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DISCUSSION Paper: A tenancy sustainment framework for Queensland

Abstract

This paper explores tenancy sustainment frameworks including supportive tenancy management, direct support provision and how these can be integrated to end homelessness.

June 2020



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Summary

Introduction and rationale for a tenancy sustainment framework

Tenancy sustainment has emerged as a key theme across the provision of social housing and specialist homelessness services in Queensland. Q Shelter has engaged with key stakeholders extensively during 2018-2019 and also drawn on evidence to outline a tenancy sustainment framework for Queensland. The emergence of COVID-19 places further emphasis on the critical importance of sustaining tenancies and preventing rough sleeping, overcrowding and congregate living arrangements that render people and the broader community more vulnerable to public health crises. A key enduring reason to sustain tenancies is that homelessness itself significantly and negatively impacts on health and represents an ongoing, enduring crisis in the lives of people directly impacted.

A tenancy sustainment framework will help to shape policy and programs in Queensland as part of Partnering for Growth and Partnering for Impact:

- Understanding the key elements of tenancy sustainment can help to guide an investment framework for support services spanning specialist homelessness services and other types of support essential to wellbeing
- The role of housing provision in tenancy sustainment is vital and this framework can help to shape a community housing program framework and operating model
- Adequate support to sustain housing outcomes including in the private rental market will be essential to successfully reducing homelessness
- A workforce development strategy intended to build sector capacity to implement this framework to support successful implementation.

Q Shelter is setting out a framework of elements in recognition that vulnerable households often need more than support *or* housing provision. There are examples of evidence-based initiatives proving that for some households, the integration of housing, support and other inputs is absolutely essential to successfully ending homelessness. Q Shelter has integrated sector input and evidence from literature to suggest a tenancy sustainment framework for Queensland that strives for system integration, embracing the guiding principles of person-centred and place-based practices.

The rationale for tenancy sustainment

The rationale for tenancy sustainment includes some important evidence-based considerations:

- Enduring homelessness is detrimental to health and wellbeing including evidence that rough sleeping can contribute to premature mortality
- Homelessness is costly to the community compared to other types of interventions such as institutions and emergency services
- Tenancies that end negatively result in costs to the housing and homelessness system (private and social housing) in rent foregone and repeat interventions to achieve new housing with appropriate support.

Elements of a tenancy sustainment framework

This framework seeks to integrate and synergise different types of intervention based on assessed need. It is important to note that not all households need all elements however that the service system response needs to include these options and elements to respond to the range of drivers and needs that may present. High quality assessments are the basis for developing an integrated plan responding

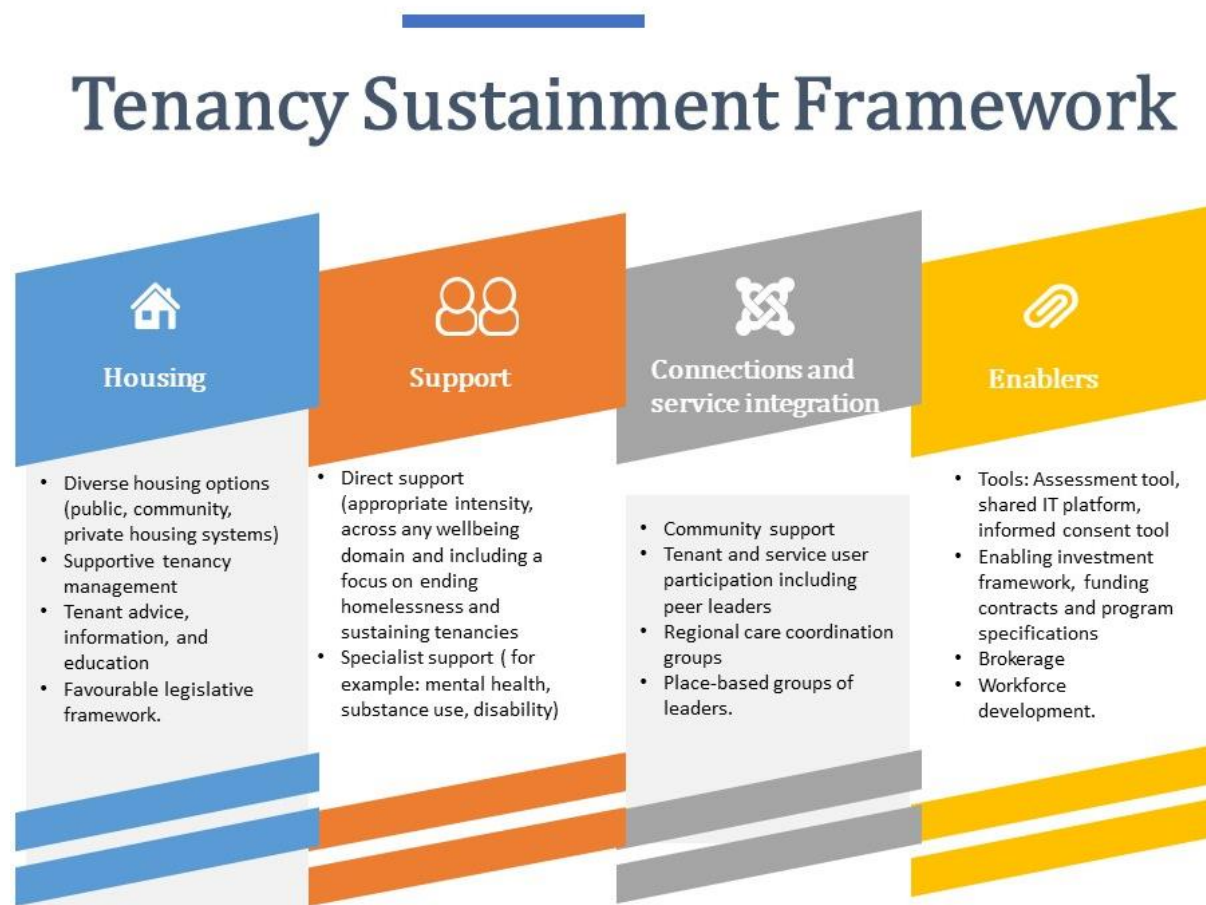


to need. Integrated plans will address all aspects necessary to assist people to exit homelessness and sustain their tenancies preventing future vulnerability to homelessness.

