



IMPLEMENTING AND PLANNING FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

A proven approach to addressing challenges homelessness creates for individuals, families and communities...and for service systems experiencing high utilisation of acute, institutional and tertiary settings.

Supportive Housing required a place based approach.



Well designed for mixed multipurpose use & environmental sustainability



Long-term, secure, stable & affordable



Tailored support & healthcare on-hand



Specialist property management



Concierge & security



Connected community

Components of Supportive Housing

1. Well Designed for Mixed and Multipurpose

All Supportive Housing designs share important features, including spaces for private household activities and community interaction. Each housing unit provides adequate living space for essential daily activities, such as cooking, eating, sleeping, and studying. Each unit has a private bathroom, kitchen, and washing facilities. Integrated or single-site Supportive Housing locations typically have access to common space where tenants can choose to interact with one another and with visitors. For further information see Attachment. Alternatively well designed share housing can be developed.

2. Affordable, Secure and Stable Housing

People are housed first into affordable, income-based, long-term housing with no time limit on residency where lease conditions are met. The household pays no more than 25 to 30% of its income towards rent, and the lease is identical to non-supportive housing. Supportive Housing is adaptable to different locations and can be delivered in a range of styles and at various scales. Supportive Housing may also include well designed and supported shared accommodation models. Affordability is achieved through subsidised public housing; community managed or owned housing and/or rental subsidy to community housing in private market.

3. Support Connected to Subsidised Tenancy

Support is connected to subsidised tenancy, on site or through mobile support for duration of need and subsidy. Tenants are linked to support services tailored to meet their needs. Case management services are provided directly by staff, who may connect tenants to health, mental health, or substance use treatment, disability, employment services, and age-appropriate services such as children's services or aged care. Services are voluntary and not a condition of the lease. Services may also address needs by having multi-disciplinary teams.

4. Coordinated Support Services and Property/Tenancy Management

Property/Tenancy Managers, concierge and service providers are jointly committed to co-ordination to prevent eviction. Property/tenancy managers maintain the physical asset (leases, building, common areas) and coordinate closely with service staff on tenant needs, concerns and provide connection to mainstream specialist services and community resources. Service providers work directly with tenants to sustain their tenancy by case management to connect them to community-based and specialised support services. Both teams work together to ensure tenants have what they need to be successful. Critical to success of Supportive Housing is formalised coordination to create sustaining tenancy plans with tenants.

5. Safety and Security

Depending on scale and purpose a 24/7 concierge team who provide a welcoming entrance in a high-density model. The concierge team also provide ongoing information, assistance, and support to tenants. In other types of developments, a comprehensive safety and security strategy is designed in for tenants, visitors, and the community. Concierge team may comprise of security trained member and support worker.

6. Connected Community

Supportive Housing facilitates community connection for tenants. The tenants are supported to connect with community-based resources and activities, to interact with diverse individuals (including those without significant vulnerabilities and disadvantages), and to build strong social support networks. Quality Supportive Housing is in areas accessible to transportation, healthcare, and community amenities. Supportive Housing providers are responsive to local community feedback and involvement of tenants within the community.

7. Environmentally sustainable

The Building is designed to meet environmental standards for energy and water efficiency. Tenants are set up with energy efficient washing machines, fridges, dryers, dishwashers, air conditioners/heaters, and hot water systems.

A Guide for Supportive Housing

Supportive Housing relies on specifically designed management support models to suit tenants' needs. By targeting these needs or shared designed accommodation, coordinating relevant services, and considering the number of supportive housing units suited to each development, a tailored management model makes for sustainable projects. Organising rental assistance and funding for support services and broader operational needs is essential when targeting households with low to no income and multiple support needs to successfully live independently in the community.



Targeting Population Needs

Planning and creating a Supportive Housing project is focused on meeting the needs of the targeted tenants. The target population for the project will influence decisions about the project's goals, the housing model selected, the services plan offered, the community support process, the selection of partners, and capital, operating, and services financing options.

Supportive housing provides support to a range of needs and can be culturally adapted by design to a diversity of population needs including (but not necessarily limited to):

- » Women and children leaving Domestic and Family Violence
- » Single or Two parent families with children experiencing homelessness/exiting from child protection, preventing removal of children to foster care, seeking reunification
- » Youth experiencing homelessness, detention, foster care or residential facility
- » People living with mental illness
- » Aging populations with co-morbidity
- » People with disabilities
- » Persistently (or chronically) homeless
- » People with poor physical health
- » People with alcohol and other drugs use
- » People exiting hospitals, corrections, emergency accommodation, child protection, domestic and family violence.

Supportive Housing

Planning and considerations

Tenant-Centred Considerations

Who is the building or project being designed for?

Where is the proposed location and how does it support tenants?

