



# Southern Homelessness Services Network (SHSN)

## *Networking Forum and Expo Report*

25 July 2018

Dandenong Civic Centre

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# About the SHSN Networking Forum and Expo 2018

On 25 July 2018, the Southern Homelessness Services Network (SHSN) hosted a Networking Forum and Expo at the Dandenong Civic Centre (see invitation flyer at Attachment A).

The purpose of the Networking Forum and Expo was to

*To foster networking and information sharing among members –through speed dating, workshops and expo tables/displays.*

*To gather feedback/input about the SHSN and issues of interest such as training, communication/newsletter feedback, ideas for future forums, etc.*

The audience for the Forum was homelessness agencies and agencies working with the same target group (allied services) such as health, mental health, legal, youth, material aid and migrant services as well as local, State and Federal Governments. The Forum was promoted through the SHSN and associated networks including the SHSN newsletter and email list. Flyers were handed out at relevant meetings as well as emailed to a wide range of agencies.

The program for the day was developed by the SHSN Network Coordinator based on ideas and input from member agencies and the SHSN Executive group. The program highlighted key themes from the SHSN Strategic Plan 2017-19 as well as providing ample opportunities for networking and agency information sharing.

The Forum Program (see Attachment B) was organised into five parts –

1. Introduction to the SHSN (Network Coordinator)
2. Keynote speakers –
  - a. Everybody's Home Campaign (Kate Colvin – CHP)
  - b. Orange Door (Kathleen Alonso – DHHS and Lucy Gregory – Orange Door)
  - c. Consumer Participation (Emma Bohmer, Launch Housing's Lived Experience Advisory Group)
3. Speed Networking
4. Workshops
5. Expo stalls (held before and after the main program)

Forum registration was online using Trybooking, which generally worked well.

## Forum Attendance

160 Forum registrations were received with 134 attendees on the day (including speakers and facilitators).

57% of participants (76) were from the homelessness sector and SHSN member agencies. 25% of participants (33) were from allied services and 19% of participants (25) were from different levels of government. This included 13 local government participants representing seven out of the ten municipalities in the Southern Region (including the Mayor of Greater Dandenong).

## Expo Stalls

Participating agencies were invited to hold an expo stall to provide information to participants about their agency and programs. 14 agencies took up this offer including Star Health, Moira, WAYSS, Launch Housing, Monash Health, SalvoCare Eastern and the Council to Homeless Persons.

# Forum Workshops

On registering online for the Forum through Trybooking, participants were asked to nominate their top three workshop preferences from a list of topics and nine topics were selected. Each workshop was facilitated by someone with specific expertise in this area with a prepared set of workshop questions. The workshops could not have been run without the support and assistance of the facilitators and volunteer scribes. 108 people were recorded as participating in the workshops.

The workshops and participation numbers (in brackets) were:

- Working together to end homelessness - service coordination (12)
- Children - homelessness through their eyes (6)
- Rough sleeping – who, what, where, how? (11)
- Local government and homelessness (11)
- NDIS and homelessness(19)
- Family Violence and the Safety Support Hub (20)
- Issues at Entry Points – IAP (8)
- Private Rooming Houses (12)
- Consumer Participation (9)

## Summary of Workshop Discussions

Below is a summary of the workshop discussions with the full workshop notes in Attachment C.

### Working together to end homelessness - service coordination

Service coordination is challenging due to staff changes, staff coverage and clients being unable to articulate services involved. Ideas for improvement include use of the newsletter for service coordination, use of SHIP by different services, fortnightly allocation meetings like the current youth meetings, multidisciplinary teams, use of secondary consultation meetings and developing a culture of sharing information and resources. The workshop felt that DHHS needs to be more present and accountable for partnerships.

### Children - homelessness through their eyes

The challenges in working with children include the impossibility of housing under 18s (including emergency housing), lack of services for children aged 15-16, making services safe for children and lack of housing can lead to the removal of children from the family. Ideas for improving responses to children include training for workers and managers, more forums and networking, safe places for children and counting children on data systems.

### Rough sleeping – who, what, where, how?

Challenges in responding to rough sleepers include the complexity of chronic rough sleepers and decreasing engagement with services, lack of targeted resources, the costs and inappropriateness of rooming house accommodation as emergency and longer term housing (people prefer rough sleeping) and the decrease in safe affordable housing overall. Suggested solutions relating to rough sleepers include longer term case management and integrated service responses, extended hours services, royal commission to highlight issues, myth busting about homelessness, increasing Council responses and consistency to rough sleeping and rooming houses including Councils' forum and protocol for Councils, Police, local businesses, etc in responding to rough sleeping consistently.

