

SA Housing Authority

Update

This message has been sent to the housing and homelessness sector

Friday, 29 May 2020

Report from the first meeting of the Sector Reference Group

The first meeting of the Specialist Homelessness Sector Reference Group (SRG) was convened by independent chair Ms Loretta Reynolds on Tuesday 26 May 2020.

Minister for Human Services, Michelle Lensink, welcomed and thanked the 10 sector representatives for their participation. Minister Lensink highlighted the importance of progressive reform to strengthen the homelessness system to ensure people receive the best support. SA Housing Authority Chief Executive, Michael Buchan, noted the importance of continuous improvement and value in working as a collective to provide positive outcomes for the most vulnerable people in our communities.

The [sector representatives](#) were joined by SA Housing Authority representatives Ian Cox (Head of the Office for Homelessness Sector Integration), Annie Francis (Senior Manager Support Strategy and Reform) and Warren Smith (Project Consultant). Ken Patterson (BDO) is also attending SRG meetings to provide probity advice.

The SRG noted the [Terms of Reference](#) and were presented with an overview of the reform principles. The SRG provided comments and input with further work to be undertaken to refine the reform principles before being shared by SA Housing Authority across the sector.

Mr Cox provided a [Sector Briefing](#), which has been provided online previously, noting the key reform goals and the need to work collaboratively to define success and outcomes. It was noted that the reform process is iterative and does not have an 'end game', rather a continuous improvement framework needs to be embedded across the system, both within SHS providers and within SA Housing Authority.

The SRG discussed a range of topics including:

- The importance of involving people with lived experience (both in workforce and customers) in system design
- Data is critical in design and decision making processes, specifically data beyond H2H
- Partnership and collaboration includes many different models that should be explored
- The importance of clearly defined outcomes that are required and outcomes measures
- Desire for flexibility for organisations to redesign their service models to better meet agreed outcomes
- Challenges in addressing prevention which requires cross sectoral interface
- How to define prevention, and the homelessness system's role to provide targeted and intensive intervention

- Whether targeted intervention is best addressed by different cohorts, as not all cohorts have the same needs and points of intervention
- Don't lose the evidence! There is extensive existing research, pilot programs and data which creates a robust evidence base for future system design.

There was also a discussion around the key elements of the service eco-system that the reforms should aspire to. The following elements were provided by SRG members:

- **Informed by People** – Customer at centre; lived experience (clients; tenants; customers) and workforce insights.
- **Outcomes driven** – A preference for frameworks specific to various cohorts; define impact objectives specific to each (for example, success is different for different cohorts).
- **System Integration** – Housing/homelessness/plus broader interrelated parts – child protection; education; health/mental health; corrections; justice.
- **Leadership** – Governance; quality; transparency; collaboration; culture; owning/accountabilities for collective effort.

The SRG is keen to meet frequently to further address the above points with a strong focus on delivering key advice around the reforms and the outcomes being sought.

Loretta Reynolds

Chair, Sector Reference Group

Ian Cox

Head, Office for Homelessness Sector Integration



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