A tenancy sustainment framework will work to:

- Support people's exit from homelessness into sustainable housing
- Support people to maintain their tenancy for the duration of their need
- Support people to transition well into a suitable and affordable housing option as their needs or eligibility changes
- Identify early risks to existing tenancies across all tenures and appropriately re-engage support to sustain that tenancy.

Figure 1: Elements of a proposed tenancy sustainment framework for Queensland



Source: Q Shelter 2020



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Directions for the future

1. That a tenancy sustainment framework is adopted in Queensland that is multi-dimensional and integrated across service system elements. A tenancy sustainment framework will help drive:
 - a. Investment frameworks across both housing and support
 - b. Program settings and service delivery models for housing and support
 - c. Resourcing of support programs geared to tenancy sustainment
 - d. Flexible funding contracts and program specifications supportive of person-centred and place-based practices and outcomes
 - e. Shared approaches to assessment and improved systems supporting integrated case management.

2. It is recommended that the Tenancy Sustainment Framework is inclusive of the following elements which will be integrated depending on assessed need:
 - a. Support
 - b. Housing provision
 - c. Connections and service integration
 - d. Enablers including tools, systems, brokerage and workforce development.



1. Introduction and scope

This discussion and directions paper outlines a tenancy sustainment framework for Queensland. It is written to reflect the person-centred and place-based framework that is central to the design and delivery of Partnering for Growth and Partnering for Impact.

This framework moves beyond a discussion about supportive tenancy management and/or direct support. These are recognised as critical to successful tenancy sustainment however this framework acknowledges a variety of possible inputs depending on a person's expressed and assessed needs.

The scope of this paper identifies how supportive tenancy management and direct support provision differ and also how they should be integrated with the goal of tenancy sustainment and ending homelessness. This makes this framework consistent with models of service delivery that prioritise the integration of housing with support depending on need.

This paper sets out the following key elements for the purposes of discussion:

- A rationale for tenancy sustainment
- A framework of key elements that contribute to tenancy sustainment
- A suggested approach to workforce and sector capacity to deliver a tenancy sustainment framework that takes into account evidence of what works and regional/local opportunities and service system features.

2. Methodology

This document emerges from the following methodology:

- Research by Q Shelter to capture evidence of what works to sustain tenancies
- Engagement with the regional delegates network, individual organisations and CEO Forum to gather early input and feedback on the proposed framework elements
- Further engagement across seven regional workshops seeking input on the elements and on specific definitions of supportive tenancy management and support
- A specialist focus group on tenancy sustainment as well as various individual meetings with sector stakeholders
- The COVID-19 Learning Exchange Series between March-June 2020.

3. Understanding vulnerability and its implications for tenancy sustainment

Social housing in Queensland is predominantly targeted to people assessed with high or very high needs. People experiencing homelessness or the risk of homelessness may be identified as experiencing one or a combination of challenges that can be causal factors in their homelessness including:

- Poor physical health
- Mental health issues
- Substance use issues
- A breakdown in social and family connections
- Early life trauma and exposure to the child protection system



- Physical disability
- Acquired brain injury
- Intellectual disability
- Communication and behavioral issues
- Domestic and family violence
- Poverty
- Legal issues.

These issues are reflected in domains identified in vulnerability assessment tools and outcomes frameworks used to assist with housing and support responses to homelessness. The following table shows domains and areas of vulnerability that may be a factor in causing or sustaining homelessness that are identified in a leading vulnerability assessment tool (DESC) and also the Homelessness Outcomes Star. The domains across these two frameworks are reconciled in the following table to demonstrate a high degree of consistency of those elements considered to be essential to assess and address in a plan to end homelessness. These domains to varying degrees, may be important areas to assess and respond to with the goal of preventing homelessness and sustaining a household’s tenancy. A third framework, also from the Outcomes Star focusses on a tenancy and uses a framework of six measurable outcomes that might be considered in a tenancy sustainment framework.

Table 1: Domains of vulnerability impacting on homelessness

DESC Vulnerability Assessment	Homelessness Outcomes Star	Tenancy Outcomes Star
Survival skills/safety	Offending	Housing
Basic needs	Self-care and living skills	Looking after your home
Physical health/medical	Physical health	Money and rent
Organisation and orientation	Managing money and personal administration	Positive use of time
Mental health	Emotional and mental health	Community and contribution
Substance use	Drug and alcohol misuse	Health and wellbeing
Communication	Social networks and relationships	
Social behavior	Meaningful use of time	
Length of time homeless/housing history	Managing tenancy and accommodation	
	Motivation and taking responsibility	

Source: <http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk/using-the-star/see-the-stars/homelessness-star/> and https://www.vpi.org/files/DESC_Vulnerability%20Assessment_Tool%202003.pdf

As the One Social Housing System is geared towards prioritising those people with the highest needs it is quite likely that one or more of these domains have an impact on housing outcomes.

It is important to acknowledge that not all people have the same level of need and therefore their housing and support plan may differ in the intensity of support, and the approach to housing provision. Of all the people housed through the OSHS, there is likely to be people who have:



- Current needs and challenges that will be mitigated and reduced through housing provision. Some support may be necessary to find and secure housing however ongoing support needs are considered low and the person/household's level of independence is high. People may access services and products through the OSHS and they may also access the private rental market with assistance. Support is unlikely to be ongoing or intensive.
- Significant needs and challenges that require more intensive support to find, get and keep housing. Housing provision will need to be proactive and intensive and support may need to be ongoing in the medium-longer term or for the assessed duration of need.
- Extensive needs and challenges are present and the person will require very intensive, ongoing support to find, get and keep housing. It is likely that the circumstances experienced by the person/household are ongoing and enduring and that moderate to intensive support and an intensive approach to tenancy management will be required and that these interventions will need to be sustained.

