	May 2016	This research considers the efficacy of introducing individualised and/or choice-based models of housing assistance into Australian housing assistance settings. It takes a novel approach to tenure-neutral needs-based analysis combined with practice and policy insights of key representative groups to provide an evidence base on the shorter- and longer-term implications of moving towards individualised-based or choice-based models of assistance. The focus is primarily upon determining the degree to which a 'one size fits all' versus a more tailored, nuanced form of housing assistance provision is of potential benefit, given the increased diversity of Australian households in potential need of housing assistance. To do so, the consideration shifts from an account of need and unmet need, such as via analysis of take-up rates of various forms of housing assistance or unmet need such as via public housing wait lists, to an analysis of the potential need for housing assistance. The research finds anomalies exist such that households with objectively similar needs receive fundamentally different levels and types of support depending on housing tenure rather than need. A shift toward an increasingly diverse model of provision would need to support households with high and complex needs in different, more intensive ways than the ways households with less complex/intense

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			needs can be supported. Expert stakeholders caution that sufficient resourcing is required for choice to be genuine and effective, and that conditional assistance is likely to be counterproductive.
The role of private rental brokerage in housing outcomes for vulnerable Australians	Selina Tually Michele Slatter Debbie Faulkner Susan Oakley AHURI	May 2016	This research investigates the role of private rental brokerage in supporting housing outcomes for vulnerable households in the private rental market. Private Rental Brokerage Programs (PRBPs) are found across Australia's system of housing supports and share similar aims (to assist low income, vulnerable clients to access and sustain private rental market tenancies) and have common, key characteristics: adaptability and responsiveness to local client and market needs. Currently, private rental brokerage is not identified as a housing assistance measure in national data or research collections, including those managed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. It remains an unexplored facet of the shift to private renting in the housing research literature. PRBPs appear to be successful in assisting 'rental ready' clients to access tenancies in the private rental market. Assessing a client's rental readiness was a key professional skill for PRBP workers, critical both to successful tenancy outcomes and the ongoing cooperation of market stakeholders. Many agencies were only funded to assist clients deemed already 'rental ready'. Others could help clients reach that point, provided the client did not have high or complex needs. Agencies expressed the view that it was very challenging, if not impossible, to assist clients with high needs into private rental. Policy and practice implications are discussed in the research.
Assessing management costs and tenant outcomes in social housing: recommended methods and future directions | AHURI	Hal Pawson Vivienne Milligan Edgar Liu Peter Phibbs Steven Rowley AHURI	Dec 2015	The research responds to the longstanding policy-maker and industry interest in improving performance metrics for Australian social housing; a sector encompassing both the public housing authorities and the not-for-profit landlord entities which cater for low and very low-income households. p32 - Building tenant–community linkages was also mentioned in this context by several providers as a means of promoting tenant engagement with their locality and—importantly from a landlord perspective—enlisting wider community support for tenants.
A sustaining tenancies approach to managing demanding behaviour in	Daphne Habibis Rowland Atkinson Terry Dunbar Dan Goss Hazel Easthope	Aug 2007	Changes in the profile of public housing tenants in recent decades have seen growth in the number of tenants with complex needs. Many tenants who engage in demanding behaviour fit within this category. These tenants are especially susceptible to the cycle of homelessness and its damaging effects.

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public housing: a good practice guide	Paul Maginn AHURI		The public housing sector is in a unique position to break this cycle by integrating a sustaining tenancies approach to routine housing management practice. This paper reports on a study funded by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute into positive housing management approaches to demanding behaviour in public housing. It describes strategies which seek to balance the rights of those in acute housing need with those of the broader community to safety and security from behaviour which may be threatening, difficult or just unconventional. The research identified examples of existing good practice in this area using an international literature review and interviews with housing and other relevant agencies in New South Wales, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and South Australia. Indigenous issues are a specific focus of the research.
Understanding the experience of social housing pathways	Kathleen Flanagan, Iris Levin, Selina Tually, Meera Varadharajan, Julia Verdouw, Debbie Faulkner, Ariella Meltzer, Anthea Vreugdenhil AHURI	Jan 2020	Report and policy evidence summary. Australia's social housing system is under considerable pressure, with high demand but manifestly inadequate supply. In this context, governments have introduced 'pathways' frameworks to promote movement through the social housing system. This report explores tenants' experiences of and perspectives on social housing 'pathways. Key findings include the following: • The same pressures placing the social housing system under strain also constrain the housing pathways of low-income households. For many, social housing offers the only viable source of affordable and secure housing. This reality structures households' experiences of social housing and their aspirations for the future. • Underinvestment in the social housing system has led to extreme rationing and limited the support that can reasonably be provided to tenants. Applicants and tenants therefore largely experience the social housing system as onerous, challenging, and unsupportive. If social housing providers are to continue to target so exclusively to need, greater efforts must be made to implement processes that provide adequate support to applicants and residents. • Social housing tenants value their homes and communities. They regard themselves as deeply fortunate to live in social housing and in contrast to the past experiences many have had of acute housing instability, social housing provides them with profound ontological security. Their experience of being 'at home' in social housing is largely incompatible with a pathways framework.