### Local government and homelessness

Issues for local government in relation to homelessness include lack of consistency across councils in terms of responding to homelessness with some not seeing it as a local government issue and the rate capping environment means there are few resources for local government to respond to emerging issues such as homelessness. Ideas for local government to work with the sector on ending homelessness include service coordination, convening networks, working with

planning departments, increase awareness and understanding and promoting homelessness prevention. Local governments in the South could call a meeting to be held at MAV with all councils to support the development of rooming house policies and improve internal management of rooming houses and the relevant provisions. Councils could develop strategies, infrastructure, use good practice examples and strengthen the planning schemes around the provision of social and affordable housing.

### NDIS and homelessness

Challenges around the NDIS and homelessness include a lot of handballing of clients from service to service and the limited capacity (skills and time) of the current workforce to support clients to apply for the NDIS. Advocacy ideas include ensuring that the NDIA are included in forums and expos, facilitating the NDIA/NDIS hearing the voices of homeless support workers and consumers, including collecting case studies and state-wide advocacy for vulnerable groups. The workshop suggested holding a Mental Health/ Housing Homelessness NDIS Q&A panel with NDIA, NDIS, NDS, Mental Health Victoria for some robust discussion including asking the sector for their top 10 burning issues/ challenges for the panel members. Disseminating information about the Eastern Region's ROAR project and advocating for a similar project in the South was also recommended by this workshop.

### Family Violence and the Safety Support Hub

This session was more of a question and answer session about the Orange Door (see notes in Attachment C). Solutions for addressing the gaps between homelessness and family violence sectors included increased training for Police and for homelessness agencies, use of the new information sharing scheme and improved risk assessment and family violence training through Regional Integration Family Violence Co-ordinators and use of the new position at the Orange Door- "local systems navigator".

### Issues at Entry Points – IAP

The key issues for entry points include the volume of demand, the lack of resources to provide a crisis response and the lack of capacity to work with clients to address ongoing issues. The lack of appropriate crisis accommodation, young people not attending entry points and limitations of the 9-5 office based entry point model were also seen as challenges for entry points. Developing effective interim response and reconceptualising IAP as early intervention were seen as an important service improvements to reduce issues with returning clients and to address the lack of throughput from entry points to homeless support (only 10% of IAP clients referred for transitional support). Improved connectedness with regular meetings between services and improved information would lead to improved referral process and more effective service coordination. Advocacy to improve early intervention, introduce Housing First models, extend rapid re-housing and increase social housing options would improve the work of entry points.

### Private Rooming Houses

A huge range of issues and challenges around rooming houses were raised in the workshop. These included the lack of affordability (average cost \$200-240 per week), lack of safety and quality and lack of compliance of rooming houses with the standards and regulations. There is a lack of incentives for landlords to improve rooming house accommodation. Rooming houses are now being used as crisis accommodation by entry points with little resourcing to support clients placed there. Entry points lack resources to check rooming houses that they are sending clients to. Ideas to improve rooming houses included working with proprietors, increase registration fees to cover costs of support and advice to residents, use of health-time models to outreach to rooming houses including Council workers. The workshop recommended an extensive awareness campaign to improve rooming house conditions and local councils working together and with the homelessness and housing sector when preparing rooming house strategies.

## Consumer Participation

Issues identified in relation to consumer participation included feedback fatigue, staff and agencies valuing and using input and sustainability and organisational commitment. Ideas for improving consumer participation included continuing to hold regular meetings regarding consumer participation, catering participation to consumer needs, being inclusive, and other services being able to utilise existing consumer participation groups for example the Launch Housing Lived Experience Group speaking to hospitals and other services working with people experiencing homelessness.

