Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Inc.

QLD Addressing

Youth Homelessness

Business case ©

Dated: 17th October 2008

Queensland Youth Housing Coalition

Queensland Addressing Youth Homelessness Business Case

One quarter of all the homeless people in Australia are living in Queensland. Nearly thirty percent are young people between the ages of 12 to 24 years. This business case will attempt to highlight the type of services required along a continuum of care from early intervention, through crisis to ongoing housing and support needs that will meet the requirements of young people.

Exploring existing services as well as potential new models this business case will attempt to argue that an increase in social investment will effectively address the causes and effects of youth homelessness. The 2006 census data has shown that investment of resources in targeted interventions can be play a significant role as part of the solution in bringing down the number of homeless young people in Queensland. This business case will provide indicative targets and costs for this social investment.

Underpinning the social service delivery model must be a strong legislative base that provides surety in not only funding but continuity in the delivery of services. This legislative base must be at a Federal level to ensure a national framework for responding to homelessness and supported by the State. The development of a new set of administrative arrangements at the COAG level must not undermine the national focus on homelessness but should continue to support and develop the current service system, building on the foundations that are already there. Without a national framework the response to homelessness will become fragmented and the ability to develop needs based analysis based on data will be lost.

The foundations that are currently in place are the building block to healthy communities and we need to develop and expand these responses. There is a need to recognise the holistic service delivery responses that service undertake in their communities and not only view them through a program silo lens.

This business case also highlights the underinvestment of the last 10 years in terms of supporting communities. This includes the ability to recruit and retain staff, the need for adequate training, support and professional development.   The compliance to standards can be quickly and effectively dealt with through an investment in a highly skilled professional workforce.

QYHC would be pleased to develop more in-depth responses to how governments and the communities can better respond to the needs of young people however we are limited in the scope of our work as we are self funded and so do not receive any resources from government around youth homelessness and housing issues.   Aspects of this business case are work-in-progress and there are some gaps in terms of target groups.   We have included a recommendation on the funding of QYHC should government determine that more in-depth analysis is, research and model development is required.

We hope this document will assist in the policy debate and resourcing discussions around youth housing and homelessness.

Ms Maria Leebeek

Executive Officer

Workforce development

A fundamental issue that needs to be addressed prior to the discussion on specific programs or products that will assist young people's access to housing and homelessness services is that none of these can be delivered if there is no community infrastructure.

In recent years there has been a significant decline in the resources that support non government services. In particular there has been an increasing divide in terms of wage parity between the government and non government sectors. This lack of resourcing has meant that services are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain staff. The impact of this on service delivery is immense. The lack of professionally trained staff can impact on the quality of service delivery, the ability to meet compliance and other regulatory frameworks and to conduct research and data to improve service delivery functions. Further the lack of continuity of staff can impact on community capacity building processes that are dependent on the developing of relationships with community members over a medium to long term period.

As a result our first targets need to acknowledge the workforce issues facing youth housing and homelessness service.

Targets;

o   To ensure wage parity between the government and non government services sector.

o   To fund appropriate administrative support staff for youth housing and homelessness services.

o   To ensure that funding of youth housing and homelessness services that provides an adequate client to staff ratio and to consider the specific issues for rural, rural and remote services.

o   Employment targets around the recruitment of indigenous and Torres Strait Islander people

Cost: To be determined

Addressing Youth Homelessness Business Case

The Youth Homelessness Business Case is targeted at service responses along the continuum of care. The Youth Homelessness Business Case has not attempted to discuss all youth programs and we acknowledge that there are a range of programs that are linked to assisting young people who are at risk of or who are homeless such as the YARROS and YACCA programs.

There are also some mainstream and State government run programs such as School Health nurses that QYHC is not in a position to provide a costing for, however these services provide a valuable support role to young people. We have attempted a number of indicative targets in these areas.

We would also note that indigenous young people are over represented in the homelessness statistics and that all programs should have specific strategies to assist indigenous young people and their families.

Early intervention

Reconnect (only target and cost based on national figures)

Target;

o   To expand the Reconnect Program threefold to ensure national coverage.

Cost: Increase by $42million nationally to $63millon

Reconnect: LGBT

Target;

o   Funding for Open Doors to educate services Statewide about LGBT and making services safe for young people.

Minium cost: $300,000 per annum

Maximum: Expansion of Open Doors in 10 regional areas of Queensland

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Young People

Target:

o   To ensure that youth services are trained in cultural competency.

o   To ensure that youth services have access to Interpreter services.

> o   To fund QYHC to educate services around access issues for young CALD people in housing.
>
> Cost: $300,000 per annum

> *Youth Support Coordinator Program*
>
> Targets;
>
> o   To ensure that the national curriculum includes a module on homelessness.
>
> o   To enhance the funding for Youth Support Coordinators to focus on young people at risk of disengaging from education **and** who are homeless.
>
> o   To ensure that young people are not disconnected from mainstream educational opportunities due to their homelessness status.
>
> Cost; Double the funding for the program by $8million to $16million per annum

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> Community Placement Model
>
> o   To support the development of Community Placement Models.
>
> | | | |
> |---|---|---|
> | Minimum (Warwick pilot) | $250,000 | $250,000 |
> | Maximum (10 regions) | $250,000 | $2.5 million |

Intensive support and supported accommodation

> *Supported Accommodation Assistance Program*
>
> o   To ensure that young people who homeless have access to SAAP.
>
> o   To ensure a diversity of models to meet needs across continuum.
>
> o   To ensure follow up support services for young people exiting SAAP
>
> o   To ensure protocols and MoU between homeless and housing departments for young people entering into social housing.
>
> o   To ensure quality service delivery for young people through adequate funding within standards.
>
> o   To allocate an early intervention worker.
>
> o   To have specific accommodation for target groups.

o To have a range of designs for youth shelter that ensures that they integrated in their local community.

o To ensure that youth shelters have two workers on at all times.

o To build upon the SAAP regional networking process to assist in planning processes.

Cost:

Youth shelter	$ per annum per service	$ per annum program
Minimum	87,454.87	2,536,191.20
Maximum	1,359,274.90	39,478,972

Follow up support worker or

Early intervention worker (each at same cost)

| Minimum | 80,542.00 | $5.9 million |
| Maximum | 89,871.00 | $6.5 million |

Family support worker

Target:

To support young people who are pregnant or parenting.

Cost

In terms of the funding of a family support worker the funding for each service for a paid worker would be.

| Minimum | 80,542.00 | $5.9 million |
| Maximum | 89,871.00 | $6.5 million |

Innovative Youth Health Service for Homelessness Young People

o To increase the scope and capacity of the program. This would improve service coverage and to meet the needs of the real cost of doctor – and the doctor hourly comparable to Australian Medical Association scheduled of fees Australian Salaried Medical officer association – and nurses and their wages need to be linked State Nurses Award

o QYHC would also advocate for independent and community midwives to be able to practice independently within community based organisation's and to bulk bill under Medicare provisions.

Cost: Double the funding $2 million per annum

Youth Bail Accommodation and support services

o To ensure appropriate accommodation for indigenous young people serving justice orders eg bail, community service order.

o To ensure that young people have adequate support, including Transition from Care Allowance and Detention Care Family Workers[1], on leaving detention that young people in primary homelessness have access to SAAP.

o To continue to support homeless people through the justice processes such as Homeless Court Connect and Homeless Persons Court Diversionary program.

o To have national reform laws around public space and begging to decriminalise homelessness.

Cost

At the time of writing this was still being assessed.

Youth homelessness peak funding - Queensland Youth Housing Coalition

The proposed budget for this study is $199,968 + GST. This costing based on our understanding of the brief and the methodology described in Section 3. It has been carefully designed to deliver a cost effective process without compromising the quality of the outcome.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our proposed approach with the Department, and are more than happy to consider an alternative fee structure if appropriate.

Cost		
Wages	1F/T Executive Officer (comparable to an AO8)	$ 89,898.00
	1 F/T Policy Office (comparable to an AO7)	$ 81,140.00
	On costs & Superannuation	$ 23,900.00
Operating		$ 50,000.00

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[1] see Youth Advocacy Centre submission to Green Paper

Administration	$ 25,000.00
Total funding	**$ 269,938.00**

Mainstream targets

External structural issues

o   A reduction of the barriers that create youth homelessness.

o   To ensure that all federally funded services provide non-discriminatory access for young homelessness people regardless of their age, sexual preferences, cultural background, or religion.

Child Protection

The Create Foundation responded to the Federal Government Green paper and within their submission set a number of targets that we would endorse. These are;

o   to provide models of care up to age 18 for all young people in care that meet their needs and adequately support them and help prepare them for independence;

o   to provide affordable, subsidised transition to independence/semi-supported accommodation for those discharged from care, available up to they reach the age of 25; and

o   to provide young people who have left care priority access to long term public and/or community housing.

Housing

The National Rental Housing Advocacy Day outlined key **targets**;

o   A Growth Target should be established involving an increase in the stock of public and non-profit housing by 30,000 additional dwellings by 2012.

o   An Affordable Housing Growth Fund should be established with funding of $7.5 billion over 4 years strictly ear-marked for expanding the stock of public and non-profit housing, contributed on a proportional matching basis by the Commonwealth and the States/Territories.

o   An Operating Subsidy Program should be established, with funding of $3.5 billion over four years provided by the Commonwealth.

- These funding arrangements will require approximately $5 billion above funding currently provided by the Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments through the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA).

- New stock should meet standards relating to dwelling quality, disability accessibility and energy efficiency.

- Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) should be reviewed to ensure that it best meets the needs of all low income renters. As a first step, the maximum rate of CRA should be increased by 30% for low income households currently receiving the highest rate of CRA at a cost of $500 million per annum.

Private rental market reforms

- To ensure national Boarders and Lodgers tenancy legislation includes procedural fairness and access to a Tribunal.

- To ensure minimum national standards (based on the current best practice) in Residential Tenancies Law.

- To ensure that the Residential Tenancies Authority conducts community education forums on homelessness targeting lessors and agents.

Social Security and economic participation

- To ensure young people have an adequate after housing income.

- Rent assistance scaled to income allowing for special consideration for young people

- To ensure that young people do not become homeless due to payment penalties imposed in the Social Security system.

Employment

- To support accommodation options for apprentices and young people on traineeships.

Health

- To implement the recommendations of the HHOT Evaluation.

- See above re: Innovate Youth Health Services for Homeless Young People.

Contents

1.1 Organisational capacity

There are a range of challenges facing non government organisations that impact on their capacity to undertake their services delivery functions.

The key issue for most youth housing and homelessness services is the inadequate funding to meet demand ie demand outstrips supply.   Not only is there a need for funding levels to be considered but to enable continuity and meaningful strategies to be developed service agreements need to be longer, at least 3 -5 years, as opposed to pilots or 1 -2 year funding cycles.

Service agreements also need to be more focussed on outcomes than compliance and to allow for flexibility in service delivery to meet local need.