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			• Tenants value caring relationships with individual workers, yet many have experienced disrespectful and demeaning practices and interactions. Housing officers, especially in public housing, must be resourced and supported to prioritise care and respect in their everyday interactions with clients. • Better coordination is needed between the social housing system and other areas of human service delivery. This includes with aged care services and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), to ensure that for older tenants and people with disability, support to live independently aligns well with the provision of appropriate housing. Measures to better integrate support for tenants also need to include better engagement with employment services to assist tenants into paid work so they can increase their incomes and move out of poverty. • Tenants, and many providers, regard the role of social housing as one of providing permanent, affordable housing to low-income households and of sustaining tenancies rather than disrupting them. At present they do not consider the system to function as a transitional pathway and, largely, they do not think it should in future. p4 The research found that what constituted 'care beyond the provision of support full' practice within social housing extended through services. Although providers and tenants alike recognised the need for better, more consistent provision of professional support, particularly for tenants with complex needs, tenants placed considerable emphasis on more intangible aspects of care, such as being treated with respect and empathy. 4.3.4 - Failures in support (pp46 - 47)
Parity - Responding to Homelessness in the ACT	Volume 31 – Issue 9.IS N1032-6170	Nov 2018	This edition of Parity highlights the very welcome release of the 2018 Australian Capital Territory Housing Strategy. This has been met with generally positive reactions from the sector, though it's very recent release means there hasn't been time for its detailed consideration in this edition of Parity. Articles: • Homing in on 2020: Revisiting Homelessness Responses and Funding in Australia and the Australian Capital Territory T Gilbert • Specialist Homelessness Services in the ACT • Homelessness and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services in the ACT — A Data Snapshot • The ACT Housing Strategy 2018 • Building Communities, Boosting Self-esteem, Reducing Recidivism • Responding to the Housing Strategy • The Journey of Joint Pathways

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Title and link	**Author/s Publisher**	**Publication date**	**Summary/comments/Additional information**
			• Bringing it all Together: Creating a Single Human Service Gateway • An Action Plan to Prevent Child Homelessness: A service model for children aged eight to 15 in the ACT • Preventing Homelessness: The Role of Tenancy Support • Addressing ACT Youth Homelessness Through Health Justice • Safe Shelter ACT: A Community Response to Homelessness • Common Ground ACT • Homelessness and Older Canberrans • Public Housing in the Canberra: The Pride and the Prejudice — A Public Policy Literature Classic? • We Are Not There Yet • Disability Housing in the Post-NDIS World • Housing for Migrants and Refugees in the ACT • Housing Must Be Accessible as Well as Affordable • The Complexity of Domestic and Family Violence — 30 Years On ACT Safer Families Assistance • The Making of Hidden Women • There is Always Room for Change • Sailom's Story • Interview with an Old Boy • Housing Insecurity: The Lived Experience of the LGBTIQ+ Community • Reimagine — My experience with Youth Homelessness • In Their Own Words - David's Story| Violet's Story | Maree's Story • What is a home? • Opinions - Susan Helyar Director, ACTCOSS | Kate Cvetanovski Executive Director, Northside ACT | Kym Duggan Social Justice and Advocacy Advisor, St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn

Appendix 5 - Changes in prevalence of homelessness in the ACT 2006 - 2021

Australian Bureau of Statistics

20490DO001_2021 Estimating homelessness: Census, 2021
Released at 11:30 am (Canberra time) Wed 22 Mar 2023

Table 1.1 HOMELESS PERSONS, Selected characteristics, 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021(a)

