Supported Accommodation Evaluation Framework (SAEF)

Short Summary and Easy Read Report

December 2014

SAEF Short Summary and Easy Read Report

Prepared for the NSW Department of Family and Community Services, Ageing Disability and Home Care by the Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Australia.

Document approval

The Supported Accommodation Evaluation (SAEF) Summary Report has been endorsed and approved by:

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Full summary report and evaluation guide

Purcal, C., Fisher, K. R., Jones, A., Lutz, D., Meltzer, A., Hill, T., Robinson, S., Kayess, R., & Smedly, C. (2014) *Supported Accommodation Evaluation Framework Summary Report (SPRC Report 31/2014)*

Fisher, K.R., Jones, A., Lutz, D., Purcal, C., Meltzer, A., Eastman, C., Hill, T., Robinson, S., Kayess, R. (2014), Supported Accommodation Evaluation Guide (*SPRC Report 32/14)*

Easy Read summary about accommodation support for people with disability
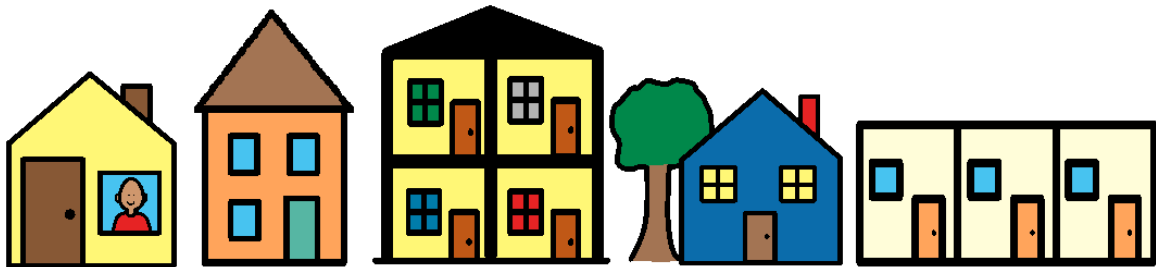
This report is about accommodation support for people with disability in New South Wales, Australia.
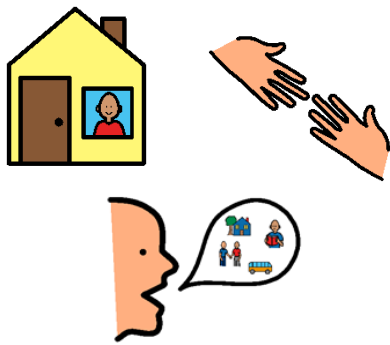
Accommodation support helps people with disability to live where and how they choose.

It includes a place to live. Help to live there. Help for people to say what they want and need.

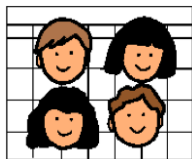This report is about how well accommodation support is working.

Lots of people spoke about how well accommodation support is working:

- People with disability
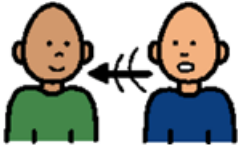
- Family members and friends

- Support workers

- Service providers

- Government

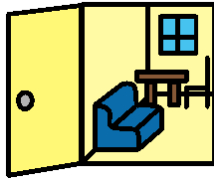Some people did an interview. This is talking and answering questions.

Some people did a survey. This is choosing answers from some already written down.

A person with disability helped to decide on what questions to ask

Most people who used accommodation support had some good changes in their lives.

