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Frequently Asked Questions

Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Accommodation and Support Strategy 2018-2025

Why was the Accommodation and Support Strategy developed?

Consultations for the development of the Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025 (the Plan) outlined the need for an accommodation and support strategy. It was recognised that a system-wide, multiagency approach to addressing the accommodation and support needs of people with severe mental health issues and/or mild, moderate and severe alcohol and other drug (AOD) issues was required.

The draft Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Accommodation and Support Strategy 2018-2025 (Accommodation and Support Strategy) is a key action (action 24) of the Plan. It aims to illustrate the key features of a quality accommodation and support system to enable people with mental health and/or AOD issues to sustain and maintain their accommodation in a community of their choice.

What is the MHC's role?

The Mental Health Commission (MHC) is leading the development of the draft Accommodation and Support Strategy, together with stakeholders, in line with action 24 of the Plan.

The implementation of the Accommodation and Support Strategy is the responsibility of the whole community, including State and Commonwealth Governments as well as private and not-for-profit sector, individuals, their families and carers, and service providers including clinicians. Following the release of the final Accommodation and Support Strategy, the MHC will develop its own implementation plan for its relevant actions.

Who has been involved in the development of the Accommodation and Support Strategy?

To identify key issues and early priorities relating to housing and support for individuals with mental health and AOD issues, the MHC has undertaken consultation with a range of key stakeholders including MHC funded services that deliver housing and support.

The purpose of these consultations was to continue to build upon the knowledge sourced through the Plan consultations, and previous forums. Phase one of the consultation period commenced in March 2016 and concluded in June 2017. Phase two is public consultation to provide feedback on the draft Accommodation and Support Strategy.



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Methods applied throughout this process were designed to meet the MHC's objectives to support consumers, families and carers and other key stakeholders to actively participate in the co-design of policy development.

The MHC aimed to ensure both metropolitan and regional stakeholders were engaged in the process.

The consultation process included:

- written submissions to the MHC;
- individual meetings with targeted stakeholders;
- a consumer, family and carer workshop;
- a group meeting with stakeholders involved in the delivery of the Independent Living Program; and
- establishment of the Accommodation and Support Strategy Advisory Committee.

More than 50 non-government organisations, peak bodies, and government agencies, and more than 30 consumer consultants, carers and family members have been involved in the consultation processes to inform the development of the draft Accommodation and Support Strategy.

What is the Vision of the Strategy?

Western Australians with mental health and/or AOD issues will have timely access to a range of appropriate accommodation and support options to meet their personal and cultural needs.

What are the Principles underpinning the Accommodation and Support Strategy?

There are a number of key features of a quality Western Australian accommodation and support system to assist people with mental health and/or AOD issues to sustain and maintain their accommodation in a community of their choice.

The Accommodation and Support Strategy seeks to develop a system supported by the following principles:

- 1. Individual Rights:** Accommodation will be available to those in Western Australia with mental health and/or AOD issues that is consistent with the human rights framework. All individuals have the right to an adequate standard of living, free from discrimination, and access to affordable, appropriate, stable and secure housing.
- 2. Personalised:** Accommodation and support will align to an individual's personal and cultural needs and will provide a foundation from which individuals can make choices. Providers will work in partnership with individuals and their families/supporters to co-plan and co-design recovery-oriented supports.
- 3. Inclusive Communities:** Accommodation and support will enhance connection to a supportive network of people and community organisations. The individual will be supported to access communities of their choice in an environment that is free of stigma.



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4. **Effective System-wide**

Partnerships: Accommodation and support for Western Australians with mental health and/or AOD issues will be available across clinical and non-clinical settings in an integrated, coordinated, collaborative and seamless system. Government agencies, non-government organisations and the private sector will work together with consumers, families and carers to develop effective partnerships and provide an integrated service response system.

5. **Continuous Improvement:**

Accommodation and support options will be aligned to best practice standards and initiatives. There will be system-wide quality controls and measures in place to monitor, track, review and improve the system and options available.

What are the Key Strategy Areas?

Through the research and consultation processes, five key focus areas for the Accommodation and Support Strategy have been identified, and outline priorities for implementation. The five key focus areas are summarised below.

Key Focus Areas 1: Increase Access to Appropriate, Affordable, Safe, Long-term Accommodation. The need for innovative approaches and policy reform to improve access to accommodation and support for individuals when they need it.

Key Focus Area 2: Establishment of Strategic Collaborative Partnerships. Emphasises on system integration and the need for collaborative, whole of government approaches, including the necessity of consumer, family and carer

partnerships at all levels of service development and delivery.

Key Focus Area 3: Provision of Contemporary Housing and Support Models. Focusing on the development of evidenced based or informed accommodation and support models, articulating the need for robust review of existing models to ensure alignment with the Plan.

Key Focus Area 4: Provision of Policy, Education and Training. Highlighting workforce development and training priority areas and the importance of mechanisms to support individuals to understand processes regarding tenancy management and system navigation.

Key Focus Area 5: Provision of data and research to improve accommodation and support responses. Emphasising the importance of available data, monitoring and reporting to ensure the appropriateness of accommodation and support approaches.