It is widely understood that many tenants of social housing don't have access to adequate support to sustain their tenancy and address other wellbeing issues and challenges. It should be noted that a framework to sustain a tenancy is likely to be most successful if it addresses all or any domains and issues that impact on the capacity to achieve a sustainable housing outcome either directly or indirectly.

People exiting homelessness may experience a number of issues and vulnerability assessments strive to use an index to examine the total impact and level of acuity determined by a number of factors measured in combination. In the 500 Lives 500 Homes project, a sample of 267 families showed that 15 per cent of those families were assessed as having high acuity while a further 53 per cent of families had medium acuity leaving 32 per cent of families as assessed with low acuity (Batchler, 2015). While this level of acuity demonstrates the potential of integrated housing and support, housing providers struggle with a lack of adequate support at a sufficient level of intensity to always achieve a sustainable housing outcome. Many rough sleepers and homeless people are known to experience tri-morbidity across issues such as mental health, substance use and considerable physical health issues for example.

There is recognition also that the higher the level of vulnerability, the greater the need for persistent and assertive approaches to support and tenancy management. Passive approaches can fail to achieve the level of contact and engagement needed to overcome the barriers to access caused by vulnerability across multiple domains.

4. The rationale for tenancy sustainment¹

The sustainment of tenancies is important for several reasons and can be understood as positively impacting on both individual client outcomes and also system-wide and community outcomes. The following elements are listed in order of criticality:

Homelessness is harmful to people

There is ample evidence that homelessness is detrimental to wellbeing. Perhaps the most focussed way of understanding this is to examine mortality rates among homeless people:

¹ This section is adapted from a resource kit produced by Under 1 Roof (2012).



- on average, homeless people experience premature mortality and some studies have showed the average age of death in the 40s (47/43 (men/women) in study by Crisis, and 46 in another (O'Connell, 2005))
- many homeless people have multiple health issues that are not necessarily well-treated.

“Subsequent studies in major cities across the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, and Australia have confirmed a persistent relationship between a lack of housing and excess mortality.

Despite a diversity of methodologies utilised across multiple continents, the current literaturedemonstrates a remarkable consistency that transcends borders, cultures and oceans: homeless persons are 3–4 times more likely to die (prematurely) than the general population.”
O'Connell, 2005:13

In the context of COVID-19, the risks to people in congregate living environments, overcrowded dwellings and rough sleeping have been identified and the target of significant interventions that have integrated housing and support. Without these interventions, homeless people and people who are marginally housed would have faced greater risks of disease incidence.

Homelessness is costly to the community

Providing permanent housing with support establishes an important return on investment for the broader community including a financial return on investment considered to be \$8 of value for every \$1 in investment. Homelessness costs the community in terms of emergency services, hospitals, institutions and the management of public space. Communities in which homelessness is prevalent can also experience other impacts such as community level conflict, behaviour management issues and the perception of safety impacts.

Providing permanent housing with support helps to stabilise communities and strengthen the social fabric. This is beneficial to people being housed and also to the community overall.

Homelessness is costly to the service system

When a tenancy fails, people often emerge in others parts of the service system seeking assistance. When social housing tenancies fail, housing providers can face damage bills and also empty bed nights and rent forgone. These factors destabilise the housing provision system and contribute to sustainability issues for providers reliant on receipting rents and reducing costs for business survival.

For community housing providers, key financial and business performance indicators can be seriously impacted by issues effecting tenancy sustainment. Sustaining a tenancy, reducing vacancies, reducing damage and managing/preventing arrears all contribute significantly to the sustainability of all housing provision.

The challenge of social housing provision responsive to vulnerability

There is considerable feedback from community housing providers and the specialist homelessness system indicating ongoing difficulty and barriers to guaranteeing support for people to find, get and keep their housing. While current program settings allow consideration of 'duration of need' as a key determinant of support periods, the system is lacking adequate support and resources to provide the intensity of assistance often required by people and households who are vulnerable. This level of vulnerability can impact negatively on commencing tenancies and sustaining housing outcomes in the following ways:



Table 2: Practice responses to the stages of finding, getting and keeping housing for vulnerable households.

The process	The challenges	Tenancy sustainment practices
Finding housing (search)	<p>Application process and need for planning, documentation</p> <p>Multiple applications (register, housing companies)</p> <p>Contact and communication, correspondence, monitoring application progress.</p> <p>Executive functioning and the impacts of psycho-social disability, cognitive disability and trauma.</p> <p>Looking for housing, visiting options, viewing properties, transport, mobility.</p> <p>No consent for collaboration between HSC, housing providers and support</p> <p>Early identification of anxiety and other factors that might negatively impact on a housing offer.</p>	<p>Assessment of need for assistance (persistent, assertive)</p> <p>Intensive support for application process if needed</p> <p>Practical support for visits, inspections</p> <p>Motivational support for housing offer</p> <p>Outreach</p> <p>Application monitoring.</p>
Getting housing (allocation and establishment)	<p>Communication difficulties at time of offer</p> <p>Lack of contact/no means of contact</p> <p>Periodic illness/difficulties/crises makes decisions overwhelming</p> <p>Lack of rapport at time of offer</p> <p>Lack of options for moving/transport</p> <p>Difficulties with securing furniture and appliances</p>	<p>Intensive support in making the housing offer</p> <p>Practical assistance to move</p> <p>Sensitivity to grief and separation issues from street community</p> <p>Careful sign-up and orientation</p> <p>Early visits</p> <p>Motivational interviewing techniques and skills.</p>



