



DEPARTMENT of
HEALTH *and* HUMAN SERVICES

Child Youth and Family Support

Integrated Continuum of Support Model
for homeless people
and those at risk of homelessness

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Executive Summary

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) is a support program assisting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, through a range of support and supported accommodation services. Funding is provided to SAAP by both the Commonwealth and State Governments, with the program being administered by the State Government. \$9.313 Million was administered from SAAP to 41 organisations in Tasmania in the 1999-2000 financial year. During 2000-2001 expenditure in this program will be increased to \$11.187 Million.

In the past, mix and distribution of services has not always allowed for a good match between the needs of the client and the service that is provided. The proportion of funds allocated between service functions will be altered, thereby increasing the proportion of funds provided to Early Intervention, Assessment and Case Planning, and Transitional Support. The Government is committed to continuing to provide the best support and services possible for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This commitment includes the maintenance of the existing level of funding. Government is also committed to balancing support for new services and the continuous improvement of existing services, and ensuring that funding is strategically and flexibly directed to areas of highest need and in a way which promotes best practice and improves the programs effectiveness in meeting client needs.

In 1998/1999 SAAP was evaluated at both the National and State levels. It was concluded that, whilst SAAP is a vital and successful program which has responded well to the needs of homeless people, there were a number of areas where there was scope for further development.

Government aims to improve the outcomes for homeless people through an increased emphasis on early intervention; increased diversity and flexibility of assistance available; the development of more effective pathways to stable accommodation through better linked services; and enhanced management and administration arrangements. This will be achieved in partnership with community-based service providers.

A number of principles will guide the future provision of services. These include:

- services are to be tailored to achieve the best possible outcome for clients;
- services and the service system should result in improved collaboration and service delivery arrangements;
- an increased emphasis on early intervention; the safety net of emergency accommodation and other crisis support services continue to be available for the homeless; and
- services should be integrated into local communities.

Government will coordinate the provision and planning of services for homeless people through the establishment of an Integrated Continuum of Support.

The Integrated Continuum of Support model allows for the development of comprehensive responses to the diverse needs of homeless families and individuals at a local and regional level, whilst ensuring that clients have access to a similar range of services throughout Tasmania.

Services in the Integrated Continuum of Support are grouped into four clusters based on function. These clusters are referred to as modules. The first three modules include direct services for clients whilst the fourth contains service system development activities.

Module 1 (Assessment and Support) contains the crisis assessment and crisis support, early intervention, and, information and referral services.

Module 2 (Immediate Emergency Accommodation) includes the management of crisis beds, shelter based crisis accommodation and increased access to non-shelter based crisis accommodation.

Module 3 (Transitional Support) includes long-term case planning and support, transitional support, access to sustainable and long-term accommodation, and the provision of high supported accommodation for specific groups.

Module 4 (Service System Development) includes the provision of training, quality assurance arrangements, community and knowledge network maintenance at the local, regional and statewide levels, and evaluation.

The Integrated Continuum of Support features an increased involvement of local and regional communities in the planning of services and ongoing coordination of services. Regional networks will be established. The service system increases the capacity of local communities to develop service responses to localised need.

Section 1: Overview of the Integrated Continuum of Support

Introduction

Homelessness is a complex phenomenon with a devastating impact on people's lives. It has multiple causes and afflicts many groups within our society. Homeless people are denied not only accommodation and its associated benefits of privacy, security and stability but also the network of family and community supports normally associated with home. Many homeless people also have a range of complex needs requiring a range of interventions.

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) was established in 1984 as an Australia wide coordinated response to homelessness. SAAP is a support program assisting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, through a range of support and supported accommodation services. Funding is provided to SAAP by both the Commonwealth and State Governments, with the program being administered by the State Government.

Tasmania experiences a lower level of homelessness than most States and Territories, spends more per head of population on services for homeless people and spends more on each client accessing SAAP services.

However evidence suggests that the demand on existing services is growing, while the emerging trends in the composition of the homeless population are also demanding new and innovative responses.

In Tasmania during the 1999-2000 financial year \$ 9.313 million was administered from SAAP to a total of 41 organisations providing crisis accommodation and related support services.

Government is committed to:

- maintaining the base level of ongoing financial commitment to SAAP;
- balancing support for new services and continuous improvement of existing services; and
- strategically and flexibly directing funding, including growth funding, to target areas of highest need, promoting best practice, and improving the program effectiveness in meeting client needs.

This reform is primarily about using existing resources differently. It is not about the reduction of resources. An additional \$.508 Million will be provided commencing in the 2000-2001 financial year.

What is the Integrated Continuum of Support

The Integrated Continuum of Support is a way of describing the range of services available to assist clients to establish and maintain secure accommodation. It is a way of coordinating and planning the provision of services to meet client needs. The Integrated Continuum of Support is based on an understanding that homelessness is not caused merely by a lack of shelter, but involves a variety of underlying unmet needs including physical, economic and social needs. The Integrated Continuum of Support model allows for the development of comprehensive responses to the diverse needs of homeless families and individuals at a regional and local level, and ensuring that clients have access to a similar range of services throughout Tasmania. The Integrated Continuum of Support facilitates locally-based service providers and communities to be involved in the planning for the provision of services and sharing in decision-making around issues relating to homelessness.

Services provided through SAAP are part of an overall response to meeting the needs of those who are at risk of becoming homeless or who are homeless.

The Integrated Continuum of Support includes;

- preventative services,
- early intervention services,
- information and referral services,
- crisis services, and
- support services including skill development.

Government's response to homelessness is not limited to services funded from SAAP. Responsibility for the provision of the full range of services is shared between the three tiers of Government and the community. Services funded from SAAP include early intervention, information and referral, crisis responses and the provision of support.

Principles that guide the provision of services through the Integrated Continuum of Support.

Government, in partnership with community-based providers, is committed to providing services that will minimise the effect of homelessness.

▪ *Services tailored to achieve the best possible outcomes for clients*

All clients are unique, their needs often being complex and diverse, requiring services developed specifically to meet these needs. Flexibility in service delivery is encouraged. Services will focus on, and be reviewed against, the results that are achieved for clients.

- ***Improving Collaboration and Service Delivery Arrangements***

Responsibility to respond to the needs of clients is often spread across a range of organisations and Government departments. The services provided to clients should be seamless and aim to minimise the disruption to the client's life. Service arrangements will require collaboration in the planning and delivery of services at a regional and local level. Service arrangements will emphasise the complementary nature of services provided and maximise the opportunities for the development of a service continuum.

- ***Early Intervention***

The SAAP Memorandum of Understanding defines early intervention as the provision of support services to a person immediately before and at the point of homelessness. The disruption caused by homelessness can be minimised through the provision of timely support services. Increased support for families and individuals still accommodated and at risk of becoming homeless will be provided. Intervention will also be provided at the earliest possible point of crisis to minimise ongoing effects of homelessness.

- ***Safety Net***

Government will continue to ensure that those who are homeless have access to a safety net of services, including emergency shelter and other crisis support services. These services will continue to be funded from SAAP. The Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates that only 12% of those who are homeless use shelter based crisis accommodation. The continued development of new and improved ways of providing services will be an important feature of the Integrated Continuum of Support.

- ***Integration in Local Communities***

Housing opportunities and support should be integrated into the local community minimising disruption in peoples lives, and enhancing participation in community activities, employment and education. Services will maximise client's choice, independence and self reliance.

Distribution of services

Homeless people should have access to a similar range of services throughout the State. It is acknowledged that clients will not need to access all services.

Services funded through SAAP are described on a modular basis. Clients have access to services within each module on a regional basis.

