

# Effectiveness of supported living in relation to shared accommodation

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW SOUTH WALES



**EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPPORTED  
LIVING IN RELATION TO SHARED  
ACCOMMODATION**

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PLAN

FOR RESEARCH COMMISSIONED BY THE  
DISABILITY POLICY AND RESEARCH  
WORKING GROUP

**SPRC Report 6/07**

**University of New South Wales Consortium**  
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## Summary of the Research Plan

### 1 Background

The Disability Policy and Research Working Group has commissioned the UNSW Consortium to research the effectiveness of supported living in relation to shared accommodation to improve service delivery to people with disabilities. The research has two parts: improving access to housing and improving models for people with disabilities who require 24-hour support.

The project is to build on the priority area of strengthening access to services, including housing. It will build on knowledge and research to increase access to housing and enable specialist disability services to respond to identified gaps. More information is needed on the range models for people with support needs. They also need to know the actual barriers and access gaps that people experience trying to access housing to facilitate other models eg social housing barriers. The research will inform future CSDTA opportunities.

Housing support for people with disabilities can be conceptualised in terms of support services, financial support and the built environment. Most current initiatives to assist people with complex needs to move into and maintain housing are limited in their ability to support the large numbers of people who may want or benefit from such support. Alternative paradigms relating to people with complex needs influence approaches internationally, and are implicit within legislation and service approaches in Australia. In relation to housing and support, these emerging disability paradigms require greater choice, control and capacity to address the changing and diverse needs of people with disabilities (NSW DADHC 2006; Bleasdale 2006; Dowson & Salisbury 2001; Social Exclusion Unit 2005; PWDA 2005).

Innovative models operate in Australia and internationally, based on principles of self-determination and utilising mechanisms of individualised funding (eg Canada, USA, New Zealand and the UK; Victoria Accommodation Innovation Grants; Beneke 1999; Rankin & Regan 2005; Stewart 2004).

Current service-based initiatives in Australia have been evaluated favourably, in terms of their quality of life outcomes for people with complex needs, and the sustainability of their housing arrangements (Centre for Developmental Disability Studies 2004; Stancliffe & Keene 1999; Stancliffe & Lakin 2004). Research has established the need for the separation of housing and support and the associated complexity of such a separation (Bridge et al 2002).

Research has also established the need for across-government approaches to address the systemic barriers that face people with complex needs who require housing (Bostock et al 2001; Bostock & Gleeson 2004a, 2004b; Jones & Seelig 2005). That is, approaches that acknowledge that people with disability, like other members of the public, have recourse to the full range of government policy. Service-based approaches tend to assess individual deficiencies and promote placement within services that will address or overcome these deficiencies. Such approaches can largely ignore the systemic causes of homelessness, lack of opportunity and other barriers (Disability Advisory Council 2004). An approach that acknowledges these barriers

and asserts the right of people with disability to equal participation in Australian society is being adopted.

Further research is needed into how these experiences can inform improved access to housing for people with disabilities and innovative accommodation models for people with disabilities requiring 24-hour support. Research also needs to further understand how improved service delivery can both deliver value and positive outcomes so that living within a community is not merely about housing location, but participation within that community (NSW Council for Intellectual Disability 2004).

### **Relevant disability policy principles**

The research plan is based on three principles that inform the current development of disability policy. First, like other citizens, people with disabilities want equal choice, freedom and control over their living arrangements, including where they live, who they live with and who provides support to them. For most people with disabilities this means informal support from family and friends while living in the community, supplemented with formal support or housing where necessary.

Second, governments are reorienting disability accommodation support policy towards prevention and early intervention and away from crisis responses or relative need. The implication is that policies aim to be responsive to people's changing support needs and preferences in the community context in which they live or in which they would prefer to live. The benefits of this principle are both to improve quality of life outcomes for people with disabilities and the people who support them and also to improve resource efficiency for government.

Third, governments are moving towards individualised service provision, consistent with the other two principles. This approach has implications for provision of all forms of accommodation support, including access to generic and disability specialist housing and support services. Service planning becomes based on what is most appropriate for a particular person's changing support needs and individual preferences.

In the context of these principles, for most people with disabilities, many past accommodation models do not meet either people's preferences or government principles of service provision. This includes most group care models for most people.