# Forum Feedback

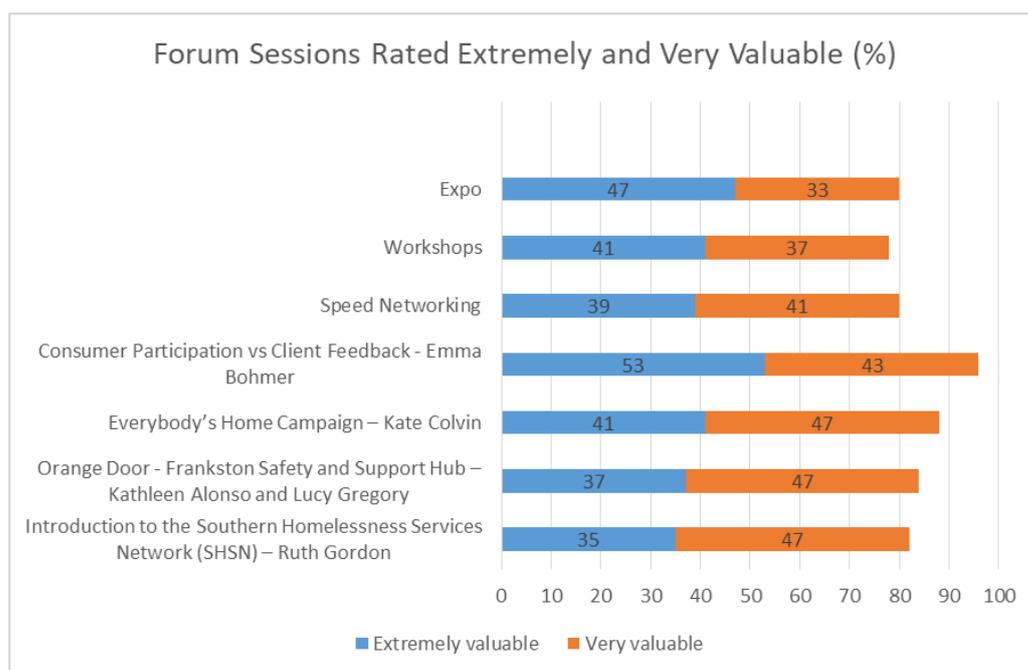
Forum participants were invited to complete an online forum feedback form using Survey Monkey. 50 forms were completed representing a response rate of 37% which is high. The respondents were from:

- Homelessness agencies (54%)
  - General homelessness (16 respondents)
  - Youth homelessness (4 respondents)
  - Family violence (4 respondents)
- Allied agencies including government (46%)
  - Health (7)
  - Local government (9)
  - State Government (2)

## Overall Forum Feedback

The majority of respondents rated the SHSN Networking Forum and expo very or extremely valuable (88%) with no respondents finding the event not valuable. The majority of respondents found all of the Forum sessions extremely valuable or very valuable (see Figure1). Only five respondents found some sessions “not so valuable” with no respondents rating any sessions as not at all valuable.

Figure 1. Forum Sessions Rated Extremely and Very Valuable (%)



### Most useful aspects of the Forum

Nearly half of the respondents mentioned that networking was the most useful aspect of the Forum. Information sharing and learning about other agencies and services were also important aspects of the Forum for respondents. Respondents enjoyed the variety of activities offered and wanted such forums to be run more often.

*All of it was fantastic from networking to information sharing*

*Emma Bohmer - she was inspirational; learning about being able to access LEAG, what a fabulous resource.*

*Getting together - being linked to like-minded people. It was a boost to my flagging emotional state.*

*Great to meet large number of people from Southern Region. Increase my contacts.*

*Networking, stalls, diversity of things covered - i.e. some attention to FV services*

*Networking and up to date information*

*Uplifting - to be on the same page as other organisations*

*The workshop identified some opportunities for local government to pursue as a sector.*

*All of it really. Good snapshot of the here and now and what is impacting upon the sector in general.*

*Networking has been good in the general sense but also getting our agency name out there esp. with the name changes recently*

*Very well run and great time for networking. Very informative.*

*Great event. Well coordinated. Opportunities for networking and learning about services.*

*It's always fantastic to hear new information and gather resources and hear what's happening out in the service sector.*

*Thank you and I look forward to the next event.*

*We need to do this more often. It was useful to collect a lot of resources.*

*The various activities kept it interesting and engaging. Was great to network with other agencies.*

*The catering was great.*

*Overall a really good forum. Good presentations and great networking opportunities. Valuable to meet people from services that I have not used or worked with previously and to hear the issues that other Local Governments are experiencing.*

*It was a good opportunity to learn about some of the work that is being done across other LGAs, to identify potential gaps and to determine potential steps of moving forward*

*Good to have a forum to share frustrations and ideas.*

*Terrific to have networking opportunities. Always very valuable esp. in these times of huge sector change. Well done!!*

### Least useful aspects of the Forum

The majority of respondents did report anything that was not useful at the Forum. The main comment was wanting more time for the Forum and Expo and some mentioned noise interference, particularly during the workshops. A few respondents also recommended having a larger venue to run the event, particularly in relation to managing the noise during the workshops.