Whilst staff numbers have not increased to meet the demand, the compliance on services has dramatically impacting on service capacity. The onerous administrative constraint on services, in terms of increased compliance, needs streamlining by government.

1.2 Workforce development

In recent years it has also been incredibly difficulty in trying to recruit and retain staff. The inability to compete with government in terms of wages means that many skilled staffed are often opting to work in government where they receive higher remuneration.   The low wages and the high cost of housing have meant that at times youth workers have been homeless. However it must also be acknowledged that the youth homelessness sector continues to have a highly skilled professional workforce with specialist knowledge.

The Queensland Council of Social Services is conducting a 'Good Work Decent Wages Campaign' for increased wages and conditions.   The campaign demonstrates the high levels of wage disparity between government and non government workers – see tables 1 and 2 below.

The wages campaign is consistent with the messages from the Australian Services Union around key issues such as;

o Disparity in wages between the community sector and the public sector.

o Portability of Long Service Leave (PLSL).

o Ability to enterprise bargaining.

The lack of resourcing also meant that it is difficult to support staff and to release them for training, networking and other sector development improvement processes.   Many 'direct service staff' undertake a number of administrative support functions.

In an attempt to improve the service delivery many services attempt to source additional areas of funding however this is a double edged sword as this function also detracts from supporting young people.

- Table 1 QCOSS Comparison of Community sector wage rates and public sector wages rates (administrative stream)

Classification level	Social and Community Services Award (2001) [1] as at 1/7/8	Public Sector Certified Agreement [2] as at 1/7/8	Difference in rates
1	$29 849 – 32 130	$28 122 – 31 790	$(1 727) – (340)
2	$32 130 – 35 291	$35 956 – 43 160	$382 – 7 869
3	$35 291 – 38 013	$46 121 – 51 432	$10 830 – 13 419
4	$39 101 – 42 262	$54 534 – 59 968	$15 433 – 17 706
5	$43 350 – 45 423	$63 201 – 68 693	$19 851 – 23 270
6	$50 000 – 53 239	$72 715 – 77 584	$22 715 – 24 345
7	$53 509 – 55849	$81 140 – 87 005	$27 631 – 31 156
8	$57 018 – 59 358	$89 898 – 95 082	$32 880 – 35 724

Source: [1] Social and Community Services (Queensland) Award 2001 [Transitional]
[2] State Government Departments Certified Agreement 2006

- Table 2 QCOSS Comparison of Community sector wage rates and public sector wages rates (professional stream)

Social and Community Services (Queensland) Award 2001 [1]	Public Sector Award 2003 Professional stream [2]	Difference in rates
Level 1 28 849 – 32130 Level 2 32 130 – 35 291	Level 1 $28,839 - $42,625	$(10) - $7 334
Level 3 35 291 – 38 013 Level 4 39 101 – 42 262	Level 2 $46,071 - $58,967	$10 780 - $16 705
Level 5 43 350 – 45 423	Level 3 $61,946 - $67,647	$18 596 – 22 224
Level 6 $50 000 – 53 239	Level 4 $72,017 - $77,584	$22 017 - $24 345
Level 7 $53 509 – 55849	Level 5 $81,140 - $87,005	$27 631 - $31156
Level 8 $57 018 – 59 358	Level 6 $89,898 - $95,082	$32 880 - $35 724

Source: [1] Social and Community Services (Queensland) Award 2001 [Transitional]
[2] State Government Departments Certified Agreement 2006

Executive Officers/Managers/Coordinators (hereafter referred to as Coordinators) undertake a huge number of tasks. A Coordinator's primary task is organisational management and should only undertake case management where appropriate to the organisation. The Coordinator ensures the quality standards within an organisation. The tasks that coordinators undertake are many and varied and may include one or all of the following tasks:

o   Organisational management

o   Administrative (internal Policy and Procedures development, implementation and review, Strategic and operational Planning, Liaison with funding bodies, Service agreements, Workplace Health and Safety, Marketing and Public relations, Insurance)

o   Financial (Budgets, Audits, Accounts)

o   Resource development (submission writing, Project management)

- o Human Resource Management (Conversant with Industrial Relations Act, Development of position descriptions, Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers, Training for staff and volunteers, Staff supervision, Staff grievances. Provision of up to date and relevant information for staff body)

- o Broad policy development (Engagement in policy development processes of government ie SRSI, Network with relevant stakeholders)

- o Casework (Monitoring the quality standards of the service, Provision of casework where appropriate)

The development of a Coordinator position through the utilisation of a number of funding sources needs to be reflected in a whole of government approach. This means that all funding sources must acknowledge the need for organisational management costs, including that of coordinator. Until this approach is adopted there is no ability for services to combine funding to create a Coordinators position. Further that there is acknowledgment that this funding is 'on-top of' not detracted from the existing funds allocated.

Remuneration for Coordinators needs to be set at a level that is reflective of the skills and knowledge required for the position.

Regardless of the size of an organisation there are some administrative tasks that need to be carried out in all organisations. For some organisations there is a split between the administrative support tasks and bookkeeping. The funding of positions need to take into account the costs associated with both functions.

The administrative functions that need to be completed in any organisation include administrative support and bookkeeping.

The overall administrative tasks of an organisation are becoming increasingly complex. Due to the diversity of tasks required for the position of administrator (administrative support and bookkeeping) it is increasing difficult to compete in the job market and attract appropriately trained staff.

Considering the nature of the work that is undertaken by administrative staff there is a requirement of at least a one full time position within each organisation.

1.3 Staffing issues

A major issue for services is the lack of appropriate staffing levels.

In particular this is a issue in youth shelters where in Queensland currently they have only one staff member on at night and often with up to 6-8 young people.

Over and above the wage parity issues there are a number of challenges surrounding the awards (Crisis Accommodation Supported Housing Award and Social and Community Services Award) currently applicable in the sector. These are:

a) Application of the award -

There is a level of complexity in determining the appropriate Award for the workplace especially if the organisation has more than one function. The use of the CASH and the SACS Award in some services has been due to the higher administrative tasks that some coordinators undertake. There is clearly a need for government to have a better understanding of the employment 'make-up' of services and the Award implications.

b) Variation in the funding of the award by services -

There is an issue about the levels of funding due to the variations between services. These variations may be due to the size of the organisation, its structure and therefore the variations in the tasks that youth workers and coordinators undertake within each service.

c) On-call

This is mainly conducted through a pager system. Most services are covering this cost through a TOIL system.

Rural, Regional and remote issues

The issues in terms of staff recruitment these issues exacerbated by in rural, regional and remote areas. There are not enough skilled people and there are no loadings to attract staff into more remote areas of Queensland.

Further if there are no services in rural, regional or remote areas the other difficulty is how the community can support families and young people in these areas. There must be special considerations made in terms of how rural, regional and remote communities are resourced to meet the needs in their location.

Many models that are developed pertain to an urban setting and these do not work in large parts of Queensland that do not have the capacity to sustain as a highly populated urban area.

2.1 Youth homelessness in Queensland

Statistically it is very hard to enumerate the total numbers of homeless young people in Queensland. The two main sources of data are from the SAAP National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census, each having a different data counting method. The NDCA data is cumulative and is collected by services over the course of a financial year while the ABS Census is a 'point in time' data collection method and conducted once every 5 years.

So what does the data show?

The Chamberlain and Mackenzie Report *Counting the Homeless 2006*[2] found that the numbers of homeless people rose between 2001 and 2006 by about 5000 people – the national homeless figures is about 105,000 people are homeless. However the rate of homelessness at 53 per 10,000 has not changed.

As with the 2001 census the 2006 census found that nearly a quarter (26,782) of the homeless population (104,676) were living in Queensland.

The National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) data3 for 2006 -2007 found that there were 187,900 people or 1 in every 110 Australians who utilised a SAAP funded service system. Of these 118,800 were adult or unaccompanied children and 69,000 were accompanied children. One in 154 people aged 10 (65 per 10,000) and over are in a SAAP funded service.

The NDCA data for 2006 -2007 found that out of the 118,800 people, 19,000 or 16% of SAAP clients are people are in Queensland. This equates to 1 in every 189 Queenslanders being accommodated in a SAAP service.

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[2] Chamberlain C. and MacKenzie, D. Counting the homeless Australia, 2006, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008
[3] AHURI (2008), SAAP NDCA report series 12, Homeless people in SAAP, SAAP National Data Collection Annual Report 2006/07.

- Table 3 NDCA report 2006 2007

State/ territory	Support periods			Clients				
	Support periods (number)	With accomm- odation[a] (number)	Without accomm- odation[a] (number)	Clients (number)	Clients with only one support period (%)	Mean no. of support periods per client (number)	Per 10,000 population aged 10+ years[a]	
							Actual	Age- standardised
NSW	53,400	25,600	27,900	31,900	74.3	1.68	53	54
Vic	75,800	14,400	61,500	37,900	70.0	2.00	84	83
Qld	27,800	15,000	12,800	19,000	77.2	1.46	53	53
WA	16,500	9,800	6,700	11,100	76.7	1.48	62	61
SA	20,000	7,200	12,800	12,200	72.0	1.64	87	91
Tas	6,800	2,900	3,900	4,700	76.3	1.44	110	117
ACT	2,600	1,400	1,100	1,900	79.2	1.37	63	58
NT	4,800	3,000	1,800	3,200	75.2	1.49	182	161
Australia	207,700	79,200	128,500	118,800	72.8	1.75	65	65

Therefore;

o   Queensland has the 2nd highest number and the second highest rate of homeless people with 26,782 people homeless.

o   About 25% of the homeless population is in Queensland

o   When comparing the NDCA data nationally to State figures (see table 3) it can be seen that Queensland has the lowest number of people using SAAP aged 10 years and over per 10,000 in Australia.   This can be interpreted as a lack of the service system to respond to homeless people.

- Table 4 Comparison of usage of SAAP services nationally to State[4]

	Nationally	**State**
Total number of people using a SAAP service	187,900 people or 1 in every 110 Australians	30,000 people
Numbers of people over ten years of age using a SAAP service	118,800 or 1 in every 154 (65 per 10,000)	19,000 or 1 in every 189 Queenslanders (53 per 10,000)

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[4] AHURI (2008), SAAP NDCA report series 12, Homeless people in SAAP, SAAP National Data Collection Annual Report 2006/07

Number of accompanying children (17 years and under)	69,100	11,000
	or	
	1 in every 71 children	(109 per 10,000)
	(141 per 10,000)	

In terms of the national figures most of the 118,800 most were young females between the ages of 15 -19 years see table 5 below.

- Table 5 NDCA data SAAP clients by age and sex

Source: Table 4.1.

Figure 4.1: SAAP clients, by age and sex, Queensland, 2006–07 (per cent of all clients)

Source: Table 4.2.

