

The Low Cost Accommodation Support News

Community Connections Program | Older Persons High Rise | Housing Support for the Aged | SAVVI Supporting Connections

Summer 2009

Welcome to edition eight of the Low Cost Accommodation Support News, a newsletter for program managers, workers, and regional staff involved in the Low Cost Accommodation Support programs funded through the Aged Care Branch of DHS. **This edition features -**

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Highlights from the State wide forum - 2008

It was very pleasing to see a record number of attendees at the November forum (over 140 registrations for both days). This is a clear indication that the forum is providing opportunities for sharing the work of each of the programs as well as hearing from invited speakers about the broader issues that inform and shape our practice.

David Green provided a timely and interesting presentation on the issue of increasing complexity in Supported Housing. His presentation gave some interesting insights into the way the service system has changed over the past 25 years.

In particular, David talked about complex causation and changes to the social and economic fabric that has occurred since the early 1980s. He gave the example of the way health and community services operated as separate service systems whereas now we know they are clearly interrelated.

The second part of David's presentation focussed on key learning's from the MACNI project of which he is co chair person. He spoke about holistic assessment and formulation, care planning and more specifically, components of a complex care plan.



David Wright-Howie provided us with an international perspective on homelessness and some useful comparisons on how Australia is traking in its response to the homeless population.

Staff from the HACC and Assessment unit gave an overview of the work being undertaken in implementing the Active Service Model and spoke about some of the demonstration projects that have been implemented in Victoria.

The Living Skills and assessment manual was launched by Claire Ames CEO of Western Region Health Centre and a copy of the manual was provided to each participant of the forum. For further information about the Living Skills and Assessment manual please contact Ian Symmons at Western Region Health Centre.

The concurrent sessions once again provided an excellent cross section of the work that is undertaken by each program and a record number of abstracts were received including for the first time a presentation from the SAVVI program which described the development and work of the Barwon cluster over its first two years of operation.

Improved access to SRSs' service information via the Infoxchange Service Seeker website

An inter-Service liaison between Inner South Community Health Service and Infoxchange Australia's *Service Seeker* has improved access to current SRS services information through the updating of the SRS's Services listings on the *Service Seeker* website.

As part of the HEAP (HACC Equity and Access Project) Worker's work with the 13 SRS Proprietors in the HEAP catchment area, the updating of the website was carried out in conjunction with a series of liaison visits to major Referring Agencies in the region, with the intention of improving and strengthening referral pathways for prospective Residents.

The aim behind this venture was to make available current and accurate information about SRSs services to Agencies, to enable better informed and more appropriate Referrals of prospective Residents to SRSs, and giving better choice and decision-making to Clients, their families and carers.

A key part of the service improvement plan, has been promotion of the use of the DHS SRS Referral Form, which is currently mandated for use by Mental Health Agencies.

As a not-for-profit Agency, Infoxchange is not able to provide for the database to be regularly updated, but has an external access facility for the listings to be updated by approved Service-users. This external updating facility means that the information listed on the Website is current and complete, and has been of value to Proprietors.

As a service-development and business improvement tool, the Service Seeker provides a space where Referring Agencies, prospective Residents and the community services sector can access current information relating to individual SRSs', the types of services they provide and the Resident group they provide for.

For Referrers, the lack of up-to-date information about SRSs, and the Support specializations that the individual SRS facilities provide, can sometimes contribute to the mis-matching of clients with SRSs, or to delays in discharge planning and community placement.

For SRS Proprietors, this dearth of information 'upstream' can impact on their Service in various ways, -in intermittent or spasmodic referrals to their facility, in times of bed availability and non-availability, or inappropriate referrals.

These are systemic issues in which the lack of availability and access to key information at various points tends to negatively impact on the referral/placement process, and where improved referral pathways and a timely exchange of accurate information would provide ongoing benefits to all involved. The *Service Seeker* option provides readily accessible information on-line to all service users.



John McMillan
HACC Equity & Access Worker
Inner South Community Health Service
Tel: 9520 3131
jmcmillan@ischs.org.au

SAVVI Supporting Connections (formally SRS Service Coordination & Support program)

Some of you will be aware that the SAVVI program took over the funding of the SRS Service Coordination & Support program mid last year and renamed the program *Supporting Connections*.

This program is now being expanded across Victoria to most SAVVI clusters with funds flowing from January this year.

Supporting Connections services have the dual objectives of (a) improving resident social participation and access to services and (b) SRS viability. A key focus of Supporting Connections is to build skills/capacity of proprietors and staff to identify resident needs, improve care planning and better manage challenging behaviours.

Supporting Connections builds on and incorporates the four existing SRS Service Coordination and Support Services that have been operating in North and West, Eastern and Southern metropolitan regions since 2003. For further information about this program please contact Kath Howlett or Shane McDonald at DHS, 50 Lonsdale St Melbourne.

Meeting dates for 2009

Community Connection & Housing Support for the Aged programs

Wednesday March 11 – 11am-1.30pm

Tuesday 21 July – 11am-1.30pm

OP Hi Rise Support Program

Thursday 16 April – 10am- 11.30am

Wednesday 2 September – 10am-11.30am

SAVVI Supporting Connections

Wednesday 21 January – 11am-1pm

Wednesday 11 February – 1.30-3.30 pm

Wednesday 22 April – 2.00 - 4.00pm

Wednesday 24 June – 2.00 – 4.00pm

Statewide Forum

November 2009 (dates to be announced)

Useful Information

Need help with implementing the MDS V2.01?

Contact the HACC Help desk on Ph: 9096 7255

E-mail – haccmds@dhs.vic.gov.au

Victorian HACC Website

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hacc>

Office of Housing Website

www.housing.vic.gov.au

Contacts

If you have a story, event or a program you would like to share with colleagues from other Low Cost Accommodation Support Programs please let us know and it can be included in the next edition of this newsletter (word limit 500 words or less).

All correspondence to Shane McDonald at Department of Human Services, SRS & Accommodation Support Unit, Level 12, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne 3000.

Ph: 9096 7227

Email: shane.mcdonald@dhs.vic.gov.au

Low Cost Accommodation Support Programs Webpage

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/services/lowcost/index.htm>