The process	The challenges	Tenancy sustainment practices
	Separation from existing networks, schools etc. causes ambivalence/grief. Sign up, keys, new relationships with housing providers Lack of integration of support and housing inputs.	
Keeping housing (sustaining housing)	Maintaining unit/house Paying rent Communicating with land lord about changes to income and circumstances Respect for neighbours Management of behaviours New local connections New services/doctors Learning transport New schools	Active support Support network and coordination Support and housing coordination and integration Roster of visits/outreach/contacts Tenancy and Support Plan and protocol between agencies Outreach, contact Prevention/early intervention

5. Examples of programs contributing to tenancy sustainment

Appendix 1 includes links to evidence-based programs that contribute to a sustainable end to homelessness. These examples include some important elements in common:

- The provision of support for duration of need
- The availability of diverse housing solutions that are ongoing for duration of need
- The successful integration of support and housing
- Intentional focus on any wellbeing domain
- Approaches to practice which are responsive to vulnerability (high-quality assessments of vulnerability, calibration of assertive and persistent practices where needed)
- Support and housing plans that reflect the level of integration needed to achieve outcomes
- A focus on measurable outcomes defined by evidence including a reduction in homelessness
- Evaluation.

These models generally challenge the view that people benefit from transitioning from crisis to transitional to permanent housing. Permanency of housing is seen as a foundation for improving other



aspects of wellbeing and is not a reward for improvement across other domains. The current system is somewhat geared to transition and a new approach to housing and support provision will result in changes to this assumption.

6. Practice

Scanning these initiatives there are several identified elements of success that span program design, approaches to partnerships and actual front-line practice. Importantly, all of these programs recognise that vulnerability is a key factor in causing homelessness and that addressing vulnerability through support is a critical element of success. There is also recognition that arbitrary support periods are not necessarily geared to success and that while some people require time-limited support, others will have enduring issues that require enduring and often intensive support.

Practice is an important element of success that needs to be addressed through workforce capacity building. Training focussed on practice skills might address:

- Robust and skilled assessment of vulnerability is key to understanding housing and support needs and is a basis for housing and support planning
- Support periods are not arbitrarily time-limited and are ongoing if need and vulnerability is persistent. There is system and program recognition of households that need ongoing support and skilled assessments identify those households early.
- Effective and mindful approaches to the housing offer
- Practices by housing and support providers are preventative and designed to also achieve early intervention
- Programs are designed to work on any issue that can impact on housing outcomes and improve wellbeing
- Tenancy sustainment and the prevention of homelessness is an explicit goal although support and assistance is provided across any domain necessary to wellbeing
- Housing and support provision are separate functions however the program model achieves integration of support and housing where support providers, housing providers and the tenant are working in a partnership
- Housing and support plans are agreed and documented
- Where vulnerability is very high or extreme, there is recognition that practices need to be more integrated, assertive and persistent

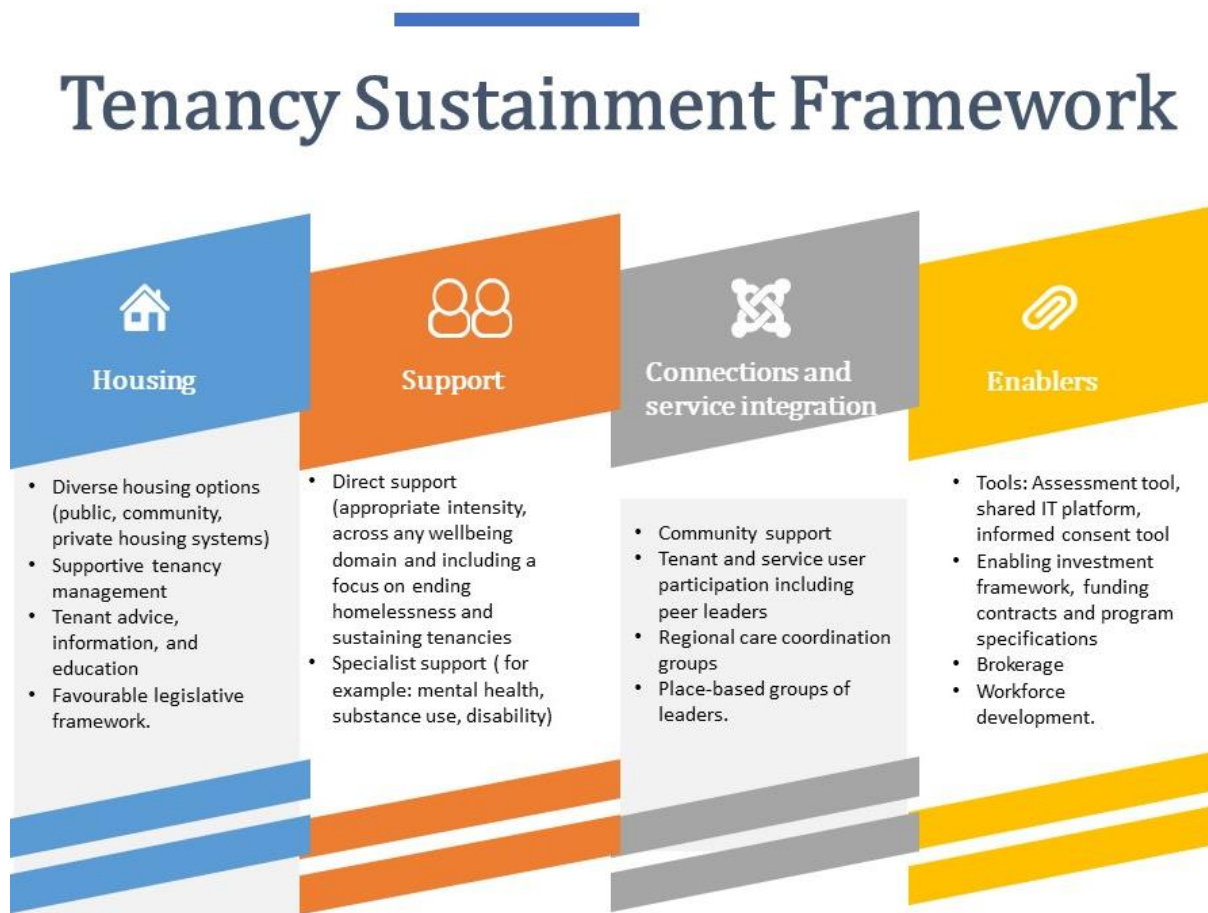
7. A tenancy sustainment framework: the case for integrated responses