*Noise interference between the workshops*

*Time factor need to be a full day*

*I think I just would have liked a bit more time - to attend another workshop and to network.*

*I would love a forum every year.*

*Could not hear all questions clearly. To have a roaming microphone for Q & A.*

*Nothing really was an excellent event*

*Lack of information about how to access the Orange Door initiative*

*Not so much "least useful" but I would have liked to have had an opportunity to attend more than one of the workshops (perhaps by having a certain amount of time for each of the workshops, (like the ringing of a bell), so that attendees could move onto additional workshops.*

*If I had to choose something I guess it was the speed networking as whilst I found out a lot about other services I didn't meet anyone that I will call upon in future.*

*I think in future a larger venue would be good, as the workshops were very noisy. Overall, it was great and I will definitely attend next years.*

### Use of information from Forum

Participants were asked how they plan to use the information from the forum in their work. The responses in the feedback survey were varied from using the business cards and brochures collected at the expo to sharing information and learnings with their colleagues. Following up on contacts made through the speed networking and expo were also common responses.

*At the least, to spread the word and encourage those around me to subscribe to the Everybody's Home.*

*Made some great contacts with other people from Local Government*

*1) Firstly, as a bit of a mapping exercise of seeing what has been done and is currently being done within and across other agencies 2) To take the opportunity to engage and liaise with existing agencies. 3) To determine the gaps and steps to move forward within my own organization.*

*Keep networking on the agenda*

*I am able to reinforce the situation of homeless in Victoria with our volunteers and seek methods to reduce homelessness in our area*

*Daily --- when we see homeless people*

*I am definitely going to link my organisation with LEAG.*

*I will share the information with my team members*

*Adding support to the Everybody's Home Campaign and providing more information on some of the other agencies and services available to them where applicable.*

*Following up leads and promoting joint work projects*

*Contacts!! I also promoted our service and offered secondary consults to professionals*

*I will be better resourced so I can resource my clients better*

*With Homelessness week coming up we plan to ensure our colleagues are aware of the stats for region and other helpful resources will be displayed in staff room.*

### **Workshops**

80% of respondents rated the workshops extremely or very valuable. One respondent rated the workshops not so valuable and one rated the workshops not valuable at all.

*The workshop had an eclectic mix of housing services, local government and allied health professionals. Some Youth Housing representatives spoke about fortnightly meetings with a common purpose around housing and supporting young people in their catchment. This model outlines positive working relationships with a focus on outcomes for young people in the system*

*I found the workshop really positive and appreciate the collaborative approach being facilitated by the SHSN.*

*Lots of issues identified ....fewer solutions but very workable*

*It was great to have that many LGA's represented and discussing the issues.*

*Rough sleeping seems to hog the agenda. There is a lot of Planning and Regulation work that Councils can bring to the issue of homelessness*

*Very good but the group was too big and I feel a number of participants did not get time for input*

*Difficult to hear and speak loudly enough because the workshops were in the same room*

*Good discussion - not long enough*

*Resulted in some concrete actions*

*The space was very noisy and i couldn't hear anything properly.*

*Lots for energy in the workshop group, sharing ideas and coming up with solutions.*

## **Expo**

Nearly half of the respondents (48%) said their agency had run an expo stall. The comments from these respondents about running the expo stall were very positive, including that the expo was well attended and a good way to promote the work of their agency.

*The stall was quite well attended, with positive feedback.*

*Well attended and gave out approximately 40 agency bags*

*It was a great opportunity to promote services. Stalls were well allocated.*

*We had many enquiries - most people did not know we exist even though we have been in the area for 9 years.*

*Great way to meet other providers and gather new information*

*Was terrific. Had lots of chats and discussion*

*It was great to be next to agencies that already liaise with each other regularly such as Wintringham, Launch, WAYSS and Monash Health.*

## **Future Forums**

100% of the feedback respondents said they would attend another SHSN Forum in the future. A broad range of topics were suggested for future forums including:

- Youth homelessness – including couch surfing and budgeting
- Funding applications and opportunities
- LGBTIQ and housing difficulties
- Family violence and links with homelessness
- Initiatives to end homelessness from Australia and overseas
- Local government and homelessness – including rooming house regulation and CAV participation
- Tools and resources – eg assessment, filing, etc
- NDIS
- Advocacy to increase resourcing to meet demand
- Training on campaigning and advocacy/community education on homelessness eg in schools and broader community
- Rough sleeping action plan
- Directions of the welfare sector in general