Services provided are tailored to individual needs and funds are available for the purpose of developing individually tailored and innovative responses for clients with high needs.

Services are grouped in the following modules. Modules 1, 2 and 3 contain direct services for clients whereas module 4 contains service system development activities.

Module 1 – Assessment and Support

- Early intervention
- Crisis assessment / crisis support
- Information / referral services

Module 2 – Immediate Emergency Shelter

- Management of crisis beds
- Shelter based crisis accommodation
- Increased access to non shelter crisis accommodation

Module 3 – Transitional Support

- Long-term case planning and support
- Transitional support
- Access to sustainable and long term accommodation
- Provision of high need supported accommodation for specific groups

Module 4 – Service System development

Including

- Training
- Quality assurance
- Community and knowledge network maintenance at local, regional and Statewide levels
- Evaluation

Government distributes funds across the State on a regional and modular basis. Distribution of funds to regions is informed by distribution of population and regional variations.

Service coordination and planning within local and regional communities

Increased community participation in the planning and provision of services is integral to the Integrated Continuum of Support. Emphasis has been placed on

- Increased community involvement in planning responses to meet the range and diversity of clients;
- Increased involvement of community partners; and

- Ongoing promotion of good service delivery practice.

Regional coordination networks are to be established. These networks will have responsibility for assisting in planning for the provision of services and advising on how functions within each module can best be provided within regional and local communities. Local communities will have input into the needs and make up of their local SAAP support system. Local networks will feed into the regional network focussing on areas of unmet need.

Regional networks are known as Partnerships Against Homelessness and include representatives from related policy and service delivery areas.

Government continues to be responsible for decisions in relation to the distribution of funding. Decisions will be informed by the advice provided by the regional networks.

Financial issues

A recent evaluation of SAAP, conducted by the University of Tasmania, established the need for a number of reforms in the way that funding is distributed and managed. Areas identified included the need to:

- address funding inequities across service types, target groups and geographic locations;
- increase diversity of service type through increased flexibility of funding arrangements; and
- increase clarity of funding arrangements including moving towards linking funding to client outcomes.

Section 2: Providing an Integrated Continuum of Support

Building a better service system

Homelessness is complex social problem affected by changes in economic and social policy. The needs of homeless people are diverse and often require multi-faceted responses. Effective, long lasting solutions tailored to individual needs require:

- linkages with other areas of Government and community responsibility;
- collaborative policy development within jurisdictions and between levels of Government; and
- service delivery coordinated across programs.

Homeless people are entitled to the best possible services that available resources can provide. There is a growing acceptance that traditional ways of working and organising may not always be the best way of achieving the desired outcomes. In the past services have been developed in an unplanned and often piece-meal way. The service that clients have received often dependant on where they lived, and their knowledge of the services available. Often the service provided was not tailored to meet the client's needs. Little emphasis was placed on the importance of the relationship between the client and supports within their local community.

The new service arrangements emphasise the complementary nature of services, maximise opportunities for the development of a service continuum, and encourage flexible, timely client-focused service interventions. Services will also have an increased emphasis on working with clients within their communities of choice and aim to assist clients to remain within those communities.

A Modular Approach

A modular approach is a way of describing groups of related service functions. This way to describing services systems is not new. It has been used internationally (e.g. Housing and Urban Development, USA) and within Australia (e.g. Coordinated Care in the Health and Aged Care Industry and Settlement Services for Immigrants through the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs).

The modular system was chosen to describe the range of services funded from SAAP due to:

- the importance of including related services providers and systems to work in partnership to address planning and service delivery issues relating to homelessness;
- the ability to meet dual and conflicting expectations that government prescribe the range of service being provided and that the community is best placed to determine how services should be provided at a local level,
- increased opportunity at a local level to influence the range and provision of services; and

- ability to meet the agreed principles underpinning the provision of an integrated continuum of support.

The four modules are:

Module 1: Assessment and Support

Emphasis will be placed on the provision of services, which

- focus on those at high risk of becoming homeless, provided linkages with other program areas and services with shared responsibility for the early intervention in and prevention of homelessness, and
- intervene when individuals and families are in accommodation but at risk of becoming homeless.

Module 2: Immediate Emergency Accommodation

Emphasis will be placed on the provision of services which

- increase access to diversity of the range of crisis accommodation available,
- improve the match between the crisis accommodation offered and the clients support and security needs,
- increase provision of case management and support services independent of, and provided separate to, short term shelter base crisis accommodation.

Module 3: Transitional Support

Emphasis will be placed on the provision of services which

- match support to client need,
- tailor services to provide for clients with complex needs,
- allow support to follow the client,
- use of funds to purchase accommodation and essential support services,
- utilise common assessment and case management skills across all services,
- provide specialist support services.

Module 4: Service System Development

This module includes the following areas, which were identified for development through the restructure process

- quality assurance,
- accountability and reporting arrangements,
- linkages between policy development and service delivery,
- integration between SAAP and other service systems,
- performance, knowledge and skills of service providers and program management.

Service functions from within each module will be available on a regional basis. At a local level service functions will be provided from modules 1 and 3. These include Assessment and Support services and support in long term housing options.

At a regional level service functions are provided from modules 1, 2 and 3 and include assessment and support services, immediate emergency shelter and support to access sustainable long term accommodation.

Some services functions are provided on a Statewide basis. These include quality assurance arrangements, training arrangements and other aspects of the service system development module.

Client Pathway to secure accommodation

Support is focussed on assisting the client to gain and maintain appropriate accommodation.

Diagram 1 demonstrates:

- clients may access support services through either immediate emergency shelters or support services;
- the intensity of support will vary according to the complexity of the client need; and
- the level of support will decrease as the client's capacity to maintain accommodation increases.

Homeless people often have many short accommodation placements, prior to developing skills or establishing circumstances necessary for the maintenance of appropriate accommodation.

