

**Legislative Arrangements:  
Crisis Accommodation Program**

The role and scope of the  
Crisis Accommodation Program  
in meeting the needs of homeless  
young people in Queensland

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**QUEENSLAND  
YOUTH  
HOUSING  
COALITION  
INC**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper attempts to review the original rationale of the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP), how CAP has been rolled out in Queensland through the exploration of specific elements of the program and to outline the strengths and weaknesses of the program in assisting young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Part 1 of the report explores the origins of the program and how it is placed within the current legislative and policy frameworks. It outlines that there are two broad objectives for the program and that reviews of the program have occurred on an ad-hoc basis. Past reviews have recognised that the strengths of the program lie in the 'tied' nature between the Commonwealth and the States/Territories, and its relationship to the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). CAP has been used for the acquisition, construction, upgrade, maintenance and rental subsidies for property predominately managed by SAAP services. What this section also articulates is that the program does not have a strong basis in legislation and lacks program logic. The broad scope that is allowed in the program due to the lack of clarity/focus of the program logic has enabled State government/s to interpret what the nature or intent of the CAP program is. Whilst this has allowed for greater flexibility and innovation it also enables the manipulation of the program whether based on good practice or not.

Part 2 explores the State based legislation and guidelines that currently governs CAP funded services. In Queensland all community based organisations that receive funding from the State Housing Authority must comply with the State Housing Act 2003 and its related regulations. In addition to this there is also a requirement to meet the Queensland CAP specifications, which also includes the Community Housing Rent Policy.

Part 3 of this paper examines the relationship between the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program and the Crisis Accommodation Assistance Program. In particular this section highlights the models of service delivery as they relate to the needs of young people. Further that special consideration must be given to the physiological and social development of young people in terms of the improvement in service delivery.

Part 4 highlights that crisis accommodation services are housing programs that have **support tied to it**. However its function is challenged by State Housing Authorities (SHA's) where most of the stock that is provided is housing without support attached. This section highlights some of the operational difficulties for SAAP/CAP and CAP funded services.

Part 5 details that the data collection for the program needs to be more specific and that there is a level of duplication in the data that services are collecting for different government departments. This section highlights the needs for developmental work to assist in the programs growth and its relationship to other service systems.

Part 6 details that it is not the role of the Crisis Accommodation Program to address the shrinking resource issues in a range of other social policy areas, including the shrinkage of public housing or the lack of support provided by disability, health or other government departments. It highlights the differences in services where support is tied or untied to a person's accommodation. Lastly it highlights the importance of the need for appropriate exit points and robust linkages to other housing systems for good client outcomes.

The summary outlines that when looking at what the critical elements of the program are (in terms of meeting the needs of young people) the following must be considered:

1. Housing and support are tied;
2. Non government nature of service provision; and
3. Case management in SAAP.

## PART 1: THE CRISIS ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

The Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) has been in operation since 1985. The program is funded under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) and managed through the Queensland Department of Housing.

The Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) is a tied program between the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments through the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement (CSHA).

The CSHA is an agreement authorised under the Commonwealth *Housing Assistance Act 1996*.

### THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF CAP

The Crisis Accommodation Assistance Program was introduced in 1985 as predominately the ‘bricks and mortar’ arm in the response to homelessness. It was part of a process of bringing together a range of disparate responses to homelessness into two key program areas – the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program and the Crisis Accommodation Program.

There have been a number of reviews of the Crisis Accommodation Program at both the Commonwealth and the State level. The 2003 – 2008 CSHA Agreement stipulated that there would be a review of the Crisis Accommodation Program.

*“4 (11) The Crisis Accommodation Program will be retained as an identified program. However, during the first two Grant Years, it will be reviewed to identify options for the future, particularly in relation to the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program. The Minister will determine arrangements for the review and will advise State Ministers of the arrangements. The Commonwealth will lead the review in consultation with the States.”<sup>1</sup>*

In section 5 of the CSHA it stipulates that there needs to be an evaluation completed no later than 30 June 2007, this would coincide with the Supported Accommodation Program (SAAP) mid term evaluation. This review was completed by Amity Management Consulting Group in July 2004.

There have been two national reviews of the program and one at a State level in Queensland, these being;

- o 1995 National Review (first national review of the program)

1. CSHA Agreement 2003 –2008

- o 1998 State Review
- o 2004 National Review

The reviews outlined in its inception the underlying reasons for the establishment of the Crisis Accommodation Program was to ensure that State Housing Authorities provided infrastructure to support the homeless service system. As such it was also a way to pressure State Housing Authorities to better respond to the needs of homeless people.

The reviews have also highlighted that the State Housing Authorities needed to continue to provide low cost public housing and that the Crisis Accommodation Program should not be a mechanism to decrease their funding for other housing products.

In Queensland the State Housing Authority is the Queensland Department of Housing.

The original objectives of the Crisis Accommodation Assistance Program were to:

- a. Meet the accommodation needs of homeless people; and
- b. Meet the needs of service providers to have access to secure accommodation.

The 2004 Crisis Accommodation Program Review found that:

*“CAP has no explicit purpose and intent beyond providing for the needs of service providers and the homeless through State Housing Authorities (SHA’s)”.*<sup>2</sup>

The 2004 Crisis Accommodation Program review found that the original objectives were still relevant.

Previous reports<sup>3</sup> have acknowledged the tensions between these objectives. It must be noted that there was also an acknowledgement that client outcomes need to be achieved both through the direct provision of housing **and** through the funding of office space or other service related accommodation, in order to sustain a diversity of models and support i.e. infrastructure support.

The Crisis Accommodation Program review report in 2004 found the key success factors of the program were;

- o CAP being a tied program; and
- o CAP’s ability to retain a focus on homelessness.

2. Butlin, Dr A., CAP Review 2004, Amity Management Consulting Group, July 2004

3. Purdon Associates Pty Limited, CAP Review: Report to the Department of Housing and Regional Development, March 1995

**Recommendation i:**

QYHC urges the continuation of the Crisis Accommodation Program as a tied CSHA program and the continued Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments involvement in the Program.

The broad scope that is allowed in the program due to the lack of clarity/focus of the purpose, other than the two broad objectives has enabled State government/s to interpret what the nature or intent of the Crisis Accommodation Program is. Whilst this has allowed for greater flexibility and innovation it also enables the manipulation of the program by government whether based on good practice or not. In reality the majority of the funding has retained its focus on the 'bricks and mortar' infrastructure responses to homelessness.

In the non government sector there continues to be a strong understanding of the program as described through the original objectives of the Crisis Accommodation Program, and its intrinsic relationship to SAAP.

Questions about the efficacy of the Crisis Accommodation Program based on asset management and housing standards should be what the program logic is focussed on. Models of service delivery and client outcomes should be generated through the SAAP program.

**Recommendation ii:**

QYHC urges the development of Program logic to ensure the intent and the practice of the program cannot be eroded by SHA's.