- Trauma informed care
- Homelessness and refugees

*Need OOH and NDIS at next one with Q&A sessions- as everyone has relevant questions. Perhaps people can pre-submit their top 5 questions to these groups and this be correlated beforehand to get the Q&A going*

*As the Southern area is so large, I would like to suggest the opportunity to attend another event towards the St Kilda area. Many of the attendees were from the Dandenong Monash area which we do not have access to.*

*I would have liked a speaker providing current information about rooming houses.*

## **SHSN Newsletter Feedback**

The opportunity was taken to survey forum participants about the SHSN monthly email newsletter. 58% of the survey respondents received the SHSN newsletter. Ideas for improving the newsletter included:

*By broadening the scope of people that can subscribe.*

*Agencies to submit their own contributions. There is always something happening in the sector.*

*It's a great resource.*

*Reader friendly and more interactive*

*"You have improved it already.*

*Keep up the great work!"*

*I think the layout could be improved.*

*Love it, it's informative and local.*

*Great publication*

*It's already fantastic*

*I find the newsletter provides a good selection of information and is easy to read maybe an updates snapshot on questions surrounding NDIS, OOH, MH sector- just a question or two appearing with an answer in each newsletter*

## **Final Comments**

A number of respondents made further comment about the Forum, Expo or SHSN overall including the following:

*Very positive so good to all get together once again with other housing agencies.*

*Excellent event and well run. Ruth is doing a great job, very approachable and helpful when needed.*

*Really well done presentation from Ruth really set the scene for the morning. Felt a little bit rushed given the time allocated*

*It was fabulous. I am so glad I decided to attend - at the last minute I was tempted not too (too much work etc, what's the point when the system IS SO broken? etc etc). But it lifted my spirits and gave me hope to know that such good work is being done. Everything was just perfect - attention to details was obvious, love the "dot" method of crowd control. Well done and Congratulations.*

*Well organised and the Welcome and Intro component was informative, relevant and well presented. Congratulations!*

*Ruth, you did an amazing job the forum expo ran like clockwork, people were engage the whole time. The people I spoke to loved the opportunity to getting together like this and feel supported by each other. Well done, I look forward to supporting the next forum expo. Thank you*

*It was well organised. Food and venue was good*

*Great job. Really pleased to be able to attend*

# Conclusion and Recommendations

The SHSN Networking Forum and Expo was successful in terms of attendance and in meeting a need for staff working in homelessness and related sectors to come together to network, share information and workshop issues of shared concern. The format worked well and participants found all elements of the Forum and Expo valuable.

## Recommendations

- 1. That the SHSN run this type of forum annually to engage and support the broader network membership and foster inter-sectoral understanding and collaboration using the same format.**
- 2. That the SHSN consider venues in different locations and larger venues for the forum and expo with breakout rooms for the workshops to address the noise issues. This may add to the venue cost.**
- 3. That future Forums include speakers relevant to the SHSN Strategic Plan priorities and actions**
- 4. That the following changes be considered for future networking forums:**
  - **Longer forum – eg. 10-3 with longer times for workshops or include other elements**
  - **Panel discussion**
  - **Two workshop sessions**
  - **Plenary to feedback to whole group on workshops**
  - **Holding the forum in the lead up to homelessness week or during homelessness week.**
  - **Include short practical skills training sessions instead of second workshop – eg. Referral into homelessness services, SHIP training, media and advocacy training, writing funding submissions/applications, etc**

Southern Homelessness Services Network

# Southern Homelessness Services Network

## INVITES YOU TO A NETWORKING FORUM & EXPO

Wednesday 25 July 2018 9.30am-1pm  
Dandenong Civic Centre,  
Level 2, 225 Lonsdale St, Dandenong

### JOIN US FOR -

- guest speakers
- workshops
- networking
- meet other workers in the homelessness sector from across the Southern Region
- services expo
- lunch

This is a free event brought to you by the Southern Homelessness Services Network



Places are limited and [bookings are essential.](#)

For more details and **bookings** go to <https://www.trybooking.com/VTXS> or click [here](#)

#### For Enquiries:

Please call Ruth Gordon, Southern Region Homelessness Network Coordinator on 0437 569 609 or email [ruth.gordon@launchhousing.org.au](mailto:ruth.gordon@launchhousing.org.au)

#### Services Expo

Agencies are welcome to have a table showcasing their services at the Expo so participants can improve their understanding of your services. Please register for your expo table when booking tickets or contact [ruth.gordon@launchhousing.org.au](mailto:ruth.gordon@launchhousing.org.au) directly if you have queries.

