

## FACT SHEET

# Mental Health Rapid Rehousing

### *Information for service providers*

(V2.A November 2018)

#### **Overview**

Mental Health Rapid Rehousing is a housing assistance initiative funded by the Tasmanian Health Service and administered by Housing Tasmania. The initiative provides clients exiting Mental Health Services inpatient units with transitional accommodation (leases up to 12 months) at subsidised rent.

The initiative is designed to address known blockages for clients who are approved for discharge but who remain as inpatients because they do not have appropriate and affordable post-discharge accommodation.

Mental Health Rapid Rehousing is a partnership between the Tasmanian Government (Housing Tasmania and the Tasmanian Health Service - Mental Health Services), registered Community Housing Providers and Housing Connect. The initiative will be piloted in Southern Tasmania and is funded until 2021.

Mental Health Rapid Rehousing complements the current social housing portfolio by creating a pool of five dedicated properties – either private rentals or owned by Community Housing Providers. Suitable inpatients are then matched to affordable accommodation from the pool of properties. Rent payable by the occupant will not exceed 30 percent of the income of the household plus Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

Mental Health Rapid Rehousing will use systems and processes established through the successful Family Violence Rapid Rehousing initiative.



## **Support**

Mental Health Rapid Rehousing tenants will be provided with support for the duration of their Rapid Rehousing tenancy. Case management support will be provided by Adult Community Mental Health Services as required. Psychosocial support will be provided by community sector organisations funded through the Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Directorate.

Mental Health Services is responsible for arranging case management and psychosocial supports for tenants.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Housing Tasmania will:

- Have oversight of the administration of the initiative including authorisation of Suitable Properties, monitoring and reporting on this initiative
- Provide Community Housing Providers with a tenancy management payment for approved Suitable Properties

Mental Health Services will:

- Identify Suitable Inpatients for the initiative
- In collaboration with Community Housing Providers, facilitate the matching of Suitable Inpatients with Suitable Properties
- Ensure appropriate mental health related supports are in place for tenants throughout the duration of their Rapid Rehousing tenancy
- Provide case management support via the relevant Adult Community Mental Health Service as required
- Facilitate referrals to Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Directorate funded community sector psychosocial support organisations as required
- Work with the Housing Connect Front Door to support exit planning out of Rapid Rehousing into stable accommodation (social housing or affordable private rentals)

Community Housing Providers will:

- Either find private rental properties or nominate properties in their portfolio that are suitable for the initiative
- Ensure private rental property owners provide evidence of current insurance documentation for their property (including tenant damage cover)
- Ensure properties are furnished, secure and suitable for occupancy



- Allocate properties to Suitable Inpatients in collaboration with Mental Health Services
- Receive \$12 000 per approved property per annum to assist with tenancy management costs
- Enter into a residential tenancy agreement with Suitable Inpatients to a maximum term of 12 months
- Provide tenancy management services in accordance with the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*
- Manage vacancies and meet the costs of any rental arrears
- Recover costs associated with tenant damage

Private property owners (or their agents) will:

- Ensure their property is clean, tidy and fit for initial occupancy
- Provide evidence of current insurance for their property (including landlord and tenant damage cover)
- Enter into a head lease with a Community Housing Provider for a one, two or three year term that takes effect from the date that the Community Housing Provider enters into a residential tenancy agreement with the tenant
- Prescribe and receive rent from the Community Housing Provider
- Be responsible for the payment of council rates, maintenance repairs (excluding fair wear and tear) or improvements and all other property owner obligations as per the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*
- Liaise with Community Housing Providers regarding tenancy and property management

The Housing Connect Front Door will:

- Provide advice and information on the initiative
- Work with the Adult Community Mental Health Services Case Manager to support exit planning

### **Suitable Inpatients**

Suitable Inpatients will be clients of the Department of Psychiatry (DoP) at the Royal Hobart Hospital, Mistral Place, Tolosa Street or Karingal who are homeless (that is, do not have suitable affordable accommodation on discharge). Suitable Inpatients will be 16 years of age or older and have a demonstrated capacity for independent living. Suitable Inpatients must meet the income eligibility threshold for social housing.



### **How Suitable Inpatients will be selected**

Social Workers at the Department of Psychiatry and Mistral Place/Tolosa Street will identify Suitable Inpatients.

Suitable Inpatients may be new to the Housing Register or may have an existing social housing application.

### **How tenants will be selected**

Once a Suitable Property is available, Community Housing Providers will work collaboratively with Social Workers to match Suitable Inpatients with Suitable Properties.

Participation in the Mental Health Services Rapid Rehousing initiative will not affect their social housing application status.

### **Suitable Properties**

Suitable Properties may either be private rentals or owned by Community Housing Providers and must be located in close proximity to services, especially:

- Health services
- Public transport
- Shops/grocery stores (open on weekends)

Properties must also meet minimum standards under the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*.