## HOUSING ASSISTANCE ACT 1996

The Commonwealth *Housing Assistance Act 1996* provides a national housing framework and facilitates the CSHA agreement. There is no specific mention of the Crisis Accommodation Program within the *Housing Assistance Act 1996* and as a result the Act does not provide a safeguard for the continuation of a specific homelessness response.

The Commonwealth *Housing Assistance Act 1996* outlines that housing and shelter are basic human rights. It acknowledges the Universal Human Rights and that Australia is signatory to:

- o International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights;

- o Conventions on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- o Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- o Rights of the Child;
- o Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- o Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women; and
- o the enactment of legislation such as the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986.

## COMMONWEALTH STATE HOUSING AGREEMENT 2003/08

*The 2003 Commonwealth State Housing Agreement is an agreement, authorised under the Housing Assistance Act 1996, between the Australian Government and the states and territories. The purpose of the Agreement is to provide funding to assist those whose needs for appropriate housing cannot be met by the private market.<sup>4</sup>*

The first mention of the Crisis Accommodation Program is within the CSHA and only within section 4 on “funding arrangements”. Again the program is not safeguarded by being specifically mentioned in the agreement.

The CSHA includes the following:

### RECITALS – RELEVANT SECTIONS

This Agreement is designed to provide strategic direction and funding certainty for the provision of housing assistance across Australia over the five years from 1 July 2003.

4. CSHA, Commonwealth Department of Families and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs



*Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement 2003*

*a. The Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) is a tied funding grant program between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories and is a component of the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement.*

*c. In entering into this Agreement the Commonwealth and the States recognise that the provision of housing assistance to people requiring access to affordable and Appropriate Housing is essential to reduce poverty and its effects on individuals and on the community as a whole. The aim of this Agreement is therefore to provide appropriate, affordable and secure housing assistance for those who most need it, for the duration of their need.*

*e. It is also recognised that the Commonwealth and the States must work together to improve housing outcomes for those in need Through better linkages between programs under this Agreement and other relevant Commonwealth and State programs, including those relating to income support, health and community services. In implementing this Agreement, both the Commonwealth and the States will seek opportunities for coordination of programs within each level of Government and between Governments in order to improve outcomes for those assisted under this Agreement. In delivering assistance, improved linkages with the non-government sector will also be sought.*

*i. The Commonwealth and States acknowledge that States will have different priorities for housing assistance provided under this Agreement, according to the different circumstance in each State. Bilateral Agreements will specify these priorities, and the outcomes to be achieved over the life of this Agreement.*

*j. Under this Agreement, and in accordance with the Council of Australian Governments' resolution to reduce Indigenous disadvantage by improving program performance, the Commonwealth and the States commit to improving housing outcomes for Indigenous people by implementing Building a Better Future: Indigenous Housing to 2010.*

*k. The Commonwealth and the States acknowledge that the Commonwealth's policy is to target Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (ARHP) funds to rural and remote areas where there is high need and where mainstream public housing and private housing are unavailable For this agreement, the priority for the ARHP is to ensure that houses are well maintained and managed to achieve health related outcomes for Indigenous people.*

*l. Through this Agreement, the commonwealth and the States will work together to improve access to mainstream housing options (public housing, community housing, private rental and home ownership) for Indigenous people living in urban and regional centres.*

**SECTION – RELEVANT SECTIONS:***Section 3: Outcome Measures*

*3(3) The Commonwealth and States will agree a core set of nationally consistent indicators and other data requirements for the purposes of the National Housing Data Agreement.*

*Section 4: Funding arrangements*

*4(11) The Crisis Accommodation Program will be retained as an identified program. However, during the first two Grant Years, it will be reviewed to identify options for the future, particularly in relation to the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program. The Minister will determine arrangements for the review and will advise State Ministers of the arrangements. The Commonwealth will lead the review in consultation with the States.*

## PART 2: STATE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING CAP

As there is no framework at the Federal level that governs the program it is State legislation and program guidelines that set the program boundaries. In Queensland all community based organisations that receive funding from the State Housing Authority must comply with the Queensland *Housing Act 2003* and its related regulations. The Queensland *Housing Act 2003* and its regulations in effect set how a service:

- conducts its operation
- delivers services to clients
- other matters ie
  - tenancy management
  - rent assessment and collection
  - property management

### STATE HOUSING ACT AND REGULATIONS

The Queensland *Housing Act 2003* is the State legislation under which the Queensland Department of Housing operates. The Queensland *Housing Act 2003* commenced as law on 1 January 2004 and replaced the State Housing Act 1945.

### OBJECTS OF THE QUEENSLAND HOUSING ACT 2003

The Queensland *Housing Act 2003* contains two objects which are the housing goals of the Queensland Government:

- to improve the access of Queenslanders to safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing; and
- to help build sustainable communities.

The activities of the Department of Housing must help achieve these two goals.

The Queensland Housing Act 2003 captures Supported Accommodation Assistance Program/Crisis Accommodation Program (SAAP/CAP) and Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) funded services because the Act allows the State to regulate housing entities and services defined under the Act as a housing provider.

The Department of Housing has operationalised the Queensland *Housing Act 2003* through a policy framework titled ‘the One Social Housing System’. At this stage it is unclear the extent to which the Crisis Accommodation Program will be included in the One Social Housing System.

In Queensland in recent years there has been increasing pressure from the Queensland Department of Housing around the use of Crisis Accommodation Program funding. In particular this has been around not only regulation and increasing compliance issues but a change in the role and function of the Crisis Accommodation Program. Whilst the need for a more robust process for the amenity/property has been welcomed there is strong concern about the impact potential changes to the role and function of the program would have on the delivery of services to homeless people.

In particular the concern has stemmed around:

- o The lack of understanding by the State Housing Authority of where the Crisis Accommodation Program is located within a continuum of care framework;
- o The lack of understanding of service models and the support that the program provides;
- o The move to alter the service system for young people with no consultation with the field on the impact on young people;
- o The demise of infrastructure that will impact on long term sustainable solutions to accommodating young people; and
- o The increasing mainstreaming of services based on adult models of service delivery and analysis of housing needs for adults.

The non government youth sector has found that the lack of legislative and policy clarity on the role of the Crisis Accommodation Program has allowed the manipulation of the program by governments at the State level.

## CAP PROGRAM GUIDELINES

In each State and Territory there has been the development of Crisis Accommodation Program Guidelines. In Queensland as the result of the State *Housing Act 2003* the guidelines were replaced by the Crisis Accommodation Program Specifications.<sup>6</sup> The State *Housing Act 2003* commenced in Queensland to ensure a range of compliance mechanisms were in place for any service funded by the State Housing Authority.

6. Queensland Government, Department of Housing, Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) Specifications, June 2004,

These State CAP specifications are concerning to some degree as it defines under section 5 the objectives of the program as being;

*The objective of CAP is to provide accommodation to Eligible Persons which will assist them to move towards independent living.*<sup>7</sup>

The specifications are inconsistent with the original objectives and should be aligned with the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program. The specifications also outline a range of policy requirements that services need to comply with as part of the Queensland *State Housing Act 2003* including:

- o Referrals;
- o Eligibility;
- o Allocation;
- o Rent;
- o Purchasing and works policies;
- o Property matters;
- o Allowable expenditure;
- o Complementary support funding ;
- o Insurance; and
- o Reporting.