Figure 4.2: SAAP accompanying children, by age and sex, Queensland, 2006–07 (per cent of all accompanying children)
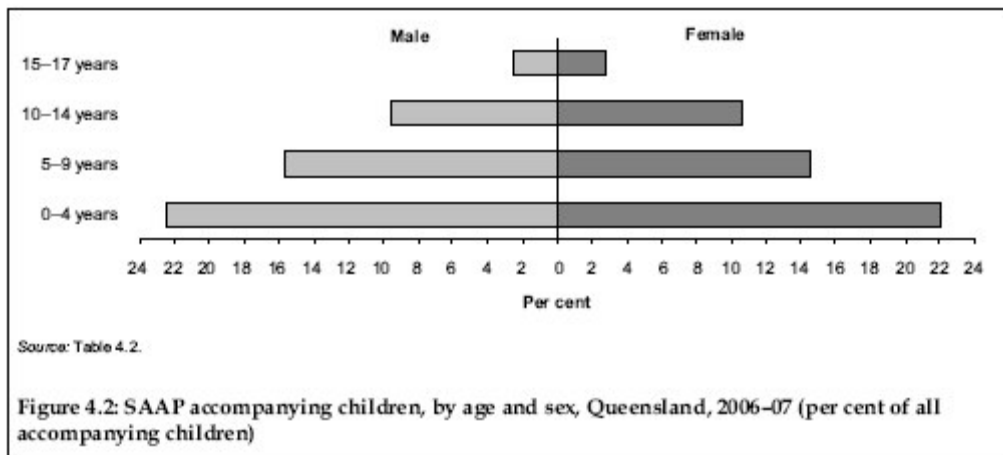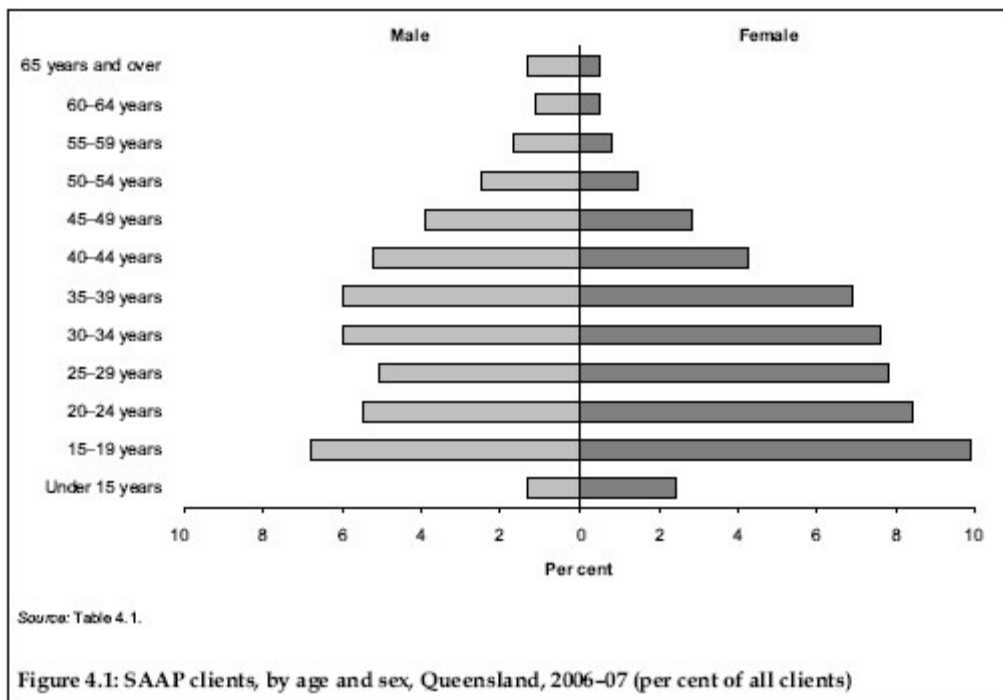
The census data found that indigenous people were over represented in all section of the homeless population. "*Indigenous people made up 3.8% of people staying with other households, 6% of those in boarding houses, 16% people in impoverished dwellings and 20% of people staying in SAAP. Overall 2.4% of people were identified as indigenous at the Census 2006, but 10% of indigenous people were homeless.*"[5]

2.2 Continuum of care

The response to youth homelessness should be based within a continuum of care.

The continuum of care framework encompasses the areas of prevention, early intervention, crisis and post crisis.

Once there is an understanding of the continuum of care then an exploration can commence on both the mapping of services and the development of programmatic solutions.

Service models can be developed in response to the need with a view to providing a holistic service that aims to develop living skills that will enable young people to participate in social and economic opportunities. Communities themselves need to identify the mix of service responses that best and most flexibly meets their needs.

Most service models should have a component of social support (counselling, family support and mediation, social and recreational opportunities) and skill development (education/training/employment).
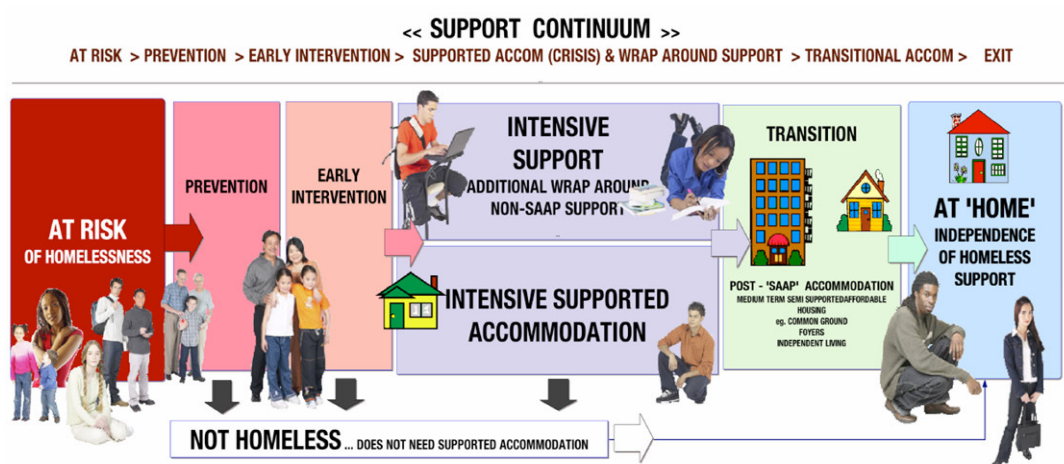
[5] Chamberlain C. and MacKenzie, D. Counting the homeless Australia, 2006, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, page X

There are a range of services currently funded that sit within this continuum and these are detailed in the following sections.

2.3 Early intervention

2.3.1 Reconnect

The Reconnect program uses community-based early intervention services to bring about family reconciliation for young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, and their families. Reconnect helps these young people improve their level of engagement with family, work, education, training and their local community. Reconnect breaks the cycle of homelessness, which can begin at an early age, by providing counselling, mediation and practical support to the whole family. Reconnect providers also 'buy in' services to target individual needs of clients, such as specialised mental health services. Reconnect service providers follow the seven good practice principles: accessibility of services client driven service delivery holistic approaches to service delivery working collaboratively culturally and contextually appropriate service delivery ongoing review and evaluation; and building sustainability. The National Youth Commission[6] reported noted that this program needs to be significantly expanded.

Targets

o   Expand the funding optimally three times to provide full national coverage for at-risk young people and their families.

Cost

Increase funding $42 million per annum nationally to $63 million

2.3.2 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and transgender young people (LGBT)

The issue for many LGBT young people is discrimination in terms of access to housing. In terms of service delivery there is only a handful of services working directly with this target group.

Targets

o   To ensure that youth services are trained in competency around LGBT issues.

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[6] Australia's Homeless Youth, A Report of the National Youth Commission Inquiry into Youth Homelessness, National Youth Commission, 2008

Cost

To fund Open Doors $300,000 per annum to educate services around access issues for young LGBT people in housing.

Expansion of Open Doors in 10 regional areas of Queensland

2.3.3 Culturally and linguistically diverse young people

o   To ensure that youth services are trained in cultural competency.

o   To ensure that youth services have access to Interpreter services.

Cost

To fund QYHC $300,000 per annum to educate services around access issues for young CALD people in housing.

2.3.4 Indigenous

As stated previously we strongly urge all program areas to have indigenous specific strategies.

Further QYHC supports the "Close the Gap" Campaign.

2.3.5 State program - Youth Support Coordinators

The Youth Support Coordinator (YSC) Program aims to establish collaborative relationships between schools, TAFE Institutes and community services to enable better responses to the needs of young people experiencing personal, social or family difficulties. YSCs are employed by community agencies and work directly with individual young people and their families as well as working developmentally both within schools and TAFE Institutes and with the wider community.

YSCs work with young people, and their families (where appropriate), individually and in group work settings and also undertake community development and capacity building in order to meet the following objectives:

o   to develop linkages between schools, TAFEs, community organisations and the broader community to enhance access by young people and their families to support and assistance

- to assist young people and their families to resolve issues contributing to not transiting into and completing the senior phase of learning

- to contribute to the development of supportive school/TAFE environments that are responsive to the needs of young people at risk of not transiting into and completing the senior phase of learning

- to assist young people to develop social and personal skills for independent and successful community living

- to encourage and support community services to respond to the needs of students and their families

There are 113 full time funded positions located throughout the State and resources by three YSC Hub Facilitators. These positions are based in NGO's and the Hub Facilitators are located at the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition.

Targets

- To ensure that the national curriculum includes a module on homelessness.

- To enhance the funding for Youth Support Coordinators to focus on young people who are homeless and at risk of disengaging from education.

- To ensure that young people are not disconnected from mainstream educational opportunities due to their homelessness status.

Cost

To double the funding for the program by $8million to $16million per annum

2.3.6 State Program - School Health Nurses

Queensland Health funds a School-Based Youth Health Nurse program in Queensland state schools.

These nurses work collaboratively within the school community by:

- providing support for the school curriculum, teaching and learning activities

- supporting the planning, implementation and evaluation of health promotion activities

- supporting the development of partnerships with relevant government and non-government agencies, and community members

- supporting the development of a healthy school environment and ethos

- providing advice and information about health education resources, including relevant Queensland health policies and programs, and facilitating health related teacher in-service

- advocating on behalf of young people on issues affecting their health and wellbeing

- providing individual health consultations for students, parents and members of the school community.

Specific duties of the nurses employed within the program are decided upon by negotiation and monitored by a local consultative team comprised of the principal/s or nominee, the nurse and the designated Health Service District line manager.

2.3.7 School based Police Officers

SBPOs' participation in the education of students is an integral part of the current approach to policing, which places a greater emphasis on community involvement and crime prevention. The school-based policing strategy has the potential to enhance students' educational outcomes by helping to create environments that support student welfare and learning.

The SBPO assists in improving the overall health and wellbeing of the school community by supporting students at risk of offending or becoming involved in the juvenile justice system. The School Based Policing Program also encourages school communities to adopt approaches that aid in crime prevention and proactive policing.

The SBPO is appointed to a school or cluster of schools to assist the school community and police in:

- promoting positive relationships between the school community and police

- understanding the law/legal process and procedures, particularly in relation to young people

- attending to police-related matters within the school community, where appropriate.