A pool of five properties is required for this pilot initiative.

### **Location**

Suitable Properties will be located in the south of the State in the following locations:

- Greater Hobart CBD
- Clarence CBD
- Huon Valley (maximum one unit)
- New Norfolk (maximum one unit)
- Kingston
- Glenorchy

Properties in the following locations will be considered on a case by case basis:

- Bridgewater
- Clarendon Vale
- Gagebrook



## Property Attributes

Three one-bedroom and two two-bedroom properties will be required. Suitable Properties must be:

- Stand-alone properties (not conjoined) with enclosed backyard spaces
- One of not more than three in the block
- Secure (that is, have security screens on front and back doors, dead locks on doors, locks on windows)
- Fitted with hard wired smoke alarms

Suitable Properties will include:

- One stove
- One refrigerator
- One microwave
- One washing machine
- One bed (double) for a one bedroom unit and two beds for two bedroom units
- One couch to suit the number of bedrooms
- One dining table with a minimum of two chairs

## Property Approval Process

Properties that meet the Suitable Property requirements will be identified by the Community Housing Providers. The Community Housing Provider will then complete a Property Approval Form and submit it to the Director of Housing Programs for approval. Properties will be considered by the Director within two business days of receiving the completed form.

The Director of Housing Programs has discretion to approve more (or less) properties in a particular region if required due to an identified change in demand and need. The total pool of Suitable Properties approved will not exceed five properties.

Payment will occur on receipt of evidence of the tenancy agreement with the occupant. If the property is a private rental, this means that the community housing provider must enter into a head-lease with the property owner or agent and a sublease with the occupant.

Application for re-approval of a dwelling must occur not less than 10 weeks prior to expiry of the initial approval. The provider will submit a Property Re-Approval Form to Housing Tasmania. Where a client has been in a property for 12 months or more a further grant will not be approved (subject to discretion of the Director of Housing Programs).



## Tenancy Arrangements

The Community Housing Provider will receive \$12 000 per property per annum which will contribute to the costs of:

- Subsidised rent and waiving of bond payments
- Rent arrears and any periods of vacancy
- Furnishings and appliances
- Any necessary security or safety upgrades
- Losses associated with unrecoverable tenant damage
- Fixed water and electricity costs and connection fees

Properties will be approved for an initial lease period of four months with the option of an eight month lease extension. Rapid Rehousing tenancies must not exceed 12 months in total.

Shared tenancies may be permitted subject to negotiations with the Community Housing Provider and Mental Health Services.

## Tenant Responsibilities

The Tenant will enter into a lease with the Community Housing Provider and will be responsible for:

- Water usage
- Payment of income based rent (no greater than 30 percent of income) plus CRA
- Tenant damage
- All other obligations under the *Rental Tenancy Act 1997* applicable to tenants

## Terminations

The lease can only be terminated by any party in accordance with the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*.

In accordance with the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*, the lease can be terminated by agreement by both parties. If the tenant wishes to terminate the lease, Mental Health Services Case Managers may provide support to the tenant to negotiate an agreement with the Community Housing Provider to terminate the lease. If no agreement is reached to end the agreement, the termination process will be as prescribed in the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*.

Where a lease is terminated, the Community Housing Provider in collaboration with Mental Health Services Social Workers will source another Suitable Inpatient for allocation to the property from the Housing Register.

The Community Housing Provider will assist the exiting tenant to contact the Housing Connect Front Door to ensure a social housing application or other form of housing assistance is made.



## Tenancy Disputes

Dispute resolution processes will be as prescribed under the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*. Parties to agreements may make use of representative bodies such as (but not limited to) Consumer Affairs and Fair Trade – Residential Tenancy Commissioner and the Tenants Union of Tasmania.

## Exit Planning

Mental Health Services Rapid Rehousing is a transitional accommodation option. Exit planning will occur in consultation with the Case Manager and Housing Connect to ensure that long term housing needs are met and to determine ongoing support needs (if any). The outcome may include exiting into social housing or exiting into an alternative affordable private rental.

Tenants exiting out of the Mental Health Rapid Rehousing will have a priority exiting status under the Housing Assessment Prioritisation System (HAPS) and will be eligible to apply for Private Rental Assistance.

## How success will be measured

<b>Effective</b>	Secure housing is sustained <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– low exits into homelessness</li><li>– low repeats</li></ul>
<b>Occupancy</b>	Vacancy rates are low
<b>Safe</b>	Tenants are safe in their homes
<b>Satisfaction</b>	Tenants are satisfied that the housing meets their needs
<b>Activity</b>	Five households are assisted by the initiative

## Further Information

Contact Housing Connect on 1800 800 588 for further information about Mental Health Rapid Rehousing.