## COMMUNITY HOUSING RENT POLICY

The Department of Housing developed a Community Housing Rent Policy<sup>8</sup> to ensure that there were clear guidelines in terms of the expectation of the funding department with regard to the rent schedules that non government service providers were able to charge their tenants. The non government sector had an active involvement in the development of this policy.

The Community Housing Rent Policy provides good protection for tenants in terms of tenant rights and compliance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1994. The Community Housing Rent Policy also identifies that the rent schedule for tenants in Crisis Accommodation Program properties should be different to the other housing products. This was developed in relation to the understanding that the Crisis Accommodation Program and the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program are tied and that the clients of these services do not always have the ability to pay rent, and that their lack of ability to pay rent should not be a barrier to their access to services.

7. Queensland Government, Department of Housing, Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) Specifications, June 2004, Section 5 Program Details and Purposes

8. Queensland Government, Department of Housing, Community Housing Rent Policy

## PART 3: THE LINKAGES BETWEEN SAAP AND CAP

In Queensland the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) is managed through the Department of Communities and the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) is managed through the Department of Housing. Currently both SAAP and CAP are operationally linked; with SAAP providing the support and case management functions and CAP the 'bricks and mortar'.

Whilst there are difficulties in at the program/departmental level in terms of the coordination and management of the two programs these are not issues at the service delivery level.

The major challenge for SAAP/CAP services is that the two programs are managed by two government departments with different policy agenda's. Whilst there is rhetoric around whole of government priorities, in this instance the policy intent is undermined by the practice of government. For the non-government sector there has been a common understanding that SAAP and CAP are tied and that the role and function of CAP has been to provide the 'bricks and mortar' support to SAAP services. It has also been clear that this bricks and mortar support has been to support various models of youth service and as a result there has been the purchase of properties to accommodate young people and to provide office space for services.

The nature of this tied relationship enables models of service delivery to best meet the needs of young people.

## PROGRAM COORDINATION

There has been an historical understanding of the importance of the relationship between SAAP and the Crisis Accommodation Program through the existence of various forms of advisory mechanisms between the two departments at the State level. In Queensland this advisory structure has historically taken the shape of the Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) and in more recent years the Ministerial Advisory Arrangement (MAA). However the MAA was disbanded unilaterally by the State Ministers of Housing and Families (now Communities) without any consultation with the non government sector. The MAA was a sound advisory mechanism and had strong support in the field. Not only did this mechanism provide advice on the program and program directions it also facilitated communication between the government and non government sectors.

In the SAAP V Bilateral there is only scope for an annual roundtable with SAAP services. The Department of Communities has committed \$160,000 per annum for a regional consultative mechanism. While there is recognition for the need for a consultative mechanism this does not alleviate the issues surrounding the policy interface between the two program areas through one consultative process.

The Department of Housing has a Community Housing Planning Group which meets twice a year and is regarded as the formal consultative mechanism with the community housing sector.

The major issue with the program is that government has had difficulty overcoming its own 'silo' mentality and have therefore found it difficult to manage both programs as 'one whole unit' addressing a need.

There have also been issues in relation to the cross subsidisation between the two programs, due to the lack of program boundaries.

There is currently no clarity of the specific engagement by the Department of Housing on the Crisis Accommodation Program with the non government sector.

**Recommendation iii:**

QYHC supports a program specific consultative mechanism that is regionally focused and is tied to the SAAP consultative network.

**Recommendation iv:**

QYHC urges the State Housing Authority to consult with the sector at the concept stage whenever reviews or changes are being proposed.

## CURRENT MODELS OF SAAP/CAP SERVICES

The flexible nature of the Crisis Accommodation Program has enabled the responses to young people to be on a capital and non capital basis. Initially there was a focus on capital provision (infrastructure) as there were little or no responses to primary homelessness. The capital provision has enabled a number of different service models. Historically the capital provision has been for:

- o Crisis shelters;
- o Medium long term supported accommodation; and
- o Externally supported – flats and units.

The models outlined below are based on consultation with the Queensland youth SAAP sector. There may need to be other service models developed to respond to specific groups but this is dependent on funding. It is important to note that under the broad term of young people there are a range of target groups, and access and equity issues associated with each ie young women, young parenting women, indigenous young people and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

There are a range of reasons as to how and why different organisations operate a different model of service and thereby providing a diversity of accommodation options. These reasons can be related but not limited to:

1. Existing local infrastructure in the community eg where there is a lot of social housing options there may be less of a need for externally supported accommodation as opposed to crisis accommodation;
2. Enabling a young person to access a service that best meets their needs, taking into account their living skills;
3. The need for young people to have a choice in the type of service model they wish to access; and
4. Geographical variation eg in a rural and remote area the establishment of a crisis shelter may not be the most appropriate option.

The models of service delivery in Queensland range from 24 hour fully supported crisis accommodation; 24 hour fully supported medium term supported accommodation, externally supported and outreach models. It must be noted that SAAP services and their operational methods may be vastly different to other States/Territories. The models of service delivery have been developed on a continuum understanding based on need. There is no 'one size that fits all' model of service delivery and Queensland Youth Housing Coalition supports both large and small organisations.

The continuum of care framework recognises that not all young people have the social and developmental skills to live independently in the community. Many of the young people who utilise a SAAP service do so because they have left home due to family violence and do not have the skills to live independently.

The bed numbers for the 24 hour fully supported crisis and medium term accommodation are generally up to 6, and the externally supported models range from 2 – 6 units with a range of bed capacities. However there are services that are currently operating much larger bed capacities. Due to the variable/inequitable funding levels between similar models of service there are capacity differences across organisations.

The models demonstrate the need for a capital program and this is where the Crisis Accommodation Program remains essential to the outcomes of SAAP. The majority of Crisis Accommodation Program funds have been provided to SAAP funded services. The importance of the tied nature of the programs is integral to outcomes of the program.

In recent years there has been an increased understanding for the need for greater flexibility in how housing provision may be delivered. An example of non capital provision use of Crisis Accommodation Program funding has included headleasing where properties are leased through the private rental market. In the main the non capital provision has been about the need to have transitional accommodation models that can move young

people into private rental or longer term community housing. Some services have utilised social housing in their headleasing process.

Many services are concerned that utilising social housing stock for the Crisis Accommodation Program diminishes the exit options for young people into longer term housing as there is no overall increase in housing stock.

It must be acknowledged that young people do not utilise SAAP services in a linear manner. For this reason there needs to be multiple entry points for young people and young people should continue to choose how they enter the service system.

The Crisis Accommodation Program should not be limited in terms of the models of housing that it is supporting, however it should not be too far removed so that it becomes a long term housing option.

