

MIDLAND REGIONAL HOMELESSNESS PLAN

2011 – 2012



Midland Homelessness Strategy

The Strategic and Practical Response to Homelessness in Midland

Background

A Regional Homelessness Workshop was held at Midland on 2nd September 2011 in accordance with the Western Australian Homelessness State Plan 2010-2013 which provides a framework for partnerships between Government agencies and community organisations to address homelessness.

The State Plan outlines the outcomes and key principles for implementing an improved integrated approach to homelessness and aims to bring together all relevant agencies and services to work together to improve circumstances for people who are at risk of, or experiencing homelessness. Responding to homelessness is fundamentally linked to accommodation or housing, it also involves providing support to meet the health, education and employment, social and personal needs of homeless people and those at risk.

The State Plan complements and builds on the agendas of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH), the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and the Western Australian Department of Housing Affordable Housing Strategy 2010 - 2020.

The workshop brought together approximately 50 representatives from a broad range of government agencies and non-government service providers. The direction of the workshop was to review all issues that contribute to homelessness from a Midland perspective, with a focus on identifying priority actions to address identified homelessness issues.

Stage I – In small groups, participants discussed “What is working well”; “What are we worried about”; and “What needs to happen” on four key areas:-

- HEALTH AND WELL BEING
- CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY, FAMILY AND FRIENDS
- EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING
- HOUSING OPTIONS

The issues and ideas raised in Stage I provided the basis for prioritising actions in subsequent stages.

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Stage II – Workshop participants used yellow stickers to indicate three key priority actions from the issues raised in Stage I.

Stage III – In a second process workshop participants then used red stickers to indicate two key priority actions that could be carried out in the next 12 months.

Overall agreement was reached on three priority actions for the Midland Homelessness Plan which will be forwarded to the Midland Leadership Council for implementation through a recommended local homelessness action group:

1. Integrating Service Provision across the Continuum of Services in the Region.

Crisis accommodation for men and women and families in addition to young people is the beginning of what needs to be a continuum of accommodation services. There is a need for a range of integrated accommodation responses from emergency to transitional supported accommodation and tenancy that eventually moves clients towards and into independent living. These continuum needs to be responsive to the needs and capacity of homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless.

2. Promote and Develop a Co-ordinated service delivery to Homeless individuals and families through one-stop-shop strategies.

There is a broad range of services and agencies offering a diverse range of services and supports for individuals and families who are either homeless or at significant risk of homelessness. A co-ordinated strategy to develop a more accessible “one-stop-shop” type of service is to be referred to the LMC for possible referral to the Communities for Children Committee to explore how best to offer a single service which can be attended by families. This service can provide multi-agency information and provide access to internet, food, showers, crisis counselling and active referral services so that individuals and families who are homeless can readily access support services. This service needs to be accessible to all community members at risk including Aboriginal and CALD families.

3. Increased use of Income Management to prevent Homelessness.

It was felt that the increased use of income management [voluntary or involuntary] would prevent homelessness particularly due to eviction due to non-payment of rent and/or arrears. This is often a driving factor in terms of eviction. It is believed that early identification of high-risk families associated with income management would prevent homelessness for a significant number of families.

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Priority Actions

<i>Priority Actions</i>	<i>Tasks</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Start – Finish</i>	<i>Resources</i>
1. Integrating Service Provision across the Continuum of Services in the Region.	Director DCP to refer identified priority to LMC Committee and recommendation of Homelessness Task Group to co-ordinate the continuum of services.	Immediate.		Unknown.
2. Promote and Develop a Co-ordinated service delivery to Homeless individuals and families through one-stop-shop strategies.	Director DCP to refer identified priority to LMC Committee for referral to Communities for Children Task Group.	Immediate.		Unknown.
3. Increased use of Income Management to prevent Homelessness.	District Director [DCP] to refer to LMC to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with Dept Housing. • Encourage Dept Housing to approach Centrelink for authority to use Income Management. • Commence Dept Housing/DCP interagency meetings on cases of likely eviction or concern. • Encourage Dept Housing to refer to DCP if eviction likely and where income management will stop eviction proceedings as per Protocol. 	To be discussed at next LMC Committee.		Nil