

The Specialist Homelessness Sector Transition Plan (2018-2022)

Build service capacity to deliver the contemporary suite of services to gain and sustain housing

The Specialist Homelessness Sector Transition Plan (2018-2022) outlines 15 goals.

Action tables have been developed to provide more specific detail on what each goal means, why it is important, future vision, relevant literature, good practice examples and helpful resources.

The action tables are designed to be a useful reference and a good starting point for organisations or individuals wanting to action any of the 15 goals in the SHS Transition Plan.

All 15 action tables can be found at: chp.org.au/shs-transitionplan18/.

4. Build service capacity to deliver the contemporary suite of services to gain and sustain housing	
What we mean	Develop sector capacity to provide streamlined access, targeted prevention, crisis responses, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and mobilisation of mainstream services.
Why is this important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist homelessness and other health and human services are historically funded to focus more on support and crisis management than prevention and early intervention activities. A more balanced approach is likely to be more effective and reduce service costs • Providing the right services at the right time is likely to reduce the impact of housing and homelessness problems on individuals and families • Reducing re-presentations to homelessness services may reduce demand on housing and homelessness services.
Future Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable and efficient use of resources in response to identified consumer needs • A system which prevents housing breakdown and intervenes early to reduce the progression to homelessness • A system which quickly and decisively intervenes to reduce the length and severity of homelessness when it does occur • Seamless service provision making it easier for consumers to move between required supports as their needs change.

Literature	<p>There is evidence from both Australia^{1,2,3} and overseas^{4,5} that prevention based health and human services, including homelessness services, are effective from both a social and economic perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations of eviction interventions and intimate partner violence programs have demonstrated reductions in homelessness⁶. • Successful prevention efforts have reduced homelessness for people discharged from hospitals and prisons^{7,8} • There is research to support the value of prevention efforts with specific cohorts including young people⁹ and families¹⁰ • Housing first models have strong evidence to support them¹¹.
Good practice examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Education First Foyers</i> – Housing and development services which support young people at risk of homelessness to transition to independence. Example programs can be found at: BSL Education First Youth Foyer and Launch Housing Education First Youth Foyer • DSS Reconnect Program <i>Early intervention programs aimed at keeping young people at home and school.</i> • Streets to Home Program Evaluation <i>A program assisting vulnerable people sleeping rough to access support and housing</i>¹².

¹ Chamberlain, C, and MacKenzie, D. (1998). Youth Homelessness – Early Intervention and Prevention. *Australian Centre for Equity through Education*.

² Crane, P. & Brannock, J. (1996). Homelessness among young people in Australia: Early Intervention & Prevention: A report to the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme, Office of Youth Affairs: Brisbane, pp.4-5.

³ Watson, J., and White, A. (2005). Early Intervention & Prevention: A literature review, Department of Community Services, NSW, pp.8-11.

⁴ Pleace, N., and Culhane, D. (2016). Better than Cure?: Testing the case for Enhancing Prevention of Single Homelessness in England. Research Report.

⁵ Culhane, D., Metraux, S., and Byrne, T. (2011). A prevention-centred approach to homelessness assistance: A paradigm shift? *Housing Policy Debate*, Vol. 21, (2).

⁶ Busch-Geertsema, V, and Fitzpatrick, S. (2008). Effective Homelessness Prevention? Explaining Reductions in Homelessness in Germany and England. FEANTSA.

⁷ Forchuck, C., Kingston-Macclure S., Van Beers, M., Smith, C., Csiernik, R., Hock, J., and Jensen, E. (2008). Developing and testing an intervention to prevent homelessness among individuals discharged from psychiatric wards to shelters and ‘no fixed address’. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, vol. 15, (7), pp 569-575.

⁸ Backer, T., Howard, E., and Moran, G. (2007). The Role of Effective Discharge Planning in Preventing Homelessness. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, vol. 28, (3), pp 229-243.

⁹ Gaetz, S. (2013). Ending Youth Homelessness in Canada is Possible: The Role of Prevention. *Canadian Observatory on Homelessness*.

¹⁰ Shinn, M., Greer, A., Bainbridge, J., Kwon, J., and Zuiderveen, S. (2013). Efficient Targeting of Homelessness Prevention Services for Families. *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 103, (Supplement 2), pp. 324-330.

¹¹ Goering, P., Veldhuizen, S., Watson, A., Adair, C., Kopp, B., Latimer, E., Nelson, G., MacNaughton, E., Streiner D. and Aubry, T. (2014). National At Home/Chez Soi Final Report. Calgary, AB: Mental Health Commission of Canada.

¹² Johnson, J. & Chamberlin C. (2015). Evaluation of the Streets to Home Program – Final Report. Accessed April 2018 from: [Streets to Home Program Evaluation](#).

Helpful Resources

- [Prevention or Cure: Early Intervention - Evidence base and policy considerations](#). Homelessness Australia. (2012).
- [Homeless Hub - Prevention Resources](#)
- [CHP Housing Focused Support Guides: outline the interventions delivered by workers in the SHS that aim to help people gain and sustain a home. There are five guides available which discuss distinct activities at different points of the support continuum](#) (Council to Homeless Persons – CHP)