## **2 Research Questions**

The aim of the research is to develop policy options that address preferred and cost-effective ways of supporting people with disabilities to live in the environment they choose. The research questions are:

1. What are the current models and strategies for housing and accommodation support for people with disabilities (generic and disability specialist)?
2. What are the facilitators and barriers to enabling people with disabilities to live in the place and with the people and support they prefer?
3. What are the cost effective models of accommodation support for people with disabilities who require 24-hour support to live in the place and with the people and support they prefer?

### 3 Conceptual Framework

The project will apply criteria for evaluation of access to accommodation support, housing and 24-hour support. The right to adequate housing has received wide recognition as a human right in a number of international instruments and declarations, regional instruments and national laws (United Nations, 2002).<sup>1</sup>

For people with disabilities, there are a number of key interrelated issues that impact on equality of opportunity in housing, including: structural and attitudinal barriers (e.g. Zarb, 1995; ACOSS, 2003; NCID, 2004); fragmented regulatory systems (e.g. HREOC, 2006); policy silos (e.g. DAC, 2004; Department of Housing and Works, 2004; Kothari, 2006); flexibility and diversity in support systems (e.g. DADHC, 2006); housing design and choices (e.g. Bleasdale, 2006); gender discrimination (e.g. Frohmader, 2002); and cultural discrimination (e.g. AIHW, 2005). In Australia, discourses and policy practices of housing support for people with disabilities attempts to operate within a wider framework of human rights and social justice.

The research will use four key criteria to assess models of accommodation support and housing for people with disabilities. The criteria are the outcomes of the model for people with disabilities and three facilitators and barriers to achieving the outcomes: the systemic environment, regulatory systems and systems of support. These criteria will be applied and refined in each part of the research.

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<sup>1</sup> This is most clearly highlighted under Article 19 (Living independently and being included in the community) of forthcoming UN International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, where: States Parties to this Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that: (a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement; (b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community; (c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs. (UN, 2006).



## Criteria for evaluating disability accommodation support and housing

### 1. Outcomes

- Quality of life (e.g. health, wellbeing and freedom from abuse, neglect and exploitation)
- Independent living (e.g. self-determination; choice; control)
- Participation and social relations (e.g. socio-economic and political-cultural spheres)
- Economic efficiency (e.g. to people with disabilities, government and providers)

### 2. Systemic environment

- Cultural (e.g. discrimination; marginalisation)
- Structural (e.g. built environment; housing stock)

### 3. Regulatory systems

- Legislation (e.g. building codes; DDA; Commonwealth, State and Territory law)
- Disability policies (e.g. HACC; CSTDA; Work Choices; DSP)

### 4. Systems of support

- Accessibility, affordability, availability
- Support functions
- Flexibility and diversity
- Links and coordination with other services and support

## 4 Methodology

The methods are a national and international literature review, interviews and observation with stakeholders, case studies and a cost effectiveness analysis to be completed by June 2007.

**Table 2.1: Application of Methods to Research Tasks**

Task	Literature review	Telephone interviews	Observation (NSW & Qld)	Case studies	Cost benefit analysis
Part 1a Existing models	x	x	x	x	
Part 1b Barriers and facilitators	x	x	x	x	
Part 2a Alternative models	x	x	x	x	
Part 2b Framework for effective services	x	x			
Part 2c Cost benefit analysis	x		x	x	x

### 4.1 Data collection methods

The data collection include a literature review of secondary materials and primary data collection through telephone contact and NSW and southeast Queensland-based fieldwork (interviews, observation and case studies).

The data collection framework will meet the objectives of the five research parts. It will include: definitions, good practice, frameworks, models, options and costs and outcomes data.

### **Literature review**

The data from the literature review will be situated in the Australian context and include information on the housing support needs of people with disabilities. It will also review how specific situations, such as geographic location (metropolitan, regional, rural and remote), cultural background (including Indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse populations) and age (eg. youth issues), affect housing support needs among people with disabilities. Housing research and policy from comparable international sources will be included in the review.

It will involve searches of recent NDA research; electronic databases; published material; government and provider reports; contact with international research colleagues and disability and housing agencies; responses to unpublished material and reports from people with disabilities, service organisations and academics; and any other research that has been recently completed or is currently being undertaken. Sources will include state and territory agency reports and policies (eg. NSW Models of Accommodation Support, Victoria Innovative Accommodation Grants); and Commission, Auditor, Ombudsman and HREOC reports and inquiries.