## **STRENGTH IS IN DIVERSITY NOT CONFORMITY/ CAPITAL AND NON CAPITAL PROVISION**

The 1995 CAP review found that one of the major achievements of the program was that it was able to increase the amount, type and quality of accommodation available to homeless people.

The diversity of models has been developed by the non government sector to respond to the needs of young people across the continuum of care. The ability for the sector to respond to the needs of young people and their community is due to the nature of a non government organisation being able to flexibly respond to the community need and thereby develop innovative practice. It is concerning to QYHC that services are being constrained to departmental demarcation instead of being given the flexibility to develop holistic responses to young people.

In recent years the Department of Housing has attempted to influence the nature and role of the Crisis Accommodation Program as housing stress due to lack of stock and homelessness has increased. However in doing so there has been a loss in the understanding of the tied nature of the programs and where SAAP/CAP services are located in the continuum of care framework. With no legislative framework to guide this process, the changing policy in relation to CAP has been through a process of negotiation between two government departments. Unfortunately this process has been a bureaucratic one with little or no engagement with the non government sector.

There is a concern in the non government sector that being an 'arm' of government limits the ability for diversity to occur, or for there to be too much rigidity in how young people are responded to. This is particularly so as the program is increasingly seen as a housing program as opposed to a supported



accommodation program with operational ties between the SAAP and CAP programs. There is growing concern that the fundamental relationship between the SAAP and CAP programs will be eroded to the detriment of good outcomes for homeless young people.

#### Recommendation v

QYHC supports that the Crisis Accommodation Program funding be tied to SAAP funded services. Further that change in the Crisis Accommodation Program policy should reflect the movement and quality improvement changes in the SAAP program as it responds to the needs of homeless young people.

The CAP review in 2004 explored the issues of whether the program was effective but found that without an explicit purpose and intent this was hard to measure. In terms of access, the review does highlight the need to continue to develop capital infrastructure due to the lead times for this process but it does highlight the need for SAAP and CAP to keep pace with each other. The review highlights that while SAAP and CAP need to be tied, on the ground there needs to be flexibility for clients to be able to mix and match their support and housing (however while still being tied). QYHC acknowledges that this has a number of complexities in terms of client confidentiality, tensions between support provider and the tenancy manager usually with client outcomes being diminished. There needs to be a range of operational methods in the delivery of housing models.

#### Recommendation vi

QYHC supports the need for CAP to be continued, strengthened and expanded.

## MEETING THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

The Crisis Accommodation Program is not a housing program. The Crisis Accommodation Program is an intrinsic part of the provision of supported accommodation that meet the needs of homeless young people in conjunction with SAAP. To explore the nature of the target group there is a need to examine what the data is telling us. The most robust data collection is collected by SAAP services using the National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) SMART tool.

The NDCA has stated that the data demonstrates that the number of people entering SAAP services is the same number exiting and therefore reflecting that the current system is working to capacity.

The 2004/05 NDCA data showed that a large proportion of the people who access SAAP services are children. The AIWH report Homeless Children in SAAP 2004/05 stated that

*“Children accounted for over two-fifths (43% or 68,100) of the 157,200 people who accessed a SAAP service in 2004–05, either as children accompanying a parent or guardian who was being supported (36% or 56,800 were accompanied children) or directly as clients independently of a parent or guardian (7% or 11,300 were unaccompanied children aged 17 years and under).”* <sup>9</sup> AIWH report Homeless Children in SAAP 2004/05

Out of the 11,300 young people, most were female and:

- O 4% were aged 11 years and under
- O 4% were aged 12–13 years
- O 24% were aged 14–15 years
- O 68% were aged 16–17 year

Of more interest is that 5% of these young people had children accompanying them—although the data is not clear whether the children were their own or siblings that they had guardianship over.

A preliminary overview of the 2005 -2006 data demonstrates that young females continue to be the most likely client of a SAAP services. Further that:

*In 2005 – 2006 there 138 SAAP clients aged 15 -19 years for every 10,000 people in Australia aged 15 -19 years, and this was the highest rate of access by any age group<sup>10</sup>*

In recognition of the presenting issues of young people coupled with an understanding of the psychological and social development of young people the youth homeless support system has explored access, accessibility, affordability and support options.

In terms of access, non government SAAP/CAP services are seen to be more user friendly and non bureaucratic in their responses to young people. This user friendly access is due to the considerations given to how young people present to services, the need to develop strong and professional relationships with young people and the importance of understanding adolescent development. Design and location of services are also critical factors.

#### Case example – successful transition through a continuum of support – Bayside service

This young person transitioned from our shared housing into our units before moving into a private rental. She was accommodated by our service for approximately three years. She first entered our service at the age of 15. This young person had a background of significant abuse. When she entered our service, she had a history of purposely sabotaging her relationships, accommodation, and education/employment. Through the development of an ongoing relationship and trust over time, continued worker and organisational support and reinforcement, this young person learnt the complex skills needed to sustain independent living and function successfully .

Most SAAP/CAP services are based on the eastern seaboard of Queensland with the exception of three services based in Mt Isa. It must be noted that some generalist services located throughout Queensland provide a level of service delivery to young people and their families, especially in areas where there are no youth services. In other regions different youth programs or the community itself may provide support to young people experiencing difficulty at home or who are homeless.

<sup>10</sup> AIWH report, Homeless people in SAAP (11), National Data Collection Annual Report 2005 – 2006 Australia

Another critical factor in terms of access is the voluntary nature of how young people enter SAAP/CAP services. QYHC believes young people need to have choice in which service that they wish to access and that the system needs to have multiple access points. Services located in a local community are known to young people and trust is a huge factor in terms of how, when and if a young person will access a service. Trust becomes central to young people who are from culturally diverse backgrounds, indigenous and for young people exiting State care.

The lack of understanding of the role of SAAP/CAP services by the SHA has been in the area of allocation of resources. In particular there has been too much emphasis on externally supported models of housing or what is sometimes referred to as transitional housing. The assumption underpinning this focus is that most young people have the skills to live independently. However, many young people do not have the skill sets to live independently both at an emotional and social level.

A case example of an inappropriate referral to a SAAP service – Brisbane region

A young person was referred to a SAAP service from Department of Child Safety. The SAAP service was not given an accurate account of the behavioural, social and emotional needs of this young person prior to their transition into the shared accommodation. Consequently, this young person had great difficulty in managing living skills such as cleaning, cooking, general hygiene and budgeting; she brought unknown strangers into her home; and was unable to communicate on any matters related to tenancy issues. She was also being supported by an outreach service. This young person's placement quickly broke down because the accommodation did not suit her needs at the time of placement. The complex nature of the support attached to this young person served to undermine the work of SAAP service was attempting to do with this young woman as our role was seen to be purely as a housing provider.