People with disability said they liked:

- Having their own space and privacy when they moved into a new place
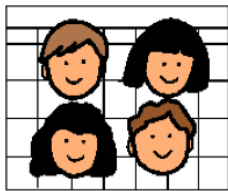
- Choosing support workers they liked
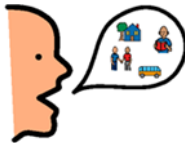
- Getting help to say what they wanted and needed

- Making a plan to live how they wanted to

- Living near family, friends, trains or buses, shops and other places to go
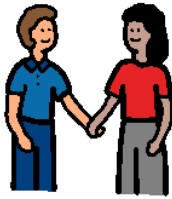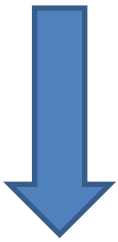
Fewer people had good changes in their relationships.
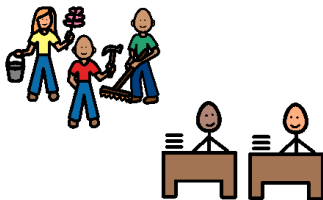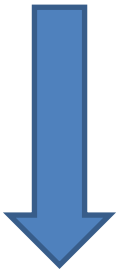
Fewer people found a job.

Sometimes it was hard to find a good place to live or to pay for it.

Some things are important to make accommodation support good for people with disability:

Making a plan

- Help people with disability make a plan with goals that can really happen

- Make sure that people with disability have help to say what they want and need in the plan
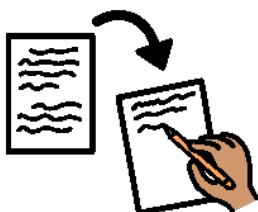
- Make sure to change the plan when there are changes in what people with disability want and need

Helping everyone work together

Lots of different people may help people with disability make the plan – for example:

- Family and friends
- Support workers
- Service providers

Because lots of people might be helping, it is good to:

- Help everyone work together when making the plan
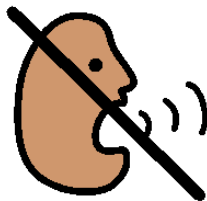
- Help everyone work out any disagreements that happen while planning

- Make sure there is information that everyone can understand

Working with support workers
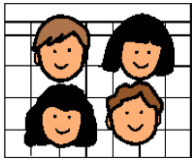
- Work with support workers to be flexible and respect people with disability
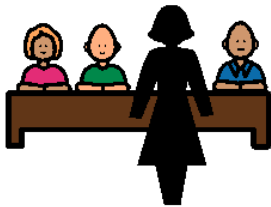
- Train support workers to help people with disability live how they want to

Working with service providers

- Work with service providers to give people with disability the information, funding and help to make plans happen

- Help service providers work together with other service providers, so that they all use their skills together to help people with disability

Making the plan happen
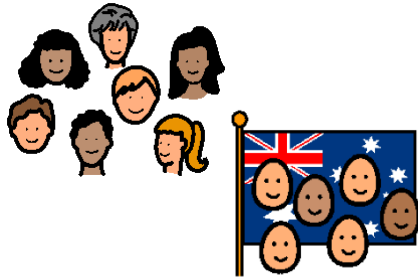
- Link people with others in the community and government who can help the plan happen

- Make sure people can use their funding in lots of different ways to make their plan happen

- Do more work to make places to live cheap enough that people can pay for them

Brief Summary of Initial SAEF findings

In 2013, the NSW Department of Family and Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) commissioned the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at UNSW Australia to design an evaluation framework and collect initial data for the accommodation support and funding models under *Stronger Together* 2 (ST2), now known as *Ready Together*. The evaluation used longitudinal, mixed methods and a participatory research approach.

The evaluation included nine SAEF options grouped in four types: Individual Packages, Drop-in Support, Group Accommodation and Other Options. The evaluation did not compare the options. The evaluation found that most people in all options were aged under 45 years. People with cultural and linguistic diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status were represented in the newer options. Most people were supported in metropolitan areas and had intellectual disability.

Accommodation support is intended to facilitate people with disability to live as independently as they choose[1], in an accommodation arrangement of their choice, and with formal support that suits their preferences and life goals. Most of the support achieved some positive outcomes. Least change was evident in people's interpersonal relationships and employment, and in some options access to preferred housing. Living in independent accommodation had been realised mainly where families had some capacity to assist or the support worker could help with accessing social housing. The findings highlight practical strategies that can be implemented for best practice, and have implications for policy design, implementation and collaboration.