The review will include relevant state and territory disability, housing, health and aged care policy and service documentation. We will source these documents from the NDA members, key informants and people identified in the primary data collection. This document review will be supplemented by targeted telephone interviews to be conducted with government representatives in disability, housing, health and aged care departments and service providers.

The project will rely on the extensive previous research on the effectiveness of housing options for people with disabilities (eg. Knapp et al 2005; Lakin 2004; Stancliffe & Keane 1999). For this reason, the primary data collection described below will supplement more extensive secondary data collection of cost and outcome data on innovative models.

We expect that much of the secondary data will not be formally published, particularly for Part 1a (eg. policies, programs, practices and initiatives). We will include policy documents, conference papers, agency reports and discussion reports identified by key informants. For this reason we have budgeted for extensive telephone contact nationally and internationally.

A further source of secondary data will include survey and statistical data on the scope of demand and supply of housing support from the CSTDA National Minimum Dataset (CSTDA NMDS), HACC Minimum Dataset, Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

### **Primary data collection - interviews, observation and case studies**

Three primary data collection methods will be applied to collect primary data to supplement the literature review: interviews, observation and case studies. The telephone interviews will comprise a significant component of the project, forming a

comprehensive method for understanding current practice and possible future directions.

We will conduct face to face fieldwork in NSW and southeast Queensland (Sydney region, Wollongong, Newcastle, Lismore, Brisbane, Gold Coast) and telephone contact in all other states, territories and the remainder of NSW. Interviews will be conducted with the stakeholder groups agreed in the design stage. We will primarily use telephone interviews to cover the experience in each of the states and territories such as regional and rural service provision. Interviews will be face to face in NSW and southeast Queensland, individually and/or in groups. Within the budget constraint, for equity reasons, it will be important to include face to face interviews and activities with people with disabilities in NSW and southeast Queensland, particularly people with a communication impairment, to maximise accessibility. Flexible methods will be employed to gather data from the range of stakeholders, including narrative methods with people with cognitive disabilities and group methods with agencies where appropriate. We will seek respondents to reflect diversity in support needs, socio-demographic experience and housing and disability sector position. Interviews will collect data to inform Parts 1 and 2.

The methods will be adapted to be effective and inclusive of diverse experiences such as people in Indigenous communities, women, a range of disability types, people living in culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with print or communication impairments. People participating in the research will be selected through an ethical consent process. Considerations will include clear, accessible information about participating in the research, voluntary consent to participate (with continuous opportunities to withdraw from the research), respect for individuals' rights and dignity, payment for participation and confidentiality.

Observation of housing support services will be conducted to collect data for analysis in Part 1 and 2. This will be restricted to NSW and southeast Queensland for cost reasons. Information on innovative services in other locations will rely on telephone contact and the literature review. Observations will focus on innovative models for any people eligible for CSTDA services and people requiring 24-hour care. Other observation might be required to identify barriers and facilitators to access, although we expect that the interview and literature review data will be sufficient for this part of the analysis.

Case studies for Part 2a and 2c (alternative models and service options) will be selected on the basis of information from the design, literature review and other primary data collection activities. Preference will be given the case studies that supplement secondary data on alternative models and service options. They will include a range of options that meet the diversity of need in terms of the characteristics of people with disabilities, location and cost.

Case studies of people living in 24-hour care and innovative models of semi-independent living will be compared. Prospective interviewees will be matched based on skill level so that housing outcomes can be examined with greater validity. As mentioned above, participation will be voluntary, time will be reimbursed and appropriate interview and survey tools used. Research instruments will measure a range of outcomes, such as housing stability, independence levels across a range of domestic, social and financial skills, social networks, community participation

(including work, study and local activities). Using the social model of disability, it will endeavour to understand differences between 24-hour support and semi-independent living at providing opportunities for independence and facilitating pathways for true community participation, rather than merely maintaining tenancy and attending segregated disability programs. This part of the research will also assess the extent of choice provided, support structures and cover issues such as matching of living companions, safety, exploitation and loneliness.

