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# **SUPPORTED TENANCIES PROGRAM & SERVICES**

## **Shelter SA Forum**

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# Background

- Increasing customers with high and complex needs
- Category 1 applicants 13% in 1992/1993 up to 60% in 2004/2005
- Tenancy management challenges



# Housing Support Coordinators

- Provide a case co-ordination, consultancy & brokerage of support services
- Do not provide support
  
- Evaluation of this role
  - fewer evictions
  - increased networking within the region
  - more positive engagement with customers
  - better coordination between agencies



# Demonstration Projects

- ❑ Intensive Debt Management
  - ❑ Financial Management Project
  - ❑ North West Families Project
  - ❑ Service Systems Change
  - ❑ Supported Housing in the North - Mental Health
  - ❑ Successful SA Housing Trust tenancies
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# Successful Tenancies

- The Successful Tenancies Demonstration Project was designed to link families and individuals with multiple needs and those at risk of homelessness with support services to enable them to sustain their accommodation.
- **How it works -**
  - Housing Managers refer to Housing Support Coordinator
  - Referral to NGO to engage support
  - Services such as independent living, financial etc



# Evaluation

- ❑ Support offers sustainability for tenants
  - ❑ Service agencies working together
  - ❑ Focus on early intervention and prevention and on outcomes
  - ❑ Intensive tenancy management and flexibility
  - ❑ Develop staff skills and strategies to increase early identification
  - ❑ Conditional leases to encourage engagement
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# Social Inclusion Initiative Recommendation 13

- That the Department for Families and Communities extend and expand supported tenancies projects across the Housing Trust and develop pilot projects in the Aboriginal Housing Authority providing assistance to tenancies at risk of failure and eviction.



# Supported Tenancies Program Results to date - March 2005

- 330 Clients participating across SA
- 71% Females and 29% Males
- 98.5% have retained their tenancies
- 14% ATSI - Housing Trust Tenants
- 4% Aboriginal Housing Tenants
- Primary income sources – Parenting payment -  
Single 36%, Disability Pension 26%  
Newstart 13%



# Identified Issues

- ❑ Primary source of non-Housing Trust debt is utilities (electricity/gas 46%)
- ❑ 57% of clients have Mental Health issues
- ❑ 33% of clients have general health issues
- ❑ Total of 537 children, 65% aged below 9 years

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# SUPPORTED TENANCIES

**Demonstration Project and  
Program**

**In partnership with SAHT**

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# DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

- Port Adelaide / Woodville / The Parks -- worked with adults / families
- Noarlunga / Marion – worked with young people
- Anticipated case loads were around 15 per worker -- total of 55-60 over 2 years
- Actual case loads were as high as 30 at times



# DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

- Evaluation process and data to be collected was not decided until after the support agencies had been selected
- Development affected by differing perceptions of what would be useful to collect:
  - What met SAHT needs and what was useful data for support program agencies?



# Learning from Demo. project

- Some different tenancy issues were experienced across both support agencies
- These were often affected by:
  - Age of clients
  - Length of tenancy e.g. debt levels, long-term property issues, disputes, etc.
  - Timeliness of referral
  - Level of information provided on referral
  - Patience / endurance of neighbours



# Learning from Demo. project

- Support agencies had the task of “selling” the project to SAHT staff who would be making the referrals – emphasis on partnership
- Referrals were slow initially, in part due to a perception by some SAHT staff that they already dealt with / supported these people at risk of eviction and
  - Necessary to clearly define roles of SAHT staff and roles of support agency staff – tenancy management versus tenant (people) support



# Learning from Demo. project

- ❑ It took time to build credibility in some cases, so some quick success stories were needed
- ❑ The role of HSCs, assisted by SDMs, was critical to ensure that Housing Managers referred all tenants who needed support, in order to demonstrate the need for support programs
- ❑ Communication at all levels was of primary importance



# Learning from Demo. Project

- ❑ Regular meeting times for HSCs and support workers assisted working relationships and enabled referrals to be monitored
- ❑ Integrated / collaborative support in a timely way and without artificial time limits allowed staff to tailor contact and active support to client needs
- ❑ It is possible to do more than Service Agreements require and achieve significantly better outcomes
- ❑ Project deemed successful and rolled out across the state on a generic basis



# Outcomes – in Demo. Project and Supported Tenancies Program

- ❑ Very few evictions over 22 - 24 months (1 in south out of about 60 tenancies)
- ❑ Increase in independence of tenants
- ❑ Improvement in tenancies and property management
- ❑ Debt resolution -- often via bankruptcy, unfortunately
- ❑ Lifestyle changes as a result of integrated support being available on a long term basis
- ❑ Children's issues addressed and other supports arranged



# Outcomes

- Decrease in crises and improved responses
- Group work fostered new skills for many tenants in the program:
  - Cooking
  - Mosaics
  - Activities e.g. parenting workshops
- Increased community involvement / education / employment participation
- About 60% of people referred had a mental health issue, diagnosed or undiagnosed
- OCD / hoarding is a major property management issue



# Outcomes

- ❑ Increased respect for and understanding of roles of SAHT & support staff
- ❑ Increase in community understanding of tenants with mental health issues -- leading to earlier intervention when a tenant became unwell
- ❑ Improved response for neighbours who had concerns -- often SAHT and support staff attend together to follow up
- ❑ Homelessness avoided.-- Improved tenancies and more positive engagement in daily living, people more able to cope