If the assumption is made that homeless people and people at risk of homelessness may be vulnerable because of one or more factors, then it is essential that a tenancy sustainment framework responds to multiple needs and challenges. The previously cited program examples highlight the role of support and housing provision working together for example. It is important then to articulate the roles of support and housing provision and to also consider all elements involved in a coordinated and integrated approach.

The elements of a tenancy sustainment framework are identified as follows. Not all elements will be required by all people however an effective service system will include investment and evidence-based approaches to the following:



Figure 2: Tenancy Sustainment Framework



Source: Q Shelter 2020

The following table further articulates the scope of these activities and elements:

Table 3: Description of tenancy sustainment framework elements

Intervention	Responsibility	Description
Supportive tenancy management	Housing provider	Supportive tenant management is the role of housing providers. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive intake and assessment to understand needs and match housing for success • Effective engagement and outreach practices at the time of the housing offer • Active goal setting with the tenant • Orientation and welcome practices including engagement and tenant information • Programs of visiting that identify emerging issues early in a tenancy • Continued program of visits aimed at prevention and early intervention



Intervention	Responsibility	Description
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active identification of and referrals to support services. Referrals are warm/active and work to achieve prevention and early intervention Skilled informed consent processes on intake to ensure a collaborative/integrated housing and support plan Tenant education about rights and participation Community development and community engagement Ongoing assessment of progress, issues, strengths and opportunities as a basis for referral when necessary Housing can be sustained even if needs stabilise including well-supported transitions where necessary,
Housing Supply	Housing Provider	Growth in housing options across public, community and private housing market systems.
Direct support	Support provider	<p>Direct support involves key support workers assisting people to address their needs and concerns. This might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct support to search for housing Direct support to consider and accept a housing offer Direct support to access resources and other services including shops, doctors etc. Direct support to maintain a tenancy such as cleaning, bill-paying, budgeting etc. Direct support to maintain health and wellbeing – such as mental health, addressing the impacts of trauma, personal care, shopping, cooking etc. Direct support to sustain community connections and participate in activities Direct support to sustain other social relationships and build connections to volunteering, training and employment. Engagement with housing provider that is proactive and integrated
Specialist support	Support provider	Specialist support might include accessing support for specific needs such as mental health issues, disability and substance use issues.
Legal framework and tenant advice, education and advocacy	Tenant advocates ² Support provider Housing provider	<p>Assistance with tenancy law matters including advice, information and education about rights and responsibilities. Advocacy regarding tenancy law issues including assistance with QCAT.</p> <p>Favourable legislation for achieving security of tenure, particularly in the private rental market.</p>
Community development and tenant engagement	Housing provider Neighbourhood and community centres Local Government	<p>Assisting tenants to engage within buildings and to be involved in activities and opportunities to influence service delivery and program improvements.</p> <p>Assisting tenants to engage with their broader community and working within the broader community to enhance engagement with tenants and to increase community support for housing solutions.</p>

² While independent advocacy is critically important, housing providers also often provide tenants with information about their rights and responsibilities and this can help to augment other vital inputs. Housing providers can also work with tenant advocates to enable access for the provision of tenant education sessions and the distribution of tenancy law information.



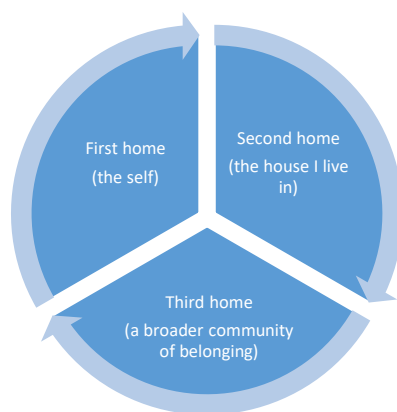
Intervention	Responsibility	Description
		Working actively to prevent community concerns about social housing or particular tenancies and to build community support.
Care coordination	Support and housing providers	An approach that coordinates and facilitates other inputs and interventions. This element can be done through individual care facilitation roles (such as PIR) and through coordinated meetings where clients give informed consent to service integration and coordinated housing and support plans. Meetings are usually regionally-based. These meetings are part of a funded service integration initiative in Queensland at present.
Tools and enablers	All stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment tool Brokerage Informed consent tools Integrated housing and support plans IT platform enabling integrated case management across agencies Contract and program settings that are enabling and flexible Workforce development

This framework makes the assumption that tenancy sustainment is an outcome that is achieved through various interventions depending on the person’s assessed and identified needs. Depending on the person’s circumstances this might include contributions from various types of services and the combination of different types of resources. As such, tenancy sustainment isn’t only the responsibility of housing providers or support providers. Tenancy sustainment must involve an effective relationship between housing provision and support provision. It might also involve other inputs depending on the situation. Any dichotomy that proposes tenancy sustainment is either the responsibility of the housing provider or support provider will fall short of achieving the most obvious outcome of ending homelessness and sustaining an end to homelessness. A fixed dichotomy can result in practical barriers to addressing those issues that are most impacting on a tenancy.

It is proposed instead that a person’s situation needs to be carefully assessed and understood as a basis for integrated housing and support plans. This approach recognises important contributions from the entire service system and from the community itself.