School-based officers' duties are decided upon by negotiation and monitored by a local consultative team, comprised of the principal/s, the officer and the officer's police supervisor.

2.3.8 Family support worker

Young women are over represented in the homelessness figures and many are young people who are pregnant or parenting. To assist these young people and their children it is essential to have support worker in services who have a specific focus on pregnancy and parenting issues.

Cost

In terms of the funding of a family support worker the funding for each service for a paid worker would be.

	Per service	*Program*
Minimum	$80,542.00	$5.9 million
Maximum	$89,871.00	$ 6.5 million

2.3.9. Community Placement Model

QYHC has attempted to assist communities and services to establish a formal short-term accommodation and support option for young people who are in the early stages of family breakdown. This accommodation and support, the Community Placement Model (CPM) enables young people, with consent of their families, to continuing their schooling and, where possible and appropriate, working towards family reconciliation.

The concept of the Community Placement Model (CPM) as an early intervention model came about from a number of research projects and an ongoing understanding of the process that leads young people to become homeless and disengage from mainstream services.

Research[7] has shown that young people will "couchsurf" for a period of time before making a final break from home. Anecdotally QYHC is aware that there are a number of communities who currently assist young people and their families through the provision of

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[7] Chamberlain, C. and Mackenzie, D. (1998) *Youth Homelessness: Early Intervention and Prevention,* Sydney, Australian Centre for Equity through Education
Uhr.R (2003), *Couchsurfing in the Burbs,* Brisbane, Community Living Program

family counselling and support whilst at the same time accommodating young people, through an informal placement process, into local community/family homes.

The target group as a result of the above understandings therefore became young people between the ages of 12- 18 years who were still in school and had links to home.

It was a natural process for QYHC to consider how we could support communities and young people into formalising this process. Further QYHC was concerned about keeping the process about supporting young people and their families in the most non intrusive manner possible and so trying to keep young people from transitioning into crisis orientated services and out of mainstream services in particular education or training. We have been working in Warwick for a number of years attempting to establish this program in their community after extensive research and broad community support including funding commitments.

Costs

To support the development of Community Placement Models initially in Warwick and then in 10 regions throughout Queensland.

Minimum (Warwick pilot)	$250,000	$250,000
Maximum (10 regions)	$250,000	$2.5 million

2.4 Intensive support and supported accommodation

2.4.1 Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

SAAP is the jointly funded Commonwealth, State and Territory program that is Australia's primary response to the needs of the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness. The aim of SAAP is to "…provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services, in order to help people who are homeless to achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence" (*Supported Accommodation Assistance Act (1994)* (Cth) s.5.2). Youth SAAP funded services comprise a range of types from crisis accommodation to long-term youth housing.

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) has been implemented through 5 year agreements with all the State and Territory Governments since 1985. The program has continued to grow and develop via a process of National Evaluations.

There are currently 73 youth funded SAAP service models[8] (some of these may be auspiced by the same organisation) in Queensland. Most of these services are based on the eastern seaboard of Queensland. It must be noted that some generalist services located throughout Queensland may provide a level of service delivery to young people and their families. In other regions different program areas or the community itself may provide support to young people experiencing difficulty at home and/or who are homeless.

The models of service delivery that follow have been developed as a draft only on a continuum understanding based on need. There is no 'one size that fits all' model of service delivery and the QYHC supports both large and small organisations. 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 also be noted that SAAP services and their operational methods may be vastly different to other States/Territories, however it is considered that the current models of service delivery best meet the needs of young people in a continuum of care.

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

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.

There are a range of reasons as to how and why different organisations operate a different model/s of service. These reasons can be related but not limited to:

o   Existing infrastructure in the community eg there may be a need for less crisis housing in an area where there are lots of other social housing options as opposed to a region where there are limited or no social housing options

o   Geographical variation

o   The need for young people to have a choice in the type of service they wish to access as well as entering a service that most meets their needs requires a diversity of models/ accommodation options.

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[8] SAAP funded data shows that there are 73 however one service has more than one service model not reflected in the data.

It must also be acknowledged that young people do not utilise SAAP services in a linear manner and for this reasons there needs to be multiple entry points for young people.

In responding to youth homelessness at the crisis end of the continuum of care spectrum there are four main models of youth services in Queensland. These are the crisis youth shelter (crisis fully supported), the share house with 24 hour youth work workers rostered on (medium term fully supported), 'units of housing' either flats or houses located in the community where youth workers visit and provide support (externally supported models) and outreach models where youth workers meet young people outside of the service.

There are 230 services funded from the SAAP to assist homeless Queenslanders. Of these there are 73 models of service funded to assist homeless young people accounting for 29.7% of the recurrent funding. All four models are provided within an understanding of the continuum of care required by young people and with the goal of transitioning young people to live independently in the community. Some of these models are stand alone operations in the community and others may be part of larger organisations providing multiple responses to community need.

The tables over describe the three of the four models of service delivery based on a good practice benchmark developed in consultation with youth SAAP funded services in 2005.

Youth SAAP funded services acknowledge that young people enter into their service from a variety of situations and with varying living skills. Further, services are concerned about the dependency that can be developed by young people who live in SAAP.

The aim of the service system is to allow multiple points of entry and to ensure that young people have access to social and recreational opportunities as well as assisting in family reconciliation where this is possible and appropriate in order for them to have healthy broader community relationships.

- Table 6 Crisis fully supported accommodation – good practice benchmark

Description	
Service Model	24-hour on site support, 24-hour referral/intake, and basic life skills needs
Target Group and profiles	Homeless and at risk young people 15- 24 years
Staffing model	1 full-time Coordinator – ,no caseload, focus on organisational management/compliance, administration, finances, resource development, broad policy development, supervision of caseload 7 full-time Youth Workers – (to allow for 2 people per shift, 3 8 hour rotating shifts and 2 plus sleepover, + relief hours). 1 full–time Administrator
Broad service outcome	Crisis accommodation and support appropriate to client need through the provision of a case management approach to address immediate housing and support needs.
Objectives	To provide support services to address: • Immediate needs of safety, shelter, food, health and hygiene etc.; • Crisis intervention and support; • 24 hour referral/intake; • Case management approach to needs identification and short term goal setting; • Advocacy; • Education, training, income issues; • Information and referral for appropriate transition to more stable accommodation.
Capacity benchmark	7/8 young people on-site in a share accommodation model Over 16 years, broad support needs - staff to client ratio 2:8 Include under 16's, JJ, high support needs – staff to client ratio 2:7

- Table 7 Medium/long term fully supported accommodation – good practice benchmark

Description	
Service Model	24 hour on-site support, assessment process prior to intake and living skills program
Target Group and profiles	Homeless and at-risk young people aged 15-18 years. Young people with limited or no family support who have complex or high support and supervision needs.
Staffing Structure	1.0 full-time coordinator ,no caseload, focus on organisational management/compliance, administration, finances, resource development, broad policy development, supervision of caseload 7.0 full-time youth workers, (to allow for 2 people per shift, 3 8 hour rotating shifts and 2 plus sleepover, + relief hours). 1.0 full time Administrator 1.0 full-time outreach/follow up support worker
Broad service outcome	Transitional accommodation to support to enable young people to move towards independent living.
Objectives	To provide living skills program and case management, information, referral and advocacy, educational and therapeutic recreational programs, day program for young people who are not engaged in vocational or educational training, follow up support. 1. To enable young people to develop sound practical living skills and resources for independent living; 2. Assist young people to identify goals and work towards them; 3. Address the diverse needs of young people; 4. Assist young people to learn skills in conflict resolution and decision making thus encouraging them to make informed decisions about their lives and to take responsibility for same; 5. Assist young people in their personal and social development; 6. Assist young people to re-establish family links wherever possible and to foster a sense of community belonging.
Capacity	7/8 young people on-site in a share accommodation model and an average of 15 external follow up support clients Ratio of 2 staff to 7/8 young people at all times (worker health and safety)

- Table 8 Externally supported accommodation and support – good practice benchmark

Description	
Service Model	Long term externally supported (units or share), living skills program, referral, advocacy and personal support, follow up support.
Target Group	Homeless and at-risk young people aged 16-25 years.
Staffing Structure	1 full-time coordinator, no caseload, focus on Organisational management/compliance, administration, finances, resource development, broad policy development, supervision of caseload 2 full-time youth workers, 1.0 Administrator 1 full-time outreach/follow up support worker (inc housing information and support)
Goals	Transitional accommodation, assistance and support to enable young people to move towards independent living.
Objectives	1. Enable young people to develop sound practical living skills and resources for independent living; 2. Provide information, advocacy and referrals to other services to develop responses to individual client needs; 3. Assist young people to identify goals and work towards them; 4. Assist young people to learn skills in conflict resolution and decision making thus encouraging them to make informed decisions about their lives and to take responsibility for same; 5. Assist young people in their personal and social development; 6. Assistance and follow up in securing and maintaining accommodation when young people exit the program.
Capacity	8 young people in a externally supported model (flats or share) and an average of 15 external follow up support clients Ratio of 2 staff to 8 young people at all times

International comparisons

In 2004 AHURI undertook an overview of international and national approaches to homelessness and a literature review to "identify, assess and compare the range of current definitions, legislation, planning and policies that address homeless and inadequate housing in Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Union Countries" [9].

The report states that "Australia is arguably at the forefront of advances in the definition, enumeration and response to homelessness". The report also states that "*It is in this field of providing strategic and cohesive approaches to homelessness that Australia can become a leader in 'good practice' internationally*".[10]

National Evaluation of SAAP IV

The National Evaluation Report of SAAP IV (May 2004) Executive Summary found that funding was required to *"… increase the capacity of the sector to meet the current levels of demand overall*" and to *"…increase the capacity of the service sector to more effectively address the need for a greater proportion of client to achieve independent living*" (page 9).

The report found that the SAAP funded service system is working to capacity across the continuum of care spectrum of early intervention, crisis and post crisis. The report however raises questions as to how much can be achieved by SAAP on its own. The Evaluation Executive Summary comments on the need for a more whole of government approach and states that "Until a more systematic whole of government approach is adopted, major challenges will remain in providing joined-up services needed to reduce homelessness occurring and providing appropriate pathways out of homelessness" (page 6).

Finally the Report states that "*The cost of the program is high, (although perhaps lower than other comparable public assistance programs), but not nearly as high as the consequences of not addressing these evident needs*" (page 11).

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[9] 'Recent International and National Approaches to Homelessness – Final Report to the National SAAP Coordination and Development Committee' was released in March 2004, page 1
[10] 'Recent International and National Approaches to Homelessness – Final Report to the National SAAP Coordination and Development Committee' was released in March 2004, page 2

Key program issues and funding implications

Mean funding

The mean funding per youth SAAP funded service regardless of the model during the 2006 -2007 financial year was $257,300[11].   This is clearly lower than the good practice benchmarks developed by the field in 2005.   There is also a huge disparity between Residential Services funding in the child protection system and SAAP funding and we have develop our costing to ensure that funding is comparable.