# Southern Homelessness Services Network

## NETWORKING FORUM & EXPO

Wednesday 25 July 2018 9.30am-1pm

Dandenong Civic Centre,  
Level 2, 225 Lonsdale St, Dandenong

### PROGRAM:

- 9.30am** Registration and Expo
- 10am** **Welcome and Introduction** – *Ruth Gordon, Southern Homelessness Services Network Coordinator*
- 10.25am** **The Orange Door: Frankston Safety and Support Hub** – *Kathleen Alonso, Area Director, Bayside Peninsula Area, Department of Health and Human Services and Lucy Gregory, Manager, Orange Door, Bayside Peninsula Area*
- 10.35am** **Everybody's Home Campaign** – *Kate Colvin, Manager – Policy and Communications, Council to Homeless Persons*
- 10.45am** **Consumer Participation vs Client Feedback** - *Emma Bohmer – Launch Housing, Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG)*
- 11am** Speed Networking
- 11.40am** Workshops – Choose one workshop to attend
- 12.20pm** Summing up and evaluation
- 12.30pm** Lunch and Expo



### Forum Survey:

Please complete the brief online evaluation form at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SHSNForumSurvey> to provide your feedback on today's Forum and Expo. Your feedback is greatly valued and will be useful for future forum planning.

This is a free event brought to you  
by the Southern Homelessness  
Services Network

Attachment C Workshop Notes

**SHSN Forum Workshop Notes – 25 July 2018**

**Working together to end homelessness - service coordination (12 participants)**

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the issues/challenges in service coordination in the Southern Region (at systemic and client based level)?</b></p> <p>Staff changes – difficult to maintain                      Staff coverage                      Client being unable to articulate services involved                      Clients using multiple services and “they didn’t help me”.                      Very time consuming to follow up all agencies on what has happened.</p>	<p><b>How can service coordination in the Southern Region be improved?</b></p> <p>Combine with the newsletter                      SHIP within different services – save on phone calls to other services. Know who has been funded etc.                      F/N meetings with like services – allocation meetings                      Secondary consultation meetings                      Guidelines about meetings/structure                      Culture of sharing information and resources                      Multi-disciplinary teams like health services</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support these improvements?</b></p> <p>Staff coverage</p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, State level etc</b></p> <p>SHIP                      DHHS needs to be more present and accountable for partnerships.</p>

**Children - homelessness through their eyes – 6 participants**

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the challenges/barriers/gaps around working with children in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Housing under 18 is impossible                      DHHS responses for children                      Can’t put youth in motels                      15-16 is still a child but no service for them                      Even “family agencies” may miss kids’ support                      How to make a safe place for children                      Not always safe even in services                      Children exposed to so much                      Not having stable housing can mean kids taken away                      Workers knowing how to response to kids’ issues appropriately</p>	<p><b>What are the solutions for the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Training for workers and management and those in power starting this.                      More forums/networking</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support the solutions?</b></p> <p>Orange Door                      Place for kids/counselling/safe                      Knowledge of how to work with kids at access points                      More funding/programs                      More groups/training for parents</p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, State level etc</b></p> <p>Ask government for more funding                      Everybody’s Home Campaign                      Making kids count on systems not just under families so that stats count (record keeping)                      More education for everyone as prevention.</p>