Much of the work of SAAP/CAP services is in skilling up young people to manage their tenancy and to provide long term exit options. Services do not want the young people to fail so the allocation process may take longer than an allocation policy in a housing program where tenants have the necessary living skills. This process also ensures wherever possible that their particular model of service is the most appropriate for the young person. The case example above is an excellent example of the impact on a young person and the service as a result of inappropriate information being provided to a service.

The 2004 CAP review explored the issues of:

- Affordability – the review noted the tension between the ability for young people to pay rent vs the ability of services to manage property with no rental income. The key issue for QYHC is that young people are not denied access to SAAP/CAP services based on their ability to pay. QYHC support the current policy of SAAP/CAP services having a 0 -25% of income as rent, and that this is dependent on the case management plan developed for the young person.
- Security of tenure – the review found that security of tenure has improved for clients and service providers. Particularly through headleasing where support is moved but the client can stay in the same accommodation thereby improving client outcomes.

- o Appropriateness – the key issue here was whether the location of the stock met client needs. The review only makes comment on the extent to which public housing has appropriate stock to meet the diversity of need and the general lack of understanding by SHA of the importance of the built environment (in particular design) for young people and the services that they accessed.
- o Sustainability – The review noted that there needed to be a more robust property maintenance program to ensure that young people had quality accommodation. It noted that the issues confronting CAP services were no different than any other housing program in terms of how a capital maintenance program can bring down costs of emergency repairs. One of the suggestions was to have a proportion of funding for ongoing maintenance built into CAP funding.

There is a need for a common assessment and referral process that can be used by all services including the Queensland State Government run Homeless Persons Information Queensland service.

Therefore when looking at what the critical elements of the program are (in terms of meeting the needs of young people) the following must be considered:

- o Housing and support are tied;
- o Non government nature of service provision; and
- o Case management in SAAP.

#### Recommendation vii

QYHC supports the need for CAP to meet young people's needs by:

- o Providing a range of access points
- o Ensuring young people's capacity to pay should not exclude access
- o Providing diversity of models
- o Providing security of tenure
- o Catering for young people in both the type and location of accommodation
- o Provision of quality accommodation
- o Setting rent policy to 0-25% of income

## INDIGENOUS YOUNG PEOPLE

The rate of indigenous homeless is much higher than the national average. The 2004 CAP review found that

*There is a need to develop indigenous specific infrastructure responses to homelessness in all jurisdictions which are both flexible and diverse in nature.*

Therefore in exploring all the issues in relation how the program functions, there must be considerations made to the specific access and equity issues in relation to indigenous young people. In particular consideration needs to be given to issues such as gender specific services, culturally appropriate service delivery practices and the location of services throughout the State.

## THE USE OF CAP FOR OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

One of the major areas of contention between the non government sector and government in recent years has been the funding of office space for outreach and externally supported models of accommodation. It would seem that the concern is based on the use of a capital building that does not physically accommodate a young person.

QYHC would contend that this viewpoint is very limited in the understanding of the role and function of different service models and that there is scope within the program for the purchase of capital for a range of service models. The 2004 Review supported the proposition for office space:

The alternative view is that this should be expenditure by SAAP through the Department of Communities. QYHC does not support this proposition as the Crisis Accommodation Program is for the development of infrastructure (as in the original intent of the program) and there should not be a devolution of the role of SHA's in this area.

Services cannot deliver outreach services, drop in services or externally supported models of accommodation without office space. Further the perceived savings in terms of the sale of a Crisis Accommodation Program property replaced by a rent subsidy in our view is a false economy when the following factors are taken into account:

- o Services develop along a continuum of care that responds to young people in their local community;
- o SAAP/CAP services work within a relationship model of work and an important component of this is related to being seen as part of your local community by the client;
- o SAAP/CAP services conduct projects and workshops to engage their local community as part of a community capacity role; and
- o Security of tenure enables the growth of sustainable non government services.

*It is likely that the built environment has a far larger impact on service delivery models and client outcomes than is generally realised in the sector. It is especially unsatisfactory that there are no clear measures of the extent to which CAP provides appropriate accommodation for service providers or to homeless clients.<sup>11</sup>*

#### Case example: Bayside Adolescent Boarding Inc

BABI's SAAP service provides medium to long term accommodation. This means that young people have contact with our service for up to many years. Knowledge of the 'big orange house on Bay Terrace that is BABI, is well known in the Wynnum/Redlands community and many referrals that we receive are from local community members. Whilst BABI cannot accommodate everyone that walks through the door, part of its service delivery is responding to *all* individuals that enter the office. The BABI house is very child friendly. Young people are welcome to use our facilities to shower, eat and get a cup of tea. The simplicity of feeling welcome through this office setup can make all the difference in a young person seeking help or not, and especially for those in a distressed state because of their personal situations. This reputation also means that Department of Housing and Department of Child Safety often send young people down to our office before attempting to listen to their stories.

One of the dominant goals of BABI is family reunification wherever possible, and the rebuilding of relationships between young people and their families where returning to the family home is not possible. Providing support and mediation to these young people and their families means we are also able to simultaneously accommodate the young people in a safe environment. The physical set up of the office and the fact that we are a non-government agency where contact is not obligatory means that the office is a good meeting point for us to work with the young people and their parents/guardians in a non-threatening environment, which is much more conducive to positive outcomes.

The security in knowing that the BABI office is always within the community that it serves assists in its service delivery to its target group. The familiarity that comes from the house/office means that many people return to the service and young people are happy to bring other's at risk of homelessness or who are homeless into the office to seek help.

#### Recommendation viii

QYHC supports the continued use of CAP dollars for the purchase of office space for outreach, drop in and externally supported models of housing.

11. Butlin, Dr A., CAP Review 2004, Amity Management Consulting Group, July 2004, pg 7

## PART 4: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The management of the Crisis Accommodation is by Department of Housing due to the relationship with the CSHA. It was also constructed in this manner predominately due to a desire to see the SHA respond more appropriately to homeless people. In Queensland there was also an acknowledgement of the expertise of housing to be able to deal with the acquisition and management of housing.

In examining the program administration it highlights that crisis accommodation services are housing programs that have **support tied to it**. However this function is challenged by State Housing Authorities (SHA's) where most of the stock that is provided is housing without support attached. As a result the Crisis Accommodation Program poses particular administrative hurdles for the Department of Housing.

### NUMBERS OF CAP PROPERTIES

A snapshot of the Crisis Accommodation program<sup>12</sup>:

Commenced:

1984

Number of Crisis Accommodation program registered providers:

154

Number of dwelling units:

801 dwelling units owned by the Department of Housing 185 dwelling units rented on the private market

Title:

- Held by the Department of Housing
- Some housing is rented on the private market

Some properties are owned by organisations

Locations:

Throughout Queensland

Number of dwelling units:

801 dwelling units owned by the Department of Housing 185 dwelling units rented on the private market

Types of properties:

- Women's Shelters
- Youth Shelters

12. Department of Housing website updated 17 November 2005, downloaded 3<sup>rd</sup> august 2007

- o Detached houses
- o Units
- o Duplexes

## FUNDING, FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

### TYPE OF FUNDING

The major type of funding is through a one-off capital grant to a non government service provider that is a registered entity under the State Housing Act 2003. The one off capital grant enable NGO's to build or acquire properties. The main use of Crisis Accommodation Program funds has been for the acquisition of stock. The funding includes recurrent funding for maintenance and repairs. The purchase of stock is crucial for services to be located in areas where they are close to essential services that are required for the service users.

