

HACC GROWTH FUNDING ROUND 2002 – 2003

INFORMATION SHEET 3: SUBMISSIONS FOCUSING ON PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS, INCLUDING THOSE LIVING IN UNSUITABLE OR INSECURE ACCOMMODATION, OR PEOPLE ON LOW INCOMES LIVING IN SUPPORTED RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

The following information is to assist services to develop applications that address the needs of people in the HACC target group who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as a result of living in unsuitable and/or insecure housing or people on a low income living in Supported Residential Services (SRS).

The intention of this information paper is to:

- Define the characteristics of this HACC client group.
- Provide examples of models of practice relevant to this client group.
- Indicate the key issues that should be considered when making a funding submission.

1. CLIENT GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

1.1 Definition Of Homelessness

The Council to Homeless Persons (1998) defines a homeless person as someone who “is without a conventional home and lacks the economic and social supports that a home normally affords. He or she is often cut off from the support of relatives and friends, has few independent resources and often has no immediate means and, in some cases, little prospect of self-support”.

Three categories of homelessness have been identified in the Victorian Homelessness Strategy (*Chamberlain, Counting the Homeless: Implications for Policy Development, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999*) as follows:

- *Primary homelessness* - People without conventional accommodation, such as people sleeping rough, squatting, living in temporary shelter.
- *Secondary homelessness* - People who move frequently from one form of temporary shelter to another, including people living in refuges and emergency accommodation, living temporarily with family and friends, using boarding houses on an occasional or intermittent basis.
- *Tertiary homelessness* - People who live in boarding houses on a medium-to-long term basis - residents in these settings do not have their own kitchen and bathroom, nor the security of tenure provided by a lease. People on low income living in pension level Supported Residential Services (SRS) and some caravan park residents may be considered as tertiary homeless based on this definition.

1.2 Priority Target Group

In the 2002-2003 funding round, priority will be given to submissions targeting frail older adults and people with a disability on low incomes living in SRSs given the often high/complex support needs of many of the people living in this setting.

Submissions that target people experiencing primary, secondary or tertiary homelessness are also invited. These submissions may also give attention to sub-groups within this client population such as Kooris, people from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds and people living in remote areas.

Priority will be given to submissions providing evidence that the funding will consolidate or expand existing service provision to this client group, particularly submissions that can demonstrate an integrated response to this client group.

1.3 Client Group by Housing Setting

1.3.1 Supported Residential Services (SRS)

SRSs usually provide accommodation, basic domestic and personal care and an onsite presence/supervision. SRSs catering for the pension end of the sector commonly charge up to 100% of an individual's income including rent assistance. Given the high costs associated with living in an SRS relative to income, residents often have little or no disposable income and therefore require a HACC service fee waiver.

The SRS HACC client population are usually eligible to be assessed and prioritised for HACC program funded Nursing; Allied Health; Planned Activity Groups; Assessment and Care Management; Volunteer Co-ordination, Flexible Service Response and Home Care (limited to assisting an individual with personal shopping, errands, banking and escorting to appointments). However, people on a low income living in SRSs are not eligible for Delivered Meals, Home Care (except the above), Personal Care, Property Maintenance and Respite (home and community or overnight) where these services are included in the accommodation agreement with the SRS.

Given that low income frail aged people and people with disabilities living in pension only SRSs are a priority for HACC service delivery in 2002-2003, HACC service providers are encouraged to take an active role in ascertaining what services pension level SRS providers have committed to provide to their residents and to plan their service provision to address the unmet support needs of people living in this setting. Providers should note that the level of additional support varies from SRS to SRS. For example, some proprietors provide considerable social support opportunities whilst at other SRSs, no planned social support is available.

1.3.2 Rooming Houses, Private Hotels and Caravan Parks

Residents of rooming houses, private hotels and caravan parks (excluding recreational users) often have significant health and community care needs and may be in the HACC target group. However, for a range of reasons residents are often not well linked into the service system. Service models targeting this population may involve outreach, assessment and case management, augmented by other HACC service types such as Home Care, Personal Care, Nursing Care, Allied Health, Delivered Meals and Planned Activity Groups.

1.3.3 *Public Housing*

People in the HACC target group who are living in public housing do not fall within this special need client group on the basis of their housing circumstances, as public housing is low-cost, rather than being unstable or unsuitable housing. Tenants have security of tenure and have their own kitchen and bathroom amenities. However, it is recognised that a proportion of tenants who are living in public housing may have a history of homelessness and social marginalisation and/or are at risk of losing their tenancy due to unmet complex presenting needs. Individuals with these characteristics form part of the 'at risk of homelessness' client group and can be considered under this funding priority.