### **Cost benefit analysis**

The cost benefit analysis will include financial and opportunity cost economic data. In order to compare between models, we expect to use cost effectiveness analysis of comparable outcomes. We will use methods consistent with existing research to enable comparisons to international and Australian research (eg. Knapp et al 2005; Lakin 2004; Stancliffe & Keane 1999). If data are available, we will include short and long term benefits in the economic modelling. If necessary, the analysis will include synthetic data derived from secondary data sources.

## **4.2 Data analysis**

Analysis of the data from the literature review and primary data collection will be conducted to fulfil the five research tasks described in the tender brief. We propose the following structure in the analysis and reports. The structure will be modified in response to data collection findings, interim analysis from Part 1 and response to feedback.

Part 1a analysis will include further development of the project evaluative criteria to identify, describe and analyse data in each part of the research. This will inform policy priorities and provide a focus for the development of the evidence base. The criteria will be refined as the analysis progresses for each research part.

## 5 Timeframe

Milestone details	Deliverable	Month
Execution of contract		October 06
Planning meetings	Project plan	Oct-Nov
Part 1 data collection		Nov
Literature review		Nov-Jan
Design fieldwork		Nov-Dec
	Progress report	February 07
Interviews, observations, case study data collection		Feb-March
Part 1 analysis and writing	Part 1a report	April-May
	Part 1b report	May
Presentation of draft reports and amendments		May
Part 2 analysis, supplementary data collection, writing	Part 2a report	April-May
	Part 2b report	June
	Part 2c report	June
Presentation of draft reports and amendments		June
Final reports		June

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## **Summary of the Report Structures**

### **Part 1 Improving Access to Housing for People with Disabilities**

This part is designed to improve understanding of how people with disabilities access housing in Australia, and to identify strategies to improve access to housing for people with disabilities. It will identify, define and map policies, programs and initiatives concerning housing options for people with disabilities in Australian jurisdictions. It will provide information regarding current and emerging strategies and initiatives worldwide to enable greater access for people with disabilities to generic housing. It will also provide an evidence base to inform policy direction and the development of appropriate, alternative long-term service responses.

#### **1 Existing Models and Strategies**

The models to be researched will be limited to ones that comply with the Disability Services Act 1986 and its State and Territory counterparts. Each model will include a brief description, national and international examples and a brief evaluation against the project criteria (outcomes, systemic, regulatory and support).

#### **2 Barriers and Facilitators to Access to Housing**

This part of the report will identify barriers and facilitators to access to housing for people with disabilities. It will identify, define and map components of policy, and systemic and service responses that act as barriers or facilitators for people with disabilities in accessing the broad range of housing options across Australia. The information will enable the development of specialist disability services targeted to complement and/or address areas of service gap for people with disabilities accessing generic housing services, and to facilitate their social and economic participation in the community.

Barriers and facilitators will be described, with national examples, against the project criteria (outcomes, systemic, regulatory and support) to draw implications for generic housing services policy and specialist disability services to complement other housing opportunities.

## **Part 2 Improving Accommodation Models for People with Disabilities who Require 24-hour Support**

This part will include a description of innovative models of care for people with disabilities requiring 24-hour support, the development of a service framework identifying and describing key components of successful models, as well as a cost-benefit analysis of selected models against traditional 24-hour staffed group homes.

### **1 Alternative Models**

The report will identify, describe and analyse existing innovative models of housing and supported living developed for people whose needs would typically be met in 24-hour staffed group homes. It will evaluate the effectiveness of supported living in relation to shared supported accommodation to provide an evidence base to support the development of alternative housing and support options for people with disabilities.

### **2 Framework for Effective Accommodation Services**

The report will develop a framework that incorporates the key components of effective accommodation support for people with disabilities. The framework will incorporate elements of the models reviewed which are considered to be effective to evaluate current and future models.

### **3 Cost-Benefit Analysis**

The report will analyse the structure and outcomes of innovative service responses to housing and support for those people with disabilities who are traditionally viewed as requiring 24-hour support, including a financial comparison of these models against group homes. It will determine the cost-effectiveness of different service options for people with disabilities who require 24-hour support. The models will have demonstrated positive client outcomes. They will be compared with existing 24-hour staffed service models. Costs will include all components (i.e., not restricted to the costs to Governments), as it is recognised that there are other real and opportunity costs included in the cost of services.

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