In some areas there is an inability for services to purchase due to the rising cost of land and housing. A number of services utilise their Crisis Accommodation Program funding for headleasing in the private rental market and this is seen as an excellent innovation in the program if it is part of a broader response to youth homelessness. While this diversion of funds has been promoted as adding choices and flexibility to the Crisis Accommodation Program, this is often not the case. Crisis Accommodation Program purchasing ensures a level of security of tenure to the service to be able to conduct their service delivery, if headleasing is seen as the only option the lack of this security of tenure reduces the choices that SAAP services and clients may make regarding their transition to independent living as the houses may be located away from essential services. NGO's who are leasing are also finding that they are getting less service outcomes due to sky rocketing rental prices and related costs, which impacts on service budgets.

#### Recommendation ix

QYHC supports the ongoing purchase of property and does not support use of CAP funds for the exclusive use of leasing or brokerage.

Further Crisis Accommodation Program funds across the States and Territories have been diverted away from the capital inputs (bricks and mortar) to other uses such as:

- o the purchase of temporary accommodation for SAAP clients such as in boarding house lodgings



- overnight hotel room accommodation and caravan park accommodation; and
- the payment of public service salaries for positions that support homeless people.

Case example: Southwest Queensland

Overnight hotel accommodation or caravan parks are not suitable accommodation for young people under 16 yet quite often this is the only accommodation that can be found. On top of this many refuse accommodation to younger folk because of previous 'bad' experiences.

QYHC contends that none of the above options provide young people with security of housing and an ability to work through their issues. For example a young person who is homeless and still going to school does not require a placement where he/she is moved every night with a chance that they may not be housed at all at some stage in the future. This young person requires either supported accommodation or independent housing with a level of security of tenure.

Recommendation x

QYHC supports that CAP funds are not expended on non housing related support services including wages and that this continues to be funded through SAAP or other funded support programs.

The use of Crisis Accommodation Program funds should not be misinterpreted as emergency relief. If there is a greater need for emergency relief then this funding should be enhanced rather than diminishing the CAP dollar.

Lastly there is no 'infrastructure building' if Crisis Accommodation Program funding is spent unwisely, and there is a risk of succumbing to pressures due to the shrinkage in boarding accommodation, caravan parks and any low cost housing. The advantage of purchasing property as opposed to using Crisis Accommodation Program funding for these short-term highly transitional options is that there is the development of ongoing service responses in areas where the infrastructure is provided.

## REPORTING

There is a high level of reporting and many services would contend that there is an onerous amount of reporting. In particular many services question the relevance of the paperwork and in the area of financial reporting there should only be reporting on the Crisis Accommodation Program finances. The department should only

require a profit and loss (P&L) on Crisis Accommodation Program properties not on all the finances of the organisation.

The accountabilities for the Crisis Accommodation Program should only be focussed on the bricks and mortar elements. This means that the Crisis Accommodation Program should only be accountable for:

- Asset management
- Housing standards and some tenancy management - relevant to the model of service delivery.

## HOUSING MANAGEMENT

Tenancy/housing management includes the functions of tenancy management and property/asset management. In terms of the tenancy/housing management the Department of Housing is seen to be responsible for:

- Standard of housing;
- Adequacy of housing management; and
- Housing maintenance and repairs.

Services are responsible for the payment of rates, minor maintenance and repairs.

In terms of SAAP/CAP there have been debates in relation to the 'functional' separation of housing and support and the 'organisational' separation of housing and support. This essentially is about whether the SAAP provider can deliver both support and tenancy/housing management or whether the tenancy/housing management is outsourced to a specialist housing provider either within or outside the service.

The rationale for outsourcing by externally supported accommodation providers has been:

1. To have housing managed by a provider that has the specialist knowledge and skill sets to manage the housing; and
2. That the separation of the functions would assist in reporting arrangements.

There have been instances where the outsourcing of tenancy management has occurred in the youth sector however there are major challenges in the delivery of the service in this manner in particular:

- The different outcomes sought by housing providers and the housing support providers;
- The fundamental differences between youth services and housing providers in the provision of service; and

o The pressure by housing providers on youth services around issues of payment of rent and maintenance of property.

#### Recommendation xi

The QYHC recommends that a SAAP/CAP service should be able to determine whether they wish to have housing management and support outsourced or not depending on the skill set of the young people accessing the service and whether or not an outsourcing would support the service model.

## USE OF RENT MONEY

The current Queensland Community Rent Policy 2006, which incorporates within it a CAP Rent Policy, from the Department of Housing was developed in collaboration with the non government sector and has endorsement from the field and sets out the framework for a rent policy. There is no obligation for young people to pay rent when they are in a SAAP/CAP property regardless of the model of service delivery. The Queensland CAP Community Rent Policy 2006 states that young people should not be denied entry to a SAAP or CAP funded services due to their inability to pay rent.

The Community Housing Rent Policy only applies if young people are signatories to a Residential Tenancies Authority compliant lease. Section 4.4.1 clearly states:

*Client contributions/fees charged at Supported Accommodation Assistance Program/Crisis Accommodation Program services are only classified as rent when they are charged under a RTA compliant lease.<sup>13</sup>*

Further the Community Housing Rent Policy clarifies that:

*Households in Crisis Accommodation Program-Supported Accommodation Assistance Program services without a RTA compliant lease are not required to conform to the Community Housing rent policy. Client contributions, fees or charges charged at these services should be linked to the client's case management plan and service policies in accordance with the above Supported Accommodation Assistance Program considerations.<sup>14</sup>*

The issue with regard to rent is how and where the money is spent after it has been collected. Youth services would contend that the use of rent for the following purposes would assist in meeting client outcomes:

13. Queensland Government, Community Housing Rent Policy, July 2006, p 11

14. Queensland Government, Community Housing Rent Policy, July 2006,

- o Payment of rates;
- o Insurance
- o Quality of accommodation – use of rent to maintain property including lawn and garden maintenance cost; and
- o Transfer to independent living – using rent monies for housing assistance (ie fridges, washing machines, establishment costs) to support young people to transition to more independent living.

The current Crisis Accommodation Program Specifications from the Department of Housing states in section 8 Allowable Expenditure states that service must only use the funds for allowable expenditure (but does not stipulate what this is) and approval is needed for other expenditure such as support services or non housing capital items such as furniture, fridges, washing machines or computers. No service can spend rental income on recurrent costs or leases.

## MAINTENANCE

The non government youth sector has requested from the Queensland Department of Housing the Crisis Accommodation Program allocated budget for maintenance however to date we have been unable to source this information. There have also been requests made for the Crisis Accommodation Program maintenance program however this too has been unsuccessful. In turn services find it difficult to plan for maintenance or budget priorities with any certainty.