The scope of interventions might also be understood by reflecting on Kraybill’s ‘Three Home’ model.

Figure 3: Three homes model



Source: Kraybill, 2012.



This framework helps to recognise that some interventions might be geared towards addressing issues and needs at the level of the self (mental health support, treatment etc.) while other interventions might be focussed on finding, getting and keeping housing in terms of the actual dwelling where a person or household will reside. Third home interventions might involve connections in the community, engagement and participation. All of these levels can contribute to homelessness and all of these levels can arguably contribute to ending homelessness and sustaining housing outcomes.

8. Workforce implications

The following capacities and capabilities are identified as necessary within a tenancy sustainment framework:

- Robust assessment skills and tools (support and housing providers)
- An understanding of vulnerability and skills to work with key types of vulnerability including mental health, substance use, trauma and tri-morbidity
- Persistent and assertive practices responding to vulnerability
- Working with complexity (at the individual, organisational and systems levels).
- Motivational interviewing skills
- Providing advice and information about legal rights and responsibilities
- Tenant and community engagement skills
- Skills in the management of local concern about social housing and in building support
- Prevention and early intervention approaches to tenancy and asset management
- Skills in active care coordination and service integration
- Developing and sustaining support and housing partnerships
- Developing and implementing housing and support plans.
- Seeking and sustaining informed consent for service integration
- Data capture/note taking
- Outcomes focus and outcomes measurement
- Partnering and service integration skills

The scope of activities and the skills that underpin them imply the importance of deliberate investment in workforce development activities including learning exchanges, tool kits and formal training.

9. Themes requiring synthesis

The following themes require synthesis and ongoing discussion as part of system design and workforce capacity building. They are stated here to highlight the need for creative synthesis rather than binary propositions:

[Integrated and coordinated approaches and information privacy](#)

There is considerable recognition that an integrated and coordinated approach to ending homelessness is essential to success yet there are also legal parameters about information privacy that are important to respect and uphold.

There is a debate in the service system about whether integrated and coordinated approaches respect legal parameters and tenant rights. Some models and services operate using a structured approach to



informed consent so that services and resources can be coordinated and integrated with full respect for legal requirements.

Recovery and strengths with respect for vulnerability

Emerging practice places much more emphasis on people driving their own recovery and on focusing on strengths. Recovery practice focusses also on hopefulness, wellness and active engagement and planning to achieve self-determination and respect for rights. There is also well-documented evidence of extreme vulnerability among people who are homeless and who are at risk of homelessness. Support and housing providers can find themselves striving to work in partnerships with tenants towards person-centred recovery and client-directed plans, yet also encounter significant impacts from the household's vulnerability.

Access to NDIS and its impact on homeless people

There is current debate about the need to ensure social housing tenants and homeless people can access NDIS if they are eligible. The promise of NDIS is sometimes viewed as an answer to the support needs of homeless people and people who are housed but vulnerable to homelessness.

There are continued challenges in assisting homeless people and vulnerable housed people to engage with NDIS and the processes required as part of assessment and approval. There is growing recognition that people with mental health challenges are not being allocated support packages despite a high degree of vulnerability (Mission Australia, 2018).

'The NDIS is expected to support people with disabilities to enjoy an ordinary life. However some people who are currently receiving other forms of disability related supports, particularly those receiving mental health related supports are facing barriers to having their applications approved and spend a considerable amount of time either contesting the rejected application or claiming for further funding as their approved package does not cover all the reasonable and necessary supports.'

'Concerningly, a significant number of people with complex needs are not applying for NDIS due to the complexity of the application process, despite their case workers offering to support them throughout the application process.'

It is arguable that many homeless people and tenants vulnerable to homelessness require support but may not receive support through NDIS. Support is needed to optimise access to the NDIS but also to meet the needs of people who are vulnerable who will not be eligible.

The separation of support from housing provision

It is widely acknowledged that the separation of housing provision from support provision is critical to ensuring that support can continue even when the location and type of housing changes. This is based on important learning about structuring the provision of essential assistance (both housing and support) to avoid a situation where single institutions wield total power and control over critical elements in people's lives. This is deliberate to prevent institutionalising people.

Yet it is also acknowledged that housing and support systems are complex and where vulnerability is present, it can be difficult to find a gateway enabling access to critical assistance. While it is important to structurally separate housing from support, people also require these functions to be well-coordinated and integrated otherwise housing can fail and homelessness is a higher risk. A system is needed that structurally separates these functions so that no one institution has total power over



people’s lives and also a system where these functions work in a coordinated way with clients to find, get and keep housing.

Community housing providers also routinely describe difficulties accessing adequate support for complex tenancies leading to some providers adopting a case management approach to address the needs of those households. Differences in frameworks across housing and support provision can result in different approaches to the timeliness of interventions and frustrations about the impact of interventions that are not timely enough or intensive enough for presenting needs. Some housing programs broker support and other inputs so that housing can be effectively sustained.