When any service system is under stress, the ability to respond to young people becomes limited to a discreet model of service delivery as the system does not have the ability to respond holistically, flexibly or innovatively. Therefore capacity is limited.

The critical area in determining financial viability is to determine all the components in order to be able to conduct a comprehensive costing.   Different models will have certain line items that other models would not require.   However, it is important to be able to identify all cost areas.

There is nothing worse than making young people feel that they are undeserving when they are in supported accommodation eg young people should have access to good quality food and it is acknowledged that this is sometimes hard to do with a full house and limited resources.

An organisation cannot operate without an infrastructure and this includes the need for capital items. All budgets should also include a capital line item.

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[11] AHURI (2008), SAAP NDCA report series 12, Homeless people in SAAP, SAAP National Data Collection Annual Report 2006/07 Queensland Supplementary Tables, pg 3.

Financial viability
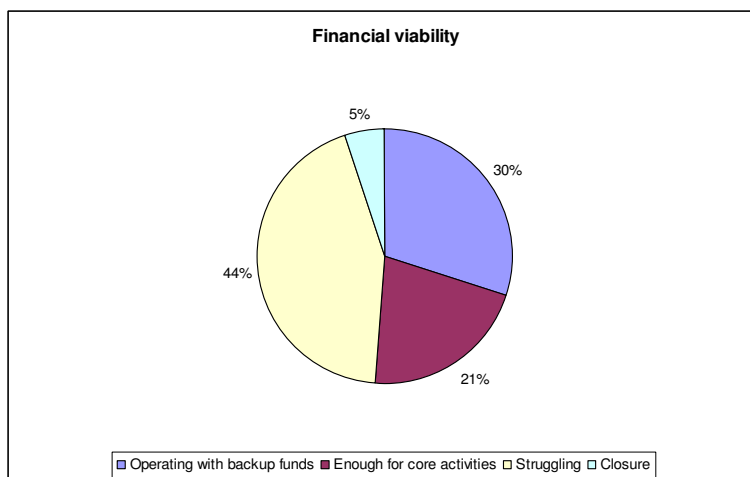
In the QYHC report in 2005 most services (74%) indicated that they were struggling to fund core activities or that they were utilising other forms of income to support their current level of activities.

A large number of these services verbally indicated that they had in previous years a financial buffer to ensure their service viability. In recent years, particularly due to the increase in insurance and rising wage costs, they no longer have the ability to create this financial buffer.

It is of concern that 5% of respondents were already indicating that they were facing service closure.

Insurance

The cost of insurance is a major issue for all services.

Crisis services (regardless of size or auspice) indicated that insurance was about 5% of their total funding grant.

Bed capacity

In the 2005 report all the services indicated that they were working to capacity however this did not mean a full utilisation of the beds/units of houses available. Services when dealing with their intake need to take into consideration a number of factors:

- Household type and household numbers - because there is generally only one staff on overnight there needs to be consideration around the household mix. This is a duty of care issue.

- Staff skill level - the household mix is considered in the light of the level of staff training, skills and expertise on any given night – again a duty of care issue.

The lack of beds often means that young people do not make choices about where they can be accommodated. Youth services advocate the need for young people to be able to make informed choices about their accommodation.

Young people may not be accommodated in the most appropriate model of service based on their needs, in many cases young people with high and complex needs may not be able to be accommodated on any given night. Services strongly support the need for young people to have non discriminatory access to services and for a range of housing models that meet a range of needs.

Services also recognise the need to be able to respond flexibly to young people and to be able to provide follow-up support once they exit the service. In many cases this is limited due to the resourcing of the service and the lack of recognition of the importance of follow up support.

SAAP is not resourced adequately to be able to implement a 'first through the door policy'.

The issue of who will be housed is therefore not as easy as it first sounds. There needs to be an acknowledgment that there are a range of needs that young people will present to a service. In many cases it is impossible to tell (either through the physical appearance of a young person and an initial interview) what sort of issues young people are dealing with and how this may affect their behaviour and their behaviour with others. Further young people's needs may fluctuate and it is impossible to set arbitrary timeframes on the amount of time they may require from the service. Placing a 'type' or 'characteristic' on young people stigmatises them and in the process devalues them as individuals.

Service Provision

In the 2005 report services indicated that if there is no additional funding (other than indexation) during the course of the next agreement, SAAP services indicated the following impacts:

Client group

o 51% indicated that they would reduce client numbers or target clients with less complex needs

o 28% indicated that they would not take on any new clients or increase client numbers

Hours open

o 46% indicated that there would be no significant change to their hours of service

Staff numbers and hours

o 46.5% indicated that there would be a reduction in the staffing hours

Threat of Closure

o If there is no change in funding 5% of services are facing service closure

Should there be a 5% cut to funding services indicated the following impacts;

Client group

o 65% indicated that they would reduce client numbers or target clients with less complex needs

o 21% indicated that they would not take on any new clients or increase client numbers
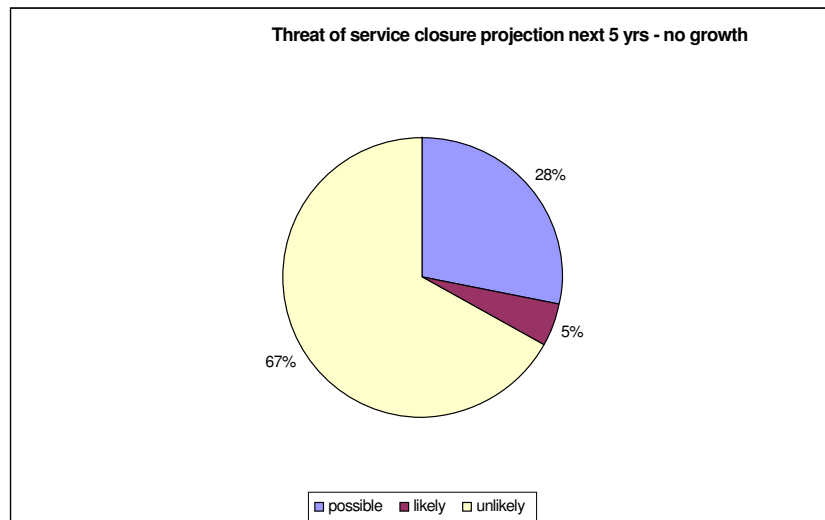
Hours open

o 41.8% indicated that they would reduce the hours their service was open and staffed

> *Staff numbers and hours*
>
> o   60.5% indicated that there would be a reduction in the staffing hours
>
> *Threat of closure*
>
> o   If there was to be a funding cut this would mean that further 21% of service would need to either close their service or undertake some form of major restructure

Innovation

In the 2005 report seventy nine per cent (79%) of services indicated that they were providing some form of innovation over and above their core funding.

Sixty-three per cent (63%) of services provided some form of transitional housing (eg Youth Headlease Transfer, Same Housing Different Landlord) in the community for young people.   Other innovations that youth SAAP services provide included:

o   Community education – eg school based lectures and information seminars

o   Community development – eg programs for young people in the community, alternate learning opportunities, family/individual counselling, parenting support, building partnerships (affordable housing), integrated case management responses, participation in pilot programs such as family homeless pilot, arts and crafts (indigenous), networking, crime prevention strategies ,recreational programs, Schoolies week, one service indicated that they provided a drop-in centre for young people

o   Resourcing – eg supporting professional development, youth info cards, emergency relief, one service indicated that they provided a health clinic on site

All the services who were conducting some form of innovation in the community indicated that these would be the first activities that would be discontinued.

Staff/client ratios

There has been much discussion in the youth housing sector about the level of support young people require in supported accommodation. Essentially this debate should be about quality service delivery and so the focus should be on the staff/client ratios.

The level of support that is required by young people needs to be flexible and the focus should be on the service system being able to assess and respond flexibly to changing need. Young people enter into youth SAAP funded services with a range of issues such

as needing support to live independently, advocacy and referral, accommodation, child protection, drug and alcohol and mental health (to name a few).

The focus then can be on the 'throughputs' of a service ie if there is a high volume of young people being provided support by a service it can be assumed that many of these young people may only need low levels of support. If there were a low volume of young people accessing a service this would indicate that there are young people with high levels of support. This will also allow for greater accountability of the service to the community. Needless to say there needs to be a greater emphasis on case management and benchmarks utilising this system of support.

The key policy driver for homelessness support services such as SAAP is the support needs of the young people have who accessed the program.

Targets

o   To ensure that young people who are homeless have access to SAAP.

o   To ensure a diversity of models to meet needs across continuum.

o   To ensure follow up support services for young people exiting SAAP

o   To ensure protocols and MoU between homeless and housing departments for young people entering into social housing.

o   To ensure quality service delivery for young people through adequate funding within standards.

o   To allocate an early intervention worker.

o   To have specific accommodation for target groups.

o   To have a range of designs for youth shelter that ensures that they integrated in their local community.

o   To ensure that youth shelters have two workers on at all times.

o   To build upon the SAAP regional networking process to assist in planning processes.

Cost

As the targets demonstrate there are a range of improvements that can be made to SAAP in order to provide quality outcomes for young people.

In terms of the youth crisis shelter models these need an injection of funds to ensure two people on the roster at all times and for a wider range of service activities to be undertaken. The funding of these services should be comparable to the Residential Care services in the Child protection area.   This would mean that there needs to be a mean funding increase per crisis accommodation service of:

	Per service	*Program*
Minimum		
($465,00)	*$8,7454.87*	*2,536,191.20*
Maximum		
($1.7million)	*$1,359,274.90*	*39,478,972*

In terms of youth externally supported accommodation service the funding of a follow-up support worker would provide young people with a greater capacity to sustain their tenancies upon transitioning to more independent accommodation.

	Per service	*Program*
Minimum	*$80,542.00*	*$5.9 million*
Maximum	*$89,871.00*	*$ 6.5 million*

2.4.2 Innovative Youth Health Services for Homeless Young People (IYHSHP)

The Innovative Health Services for Homeless Youth (IHSHY) Program was introduced as a pilot program in 1991, in response to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's (1989) 'Our Homeless Children' (Burdekin) Report which found that homeless young people exhibit chronic health problems but are reluctant to seek treatment through mainstream services which they regard as judgemental and unsympathetic to their needs and life situations. The IYHSHY Program is jointly funded between the Australian Government and the State and Territory Governments.

This program has been an important part of the suite of responses for young people. The program objective is still as relevant today as it was when the program was conceived.

> *The aim of the program is to improve the health outcomes of homeless and otherwise at-risk youth aged 12-24 years and their dependents through the provision of specialised health services and improved access to mainstream health services.*

The IHSHY program continues to play an important role in facilitating access to health services by marginalised young people and ensuring that primary health care is provided to young people. The nature of this program can also ensure that young people minimise the level of presentations to health facilities through a preventative health approach.

Currently in Queensland there are only 6 services funded, they are Young Parents Program (Brisbane), Brisbane Youth Service (Brisbane), Young Women's Place (Toowoomba), Indigenous Youth Health Service (Brisbane), Injilinji Youth Health Service (Mt Isa) and Youthlink (Cairns).