**Rough sleeping – who, what, where, how? (11 participants)**

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the issues/challenges/barriers in addressing rough sleeping in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Complexity – decreasing engagement                      Different target groups with different needs – individual approach                      Complex service system                      Lack of resources of rough sleepers, hidden homeless, lack of options                      Lack of specialist medical support and wrap around services                      Animals (barrier)                      Rooming house – not wanted by many rough sleepers                      Lack of visa/passport, eg Afghan people in Dandenong                      Cost of private rooming house - \$230 and safety.                      Crisis housing                      Health service system response to rough sleeping                      Mental health support/housing services (especially Chelsea)                      Decrease in affordable and safe housing and affordable private rental</p>	<p><b>What are the solutions for the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Longer term case management/support                      Intergrated approach – service response                      Government policy change – housing policy                      Wrap around support around person and trauma informed approach to care                      More flexible responses form health care services                      Extended hours services                      National Homeless Scheme”</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support the solutions?</b></p> <p>Myth-busting re homelessness                      Royal commission to highlight issues                      Nominate a homeless person for Australian of the Year                      More networking, unifying approach to care/service                      Increasing consistent approach across organisations                      WAYSS to take leadership as main player in the area.                      Increase Council response and consistency in approach.                      Bring Councils together for a similar forum</p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, State level etc</b></p> <p>Safer rooming houses – registered with Council                      Form an alliance with police, shopkeepers, material aid, etc – protocol for working with rooming houses/homelessness                      More forums with increased frequency                      Support the Everybody’s Home Campaign.</p>

**Local government and homelessness (11 participants)**

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the issues/barriers for local governments in addressing homelessness in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>All local governments are different                      Eg, Port Phillip work directly in homelessness whereas others do not                      Raising the profile – some councils think it’s a State issues.                      Need more interface with agencies                      Lack of buy in from councillors and other levels of government.                      Cultural perception of councils needs to change</p>	<p><b>How can local governments work with the sector to end homelessness?</b></p> <p>Convene network meetings                      Coordination with agencies                      Work with planning departments                      Infrastructure needs to include housing                      Changing the frames to includes housing and homelessness                      Ending homelessness is not a reality                      Facilitate and provide the platform to network, receive knowledge and come together                      Work in prevention</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support local government?</b></p> <p>Agencies to support                      Build affiliations                      Partnering with agencies to deliver actions and to receive grants                      Need wrap around services and bring people together                      We need to call a meeting with all councils to seek MAV support for particular provisions in the rooming house space</p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, State level etc</b></p> <p>Rooming houses – definitions.                      Call a meeting to be held at MAV with all councils to support the development of rooming house policies and internal management of rooming houses and the particular provisions.                      Strengthen the planning schemes around the provision of social and affordable housing. Councils to develop strategies, infrastructure, use good examples another models to implement common equity housing.</p>

<p>Councils can be very conservative and do not see a role.</p> <p>No appetite</p> <p>Rate capping environment</p> <p>Changed with the NDIS and changes with the aged care sector</p> <p>Lack of awareness</p> <p>Lack of resources</p>	<p>Coordination</p> <p>Increase awareness</p> <p>Network</p>		
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### NDIS and homelessness – 19 participants

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the issues in relation to the NDIS and homelessness in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>When calling the Council to get HACC services for under 65, being told to call NDIS to test eligibility. Experiencing a lot of handballing of clients, also being told over the phone the person is not eligible for NDIS.</p> <p>Capacity of the current workforce supporting clients to navigate their way through NDIS and test eligibility, the current housing support workers are not funded to do this, but are doing it anyway to support the client. On average it take 20+ hours to support a person with an NDIS application this includes doctor's reports etc. And these can cost \$\$ this is an out of pocket expense for the housing support service.</p> <p>Time is needed to work with the client before a planning meeting, this meeting cannot take place without support otherwise it would not happen and the person would refuse the service.</p> <p>*Note HACC – PYP services will continue and can be accessed through the Councils.</p>	<p><b>What are the solutions for the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>-</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support the solutions?</b></p> <p>Need to advocate locally and state wide for vulnerable groups</p> <p>Link with services – Share information / knowledge</p> <p>Make access for viable for those vulnerable in our community</p> <p>Feeding up to Mental Health Victoria – Cases Studies of current clients and their experience.</p> <p>The NDIS/ NDS/ NDIA need to be at Forum/ Expos like today to hear from the sector the challenges etc.</p> <p>NDIA/ NDIS need to consult more and hear the voices of consumers/ housing support service sector.</p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, State level etc</b></p> <p>Suggestion from the group to have an Mental Health/ Housing Homelessness NDIS Q&amp;A panel with NDIA, NDIS, NDS, Mental health Victoria, to have some robust discussion.</p> <p>Ask the sector for their Top 10 burning issues/ challenges for the panel members.</p> <p>Would like to hear about program's like the ROAR project – how can we get this kind of support/ project in the Southern Metro Region.</p>