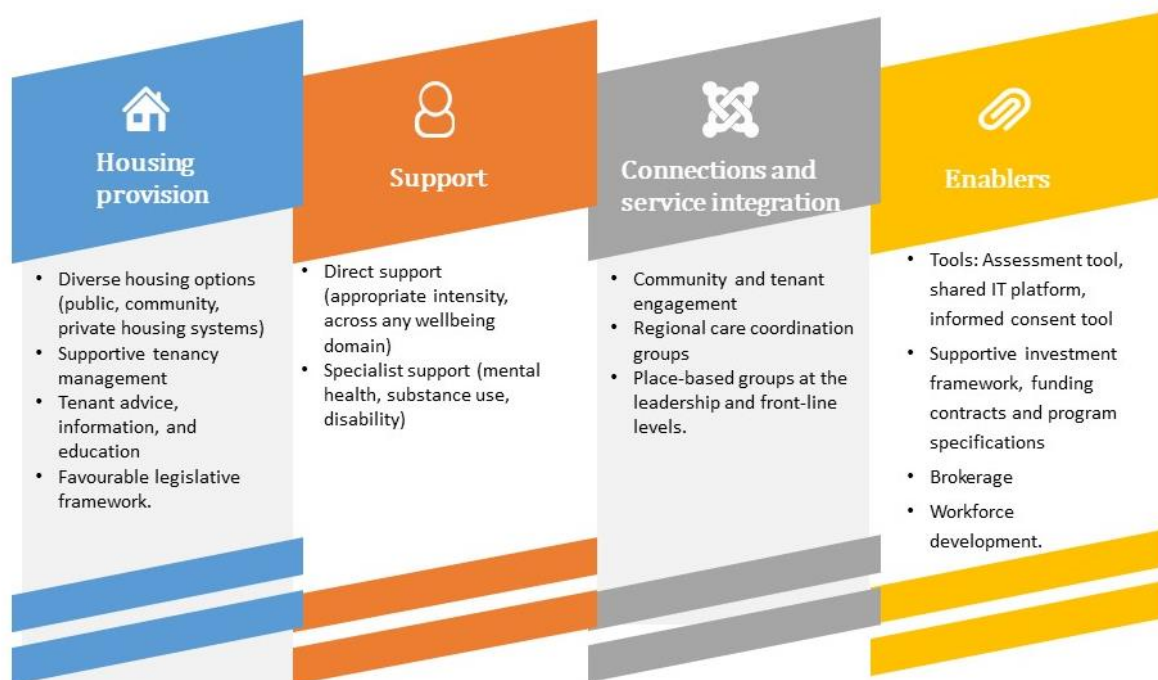
10. Directions for Queensland

A tenancy sustainment framework will help to address the needs of vulnerable Queenslanders in an integrated way. A framework acknowledges the multiple-parts of a service system and how they need to be integrated depending on assessed needs and levels of vulnerability.

Q Shelter acknowledges that sector input highlights unmet needs for housing *and* support and that enhanced investment in these areas is crucial. This has only been further emphasised in the context of responding to COVID-19. It is hoped that an articulated and agreed tenancy sustainment framework can help to guide investment in both housing supply and support.

A framework highlights the different and complementary roles, functions, tools and resources that need to be integrated depending on assessed needs. Not all households need all elements but a healthy system based on evidence of success will include the following:

Tenancy Sustainment Framework





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There are workforce development implications from adopting this type of framework and it is suggested that a program of regionalised training will be important to the capacity for implementation. A key goal for training should be to reduce the perceived separation between homelessness and housing responses and systems in Queensland, supporting an integrated approach.

It is proposed that:

That a tenancy sustainment framework is adopted in Queensland that is multi-dimensional and integrated across service system elements. A tenancy sustainment framework will help drive:

- a. Investment frameworks across both housing and support
- b. Program settings and service delivery models for housing and support
- c. Resourcing of support programs geared to tenancy sustainment
- d. Flexible funding contracts and program specifications supportive of person-centred and place-based practices and outcomes
- e. Shared approaches to assessment.

A Tenancy Sustainment Framework will include the following elements which will be integrated depending on assessed need:

- f. Support (including specialist support)
- g. Housing provision
- h. Connections and service integration including care coordination groups
- i. Enablers including tools, systems, brokerage and workforce development.



Attachment 1: Example tenancy sustainment programs and services

	Program	Description	Focus
1	HASI – Housing Accommodation and Support Initiative	<p>‘The Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI) in New South Wales (NSW) aims to provide adults with a mental health diagnosis with access to stable housing, clinical mental health services and accommodation support. HASI supports over 1000 mental health consumers across NSW living in social and private housing and ranging from very high support (8 hours per day) to low support (5 hours per week) levels.</p> <p>It is a partnership program between Housing NSW, NSW Health, NGO Accommodation Support Providers (ASPs) and community housing providers. The annual cost of HASI per person ranged between \$11,000 and \$58,000, plus project management costs of between \$200 to \$500, depending on the level of accommodation support and the method of calculating the annual unit cost.’ (Bruce et al, 2012:9).</p> <p>‘HASI in NSW aims to provide people with mental illness with access to stable housing, clinical mental health services and accommodation support. It enables people to maintain successful tenancies and participate in their communities, often resulting in improvements in their quality of life and assists in their recovery from mental illness.</p> <p>Supports include daily living skills, including self-care, personal hygiene, cleaning, shopping, cooking and transport; facilitating access to education, vocational training and employment; participation in social, leisure and recreation opportunities; support in building and maintaining family and community connections; and linkage to other related services.’ (Mission Australia, 2018).</p>	Adults with mental health diagnosis.
2	Supporting People Program (UK)	<p>‘Supporting People funds housing related support services. Support means advice and help to make it easier for vulnerable people to maintain their independence in their home. People can receive support in a hostel or in sheltered housing or other type of</p>	Housing related support



	Program	Description	Focus
		<p>supported living. Support can also be provided to people in their own homes through floating support services. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help to manage money and pay their bills • help to live independently • help to learn how to follow the rules in their tenancy agreement • advice or assistance on a range of housing related matters.’ <p>The Supporting People Program can provide longer term support to enable people to sustain a home (e.g. in accommodation where the person has a tenancy and housing related support is provided to assist the person to maintain the tenancy). The Program can also provide shorter-term support to assist vulnerable adults with housing related support tasks to help them maintain independence. For people with enduring and complex needs, support can be delivered in an ongoing way. (Northern Ireland Housing Executive, 2012).</p>	
3	Supportive Housing	<p>Supportive Housing is a model for ending homelessness that originated in North America and Canada.</p> <p>Supportive housing is a way of providing ‘assistance that aims to assist tenants with a broad range of health and other aspects of their lives including access to and sustaining of affordable tenancies. Affordable tenancies can be in social housing or the private rental sector, although in the contemporary Australian context most approaches to supportive housing rely on social housing. This definition includes supportive housing in either scattered-site housing with outreach support or single-site housing with onsite support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The support provided can vary from low through to high intensity, but extends beyond one off, short-term 	<p>Partnership between support and housing providers to address vulnerability and provide permanent housing with support.</p> <p>Addresses wide range of issues/needs potentially or actually impacting on a tenancy.</p>