The program has struggled in recent years due to the neglect within the policy area of Queensland Health and this year has been moved into the Department of Communities. Some of the community concerns about this program transition are whether there will be a lack of understanding around the primary health care needs of homelessness young people.

A number of issues have also been unresolved in the program over the last number of years in particular for young women's services in terms of having access to a midwife for the young women.

With regard to organisation's that have clinical services the payment for medical staff (ie doctors and nurses) inadequate.

Targets

o That the IYHSHYP meets the health needs of homeless and at risk homeless young people.

o That IYHSHYP are based in youth friendly organisations/youth services to ensure greater access to healthcare provision.

- That all homeless young people have equitable access to health services and information, including specialist health.

- That health services provide a holistic/primary health care provision.

- That young people who homeless or at risk of homelessness have access to a health advocate to facilitate to mainstream or specialist health services.

- To ensure that Queensland Department Health has a youth health policy that incorporates the IYHSHYP as it is a primary health care service.

- To provide a NGO based resourcing and support position (similar to the YSC Hub) for IYHSHYP.

- To ensure that all young women have access to ante natal and post natal health care services, including responses to post natal depression and other relevant mental health services.

- To ensure that young women have access to gynaecological services.

- To ensure that young people have access to sexual health screening and contraceptive services ie cervical cancer immunisation, Chlamydia

- To ensure that young people have equitable access to;

- Oral health

- Ophthalmology

- Podiatry

- Physiotherapy

- To provide specialist youth mental health services.

- To provide specialist detoxification and rehabilitation services ie ADAWS

Costs

The coverage of the IYHSHYP is too limited in terms and the program need to be doubled to enable better access.

This paper has mentioned the issues of wage parity with regard to social workers/youth workers in the field. In the case of the IYSHYP the wages of doctors and nurses remuneration must also be considered. In particular the wages for nurses needs to be linked to the nurse's award and the rate for doctors comparable to those being provided in the public health system.

Youth health and community based organisations must also be able to have secure the services of midwives,

The movement of the program from the Department of Health to the Department of Communities has clearly identified the need for the support of the development and support of the program. A similar position to the YSC Hub Facilitator would provide a process for programmatic improvement.

Expansion	*$1million*
Medical staff	*$350,000*
Hub	*$150,000*
Total	*$1.5 million*

Increase program funding: $1million to $2 .5 million per annum

2.4.3 Job Placement, Employment and Training (JPET)

The Job Placement, Employment and Training (JPET) programme assists disadvantaged young people aged 15- 21 years, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, to overcome personal and social barriers to get back on track. Some of these barriers may include drug and alcohol addiction, sexual abuse, violence issues, behavioural problems and low education attainment. JPET helps young people to stabilise their personal circumstances and then address difficult issues in the young persons' lives so they can build their skills and abilities to re-engage with education, study or vocational training or make the transition to employment assistance or employment and participate socially in their community.

Targets

To retarget JPET to its original objectives.

Costs

Nil

2.4.4 State program Juvenile Justice – YBASS

Using prevention and early intervention approaches, this program aims to reduce the number of young people in detention on remand to find appropriate placements for young people on bail. The service organises its clients (particularly indigenous young people) to stay with immediate or extended families or in youth accommodation services, rather than in detention on remand. A recent review found that 34% of client completing the program were sentenced to community based accommodation rather than detention. Evidence shows the service also reduces the likelihood of client offending during their bail period.[12]

Targets

o   To ensure appropriate accommodation for indigenous young people serving justice orders eg bail, community service order.

o   To ensure that young people have adequate support, including Transition from Care Allowance and Detention Care Family Workers[13], on leaving detention.

o   To continue to support homeless people through the justice processes such as Homeless Court Connect and Homeless Persons Court Diversionary program.

o   National reform laws around public space and begging to decriminalise homelessness.

Costs

Yet to be determined

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[12] Australian Government 2008 , Which Way Home – A New Approach to Homelessness ,pg 15
[13] see Youth Advocacy Centre submission

3.1 External structural issues

All services have strong linkages to other service systems.   In turn, the limitations of other service systems directly impact on programs in other funding areas. For example the issues in child protection directly impact on SAAP due to the transitional nature of the program and the complexity of need of some of the people it assists.

To critically examine the efficiency and effectiveness of programs requires an examination of the issues at both the service delivery level and the structural/policy level. This was a point during the last SAAP evaluation which stated (Queensland SAAP III Evaluation (p.xii));

> *"Effective client outcomes for SAAP will be determined as much by circumstance external to the program as by the quality and effectiveness of service delivery within SAAP. These external factors include not only macro-economic opportunities and housing affordability, but also access to a range of other community service programs such as family support, mediation services, counselling and others."*

In terms of SAAP funded services QYHC also want it acknowledged that the youth SAAP funded services have been seriously affected in their capacity to work to their full potential due external pressures. This has been an ongoing issue with Rodney Fopp in 1997 writing;

> *"… Supported accommodation services are in danger of becoming de facto housing options for many young people who do not need support, simply because there are few housing alternatives."*

Targets

o   A reduction of the barriers that create youth homelessness.

o   To ensure that all federally funded services provide non-discriminatory access for young homelessness people regardless of their age, sexual preferences, cultural background, or religion.

3.2.2 Lack of child protection responses

One of the growing issues is the increasing numbers of young people under 18 accessing SAAP funded services, more particularly young people between the ages of 12 to 16 years of age.

By accommodating young people under 16 in a formal sense SAAP is moving into the area that is the responsibility of the State, and into other models of casework practice. In the process of doing so young people 18- 25 years no longer have the ability to enter into the SAAP through the youth housing system.

If young people aged 18 – 25 are not able to access youth SAAP funded services they need to be housed somewhere else in the broader housing sector. Young people, who may not have the living skills, are moving into community housing and these housing placements are breaking down. Housing providers are identifying that young people in their housing require support to maintain their housing. The key issue is that young people have limited housing options and are accessing housing that does not meet their needs - no amount of external support will be adequate.

While there has always been the need to accommodate young people under the age of 16 there seem to be some clear trends that indicate the youth services funded from SAAP may soon be the only accommodation response for these young people. There are therefore implications for the whole service system from the alternate care system through to the housing sectors and for the young people that utilize all these services.

It may be worth noting the historical issues relating to young people 'in care' who are now being accommodated by youth housing services funded through SAAP:

o   Often they were referred to SAAP funded services as an end on the line measure because there was no option left for a young person.

o   SAAP funded service providers often expressed concern about young people 'in care' entering SAAP services for a range of reasons often related to their ongoing safety and well being, particularly in the case of short-term shelter placements.

o   Young people may have ended up in youth funded SAAP services by default because the statutory child protection system was unable to meet their needs.

It is critical that these historical factors remain at the forefront of our thinking about supported accommodation services funded from SAAP and child protection responses, because they clearly indicate that youth funded SAAP services are in a position of:

- Formalizing service delivery that occurred due to a drift of young people into these services because the child protection system could not respond to young people's needs. This does not equate to providing innovative planned responses to the needs of young people;

- Participating in cost and responsibility shifting that will hide the reality of chronic under resourcing in this area.

Of importance is the cost and responsibility shifting from the Department of Child Safety onto a range of other service systems. The NDCA data identifies a steady increase of young people under the age of 15 entering into the SAAP service system.

The reason as to why this may be occurring could be put down to:

- The lack of focus by Department of Child Safety on adolescents (12-18) and the legislative changes with regard to the departments role re: young people in care;

- Decreasing numbers of foster carers willing to accommodate adolescents due to a lack of adequate support when housing these young people;

- Lack of support for alternate care models;

- That the service models in SAAP are more suitable for some young people rather than residential care facilities or foster care models.

Targets

The Create Foundation responded to the Federal Government Green paper and within their submission set a number of targets that we would endorse. These are;

- to provide models of care up to age 18 for all young people in care that meet their needs and adequately support them and help prepare them for independence;

- to provide affordable, subsidised transition to independence/semi-supported accommodation for those discharged from care, available up to they reach the age of 25; and

- to provide young people who have left care priority access to long term public and/or community housing.

3.2.3 Housing

The private rental market and the PPP have seen very few deliverable for young people in recent years.   The issue in relation to young people with both these concepts is that there needs to be a level of financial return.   Young people particularly those on low incomes generally do not fit into the financial modelling of many of the new PPP, and the private rental market is too unaffordable.   An investment by the Federal government into public housing will not detrimentally

impact on the housing market. It is a supply side solution that can assist the young people on low incomes that will not concern lending institutions or the housing developers.

The National Rental Housing Advocacy Day outlined key **targets**;

1. A Growth Target should be established involving an increase in the stock of public and non-profit housing by 30,000 additional dwellings by 2012.

2. An Affordable Housing Growth Fund should be established with funding of $7.5 billion over 4 years strictly ear-marked for expanding the stock of public and non-profit housing, contributed on a proportional matching basis by the Commonwealth and the States/Territories.

3. An Operating Subsidy Program should be established, with funding of $3.5 billion over four years provided by the Commonwealth.

4. These funding arrangements will require approximately $5 billion above funding currently provided by the Commonwealth and State/Territory Governments through the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA).

5. New stock should meet standards relating to dwelling quality, disability accessibility and energy efficiency.

6. Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) should be reviewed to ensure that it best meets the needs of all low income renters. As a first step, the maximum rate of CRA should be increased by 30% for low income households currently receiving the highest rate of CRA at a cost of $500 million per annum.

3.2.4 Private rental market reforms

The majority of young people in Australia, if they are not living in the family home, are living in the private rental market. Young people should not pay more than 30% of income on rent, if they are then the rent assistance is calculated to income.

The cost of rental has increasing at a greater rate than income and many young people are finding the rental market unaffordable. Further their incomes do not make them competitive with other renters, so not only is there discrimination of the basis of age and lack of references but their incomes immediately creates a barrier in their application.

Targets:

o   To ensure national Boarders and Lodgers tenancy legislation includes procedural fairness and access to a Tribunal.

o   To ensure minimum national standards (based on the current best practice) in Residential Tenancies Law.

o   To ensure that the Residential Tenancies Authority conducts community education forums on homelessness targeting lessors and agents.

3.2.5 Social security and employment participation

The majority of young people in Australia, if they are not living in the family home, are living in the private rental market.   Young people should not pay more than 30% of income on rent, if they are then the rent assistance is calculated to income.

The cost of rental has increasing at a greater rate than income and many young people are finding the rental market unaffordable. Further their incomes do not make them competitive with other renters, so not only is there discrimination of the basis of age and lack of references but their incomes immediately creates a barrier in their application.

Targets:

o   To ensure young people have an adequate after housing income.

o   Rent assistance scaled to income allowing for special consideration for young people

o   To ensure that young people do not become homeless due to payment penalties imposed in the Social Security system.