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[1] Living independently means having social relationships and using informed decision-making to exercise choice and maximise autonomy about support arrangements and who to live with or alone.

Strategies for good practice

For the person with disability and their networks; including their family, support workers, service providers and other important people in their lives:

1. Use of a person-centred planning process that leads to achievable goals and is based on a person's particular strengths, abilities, aspirations and preferences

2. Development of inclusive partnerships among members through the use of clear, open and accessible communication

3. Creative facilitation of linkages in the community

4. Regular reviews to adjust goals and/or services and provide clarity around future funding

For the person with disability:

5. Having time, space and opportunity for privacy by moving to a preferred place of their own or having their own room

6. Being involved in recruiting support workers to match their personality, age, preferences and interests

7. Having self-motivation and increased confidence for decision making

8. Receiving adequate support from networks to discuss and negotiate plans

9. Having access to communication support where required for increased accessibility, such as pictorial aids

10. Living within a supportive, familiar community that is close to family and friends, public transport, local shopping areas and amenities

11. Having a sustainable and predictable life

12. Receiving support to organise transport and funding arrangements

For support workers:

13. Maintaining respect, structure and flexibility

14. Sharing interests with the person with disability

15. Maintaining professional skills, open communication and an approach based on people's strengths and abilities

16. Working on flexible rosters according to people's preferences

For service providers:

17. Being responsive to people's preferences

18. Providing a quality service that is flexible, reliable, skilful, engaging and responsive

19. Providing sufficient information and support

20. Being empathetic and supportive of each family's adjustment to change

21. Ensuring regular, clear communication with the person with disability and their network

22. Being flexible with funding within the support packages

23. Effectively managing change within the organisation, including training and supervision of staff

24. Collaborating with other agencies (housing, accommodation support, health and specialist disability providers)

Policy implications

Program design

1. Clarify program scope, control and flexibility so that people and families know how much support they are entitled to, funding constraints and how much control they can have.

2. Enhance flexibility of funding so the use of funds can be tailored to individual needs relevant to the person, family and community.

3. Review the size and variation of the allocation per person to ensure it supports transition to independent accommodation and is responsive to change.

4. Review the options so they are compatible with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), National Disability Strategy (NDS), whole of government and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) implementation e.g. funding, financial management, planning, review and accountability.

5. In Group Accommodation (including Lifestyle Planning Policy (LPP) and Other Options group accommodation), plan for some people who may want to move out, with implications for individual support, access to alternative housing, vacancy management and viability of the remaining group accommodation.

6. In the Other Options group accommodation, clarify government responsibility, such as capital contribution; advice on governance, sustainability, funding structures, individualised planning; vacancy management; quality standards; and response to changed needs.

Program implementation

1. Provide comparative information about the accommodation support options in a range of forums and accessible formats.

2. Provide information and decision making support for people with disability and families during the application process, including goal setting, arranging support, review and monitoring, informed by the experiences of people with disability, for example through disability community and advocacy organisations.

3. For people considering group accommodation, direct people and families to advice or information about risk management, contingency plans and conflict resolution.

4. Target recruitment and specific decision making support to people, families and communities from socio-demographic groups who are currently under-represented.

5. Monitor service provider performance against the Disability Service Standards and the definition of the particular accommodation support option.

6. Require service providers to train and support workers to provide accommodation support to the level of quality expected in the NSW Disability Service Standards, which are reflected in the characteristics in SAEF.

7. Require service providers to ensure that dispute resolution mechanisms and support are available for people and families in disputes with support workers and service providers.

Interagency collaboration

1. Address the shortage of affordable housing for people to live in with a whole of government approach to policy and implementation.

2. Encourage service providers to collaborate with employment support, specialist and mainstream services, community development, local self-advocacy organisations, organisations for referral, training and quality improvement.