CLIENT CONTINUUM OF SUPPORT

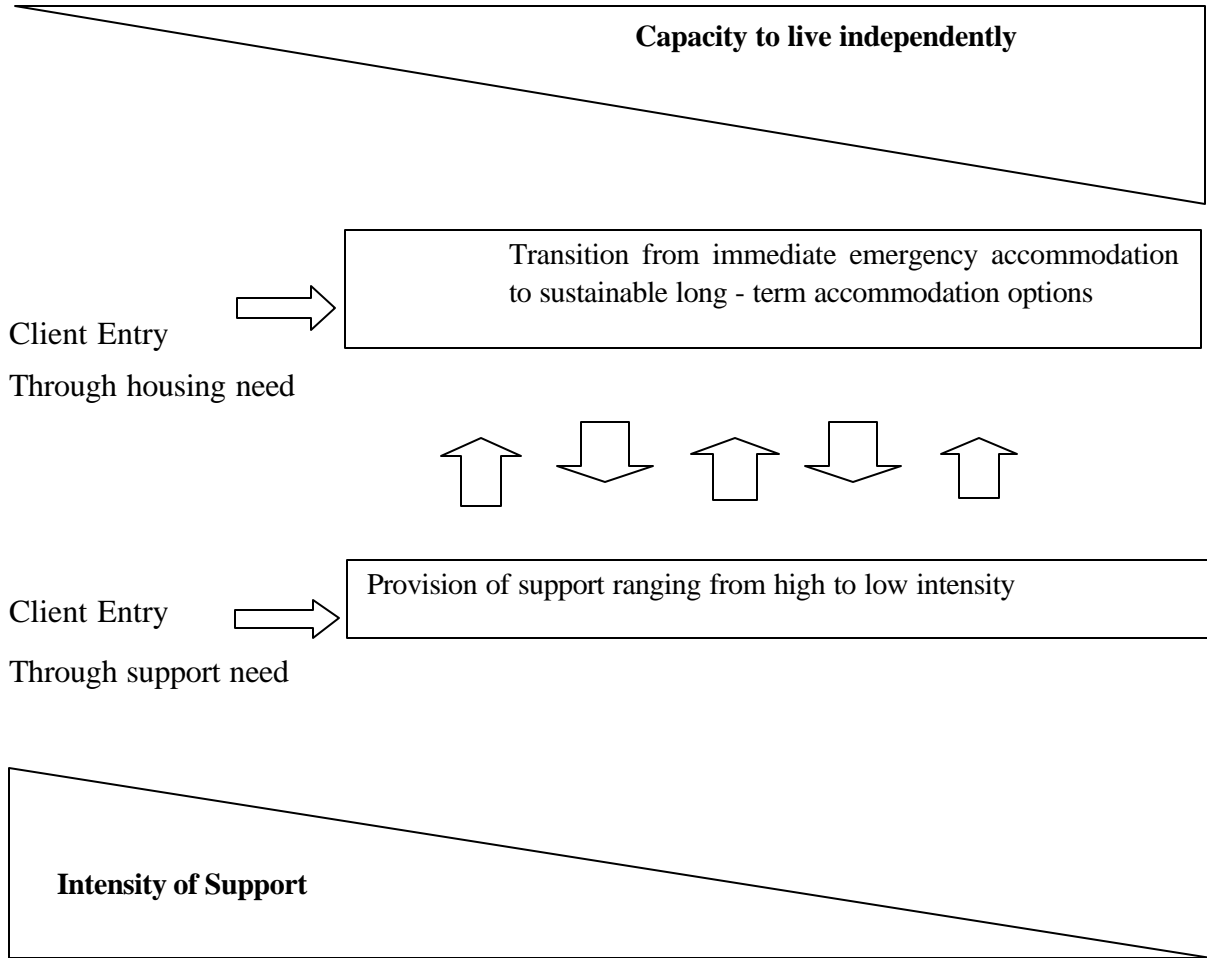


Diagram 1

Service Delivery System

This model features an increased range of points of access to SAAP services through

- a support service,
- shelter based crisis accommodation,
- accommodation services (e.g. Bond Assistance services, Housing Tasmania); or
- other community services and related service systems e.g. Domestic Violence Crisis Service.

Other features include an increased emphasis on Early Intervention and an increased capacity to tailor services to meet individual client needs through the use of brokerage funds.

Crisis intervention assessment and crisis care planning takes place at first point of contact with the service system. The new system features enhanced and standardised assessment of crisis need. Clients may be referred appropriately to other service systems dependant upon that need. The new service system features an enhanced relationship with related service providers.

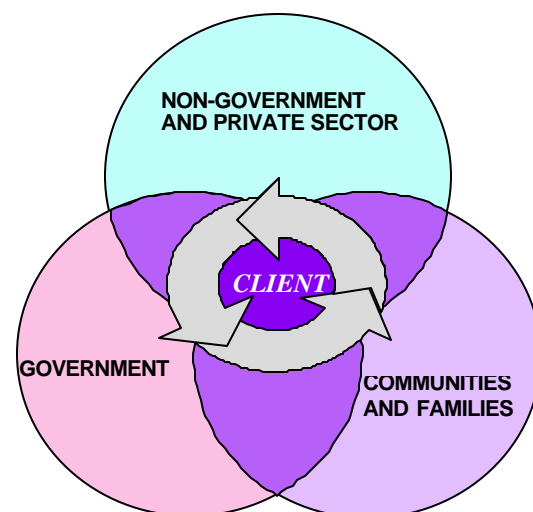
Direct service provision to the client may consist of supported access to immediate emergency shelter. The new system features an expanded range of options for immediate emergency shelter, aiming to ensure that clients are provided with appropriate types of emergency shelter and support.

Direct service provision may also consist of support within existing accommodation. The system allows for greater support for clients at risk of homelessness while still within their existing accommodation thereby intervening to avert that risk.

All clients can expect to access enhanced and standardised longer-term case planning and support services with an emphasis on flexible support that follows the client.

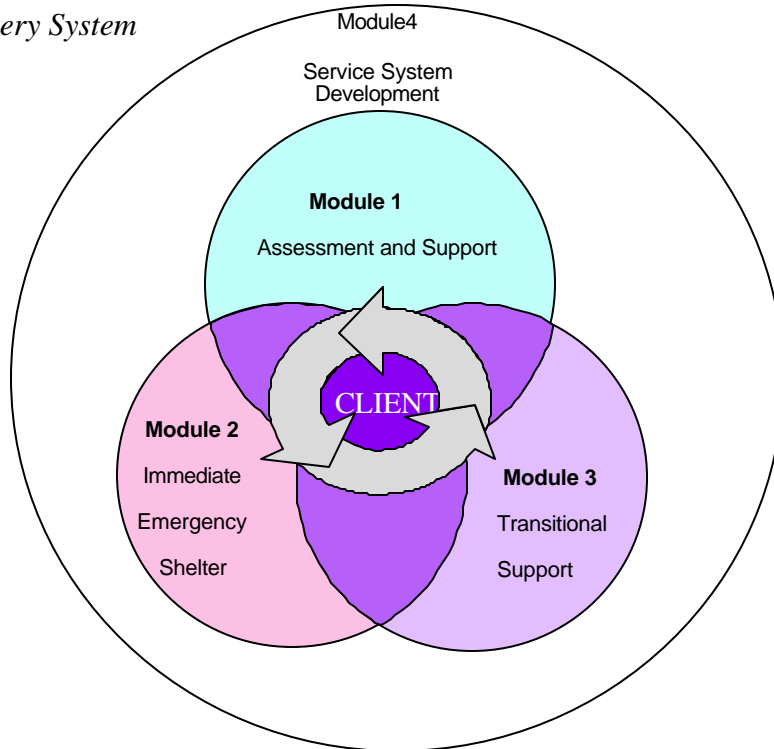
Diagram 2 represents integrated responses achieved through partnership.

Diagram 2



Service Delivery System

Diagram 3



Client need may be met through service functions from all modules.

Clients may enter and exit the service system at all points.

Client Access and Exit

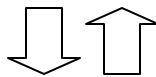
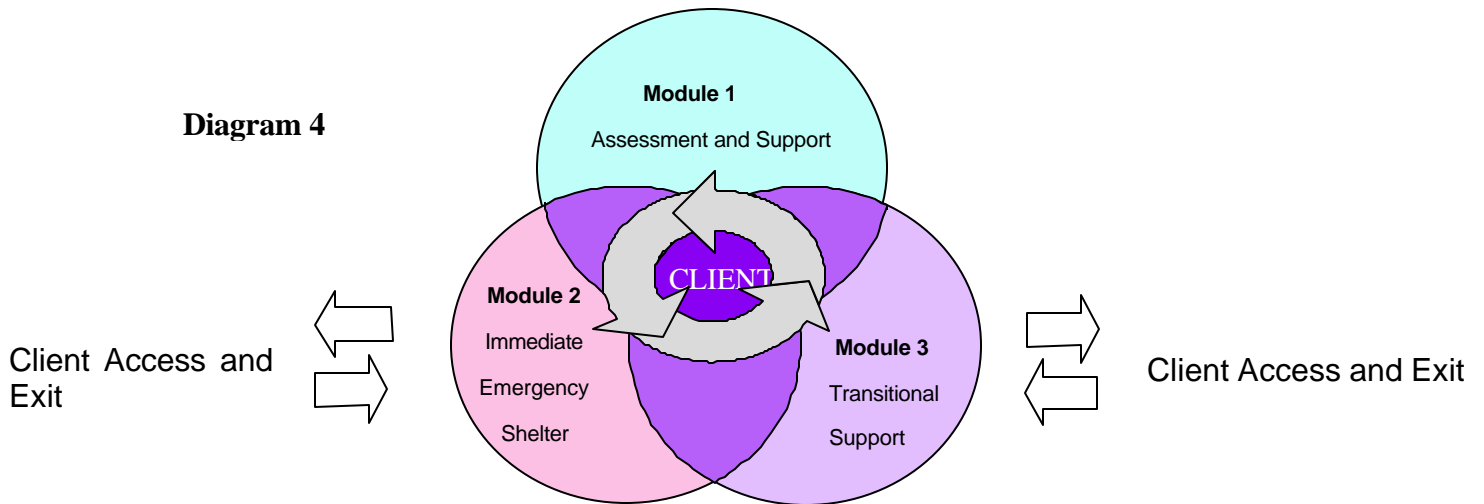