3.2.6 Employment

Large companies who have apprenticeships and traineeships need to be encouraged to provide housing for their staff, this is particularly relevant to regional centres where public housing is generally not provided and there is a small rental market.   This is especially important in areas where the company will make a significant impact on the supply of private housing. However the provision of stable housing will also ensure that young people have the opportunity to complete their training without

having to worry about whether or not they have roof over their heads.   In essence the outlay of the purchase of housing for staff should not be cost impost on businesses as it is an asset on their balance sheet.

Target:

o   To support accommodation options for apprentices and young people on traineeships.

3.2.7 Health

There are a range of health issues in terms of homeless young people especially in the area of mental health and drug and alcohol issues.

The Department of Health has attempted to more appropriately expand its service delivery functions to homeless people through their recent initiative "Queensland Health Homeless Initiative".   The initiative been evaluated by the University of Queensland, this evaluation has identified that the initiative through assertive outreach and the transitional housing, has provided improved outcomes for homeless people.

Target:

To implement the recommendations of the HHOT Evaluation.

NATIONAL HOMELESSNESS LEGISLATION

Fundamentally homelessness is a human rights issue. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission has drafted a paper titled "Homelessness is a Human Rights Issue". This paper notes that homelessness is not just about houselessness but is also about the breakdown of critical relationships that people have.

> …homelessness is not just about housing. Fundamentally, homelessness is about lack of connectedness with family, friends and the community and lack of control over one's environment.
>
> A person who is homeless may face violations of the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to education, the right to liberty and security of the person, the right to privacy, the right to social security, the right to freedom from discrimination, the right to vote, and many more.
>
> These human rights are protected by a number of international human rights treaties, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the Convention on the Rghts of the Child (CRC). As a party to all these treaties, Australia is under legal and moral obligations to promote, protect and realise the human rights of all people.[14]

The SAA Act 1994 in its application has provided a de facto national Homelessness Act.

The SAA Act 1994 has enshrined in legislation the need to:

> …redress social inequalities and to achieve a reduction in poverty and the amelioration of the consequences of poverty for individuals.
>
> Homeless people form one of the most powerless and marginalised groups in society. Responses to their needs should aim to empower them and to maximise their independence. These responses should be provided in a way that respects their dignity as individuals, enhances their self-esteem, is sensitive to their social and economic circumstances, and respects their cultural backgrounds and their beliefs.[15]

The safeguard that the SAA Act 1994 provides is on a number of levels;

1. acknowledges homelessness is a human rights issue

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[14] HREOC, 2008, Homelessness is a Human Rights Issue
[15] SAAP Act 1994 Preamble

> *Australia has acted to protect the rights of all of its citizens, including people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, by recognising international standards for the protection of universal human rights and fundamental freedoms through:*
>
> *(a)   the ratification of the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights; and*
>
> *(b)   the ratification of the Conventions on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and on the Rights of the Child; and*
>
> *(c)   the acceptance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women; and*
>
> *(d)   the enactment of legislation such as the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986.*

2.   enforces commonwealth and state intervention;

> *The Parliament intends that the Commonwealth Government should work co-operatively with State and Territory governments to ensure that people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are given opportunities to redress their circumstances and that their universal human rights are not prejudiced by the manner in which services are provided to them.*

3.   ensures engagement with the community to address the issues; and

> *It is essential then that the community has the opportunity to be involved in the development of policies relating to, or impacting on, people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Accordingly, the Parliament intends that, under the law that follows, the Minister should establish an advisory committee drawn from members of the community with:*
>
> *(a)   relevant expertise in, or experience of, homelessness; or*
>
> *(b)   an understanding of the principal issues affecting homeless people; or*
>
> *(c)   other relevant expertise or experience.*

4.   has within it a funding stream.

> *Legislation relating to homeless people should include a focus on the provision of appropriate support to meet the individual needs of the clients of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program ("SAAP") and on their right to an equitable share of the community's resources.*

The current homelessness debate does not acknowledge the role the SAA Act has undertaken since its assent in 1994.

It is essential therefore that should the SAA Act 1994 be repealed that it is replaced by a National Homelessness Act.

The Homelessness Act would have a broader mandate than the SAA Act and as a result could articulate a broader homelessness strategy.

The Homelessness Act therefore could contain:

o   Charter of Rights such as those developed by PILCH;

o   Could link the Anti-Discrimination with the Homelessness Act, as this would provide "teeth" to the Homelessness Act.

o   Definitions of homelessness can also be included, as well as the continuum of care framework.

o   A Homelessness Act would have a broader mandate through a Commonwealth Homelessness Strategy which as a result could capture other programs under it such as JPET, IYHSHY etc

o   It is suggested that SAAP can be included within the Homelessness Act and therefore protect a minimum standard and to allow for incremental change.

The Homelessness Act would not sit in isolation from other legislation and the Commonwealth/State Homelessness Stratey needs to strongly align to other Federal government strategies.   In particular in order to address the preventive measures that stop young people becoming homeless the social inclusion agenda needs to strongly focus on the issues of poverty as well as other issues related to social inclusion. Coordination across these strategies to ensure that they would compliment each other would create better social and economic outcomes. The figure below outlines these relationships.
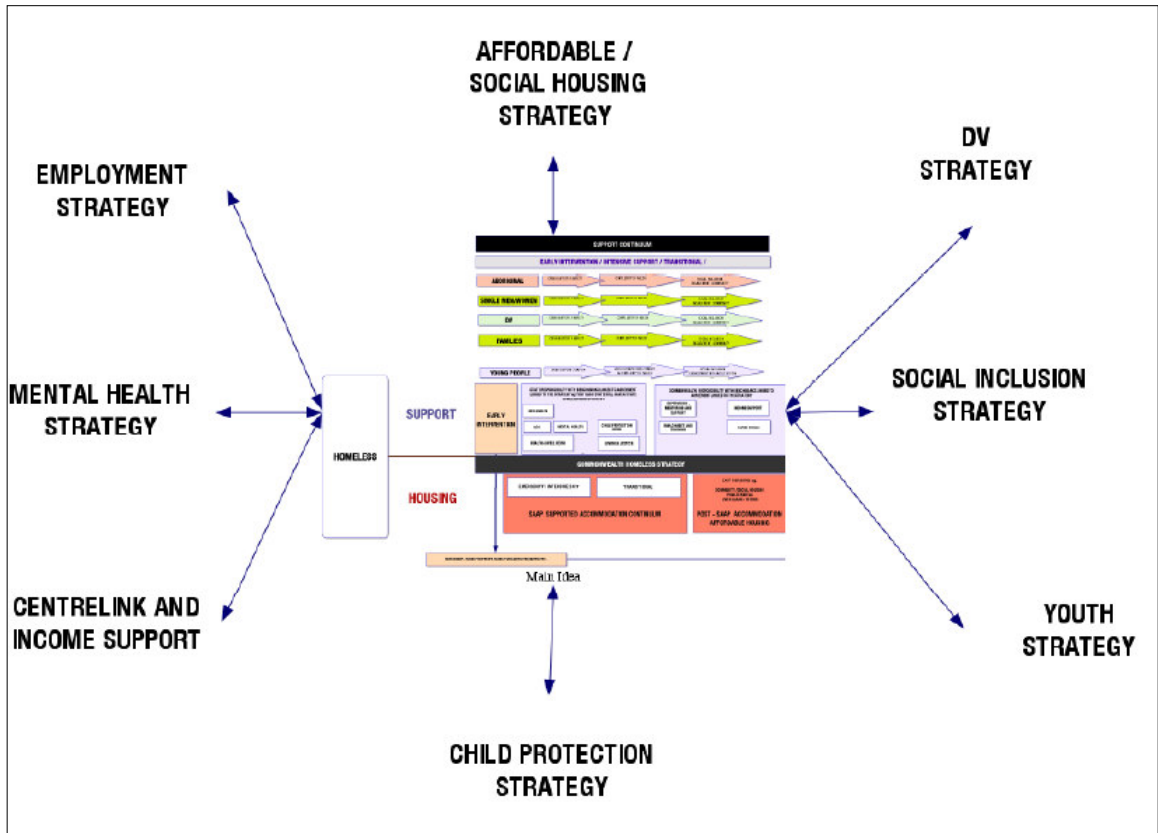
• Figure 1 Commonwealth/State Homelessness strategy relationship to other key strategies

4.1 Charter of rights

As homelessness is human rights issue it is essential that any new Homelessness Act enacts a rights based framework. The core of this framework should be a Charter of Rights. The PILCH submission to the Charter Rights discussion paper[16] notes that a Charter of Right should include;

> o *The right to participation (articles 19 and 25 of the ICCPR);*
>
> o *The right to freedom of expression (articles 19 and 25 of the ICCPR);*
>
> o *The right to equality and freedom from discrimination (article 2(2) of the ICESCR and articles 2(1) and 26 of the ICCPR);*
>
> o *The right to security of the person (articles 6 and 9 of the ICCPR);*

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[16] Lynch P, Public Interest Law Clearinghouse, Homeless Persons Legal Clinic, Response to Charter of Rights Discussion Paper, 2004

- *The right to health (article 12 of the ICESCR);*

- *The right to privacy (article 17 of the ICCPR);*

- *The right to freedom of association (article 22 of the ICCPR);*

- *The right to freedom of movement (article 12 of the ICCPR);*

- *The right to be treated with dignity and respect.(article 10 of the ICCPR); and*

- *The right to a fair hearing and an effective remedy in the case of violation of rights (articles 2(3) and 14 of the ICCPR).*

As Australia is currently party to a number of United Nations Conventions, and under them obligated to implement and enforce these rights, the Homelessness Act needs to have a goal; targets and implementation strategies include budgetary considerations.

However the Homelessness Act would only be binding to the parties that are named within it. In order to ensure that the homelessness people can enforce their rights there needs to be a broader application of the Homelessness Act. This could be achieved by linking the Homeless Act to the Federal Anti Discrimination Act.

This would require an amendment to the Federal Anti Discrimination legislation to include the prohibition to discriminate on the basis of social status. This concept has been articulated by the Public Interest Law Centre Homeless Persons Legal Clinic.

It is our understanding that a range of States have already enacted either a 'Charter of Rights' or a provision around discrimination of the basis of social status. The introduction in a Federal setting therefore would only really be consolidation of what is already occurring and providing national consistency.

The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition understands that the Federal government is also considering a Social Inclusion Agenda. However we need to acknowledge that the social inclusion focus does not mean social justice. A strong Charter of Rights within a Homelessness Act linked to Federal Anti Discrimination legislation is a more robust mechanism to ensure the right of homeless people are protected, as opposed to a policy that is subject to political will at a point in time.

The amendment to the Federal Anti Discrimination Act is not inconsistent with the current obligations. The PILCH paper, Discrimination on the Ground of Homelessness or Social Status, provides a sound argument for a need for an amendment. [17]

The PILCH submission discusses the needs for homeless people to be able to have a complaints mechanism and independent commissioners. However if the Homelessness Act is linked to HREOC, the commission could instigate the complaints mechanism and linked to the various UN Conventions that Australia is signatory to.