	Program	Description	Focus
		<p>or time-determined transitional engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of tenancy and support services are integrated, but decoupled in that accessing housing is not contingent upon accessing support or complying with the requirements of support providers. <p>(Parsell et al, 2015:1).</p>	
4	Sustaining Young Tenancies	<p>The Sustaining Young Tenancies Program was developed by Brisbane Youth Service to respond to unmet needs among young people struggling to sustain their tenancies in social housing.</p> <p>The focus of the program is to provide support that ensures the success of a tenancy.</p> <p>The program is designed to build a partnership between support staff, young tenants and housing providers. Young people have access to education about housing and being a tenants and also focusses on other important life skills.</p> <p>The program has measured improvements in client wellbeing. The scope of support can cover any issue impacting on a tenancy including relationships, life skills, mental and physical wellbeing, education and employment outcomes.</p> <p>Success factors are identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> early intervention collaboration between BYS and housing providers mobile (outreach) support delivered to young tenants 	Young people and the sustainment of tenancies through a partnership between housing providers, support providers and the young person.
5	Rough Sleepers' Initiative (UK)	<p>The RSI emerged in the late 1990s and through improved contact and assessment, and tenancy sustainment support, independent evaluations showed a reduction in rough sleeping by two-thirds.</p> <p>A critical ingredient of this success were tenancy sustainment teams who worked with</p>	Multi-faceted program including Tenancy Sustainment Teams aimed at providing support to sustain a tenancy for as long as it was required.



	Program	Description	Focus
		<p>people once housed to sustain their housing outcome.</p> <p>This was based on a recommendation by the evaluation team focussed on the critical importance of adequate support as a priority for future programs aimed at ending homelessness. These recommendations sought to address limitations in previous approaches where support was limited to between six months and a year when it was known that tenancy problems for some households will emerge after this period.</p> <p>The TSTs were funded for geographical areas and they could work with tenants for as long as support was needed. The teams also included some specialists in mental health, substance use and working with specific populations such as young people. (Randall and Brown, 2002).</p>	
6	Care facilitation and case coordination	<p>A number of care coordination mechanisms have emerged in relation to mental health and also in response to homelessness. These include group meetings of front line workers striving to respond to extreme vulnerability through coordinated housing and support plans. Groups are regionally focussed and include structured facilitation of the discussion with informed client consent to the process. Meetings involve housing, homelessness and other support providers. Care coordination groups is currently a funded initiative in Queensland in nine identified locations.</p>	<p>Focus on vulnerability and complexity driving the need for service integration.</p>



Appendix 2: Sector engagement

The following engagement took place to develop this framework:

- Q Shelter training on tenancy sustainment (2016-2017) and training on working with complex tenancies (2018-2019)
- Q Shelter meetings with members and stakeholders in one to one meetings
- Q Shelter involvement of regional delegates and CEO Forum in workshop questions about a tenancy sustainment framework November 2018 and July 2019
- Specialist focus group on tenancy sustainment
- Regional forums in eight locations with structured input to a tenancy sustainment framework (2019) (over 400 attendances)
- The Community Housing Operating Model Workshop in November 2019 (over 60 attendances)
- The COVID-19 Learning Exchange (226 attendees from 120+ agencies over 14 events)

The following set of questions has been used in various combinations to elicit sector input:

- What is the practice of supportive tenancy management?
- How is it differentiated from direct support provision?
- What are the key elements of an integrated framework aimed at sustaining tenancies?
- What are the key roles and responsibilities in a tenancy sustainment framework for Queensland?
- How important is service integration and coordination and how can this be achieved with respect for rights and information privacy.
- What are the key elements of a successful support component within this framework?
- What capacities and capabilities does the combined workforce need?
- What else is important in relation to tenancy sustainment?



Attachment 3: DRAFT Program Logic

Program name	Sustaining Tenancies Framework
Program purpose	To sustain vulnerable tenancies and reduce homelessness
Outcomes	Reduced homelessness Sustainable housing provision
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits and support periods • Support and tenancy plans • Sustained housing outcome • Protocols and agreements between agencies • Inspections • Engagement activities (community and tenants)
Inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing support programs and funding base • Community housing, social housing, affordable and private housing infrastructure • Rental income • Training for industry • Tenancy sustainment support program including investment.
Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of exits from homelessness into sustainable housing • Number of sustained tenancies over time • Subjective measures of improved wellbeing (outcomes star) • Measurement of client identified goals (tenancy and support plan) • Rent arrears, rent forgone, reduced cost of repairs – business sustainability for CHPs.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacity to deliver supportive tenancy and asset management • Develop and implement a tenancy sustainment support program • Enable specialist support providers to contribute to tenancy sustainment outcomes • Ensure access to tenant advice, advocacy and education • Implement a community and tenant engagement and participation program • Develop and sustain regionalised care coordination mechanisms • Develop the housing and homelessness industry capability to deliver tenancy sustainment outcomes
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive tenancy management • Direct support to find, get and keep housing • Direct support to address any identified wellbeing domain • Tenant and community engagement activities • Tenant advice, advocacy and education services • Care coordination and service integration • Workforce development activities and events
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless people • Tenants • Community Housing Providers • Private housing system



Program name	Sustaining Tenancies Framework
Program purpose	To sustain vulnerable tenancies and reduce homelessness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specialist Homelessness Services• General support services• Specialist support services• Funding bodies including multiple State agencies• Real Estate Industry• General community