Diagram 4



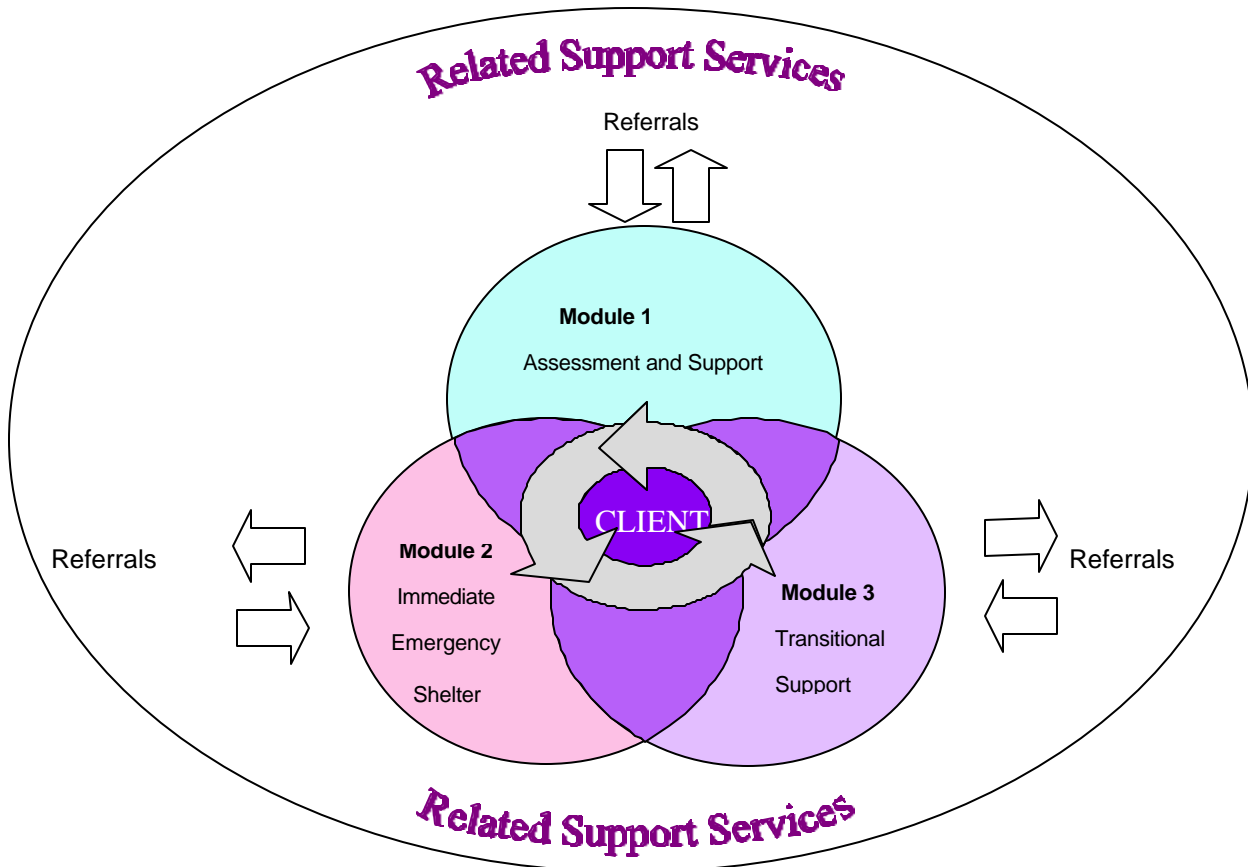


Diagram 5

Process for moving towards new service system

Government allocates funding against each module within each region, and will develop localised regional networks with responsibility to advise on the mix of services within these modules.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in partnership with community sector providers has developed guidelines to inform the provision of funding to community based service providers. These guidelines were developed within the joint government/ community Changing Relationships project. Copies of these have previously been circulated to all funded organisations. They provide a framework for decisions regarding changing funding priorities and establish a set of principles to guide decision-making about the funding process. This framework will be to guide ongoing flexible funding arrangements.

Within these guidelines DHHS has committed to undertake consultation prior to deciding on appropriate models of funding.

Three broad process options are identified in the guidelines:

- direct offers
- selective requests proposals
- open request proposal.

These guidelines indicate that it is desirable to provide a variety of process and funding options, enabling appropriate consideration to be tailored to the circumstances relating to specific programs, service areas and provider groups.

The following processes are proposed for the transition of existing services into the restructures service system:

- Existing services will be assessed against service specifications. These assessments will be undertaken by DHHS and will determine the level to which existing services meet the service specifications.
- Where existing services match service specifications and there are no outstanding quality assurance issues, organisations may be offered a preferred provider status and directly selected to provide the service.
- Where the current funded level of service delivery in a region exceeds the proposed level of service delivery or services do not match service specifications, sponsoring organisations may be provided the opportunity to reshape services provided and management arrangements on a voluntary basis. This may include the reconfiguration of management and organisational structures. In cases of satisfactory arrangements not being met through voluntary participation, an open tender process may be used.
- Where new services are created open tender process will be used. This will include the calling for tenders by public advertising.

All funding processes will be fair and open and unsuccessful respondents will be provided with the opportunity to discuss the reasons why their proposal was unsuccessful.

The process as outlined is consistent with the guidelines developed in partnership with funded community sector providers to guide the funding of community-based service providers. This process also conforms to State Government Procurement Guidelines.

Program Management

The successful implementation of the Integrated Continuum of Support model is dependent on reforms occurring in the management of the program. The following reforms will be addressed over the life of SAAP IV:

- Develop an outcome based reporting and funding model;
- Development and incremental introduction of improved reporting arrangements including client outcome reporting;

- Development of a quality assurance framework;
- Development of clearer funding arrangements;
- Development of appropriate advisory mechanisms;
- Development of a client feedback and complaints mechanism;
- Development of an evidence base to inform service delivery including
 - commissioning Tasmanian research that assists in the understanding of demand management strategies;
 - promoting increased use of data to inform program and service development;
 - promoting research activities that support the strategic intent of SAAP IV ; and
 - improving the provision of data from services to the National Data Collection.

It is envisaged that these reforms will be managed and undertaken by Government and have not been included in a module.

Section 3: Service System Specifications

Organisations funded through SAAP to provide services within the Integrated Continuum of Support are expected to provide quality services consistent with the principles outlined in the system description.

DHHS allocates funding against the elements within modules of the Integrated Continuum of Support (as outlined below). Organisations may deliver single or multiple elements of a module.