As the PILCH submission states;

When undertaking inquiries, considering complaints and making determinations, a homeless persons' complaints mechanism must include the following key features in accordance with articles 2(3) and 14 of the ICCPR:

o   *the complaints body must afford complainants the right to make complaints, give evidence and make submissions orally or in writing;*

o   *the complaints body must afford complainants a right of access to legal or other representation or advocacy at no cost;*

o   *the complaints body must use language and procedures that are easy to understand and as user-friendly as possible;*

o   *the complaints body must afford a right of access to an interpreter at no cost;*

o   *the complaints body must be independent and impartial;*

o   *the complaints body must ensure that all complainants have a fair hearing;*

o   *hearings must be conducted in accordance with the requirements of natural justice;*

o   *hearings must be conducted in such a way as to permit the ascertainment of the facts as they are and as they bear on the right in issue;*

o   *where requested, the complaints body must give reasons for its decisions; and*

o   *decisions of the complaints body must be binding and subject to review in a court of law.*

4.2 Goal

The Homelessness Act must have an overarching goal. Whilst most people would like the aim to be "the elimination of homelessness", this is a very high bar to achieve. The Homelessness Act can only achieve so much. The utopian goal of the elimination of homelessness would require not only government commitment and support, but also

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[17] PILCH, March 2007, Discrimination on the Grounds of Homelessness or Social Status, Report to the Department of Justice

substantial changes from our community in terms of our attitudes and values. Issues such as family violence, gender inequity and poverty would need to be solved.

As a result QYHC believes a more achievable goal would be:

- o To substantially reduce homelessness through addressing the individual and structural barriers that creates homelessness.

4.3 Definitions of homelessness

The Homelessness Act must also define homelessness. Australia currently has a strong understanding of homelessness and this should be articulated in the Homelessness Act.

Australia does not want to go down the trajectory that the UK has in terms of defining homeless people as only those in primary homelessness. The UK has also introduced the concepts of 'intentional' and 'unintentional' homeless people. As far as the QYHC can ascertain this is a reframing of the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor argument.
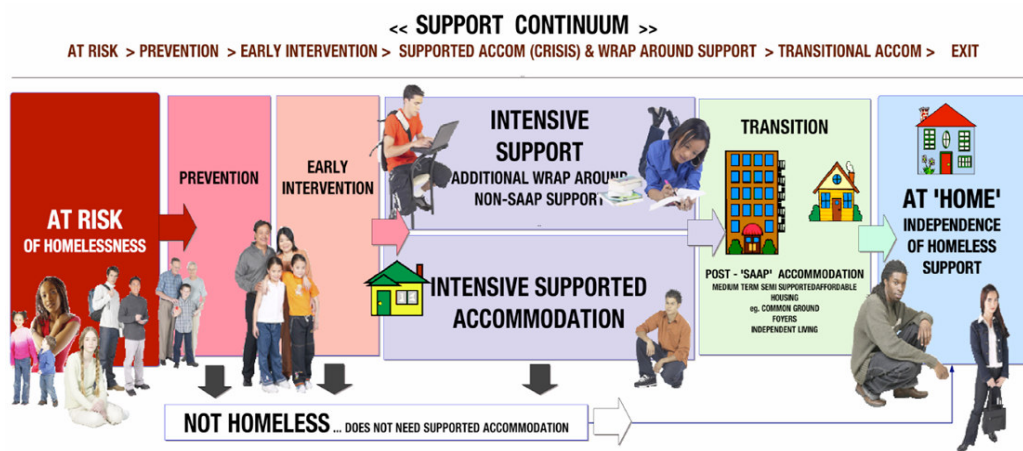
Therefore the definition of homelessness articulated earlier in this paper need to be included in the Homelessness Act.

4.4 Continuum

The Homelessness Act must include within it an acknowledgement that there needs to be a continuum of support. There are a whole range of services need to be development to meet the needs of a range of young people.

In acknowledging this it must be remembered that there needs to be a normalisation process in terms of young people housing and homelessness responses. This means that high volume services do not necessarily meet the needs of young people. Smaller services that can provide a more relationship based model of service and can have better connection to the community can be more beneficial to young people, especially if they keep young people connecting to mainstream services such as education and social and recreational opportunities.

Any future direction in terms of homelessness must take into consideration "what are the skills sets of young people" and that independent housing is not an option that works for all young people.

<< SUPPORT CONTINUUM >>

AT RISK > PREVENTION > EARLY INTERVENTION > SUPPORTED ACCOM (CRISIS) & WRAP AROUND SUPPORT > TRANSITIONAL ACCOM > EXIT

AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

PREVENTION

EARLY INTERVENTION

INTENSIVE SUPPORT
ADDITIONAL WRAP AROUND NON-SAAP SUPPORT

INTENSIVE SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

TRANSITION
POST - 'SAAP' ACCOMMODATION
MEDIUM TERM SEMI SUPPORTED AFFORDABLE HOUSING
eg. COMMON GROUND
FOYERS
INDEPENDENT LIVING

AT 'HOME'
INDEPENDENCE OF HOMELESS SUPPORT

NOT HOMELESS ... DOES NOT NEED SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

4.5 Cross government policy

The Homelessness Act can achieve a whole of government policy response through the development of a National Homelessness Plan. This plan would outline the targets that need to be met in order to address the structural and individual barrier that lead to homelessness.

In order to ensure that the National Homelessness Plan is meeting its targets the Homelessness Act can have prescribed within it the function of the Minister to report to Parliament on the National Homelessness Plan and on cross government policy to tabled annually.

The Homelessness Act would also need to include within it that the Act is implemented principally through common-form agreements between the Commonwealth and the States. In this way ensuring that all States and Territories have Homelessness Strategies.

4.6 Consultative mechanism

In order to ensure that the National Homelessness Strategy continues to meet the needs of homeless people it is essential that there is a consultation mechanism.

Therefore there needs to be a provision that includes that all levels of government endeavour to work co-operatively with community and service providers.

At the Federal level this would be constituted by an Australian Council on Homelessness and through the funding of Homelessness Australia.

At the State level this would be enabled by the funding of youth homelessness peaks such as the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition.

4.7 Tied funding – building on the foundations

In the PILCH response to the Charter of Rights discussion paper it articulates that;

International human rights law also requires that, even while Australia is progressing towards full realisation of the right to adequate housing, it must ensure that 'core minimum standards' are met, including by providing sufficient emergency accommodation to ensure that all people in need of such accommodation can access it as of right. SAAP needs to be seen within this framework (ie, part of the minimum core obligation imposed by article 11(1) of the ICESCR to provide 'basic housing', which cannot be derogated from other than in the most exceptional of circumstances).

A right of access to SAAP services should import:

An obligation on government, enforceable by both service providers and service users, to ensure sufficient funding to meet demand;

An obligation on service providers, enforceable by service users, to provide access, or to make an appropriate, supported referral;

An obligation on service providers, enforceable by service users, not to evict or discharge a person into homelessness; and

An obligation on service providers, enforceable by service users, to assist a person from SAAP services into adequate housing.

Breach of any of these obligations should give rise to a right to make a complaint and to obtain a suitable remedy.

The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition supports the need for the Homelessness Act to include recurrent and capital funding. The Homelessness Act would be meaningless and a "toothless tiger" if it does not have included within it provisions for grievance processes and access to accommodation.

The current SAAP funded service system has provided a strong foundation on which a homelessness response can be built around. The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition would also advocate for incremental, evidence based change.

4.8 Data and Research

There needs to be a strong data and research agenda to support these new arrangements to ensure the targets are being met.

The Homelessness Act can include provisions that relate to the development of a national data collection system and research agenda.

The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition would argue for an improvement and expansion of the role of the Australian Institute of Welfare and Health to conduct this task.

The AIWH as the SAAP National Data Collection Agency has been able to undertake a valuable role in collecting and analysing data. There have been issues with the NDCA from the field however with adequate funding these data issues can be resolved. Further the AIWH can explore the cross correlation of data from other program areas.

Any national data and research scheme requires the capacity to explore issues in relation to special needs groups that may not be captured in the standardised data collection mechanism, such as young people with acquired brain injuries.

The AIWH has been able to develop a data collection system that has safeguarded the privacy of homelessness people and this is an invaluable protection which must be retained and built upon.

5.1 National Affordable Housing Agreement

5.1.1 National Homelessness Strategy

The National Affordable Housing Agreement needs to have a specific National Homelessness Strategy that provides a whole of government policy framework.

The National Homelessness Strategy needs to have designed within it achievable short, medium and long terms goals.

The National Homelessness Strategy needs to acknowledge a holistic response to homelessness. In particular it needs to articulate the importance of;

o   The inclusion of smaller service that in some cases can provide a more relationship based model of service delivery and can have better connection to the community;

o   Sustaining and nurturing communities;

o   The targets should have a focus on all levels of government, community and business owning the goal of reducing youth homelessness; and

o   A link to the Federal Anti- Discrimination legislation to ensure complaints mechanism.

5.2 State Bilateral Agreements

5.2.1 State Homelessness Strategy

State Bilateral Agreements would need to include a State Homelessness Strategy and negotiated within a range of targets that meet the needs of homelessness young people in the State (within the National framework).

5.2.2 Regional Networking Processes

In order to work more holistically, services need the capacity to network and to develop joint planning processes within an evidence based framework. To do this they need

resourcing and support from the youth peak. An example of this is the developmental work undertaken in Warwick by QYHC to support a local community.

Part of the regional networking process, includes brokering relationships between the business and non government sectors. QYHC is keen to explore taking on the brokering role to develop more sustainable relationships and better outcomes for communities. This would require an initial investment from government.

Part 6	FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Office of Homelessness

The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition is proposing that there needs to an 'Office of Homelessness' that should provide the administrative support to ensure that the Homelessness Act is meeting its objectives through the National Homelessness Plan.

The Office of Homelessness would also be the liaison point between the Commonwealth and the States in terms of the National Homelessness Plan and the State/Territory Homelessness Strategies.

The Office of Homelessness would also provide secretariat support to the Australian Council on Homelessness.

6.2 Australian Council on Homelessness

The concept of an Australian Council of Homelessness is fundamentally about providing a mechanism where all level of government and the community including business can come together to discuss how homelessness can be address.

6.3 State and Territory government lead agency on homelessness

As there will be a need for there to be a lead agency in the State Government on homelessness the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition is advocating it continues to be located in the Department of Communities.

6.4 Youth homelessness peak bodies

There is a strong need for youth homelessness peaks to assist in resourcing, sector development and lobbying and we strongly feel that the State government should be assisting the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition by funding it to a level that enables it to be undertaking these function more efficiently.

Cost		
Wages	1F/T Executive Officer (comparable to an AO8)	$ 89,898.00
	1 F/T Policy Office (comparable to an AO7)	$ 81,140.00
	On costs & Superannuation	$ 23,900.00
Operating		$ 50,000.00
Administration		$ 25,000.00
Total funding		**$ 269,938.00**