

Project update

ACT Homelessness Sector Shared Practice Framework development project

April 2025, Sector update no. 2

About the project

The ACT Specialist Homelessness Services Sector is undergoing significant reform. In 2022 Specialist Homelessness Services called for the creation of a Shared Practice Framework, the objective of which is to:

- develop common communications and practices in the initial screening of people presenting to Specialist Homelessness Services, in the assessment and prioritisation of need, and in referrals.

The Shared Practice Framework will provide a guide for how the ACT homelessness sector should work together.

The Framework will include several parts which are based on a shared understanding of practice and practice principles.

The assessment tool and processes will be agreed upon and used by the sector as a whole.

The Framework will allow flexibility for different styles of working, including supporting existing case management approaches and outcomes measurement.

Embedding of the Framework will be supported by training and champions from the sector.

Where are we up to?

In December 2024 the Centre for Social Impact team finalised an [Options Paper](#) that explores key literature, documents, and assessment tools and processes. The Paper has since been shared with 35 organisations that provide Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) and peak bodies.

Over two visits to the ACT in February 2025, we met in person with representatives from many organisations funded to provide Specialist Homelessness Services in the ACT to further understand their work and discuss how the key elements of the Options Paper reflect their unique roles, expertise and practice.

Our engagement with the Specialist Homelessness Services Sector identified or reinforced several key issues pertinent to the development and implementation of the ACT Specialist Homelessness Services Sector Shared Practice Framework:

- The need for and importance of a shared vision and principles for the sector, articulating what it is working to achieve.
- The need for and importance of robust information/data on the sector, what agencies offer and do and how they work to achieve outcomes for clients.



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- The common assessment tool as part of the Shared Practice Framework to be flexible and include narrative-style intake questions, ensure informed consent, be culturally safe and trauma-informed.
- Focus to be given to the form and quality of referral information provided by the Central Intake Service from information gathered, ensuring up to date information with which agencies can make a fair assessment about clients and their needs.
- Clear information to be provided on how clients are being prioritised for referrals for housing and support.
- Importance of understanding outcomes being achieved.
- Clear desire for robust sector governance.
- Consideration of the burdens associated with data collection and reporting, as well as questions about who is best placed to do assessments of clients.

Further sector engagements are being held during April and May 2025.

What's next?

There are five key phases remaining in our work to develop the ACT Specialist Homelessness Services Sector Shared Practice Framework:

- Rounding out our engagements with the sector on the Options Paper. This phase will be completed in the first half of 2025.
- Interviews/focus groups with people with recent lived and living experience of the ACT homelessness system (preferably post-commissioning experience of homelessness).
- Engaging with the existing and new Central Intake Service providers to collaboratively shape the common assessment tool and other associated tools that are the core of the Shared Practice Framework.
- Piloting the common assessment tool and associated tools and finalising the Shared Practice Framework.
- Sharing the finalised Framework with the sector and everyone engaged along the development journey for final thoughts and working on implementation, including training and training resources.

Feedback

We always welcome any feedback on the Options Paper at any time. You can do this by directly emailing Selina via the details on the right of this page.

For further information please contact

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Can you help us with the next stage of this project?

Lived and living experience voice is an important part of the development of the Shared Practice Framework. We are keen to connect with a diverse group of participants, and will work closely with organisations to ensure cultural safety and confidentiality. Many services have already indicated their willingness to help us connect with people with lived and living experience of the ACT homelessness system. Thank you!

A flyer advertising this component of the work is available [here](#) and we appreciate your assistance in spreading the message about this opportunity.

We will provide further updates on the development of the Shared Practice Framework over the coming months.

We want to hear the thoughts of **people with lived and living experience** of homelessness as part of the Shared Practice Framework development.

People with lived and living experience will receive a \$50 gift voucher in recognition of their contribution and participation.

The project team

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