These key focus areas are aimed to assist service providers and government to begin a process of reforming accommodation and support services in Western Australia. It is anticipated that further actions will be developed as the Accommodation and Support Strategy is implemented.

Who is going to fund the Accommodation and Support Strategy?

The Accommodation and Support Strategy is provider and funder neutral, relying on the continued efforts of the State and Commonwealth Governments, the private sector and the not-for-profit sector.



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Who will lead the Accommodation and Support Strategy's implementation?

The implementation of the Accommodation and Support Strategy is the responsibility of the whole community, including the State and Commonwealth Governments as well as private and not-for-profit sector, individuals, their families and carers, clinicians and service providers. The MHC will lead its relevant actions.

How is the Accommodation and Support Strategy going to reduce homelessness?

The Accommodation and Support Strategy establishes a framework to guide stakeholders in the development of appropriate accommodation and support for people with severe mental health and/or mild, moderate and severe AOD issues until 2025.

The draft Accommodation and Support Strategy:

- defines the type of housing and support options that are evidence based, contemporary and are known to support an individual's recovery – this will also recognise the needs of specific target groups, such as people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, Aboriginal people, youth, people from regional/remote areas, and people with a forensic history;
- identifies areas of further exploration to increase access and a greater supply of affordable rental accommodation to meet the needs of those who cannot afford housing through the private market;

- identifies the issues and barriers in providing appropriate housing and support with current models of practice, including the limitations of tenancy and support services; and
- defines priority focus areas and actions to address the accommodation and support needs of people with severe mental health or mild, moderate or severe AOD issues.

These areas may require further development before actions can be implemented.

What does the Accommodation and Support Strategy include about the divestment of Graylands?

The MHC, Department of Health and North Metropolitan Health Service, are working to progress options for the redevelopment of the Graylands Hospital and Selby Older Adult sites. New services will be established before any people are transitioned out of current services. Further work is required to ascertain the types of services required to replace Graylands and Selby, which may include inpatient services, community bed-based services and community support (accommodation options).

The Accommodation and Support Strategy will support this process by providing a framework for the development of longer term accommodation options for people who require ongoing mental health and/or AOD services, but can live independently with adequate supports.



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Why doesn't the Accommodation and Support Strategy have specific actions relating to other services?

Within the mental health and AOD system there are seven service streams:

- Prevention;
- Community Support Services;
- Community Treatment Services;
- Community Bed-based Services;
- Hospital-based Services;
- Specialised Statewide Services; and
- Forensic Services.

The draft Accommodation and Support Strategy acknowledges the importance of other elements of the service stream continuum; however its focus is on actions specific to the community support services stream (including housing and accommodation) and community bed-based services.

Who does the Accommodation and Support Strategy target?

The Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025 outlines the services required for people with severe mental health issues are the State Government's responsibility. People with mild to moderate mental health issues are the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government, as recommended by the National Mental Health Services Planning Framework (NMHSPF).

MHC funded AOD services target people with mild, moderate and severe AOD issues.

Will the release of the Accommodation and Support Strategy impact existing accommodation and support programs?

The release of the Accommodation and Support Strategy will have no immediate impact on the existing accommodation and support programs. Following the release of the final Accommodation and Support Strategy, the MHC will develop an internal implementation plan for all its relevant actions.

The MHC will work with service providers, individuals and their families and other government agencies to help other stakeholders implement the Accommodation and Support Strategy. Effective change and reform of the use of contemporary models will be used, and encouraged, by the MHC. Organisations responsible for accommodation and support programs are encouraged to use the Accommodation and Support Strategy as a guide to effect positive change.

How will the impact of the Accommodation and Support Strategy be measured?

An outcomes evaluation framework, including data sharing and linkage, will be explored by the MHC to measure the impact and overall effectiveness of the Accommodation and Support Strategy, and maximise and support the impact of programs, services and policies in improving the lives of people with mental health and/or AOD issues in Western Australia.



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What are the next steps?

The next steps involve finalising the consultation processes, incorporating feedback and releasing the final Accommodation and Support Strategy in early 2019.

How can I provide feedback on the Accommodation and Support Strategy?

You can provide feedback on the draft Accommodation and Support Strategy in the following ways:

- **Visit the MHC website:**
www.mhc.wa.gov.au
- **Email:**
AccommodationStrategy@mhc.wa.gov.au
- **Call:**
(08) 6553 0570 and leave a voice message (five minutes maximum).

Feedback on the draft Accommodation and Support Strategy will be accepted up until Friday, 26 October 2018.

When will the final Accommodation and Support Strategy be released?

Pending the time taken to consolidate feedback from the consultation process, it is anticipated that the final Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Accommodation and Support Strategy 2018-2025 will be released in early 2019.

Who can I ask if I have any questions about the Accommodation and Support Strategy?

The MHC will be hosting a number of information sessions to provide an overview of the document's development, content and implementation, and will provide an opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

If you have any additional questions that are not addressed in the Accommodation and Support Strategy, or by these Frequently Asked Questions, or want to find out more about attending an information session please email:

AccommodationStrategy@mhc.wa.gov.au or visit the MHC website, www.mhc.wa.gov.au.