Detailed description of modules

Client Brokerage Funds

Modules 1, 2 and 3 incorporate the use of brokerage funds.

Funds are available for brokerage. Additionally approval may be given for service providers to convert funds for use as brokerage.

Client brokerage funds are used to assist in the development of individually tailored and innovative responses for clients with high needs. This capacity may also be required to purchase services only available through the private market.

These funds will be employed only where it is not possible to arrange timely access to existing services and resources.

Funds will be for the purchase of services and resources considered essential to achieve agreed outcomes. These may include:

- services such as specialist counseling, which are purchased on a one-off or short-term basis;
- short-term crisis accommodation through the private rental market; and /or
- one-off material aid or resources.

Module 1: Assessment and Support

Module 1 includes the capacity for

- provision of information and referral to appropriate support services;
- crisis assessment and crisis care planning;
- provision of support to individuals and families at risk of homelessness; and
- provision of support for individuals and families in immediate emergency crisis accommodation.

In order to achieve this Module 1 providers will feature

- standardised assessment at points of entry to the system and enhanced referral procedure;
- capacity for intensive support services for clients with high and complex needs;
- specialist assessment and support responses for people with mental health and alcohol and drug issues; women escaping domestic violence; children; and young women who are pregnant;
- the capacity to link in external support to a client when accommodated in a shelter-based emergency crisis facility, and
- provision of support when needed by clients.

To assist this end module 1 providers are expected to adhere to the following benchmarks

- provision of crisis assessment and care planning within 24 hours of primary contact,
- provision of access to longer term planning/ support required and housing options within 2 weeks; and
- culturally appropriate assessment and support arrangements.

Module 2: Immediate Emergency Accommodation

Module 2 includes the capacity for

- clients within each region to have access to emergency accommodation;
- specific shelter based crisis accommodation facilities for
 - young people (up to 20 years – range may be negotiated depending upon specific need resultant from regional variations);
 - women (including women escaping domestic violence);
 - single men (20 year plus);
 - multi purpose/ target group crisis accommodation;
- the purchase of non shelter based short term crisis accommodation, and
- immediate emergency accommodation which may be co-located with longer term supported accommodation .

In order to achieve this Module 2 providers will feature

- access to an increased range of options for immediate emergency shelter;
- direct provision of specific shelter-based emergency accommodation to one or a number of the above mentioned groups,
- the ability to provide linkages to specialist support services for children, women escaping domestic violence, youth, clients with substance abuse issues and mental health needs;
- the ability to link in additional support to clients in shelter based crisis accommodation facilities from providers located separate from that accommodation, and
- timely intervention (intervention provided at the earliest possible point of crisis to minimise ongoing dependency on acute or chronic services).

To assist this end Module 2 providers are expected to adhere to the following benchmarks

- participate and provide services as a part of 2nd stage assessment and longer term planning processes with clients based in shelter based crisis accommodation facilities within 2 weeks of crisis assessment;
- provide linkage to support provided through Module 3 for inclusion in 2nd stage assessment and longer term planning processes with shelter based clients; and
- length of stay in emergency accommodation be apportioned based on client need with a target of 2 weeks.

Module 3: Transitional Support

This module is designed to provide support for clients to access and maintain sustainable long-term accommodation. Support includes early intervention at Module 1.

Module 3 includes the capacity for the provision of

- longer term planning and support for clients, both those at risk of homeless and those who are homeless;
- capacity to link clients with sustainable longer term housing options;
- specialist support services; and
- increased support for private landlords accommodating people at risk of homelessness including boarding house and rooming house establishments.

In order to achieve this Module 3 providers will feature

- capacity for support to follow the client through a range of accommodation options created through the provision of support services detached from accommodation options;
- provision of transitional support independent to the type of accommodation a client is accessing or housed in,
- generic long-term assessment and planning providers,
- generic assessment processes at points of entry to the system;
- the provision of funds for the purchase of specialist support and assessment services where otherwise not available; and
- close linkages with tenancy and financial support services.

In order to assist this process module 3 providers are expected to meet the following benchmarks

- participation in 2nd stage assessment and longer term planning processes with clients based in shelter-based crisis accommodation facilities within 2 weeks of crisis assessment; and
- facilitation of access to potential long-term housing option within 3 weeks.

Module 4: Service System Development

Module 4 includes a capacity for the following

- provision of skill development at service and regional level that is flexible and is capable of providing a range of competencies reflecting the complexity of client need;
- a quality assurance framework which will indicate compliance of services with agreed standards and procedures;
- provision of a regionally based service which will foster partnerships at the local and regional level that advance the goals of integrated community planning and service delivery;
- fostering of partnerships at the local level that assist in the provision of support services at the local level; and
- enhanced use of information technology at service and program administration levels including the development of a shelter-based crisis accommodation register.

In order to achieve this, Government will provide funding Module 4 for the

- provision of training and review of training priorities to ensure consistency with the reform agenda and an appropriate match between training provided and competencies required;
- provision of training wherever possible linked to National training package,
- consultation, development and implementation of a State-wide quality assurance framework which will indicate the compliance of services with agreed standards and procedures; and
- establishment and ongoing management of a State wide bed vacancy register.

Creation of partnerships against homelessness

DHHS will facilitate the development of partnerships against homelessness at State and Regional levels. Partnerships include support services, service providers from both Government and the community, along with community representatives and others with shared responsibility to provide services for the homeless. These partnership networks are to assist in the development of a service system that best meets the needs of homeless people through

- addressing local area needs within the established service mix;
- advice on outcomes for homeless people as a consequence of the interventions, including
 - development and maintenance of non-SAAP links within the framework of addressing the complex needs of homeless and those at risk of homelessness;
 - the maintenance of service delivery principles established during the restructure;
 - provide advice on the service system capacity to meet need appropriately;
 - development of shared policy approaches; and
 - developing links between Housing Tasmania's and Child Youth and Family Support planning processes.

Partnerships are to be developed at three levels. These are

1. Statewide Partnerships against Homelessness Consultation Forum
2. Regional Partnership against Homelessness Council
3. Local Partnerships against Homelessness

Each level will have different roles and responsibilities and inform project management in a different way.

Government retains overall responsibility for the allocation of funds. Funds are allocated against each module within each region. The regional networks are to provide advice on the mix of functions within these modules.

In addition to regional partnerships there is provision to establish local partnerships. These partnerships will be created with the assistance of regional officers from Housing Tasmania and Child Youth and Family Support and will be established in “communities of interest”. Local partnerships will be time limited and task-focused, dependent on need within that community. These partnerships will provide advice on local issues into the regional planning.

Operational details for the partnerships will be developed through a project early in the life of SAAP IV.

1. Statewide Partnerships against Homelessness Consultation Forum

Role

To provide DHHS advice to inform policy development and service delivery those at risk of homelessness or those who are homeless.

This group will consist of representatives from the three tiers of Government, peak bodies representing organisations providing services to homeless clients, Government services such as mental health, alcohol and drug, child and family services, employment services, education and representatives of Aboriginal communities.

Scope of Responsibility:

This group has overall responsibility to provide advice to inform policy development and to improve protocols and working relationships between agencies delivering services for those at risk of homelessness and those who are homeless.

Terms of reference

The Statewide forum is to undertake the following:

- Evaluate and make recommendations about the effectiveness of working relationships between services and support agencies which could result in the more efficient provision of services;
- Develop a plan for more effective relationships between agencies providing services to homeless people or those at risk of homelessness;
- Provide advice on the effectiveness of regional and local networks; and
- Provide advice on and to assist in policy development.