### Recommendation xii

QYHC supports a nominated percent of CAP funds be set aside for maintenance.

Presently, SAAP operational budgets of services meet the shortfall in the Crisis Accommodation Program funding especially around minor maintenance and at those times when the Department of Housing is taking an unreasonable time to provide maintenance to the property. Many of the services discuss the issue of maintenance and express a frustration about the lack of transparency in the maintenance program.

### Recommendation xiii

QYHC urges the Department of Housing to release a CAP maintenance schedule.

The Department of Housing needs to schedule replacement of stock or develop a replacement strategy for existing properties. This will enable better asset management and can also take into consideration neighbourhood fatigue where this is an issue.

## *PURCHASE OF PROPERTY*

A number of services indicated that the Department of Housing has a very high standard in terms of the purchase of property, which provides a level of certainty around viability and sustainability of offices. In many cases properties that may be appropriate in terms of location may be rejected for other reasons. The Department of Housing needs to be more transparent around the process of purchase of property and why properties are being accepted or rejected.

## PART 5: NEEDS ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

The general lack of data, consultative processes and planning has hindered the improvement of the program and as a result, client outcomes have not been optimised.

Needs based analysis and local level planning processes can provide two mechanisms to determine the allocation of Crisis Accommodation Program funding. Data assists in the allocation of resources taking into consideration target groups as well as regional needs.

### DATA

There are a range of issues around planning, monitoring and review of the SAAP and CAP programs especially at the coordination level. A deficit in this area is that there is not enough coordination in data collection in terms of who is collecting what data and for what purpose.

The main areas of data collection for the SAAP/CAP service system is through the National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) data collection and can assist in future planning process. NDCA data has greater relevance than what is currently being collected by the services for the Department of Housing and has more of a focus on client outcomes as they relate better to the SAAP/CAP programs.

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the collection of data to identify areas of need there needs to be work done developmentally in local communities in order for there to be strong community support and networking. Without these critical relationships services will flounder as they cannot meet the complete needs of the clients accessing their service. In the current policy environment there seems to be little support for community development or developmental processes to occur in local communities. Robust community service systems cannot be created without some level of resourcing for development processes.

The combination of the lack of support for networking, developmental work and the under-resourcing means that services do the best they can with what they have got. In some areas strong relationships and high skill sets have enabled great planning and innovative approaches to systems development however these are not always sustainable once the key players leave

## PART 6: LINKS TO OTHER HOUSING PROGRAMS

There has been a historical debate about the connections between the Crisis Accommodation Program and other housing programs both at the policy and planning perspective. As stated in the previous section the lack of developmental work has contributed to the lack of statewide consistency between programs and systems.

The difference between SAAP/CAP services and other housing services is that SAAP/CAP is focussed on providing accommodation with support. This includes targeted assistance around issues that hinder ones ability to live independently.

Programs such as the Community Rent Scheme in Queensland focus on providing people housing without support. Many of these tenants are being housed due to the shrinking public housing stock or the increasing un-affordability of the housing market.

## SEPARATION OF HOUSING AND SUPPORT

It is the view of the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition that whilst the Crisis Accommodation Program has pressured SHA's to better respond to homeless people, it has also highlighted the need for homeless responses along a continuum of need.

Further, QYHC believes that SHA's need to provide housing that does not have support tied to it, and that the Crisis Accommodation Program needs to continue with support tied to it as a means of ensuring that a diversity of models are provided.

In order to better understand the arguments about separating housing and support, there firstly needs to be a better understanding of the nature of housing and support. The concept of support and who requires support is an area where very little work has been undertaken. It can be argued that everybody has a support need however the critical element is whether that support is provided by family and friends or in combination with external support agencies.

The concept of support is commonly discussed when external support agencies are being utilised. The definition of support articulated by the QYHC is:

Services that assist an individual/group to maintain their social and emotional well being.<sup>14</sup>

The underlying principles must be based in a social justice framework, promoting rights and seeking to ensure access, equity and participation. Young people may have need for one or more types of support in an ongoing or periodic way at any given point in time. Ongoing support can be provided in a number of modes including 24 hours, by necessity; 24 hours a day, negotiated; and 24 hours, upon request only. Periodic support is the provision of support on an irregular basis as a one-off means of assistance. Types of support could include but are not restricted to living skills, budgeting, counselling, and transportation.

Support must be portable ie attached to the person not the housing **except in crisis and supported accommodation**. The nature of the SAAP program is that it is intensive support provided to young people to assist them to move to independent living. Once young people are ready for independent living the SAAP workers assist in establishing supportive arrangements for young people in a community setting.

Support Needs



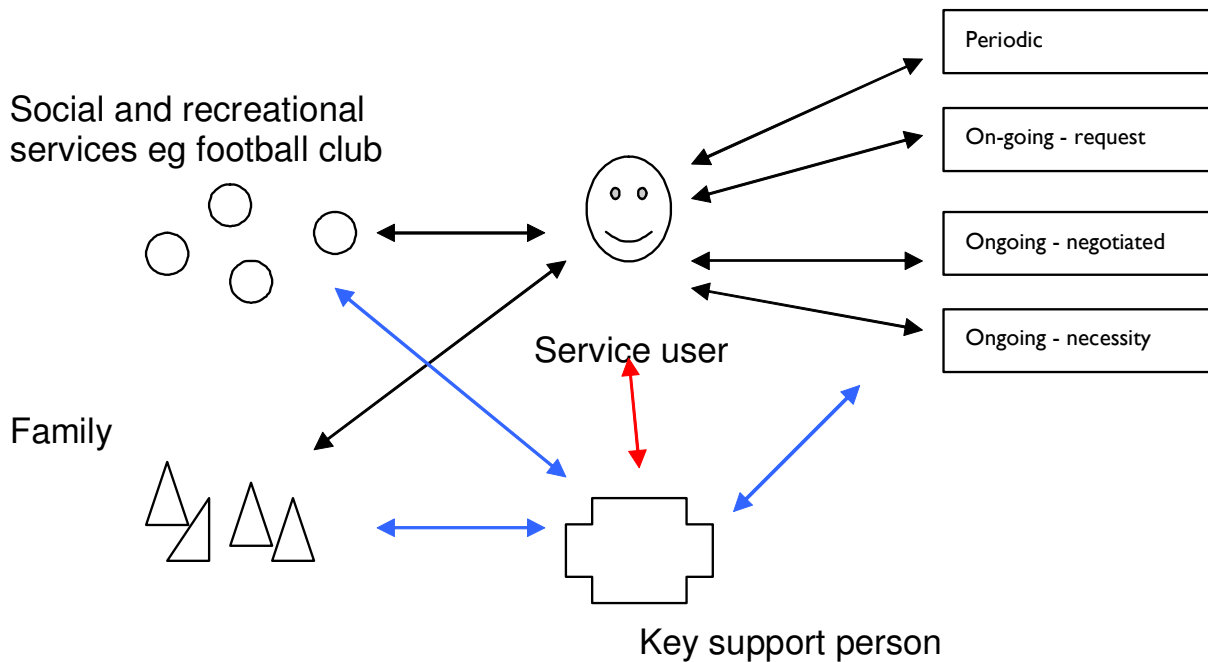
	Ongoing necessity –	Ongoing negotiated –	Ongoing request –	Periodic
High				
Low				

Many service users may have multiple support needs. This in turn requires a level of coordination between support agencies in ensuring that there is no duplication or conflict in the support being delivered. Client-based approaches to service delivery are a key element to ensuring that effective and efficient support is being provided.

