

RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION AND THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITIES

Who should go? People with alcohol and other drug problems requiring more intensive support or where community, family and social situations provide significant barriers for behaviour change.

What does a residential service offer?

Residential services for alcohol and other drugs are typically a set program for 3 to 12 months depending on individual need at the residential facility. The set program will typically include:

- one-on-one counselling and welfare support
- group education and therapy sessions
- support with behaviour management
- culturally specific interventions

Some residential services are smoke free, with stop smoking support and/or nicotine replacement offered where necessary.

Therapeutic communities will have additional expectations of residents in relation to participation as a therapeutic community member, for example providing support to other residents or designated chores or activities.

Alcohol and other drug use issues are the focus, however related welfare, wellbeing and health concerns related or resulting from alcohol and other drug use will either be addressed, or supported through referral to other specialist services.

Re-entry support, such as housing, education and vocation, social networking, social wellbeing management, relapse prevention strategies are important components of the program in order to achieve sustainable outcomes.

What do I need to know before I enter a residential service?

Entering residential services requires time and personal commitment. The assessment process for residential service entry aims to ensure people are suitable, well informed, committed, and prepared to participate in a long term residential treatment program. To ensure this residential and therapeutic services typically require individuals to:

- attend information sessions about the assessment processes, the residential service and experience, so people are making informed choices to enter residential treatment and are informed of what they can realistically expect, their rights and responsibilities
- participate in a comprehensive assessment to ensure their suitability for residential treatment at this time, and determine individual requirements if they are suitable.
- participate in drug detoxification (medical or otherwise) if required. Residential services are alcohol and other illicit drug free
- access support to ensure circumstances are managed – such as care for children, housing maintenance, Centrelink support, etc. based on individual needs
- be stabilised for any mental health condition prior to entry
- participate in an induction process, which at some services may include visits to the residential service.

How long will it take to access a residential service?

- To meet the above access requirements, and considerations below, entry into a residential service may take up to 4 months following assessment. Some services provide pre-entry support groups once the assessment process is undertaken and whilst waiting for a bed to be available.
- Entry times may also be determined on fit with the existing residential service population. This is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all residents - to achieve best outcomes for all. For example some residential services ensure a balance between:
 - male and female residents
 - mandated and voluntary residents
 - people with severe complex needs who may require additional staff support.
- Couples in relationship are often not supported at the same residential service at the same time.
- Individuals will need to stay engaged with an alcohol and other drug counselling service in the lead up to residential service entry. This supports an individual's preparedness for the residential experience and in some cases, people attending regular counselling services decide that they do not need residential services.