Membership

May include

Commonwealth Government

- Department of Family and Community Services
- Health and Aged Care
- Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business

Department of Health and Human Services

- Housing Tasmania
- Mental Health
- Drug and Alcohol
- CYFS

Peak Representative bodies

- TASCOS
- YNOT
- SHELTER
- Australian Federation Homelessness Organisations

Other State Government Departments

- Education
- Justice
- Premier and Cabinet (Women Tasmania)

Community Partners

- Aboriginal community representative
- SAAP Representation

Resources

The program management area of SAAP would support this network. An Independent Chair will be appointed.

2. Regional Partnership on Homelessness Council

Role

To provide advice on the development of service system that better meets the needs of homeless people by;

- Providing advice on service system design and the capacity to meet need appropriately
- Enhancing linkages and referral protocols within that region
- Monitoring outcomes for homeless people within the region as a consequence of the intervention
- Conducting regional planning for coordinated programs and local service delivery

Scope of Responsibility

Providing advice within a framework on regional needs to ensure that the service system is coordinated and planned

Terms of Reference

- To provide advice to inform Departmental planning around regional variations in service requirements,
- Capacity to advise on allocation of funds to functions within and between modules
- To work with local partnerships in communities of interest,
- To ensure that the regional planning contributes to the continuous improvement of a service system that provides positive outcomes for homeless people.

Membership

May include

Commonwealth Government

- Centrelink

Department of Health and Human Services

- Housing Tasmania

- Mental Health
- Drug and Alcohol
- CYFS

Peak Representative bodies

- organisations representing special interest groups
e.g. Domestic violence coordinating committees

Other State Government Departments

- Education
- Justice
- Premier and Cabinet (Women Tasmania)

Community Partners

- Aboriginal community representative
- Private landlords representative
- SAAP Representation

Related Service Providers

- Employment and Training Services
- Child care support agencies
- Reconnect services
- Non-English Speaking Background Organisations
- Disability Organisation

Resources

Each regional group is to be supported by a regional housing community development officer and Child Youth and Family Support project officer. Support may include the facilitation and organisational support, and assistance to coordinate the strategies recommended by this group.

An independent chair will be appointed.

There could be opportunities for a shared position incorporating a number of different areas of Government.

3. *Local Partnerships against Homelessness*

Role

To develop and maintain partnerships at a local level as a response to local need including;

- Providing recommendations to regional networks,
- Providing local linkages to improve practice in early intervention, shared assessment
- Establishing an advisory group that would coordinate support to homeless clients within a local area.
- Coordinating support services within the local area
- Providing local peer support to service system development module including training needs, network maintenance and information referral

Scope of Responsibility

Established in communities of interest to provide short term responses to homelessness.

Terms of Reference

To form local alliances focussed on delivering outcomes to homeless people.

To respond to local need and contribute to planning at a regional level.

Resources

Coordinated support between local government, Housing Tasmania, Neighbourhood Houses and CYFS.

Membership

Membership will be determined according to the needs being addressed and may include the following;

- SAAP Service providers
- Child care services
- Community Health Centres
- Neighbourhood Centres
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Mental Health Services
- Housing Tasmania Representatives
- Private Real Estate representatives
- Local Govt. representatives, community
- CYFS staff
- Police
- Education
- Justice

How this may work

Issues relating to homelessness vary in communities. For example a community may be experiencing an increase in adolescents experiencing homelessness. In such a case Departmental Officers could assist members of the local community in developing a response. This may include negotiation with the regional partnership to effect increased access to available support services. Longer term and support needs identified by the local committee could be fed into the Departments planning processes through the regional partnerships.

Section 3: Funding Distribution

Background

In the 1999-2000 financial year \$ 9.313 million was administered from SAAP to a total of 41 organisations providing crisis accommodation and related support services. During 2000-2001 expenditure in this program will be increased to \$11.187 Million.

Government has committed to:

- maintaining the base level of ongoing financial commitment to SAAP;
- balancing support for new services and continuous improvement of existing services; and
- strategically and flexibly directing funding, including growth funding, to target areas of highest need, promoting best practice and to improving the program effectiveness in meeting client needs.

In 1998 SAAP was independently evaluated by the Center for Public Management and Policy within the University of Tasmania. This evaluation identified the need for a number of reforms in the distribution and management of funding including the need to:

- address funding inequities across service types, target groups and geographic locations;
- increase diversity of service type through increased flexibility of funding arrangements, and
- increase clarity of funding arrangements including moving towards linking funding to client outcomes.

The existing distribution funding is based on historical allocations, which were determined on a submission basis over a fifteen- year period. Allocations have not been adjusted according to shifts in population and need. Inflexibility of funding practice has arguably contributed to inequities in distribution between regions, service types and target groups.

Tasmania experiences a lower level of homelessness than most States and Territories, spends more per head of population on services for homeless people and spends more on each client accessing SAAP services.

Levels of unmet need indicate that not all people who are eligible access SAAP-funded services. Many people seek support from friends, supports within their local communities and local (non-SAAP) support workers. The Australian Bureau of Statistics attempted to count the number of people who were homeless in the 1996 census. At that time it was estimated that nationally only 12% of homeless people were in SAAP accommodation. Approximately half of the homeless were staying temporarily with other households; 20% in improvised dwellings and 22% staying in boarding houses on either a short term

or long-term basis. This report does not identify those who were homeless (or at risk of homelessness) and receiving SAAP support

The 1996 census indicates that Tasmania had the third lowest rate of homelessness of States and Territories with an estimated 43.9 people homeless per 10,000 of population. This compares with Victoria (41per 10,000), South Australia (48.1), New South Wales (49.4). Northern States and Territories experienced significantly higher levels with Western Australia (71.5), Queensland (77.3) and Northern Territory (523.1)

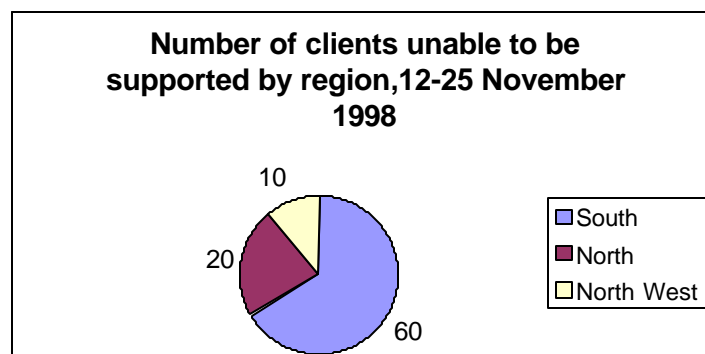
At the time of the Census there were approximately 2,014 people homeless in Tasmania, and 19% of this population were accommodated in SAAP services.

The Productivity Commission through the Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision provides comparisons of service delivery between the States. In the recent report “Report on Government Services 2000 Volume 3 Community Services and Housing” it is indicated that in 1998-99, on a per capita funding Tasmania has the third highest funding level. (The range of levels was from \$9.40 per capita in Queensland to \$28.40 per capita in the Northern Territory. Tasmania’s level of funding was \$21.80) Additionally the Commission reports that the recurrent cost per client accessing SAAP services was the third highest of all States and Territories. The range was from the Northern Territory at \$1,346 through to the Australian Capital Territory at \$ 2,863.