In the diagram below QYHC is starting to explore how young people are central to the development of support 'packaging'.

14. Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Positioning Paper, I can blow my own trumpet, a paper on empowerment of individuals in the separation of housing and support, 2006,p9





This model acknowledges that it is crucial to have an advocate who is the key support person that can assist the young person in facilitating how services engage with them. The young person must choose the key advocate, however the critical component of this model is support agencies in working together.

## THE ONE SOCIAL HOUSING SYSTEM

The Crisis Accommodation Program is only a small part of the CSHA and should not be raided to supplement the social housing funding. In a whole range of government housing and accommodation areas demand is exceeding supply. QYHC is aware of the increasing unaffordability of private rental housing, and the lack of public and community housing. Young people also have very little access to the affordable housing 'sector' due to their very low incomes. Young people face discrimination in attempting to access housing either due to their age, lack of references and tenancy databases etc. The Crisis Accommodation Program also cannot supplement failing government policy.

It is inappropriate that young people are forced in SAAP/CAP services purely because of their inability to access other housing options. It is the lack of access and inadequate stock that needs to be increased in order to deal with these issues.

It must be noted that the one social housing system should be in the post crisis area of the continuum while SAAP/CAP services provide supported accommodation with a targeted outcome in the crisis area of the continuum.

Case example: Brisbane region

*SAAP Service* has a continuum of care where young people travel through shared accommodation, into unit living and then into our SHDL Program. This model is very effective in ensuring young people maintain independent accommodation. One example is a young man who travelled through this continuum over a 3 year period to end up maintaining his Department of Housing property. This young man had very poor living skills when he entered our service, ranging from requiring daily support in everyday activities (grooming; hygiene; washing clothes; cooking) to budgeting and social skills to name a few. A support plan was catered to these needs and the young man slowly progressed through each stage as he was ready and his skills matched the level needed to maintain each level of accommodation. While BABI continues to have contact with this young man, support is provided when he requests it and he is successfully maintaining independent living.

To reiterate it is not the role of the Crisis Accommodation Program to address the shrinking resource issues in a range of other social policy areas, including the shrinkage of public housing or the lack of support provided by disability, health or other government departments.

There is no valid argument that can justify increasing the flexibility of the Crisis Accommodation Program when there is an inadequate response in areas such as CSHA funding especially for public housing, and outreach support for people with mental health issues, both areas where funding has significantly decreased in recent times.

All the alleged flexibility will achieve is a devolution of the targeted responses that SAAP/CAP services provide.

There does need to be strong and viable exit points from the SAAP/CAP service system to other housing products. The interface between the SAAP/CAP service system and the One Social Housing System can be achieved by the Department of Housing areas offices utilising a module of the Common Assessment and Referral form being developed by Homelessness Persons Information Queensland (HPIQ). Further that young people who are referred from the One Social Housing System into the homeless service system (ie SAAP/CAP) are provided with a priority allocation within the One Social Housing System, so that there is an exit point from SAAP once they have developed the skill sets to live independently. This would thereby create a seamless

service and appropriate responses to needs.

Recommendation xiv:

QYHC urges that the Department of Housing utilise a module of the common homeless assessment and referral process to ensure a seamless service delivery response between the homeless service system and the one social housing system.

## PRIVATE RENTAL HOUSING

A number of services do utilise their Crisis Accommodation funding for headleasing in the private rental market. This is an excellent innovation in the program if it is part of a broader response to youth homelessness.

## SUMMARY: WHERE TO FROM HERE

In a continuum of housing and support there is clearly a need for a range of accommodation and housing options for young people. Included within this continuum are the SAAP/CAP programs in the crisis response to homeless young people.

For young people it is essential that the responses included are those that acknowledge their age, developmental stage and social skill. It is a concern that adult models are continuing to be seen as appropriate models for young people.

The future direction of the Crisis Accommodation Program must take into account the particular needs of young people in the program logic and specifications. When examining what the critical elements of the program are (in terms of meeting the needs of young people) the following must be considered:

- o Housing and support are tied;
- o Non government nature of service provision; and
- o Case management in SAAP.

Not doing so would disadvantage an already marginalised group creating further barriers to achieving their independence.

### **Summary of recommendations:**

#### **Recommendation i**

QYHC urges the continuation of the Crisis Accommodation Program as a tied CSHA program and the continued Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments involvement in the Program.

#### **Recommendation ii**

QYHC urges the development of Program logic to ensure the intent and the practice of the program cannot be eroded by SHA's.

#### **Recommendation iii**

QYHC supports a program specific consultative mechanism that is regionally focused and is tied to the SAAP consultative network.

**Recommendation iv**

QYHC urges the State Housing Authority to consult with the sector at the concept stage whenever reviews or changes are being proposed.

**Recommendation v**

QYHC supports that the Crisis Accommodation Program funding be tied to SAAP funded services. Further that change in the Crisis Accommodation Program policy should reflect the movement and quality improvement changes in the SAAP program as it responds to the needs of homeless young people.

**Recommendation vi**

QYHC supports the need for CAP to be continued, strengthened and expanded.

**Recommendation vii**

QYHC supports the need for CAP to meet young people's needs by:

- o Providing a range of access points
- o Ensuring young people's capacity to pay should not exclude access
- o Providing diversity of models
- o Providing security of tenure
- o Catering for young people in both the type and location of accommodation
- o Provision of quality accommodation
- o Setting rent policy to 0-25% of income

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**Recommendation ix**

QYHC supports the ongoing purchase of property and does not support use of CAP funds for the exclusive use of leasing or brokerage.

**Recommendation x**

QYHC supports that CAP funds are not expended on non housing related support services including wages and that this continues to be funded through SAAP or other funded support programs.

**Recommendation xi**

The QYHC recommends that a SAAP/CAP service should be able to determine whether they wish to have housing management and support outsourced or not depending on the skill set of the young people accessing the service and whether or not an outsourcing would support the service model.

**Recommendation xii**

QYHC supports a nominated percent of CAP funds be set aside for maintenance.

**Recommendation xiii**

QYHC urges the Department of Housing to release a CAP maintenance schedule.

**Recommendation xiv**

QYHC urges that the Department of Housing utilise a module of the common homeless assessment and referral process to ensure a seamless service delivery response between the homeless service system and the one social housing system.

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