What specific needs need to be considered? (e.g. Mobility, access to specialised services, disabilities, mental health, alcohol and other drugs use disorders, primary health).

What specific design is appropriate to meet these needs?

Mix: Does the project have:

- a. A social mix of tenants.
- b. Mix of low, medium, and high needs within targeted population.
- c. What components gender/age?
- d. Which is the eligibility criteria?
- e. Can the general community access resources available in the building?

Financial Considerations

Based on the target population and the operational model, the financial requirement for operations and services can be estimated.

Who pays capital costs?

What is the ratio of tenancy management needed for each tenant?

Can the rental income cover management costs?

Which ownership models are Community Rent Scheme (CRS) eligible?

Where are the financial gaps?

What funding can be targeted to make the development viable?

Who will fund support services?

Operational Considerations

Supportive Housing ownership and operational models are varied (see Table 1). Based on the target tenancy population and the housing type, planning should consider the specific owner, the operational needs, and the required level of coordination with support services.

Who will own the asset?

Who will provide ongoing property and tenancy management?

Who is the best partnership to develop, maintain, and evaluate the support services.

Table 1. Ownership and Management Options.

Ownership	Assets Management	Property Management	Tenancy Management	Support Services
Government	✓	✓	✓	Partnership
Community Housing	✓	✓	✓	Partnership
Government ownership partnering with	✓			Partnership
Community Housing		✓	✓	
Philanthropic dependent on contribution	TBD	TBD	TBD	Partnership

Examples of Supportive Housing

There are several successful Supportive Housing projects in Australia that demonstrate the benefits of integrating long-term housing with supportive services. These include, but are not limited to...



Single Site

Brisbane Common Ground

Common Ground Queensland – Property Management
Micah Projects – Support Services

Common Ground Sydney

Mission Australia Housing

Elizabeth Street Common Ground

Launch Housing

Common Ground Adelaide

Housing Choices Group

Scattered Site

Keeping Families Together, Brisbane

Common Ground Queensland – Property Management
Micah Projects – Support Services



Integrated

Viv's Place, Victoria

Transitional housing for women and children exiting domestic and family violence and into homelessness. – Launch Housing

Wiveringham, Victoria (Aged Care)

Supportive housing for older people who are homeless or vulnerable to homelessness. – Wiveringham Housing

Youth Foyer Southport, Queensland

Transitional housing with tailored support services for youth aged 16–25 years.

Supportive Housing Design

Housing design that is fit for purpose

Well considered design of Supportive Housing environments promotes independence, wellbeing, and a sense of community for the individuals and families who may require the additional support. The following attributes are provided as a checklist for planners and project teams.

Affordability

Supportive Housing needs to be designed to ensure affordable for tenants, considering both the initial construction costs and ongoing maintenance and operational expenses.

Community Integration

Supportive Housing is designed to encourage social interaction and community integration. Common spaces such as community rooms, gardens, or shared kitchens can facilitate socialisation and a sense of belonging among tenants. Support Services funding incorporates activation of these spaces.

Flexibility

The design may allow for flexibility in accommodating the diverse needs of tenants. Spaces should be adaptable and easily modified to meet the changing needs of individuals or households over time.

Neighbourhood Integration

The design should aim to integrate supportive housing into the surrounding neighbourhood, fostering a sense of belonging and reducing stigmatisation. Architectural design, landscaping, and community engagement efforts can contribute to this integration. The building itself can also be a community asset by incorporating local community needs for use in the design.

Privacy and Dignity

Supportive Housing should prioritise privacy and dignity of tenants. Each individual or household should have their own private living space, including bedrooms and bathrooms, and communal areas should be designed to allow for both social interaction and personal privacy. In shared accommodation models having low ratio to shared bathrooms.

Safety and Security

The design should prioritise the safety and security of tenants. This includes measures such as secure entrances, appropriate lighting, surveillance systems, emergency response systems, and concierge, security services.

Social Connection

Supportive Housing can be designed for individual or shared occupancy, for example in an aged care or a disability project with the appropriate space for services to be provided with balanced privacy and connection.

Supportive Amenities

The design should incorporate amenities that support the wellbeing and independence of tenants. These amenities may include on-site health facilities, counseling rooms, recreational spaces, or access to community services and resources.

Sustainability

Supportive Housing should provide housing environmentally sustainable to set up tenants with energy efficient. This can involve the use of renewable materials, and the integration of green spaces or gardens to promote ecological wellbeing. All designs need to consider renewable energy systems and energy efficient to offset costs for washing machines, fridges, dryers, dishwashers, air conditioners/ heaters, and hot water systems.

Universal Design

The principles of universal design should be applied to ensure that the housing is accessible and usable by people of all ages and abilities. This includes features such as zero-step entrances, lever door handles, and visual cues for those with hearing impairments.

References

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