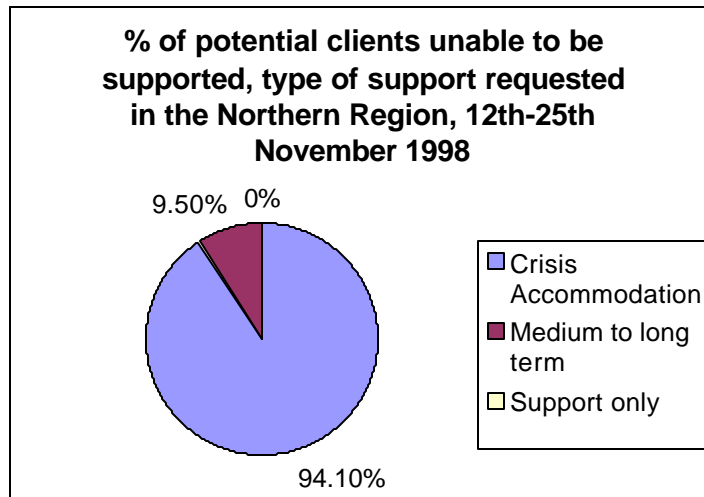
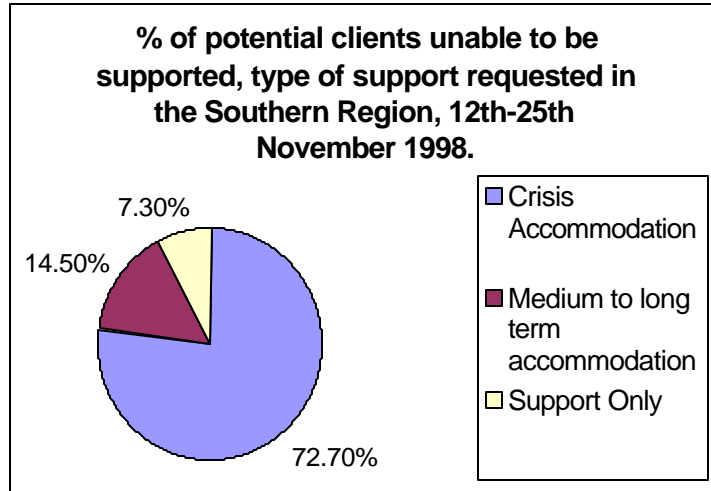
Levels of unmet demand

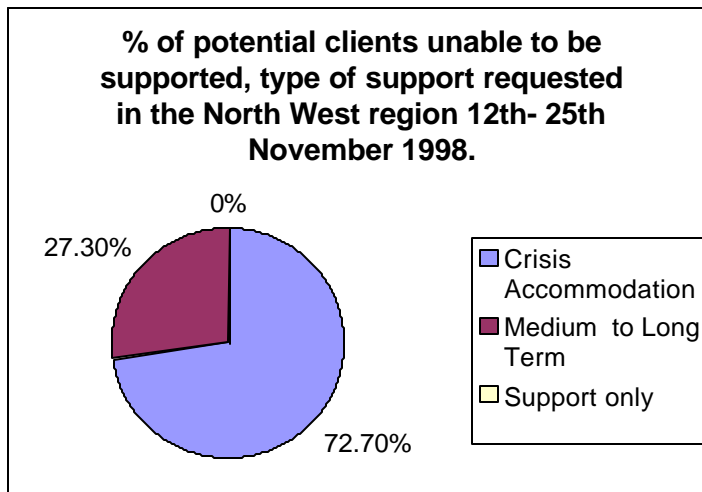
Unmet demand arises when a service is unable to provide supported accommodation or support to potential clients requesting assistance. Not all those who wish to access services provided by SAAP can do so.

The level of unmet demand is measured through the National Data Collection. In 1998 data was collected on unmet demand over a two-week period. This data shows the number of people reported unable to access SAAP services were as follows:



The nature of request unable to be supported were as follows:





Levels of unmet demand vary between the regions. Figures account for approaches to the number of funded services. This occurs because of

- data only being collected by services funded from SAAP;
- homeless people migrating to where the services are provided (e.g. increased requests for support not being met in the South); and
- clients requesting the same service from a number of organisations (and not having the need met) will be recorded multiple times.

It is interesting to note that whilst the Southern region is the only region to report requests for “support only” not being met, it also has the highest proportion of organisations providing “support only”.

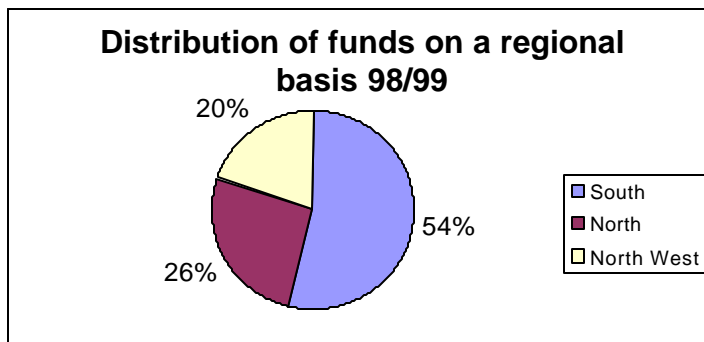
The issue of unmet need is complex. Many services report that proposed reforms of the service system may lessen the level of unmet need. Reforms identified include:

- increasing the emphasis on early intervention through the provision of support prior to homelessness;
- increasing the range of crisis accommodation options available,; and
- increasing exit options for those in shelter-based crisis accommodation.

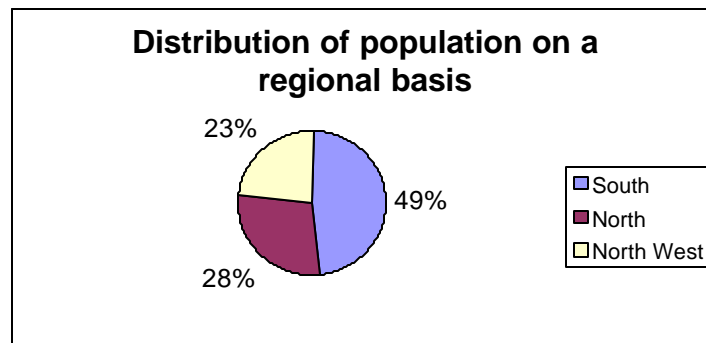
Distribution of funding

Funding arrangements in the new service system will feature increased flexibility, allowing for funds to be targeted to areas of highest need. Knowledge of need and unmet demand will be developed during SAAP IV and used to inform future funding arrangements. A feature of the future process for decisions will be an increased role for local communities and regional networks in providing advice on the most appropriate service mix. Future arrangements for the distribution of funding will aim to maximise responsiveness through increased flexibility.

The 1998/1999 regional allocations were as follows:

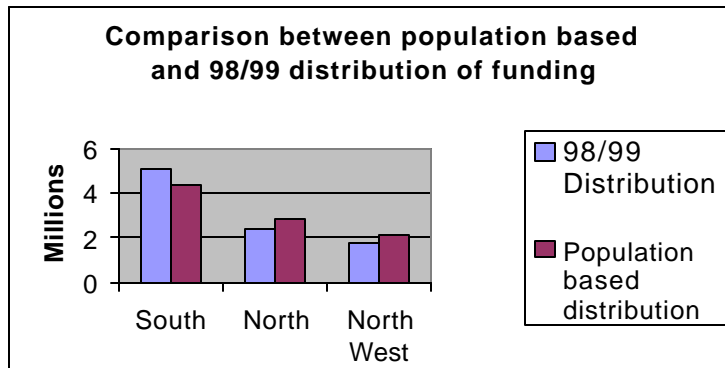


The 1996 census indicates that the regional distribution of population is as follows:



Government believes that people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, should have access to a similar range of services through out the State, and that services should be integrated in the local community and aim to minimise the disruption to a person's life. Based on population the Southern region has a proportionately higher level of funding allocated.

Funds will be distributed on a population basis for 2000/2001. The following adjustments will be made:



The following table summarises the financial adjustments between regions that will occur moving to a population-based distribution.