	2006			2011			2016			2021		
	no.	%	Rate per 10,000 of the population(b)	no.	%	Rate per 10,000 of the population(b)	no.	%	Rate per 10,000 of the population(c)	no.	%	Rate per 10,000 of the population(c)
HOMELESS PERSONS												
Homeless operational groups(d)												
People living in improvised dwellings, tents, or sleeping out	7,252	8	3.7	6,810	7	3.2	8,200	7	3.5	7,636	6	3.0
People in supported accommodation for the homeless(e)	17,334	19	8.7	21,258	21	9.9	21,235	18	9.1	24,291	20	9.6
People staying temporarily with other households(f)	17,661	20	8.9	17,374	17	8.1	17,725	15	7.6	16,597	14	6.5
People living in boarding houses(g)	15,459	17	7.8	14,944	15	6.9	17,503	15	7.5	22,137	18	8.7
People in other temporary lodgings(g)	501	1	0.3	682	1	0.3	678	1	0.3	3,934	3	1.5
People living in 'severely' crowded dwellings(h)	31,527	35	15.9	41,370	40	19.2	51,088	44	21.8	47,895	39	18.8
All homeless persons	*89,733*	*100*	*45.2*	*102,439*	*100*	*47.6*	*116,427*	*100*	*49.8*	*122,494*	*100*	*48.2*
Age groups (years)												
Under 12	15,717	18	50.5	17,767	17	53.6	15,872	14	44.8	17,646	14	47.9
12–18	9,786	11	51.1	10,718	10	54.9	9,955	9	51.0	11,302	9	53.3
19–24	12,158	14	75.4	14,479	14	83.2	17,725	15	95.3	16,902	14	90.6
25–34	15,852	18	59.2	18,411	18	62.1	24,224	21	71.9	25,504	21	70.4
35–44	13,179	15	44.9	14,225	14	46.5	15,745	14	50.1	17,085	14	49.0
45–54	10,577	12	38.3	12,247	12	41.5	14,278	12	46.0	14,678	12	45.2
Selected age groups (years)												
12–24	21,945	24	62.2	25,200	25	68.2	27,683	24	72.6	28,204	23	70.7
55 and over	12,461	14	25.8	14,581	14	26.4	18,625	16	29.0	19,378	16	26.2
Sex												
Male	51,164	57	52.2	57,689	56	54.3	67,407	58	58.4	68,516	56	54.6
Female	38,567	43	38.4	44,746	44	41.2	49,017	42	41.3	53,974	44	41.9
Indigenous status												
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander(i)	25,955	29	570.7	26,718	26	487.5	23,437	20	361.0	24,930	20	306.8
Non-Indigenous	57,321	64	31.4	68,070	66	34.2	80,769	69	37.8	81,566	67	34.9
Not stated	6,453	7	56.9	7,651	7	72.3	12,217	10	86.6	15,991	13	129.6
State or territory of usual residence(b)(c)												
Australian Capital Territory	956	1	29.5	1,738	2	48.7	1,596	1	40.2	1,777	1	39.1

Source: https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release#history-of-changes

The above table shows trend data for the overall estimate of the number of persons counted experiencing homelessness in the ACT on Census night 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021. After a large increase in the number and rate of homelessness between 2006 and 2011, prevalence has stabilised with a slight decrease in the rate of homelessness from 40.2 to 39.1 people/10,000 between 2016 and 2021.

Appendix 6 - Specialist Homelessness Services Data - Jul-Dec 22

The Census night count measures homelessness at a point in time. In statistical jargon, this is known as *prevalence*. The ABS uses this to determine how many people met its definition of homelessness in each operational group on Census night and it does this for every suburb in Canberra.

The data submitted by services to the Specialist Homelessness Information Portal and provided in 6 monthly reports to the Directorate, measures the number of people who received assistance from specialist homelessness services over time and is a detailed collection of characteristics, reasons for seeking accommodation and the main reasons for seeking assistance other than immediate accommodation or longer term housing.

ACT Shelter acknowledges and thanks Huyen Truong, Director of Homelessness Commissioning, in the Business Transformation Unit for providing a detailed aggregated summary and insights document drawing out data from the six monthly reports by providers of Specialist Homelessness Services that report to Housing ACT. |

The detailed aggregated data charts, graphs and insights examine client characteristics, reasons for seeking assistance, multiple service system referrals sought or provided, support period length and type of accommodation prior to and post-support to produce inferences about the number and proportion of people with *high and complex needs* who received assistance in the period 1 July to December 2022.

Huyen's analysis indicates the proportion of clients who broadly meet the Cohort Study definition of high and complex support needs, has increased from just under ten per cent in 2017/18 to just over fourteen per cent in 2022.

This backs what frontline workers and service managers have been saying anecdotally for a couple of years or more.

ACT Shelter became aware of the impacts on congregate accommodation providers in 2020 and 2021 when movement to and from where people were staying was curtailed by the requirements of the *Public Health Emergency Declaration*.

We direct the consultants to consider the findings from Huyen's Specialist Homelessness Services Data Analysis and Insights paper to inform the co-design work and imagine that dataset will continue to inform the responses to homelessness that CSD and Health will invest in or recalibrate investment from, over the ten year life of the Commissioning cycles.