It is to be expected that with increases in the overall ageing population, closures of many inner city private low cost accommodation options and changes in priorities for public housing, there will be greater numbers of people with histories of homelessness living in public housing in the future who require targeted support services.

1.3.4 *Primary and Secondary Homelessness*

People experiencing primary and secondary homelessness are at high risk of being disenfranchised from the service system. Accommodation is tenuous, if it exists at all, and people's health and welfare requirements can be significant. People in this group can most effectively be linked into the service system through outreach and/or drop-in/non-appointment based services.

These sorts of services often provide an essential pathway for the person into other relevant community support services, leading to improved health, well-being and accommodation/housing outcomes in addition to the service specific outcomes.

2. MODELS OF PRACTICE RELEVANT TO PEOPLE IN THIS TARGET GROUP

The effectiveness of any service model for this client group relies on being able to take services to people (eg by an outreach worker or delivering a service to specific locations) or in some, more limited circumstances by assisting people to get to centre based activities. Service models developed for this client group must therefore address how the service will reach and engage the client group into the intended activity type(s).

Practices identified as improving access to HACC services for this client group include:

- Welcoming and responsive engagement at the point of initial contact.
- A focus on outreach, advocacy and drop-in type service approaches.
- Flexible and consistent service delivery including the ability to re-engage with clients as required, particularly after acute care episodes.
- Attention to the recruitment of staff with an interest and commitment to working with this client group and consistency of staff.
- Fee exemption as the general rule rather than the exception.

Although all HACC activity types are relevant to homeless or inadequately housed people in the HACC target group, the types most likely to be relevant are:

- Flexible Service Response (e.g. to engage clients through outreach or allow for more flexible approaches to service delivery)
- Assessment and Care Management
- Planned Activity Groups
- Nursing Care
- Allied Health
- Delivered Meals – At Centre/At Home*
- Volunteer Coordination
- Personal care*/Home care*

* Residents of SRS are not eligible for service types denoted by asterix if provided by the SRS

Examples of possible service models include, but are not limited to:

- Outreach workers that can locate and engage hard to reach clients and link them into HACC services or provide non-appointment based services in an outreach setting e.g. Flexible Service Response plus Allied Health, Nursing, Personal Care, Home Care or Planned Activity Group where appropriate.
- Outreach models for existing HACC services which take them directly to people in the HACC target group living in a range of housing settings and locations e.g. mobile or outreach allied health response to SRSs, caravan parks and boarding houses.
- Service models that combine a number of HACC activity types such as:
 - Flexible Service Response to undertake outreach
 - Assessment and Care Management to support assessment of needs and co-ordinate access to appropriate services relevant to the client (eg HACC, housing, health and support), and;
 - Planned Activity Groups to support clients to develop and maintain their daily living skills, participate in community activities and reduce social isolation that is commonly experienced by the client group.
- Home Care service models that allow for more flexibility (eg capacity for periodic 'clean ups' to ensure safety and support the health and well-being of the client).
- HACC services provided out of hours, in particular, Planned Activity Groups.
- Planned Activity Groups that are designed to cater for the needs and lifestyles of the client group.

Submitting organisations should give consideration to partnership arrangements between specialist homeless/welfare agencies and HACC service providers.

3. KEY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED IN YOUR SUBMISSION:

To assist you to respond to questions in the Funding Submission, it is important that you address the issues raised below. The relevant question numbers relating to the Recurrent and Fixed Term Recurrent Submission Forms have been identified in italics:

- Describe the proposal including a description of the intended recipient(s) of the service response and the service catchment eg people on a low income living in pension level Supported Residential Services, caravan park residents, rooming house/boarded houses etc or a particular sub-group within this client population such as Kooris, people from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds and people living in remote areas. *(include in Question 5.2)*
- Describe the agency's track record in providing a service response to this target group. *(include in Question 5.2)*
- Describe how the intended service recipients will access the proposed service, ie what strategy will be used to locate, engage and link people into the service. *(include in Question 5.3)*
- Describe how the service need has been identified and provide a rationale for the proposed service response, including why the proposed 'service mix' is appropriate for the intended service recipients. *(include in Question 5.3)*
- Describe the existing service provision the agency provides to people in this target group. Does this proposed service response consolidate or expand the organisations existing effort to the client group? *(include in Question 5.3)*
- If the submission plans to extend the reach of a 'mainstream' service, describe how the issues of worker recruitment and retention and training will be addressed. *(include in Question 5.3)*
- Describe the accountability measures that the agency will use to ensure the proposed services are allocated to the intended target group. *(include in Question 5.6)*