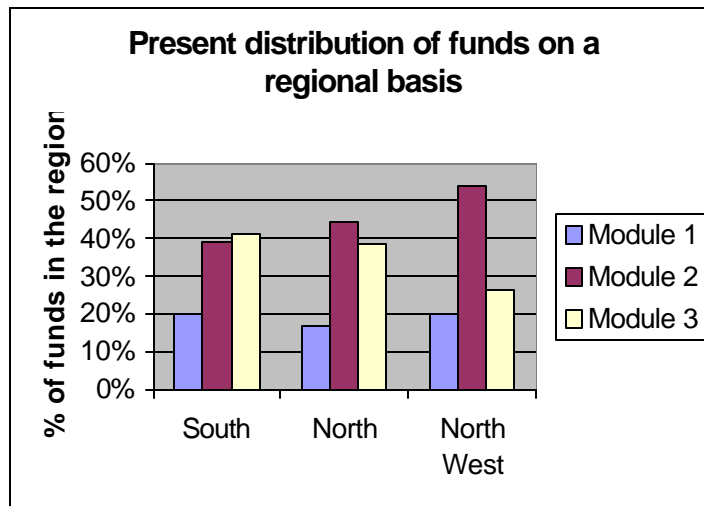
	South	North	North West
98/99 Distribution	\$ 5.08 M	\$ 2.42 M	\$1.81 M
Population based	\$ 4.53 M	\$ 2.82 M	\$2.15 M
Variation	\$ 55.M	\$.20 M	\$.34 M

Allocation of funds to service functions

The previous three sections of this paper describe the range of service functions to be provided in each region and groups these service functions into four modules. Depicting the distribution of 98/99 funding against proposed modules is indicative at best. Existing contractual arrangements between the Department and funded service providers inadequately describe the service functions being purchased by Government. Classifications used by the National Data Collection are broad, and do not align with the service functions identified in the Modules.

Distribution of funding against functions has been based on audits undertaken of services in 1998/99, and from information gathered during service visits. This distribution takes into account that most funded organisations provide a range of services across the three service delivery modules.

The following graph identifies the indicative distribution of funding against Modules on a regional basis.

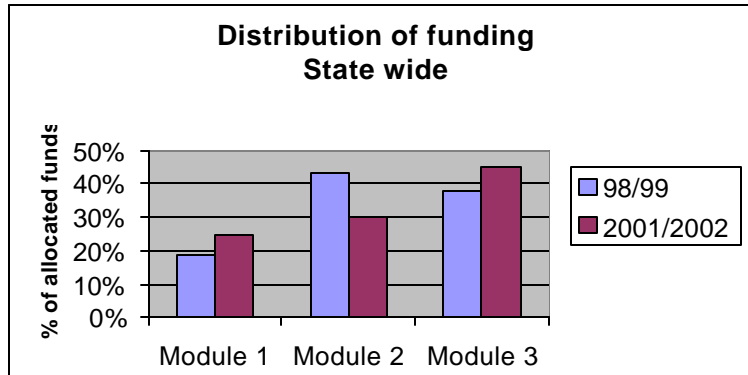


The restructure of SAAP aims to achieve

- an increased proportion of funds dedicated to early intervention through redirecting resources ,
- increased flexibility of support, including a greater proportion of support to be provided in a clients community,
- an increased range of crisis accommodation options available,
- increased assessment and case management services independent of, and provided separate to, shelter based short term crisis accommodation, and
- increased capacity for the support to follow the client through a range of accommodation options.

Changes to the current allocation of resources and the way that services are provided will occur during 2001/2002 funding period.

Distribution of funding against Modules will change as follows:



SAAP Glossary of Terms

Assessment

Whilst assessment is an ongoing process, it is useful to differentiate between crisis assessment necessary for crisis intervention and a more detailed assessment with a view to planning.

Crisis/initial assessment involves looking at a person's needs in relation to their immediate situation including safety, health, income and well being, food warmth and shelter.

Assessment with a view to ongoing planning is more comprehensive and involves an holistic approach incorporating strengths, hopes and preferences, as well as needs. It occurs over a period of time and is an ongoing process.

Case Management

A collaborative planning approach to the achievement of individual client outcomes, and includes assessment. It may also include appropriate referrals, provision of direct assistance and the use of mainstream services for each client as appropriate. It may involve the development of a personal plan or support agreement developed in consultation with each client following assessment. It may include linking clients with the range of supports that they will require after leaving SAAP. Case management operates from the initial point of contact with the client to exit from the SAAP program. It may involve some follow up of clients.

Client

A person in receipt of services under SAAP

Client focus

Starting with the needs and wishes of the client rather than what services you can provide. Services should be flexible and provide an individual response to client needs.

Community partner

Those people or organisations with an interest in SAAP that is broader than funded SAAP service providers. SAAP's community partners include service providers, academics, researchers, clients, non-government organisations in related fields and government agencies in Commonwealth and State/Territory jurisdictions.

Domestic Violence

Refers to criminal assault in the home and includes spouse (family violence)abuse.

Early Intervention

The provision of support services to a person immediately before and at the point of homelessness

Homeless

The SAAP Act (s4.1) states that a person is homeless if, and only if, he or she has inadequate access to safe and secure housing

Homeless people

Includes:

- a) people who are in crisis and at imminent risk of becoming homeless; and
- b) people who are experiencing domestic violence and are at imminent risk of becoming homeless

(SAAP Act, s4.1).

Integrated Continuum of Support A way of describing the range of services available to assist clients to establish and maintain secure accommodation. It is a way of coordinating and planning the provision of services to meet client needs. The Integrated Continuum of Support is based on an understanding that homelessness is not caused merely by a lack of shelter, but involves a variety of underlying unmet needs including physical, economic and social.

The Integrated Continuum of Support model allows for the development of

comprehensive responses to the diverse needs of homeless families and individuals at a regional and local level, whilst ensuring that clients have access to a similar range of services throughout Tasmania. The Integrated Continuum of Support concept also encourages locally based service providers and communities to be involved in the planning for the provision of services and sharing in decision-making around issues relating to homelessness.

Modular

An approach to describing a service system that includes a connected set of function groupings.

Prevention Strategies

Those strategies that prevent the reoccurrence of homelessness and minimise ongoing dependency on chronic or acute services and link with other services with a prevention and early intervention focus.

Referral

When a SAAP agency accepts the person concerned for an appointment or interview.

SAAP

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

SAAP Service or Service Provider

A person or body that provides services under

SAAP. SAAP services provide a range of assistance including, case management; assessment and referral; supported accommodation; brokerage; early intervention; outreach; mediation, including re-establishment of family links where appropriate; counseling ; advocacy.

The Safety Net

Access to a safety net of services, including emergency shelter and other crisis support services

Service Delivery Model

The structure through which a range of SAAP functions are provided for clients

Support

Assistance other than supported accommodation, provided to a client as part of an ongoing support relationship between a SAAP agency and the client. Support also includes contact with, or work on behalf of, a client for generally more than one hour on a given day. Support may be provided to the client individually or in group sessions. A person whose request for support or supported accommodation is not met may receive one-off assistance but, by definition, cannot receive support

Support needs

The level of assistance required by an individual to carry out a task or participate in an activity.

Support Planning

A written plan of action. It specifies agreed upon priorities, goals and strategies designed to meet the needs of the person who receives service

Support Services

Assistance other than supported accommodation provided to a client as part of an ongoing support relationship

Timely Intervention

The intervention provided at the earliest possible point of crisis to minimise ongoing dependency on chronic or acute services.