**Family Violence and the Safety Support Hub (20 participants) – more of a Q & A session on Orange Door**

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the issues/challenges/gaps around family violence and homelessness in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Q. youth access points- wait list 3-4 moths – clients often in rooming house wanting counselling – young mums</p> <p>A. consider family services as they have family violence counselling</p> <p>Q. women presenting to front door for housing – struggles with Safe Steps – lack of training for IAP – not being aware of safe areas for client</p> <p>A. Common challenge</p> <p>Q. Where will Orange Door refer to counselling and housing?</p> <p>A. Extra FTE for service delivery – issues on demand are monitored and responded to. Streamlined response to whole family with the right response alleviates pressure on other services. Strong emphasis on collecting data. Southern Region – 20% of women seeking FV services have been homeless in the last month.</p> <p>Q. Women forced to leave children with father then unable to get them back.</p> <p>A. Early conversations with women and children will happen under Orange Door. Child protection and Police will better understand FV lenses.</p> <p>Q. Perpetrators presenting to front door – stress on workers listening to story – lack of accommodation options.</p> <p>A. More focus coming on men’s programs. Current media campaign</p> <p>Q. Support for youth perpetrators?</p> <p>A. Peninsula Health, Family Life work with young men. Taskforce also. Perpetrators’ Expert panel being developed. Early intervention.</p> <p>Q. Elder abuse increase across catchment</p> <p>A. Peninsula Health Elder abuse Advisor – Selina Neville. Wintringham can provide support. Elder abuse forum – Bayside.</p> <p>Q. Assistance for elderly persons with disability to move after hours – often carer is abuser.</p>	<p><b>What are the solutions for the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Lack of Police training</p> <p>Training for VicPol through Rosie Batty.</p> <p>Police Divisions restructured – Detective Senior Sergeants in charge of FV Unit. Each has a training position within units around L17 assessment.</p> <p>Orange Door will actively use info sharing scheme and update concerns on clients and risk. Increase in risk assessment support – a different response</p> <p>Southsafe.com.au – local resources around FV.</p> <p>Rose Burrell can provide 2 hour FV training for workers.</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support the solutions?</b></p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, State level etc</b></p> <p>Local systems navigator – Kate Bevan-John</p>

## Issues at Entry Points – IAP – (8 participants)

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the issues/gaps/barriers for entry points in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Issue is the volume coming through the door, and the ability to manage the crisis response; limits capacity to do ongoing work with people to address more complex issues</p> <p>Sometimes people been given misleading info from other services so have unrealistic expectations of what an IAP service can do</p> <p>Don't have access to THMs; so people may have been referred from another area to be put on the THM priority list; but don't have a list because the THMs sitting with support providers.</p> <p>In this region, no THMs allocated for crisis.</p> <p>Young people not coming to access point - frightened with people with complex needs in the waiting room. Going to move youth access point to the youth service for 2 hours a fortnight.</p> <p>Access point only office based and 9-5; Staffing only adequate to cover the calls and demand in the access points; not capacity to do outreach. Would be great for the IAP to reach beyond the access point with outreach capacity. Getting out good for workers as well as clients, so stay connected to other services in the community.</p> <p>Is anyone missing out on service because of the office base? People with disability possible.</p> <p>WAYSS lucky to have a number of multi-lingual staff which helps with CALD clients; difficulties often with the translator service.</p> <p>Can be challenges, eg. with Muslim women clients not wanting to go into share housing for cultural reasons; Muslim clients not wanting to access services with meal programs, like crisis accom because food won't be appropriate.</p> <p>Generally, need a lot more options for people with housing; current suite of options very inadequate.</p> <p>Shower service at Launch useful engagement tool for rough sleepers who are not proactive about accessing services; creates capacity to monitor people's health and wellbeing and encourage pathway to service access.</p>	<p><b>What are the solutions for the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>IAP role beyond access points</p> <p>Need staffing to be able to make best use of programs like PRAP, so there is staff to do the advocacy needed</p> <p>Need more info that maps out the services available locally; is hard to be across it all</p> <p>Need more connectedness between agencies at worker level to build those relationships that facilitate referral pathways (worker from another region saying they would meet once a month – but not in Southern)</p> <p>Another person concerned don't get 'meetinged out' – is there a way to do it via email.</p> <p>Should we have a 'round robin' of offices to build stronger connections and iron out the little issues before they become big tensions; build understanding.</p> <p>Would be good to look at all the networks out there now and think through how we could organise it better.</p> <p>Only about 10% clients get referred to support. 90% worked with by IAP – need more capacity in interim response to go longer with people in brief interventions.</p> <p>A lot of time taken up with returning clients – can do more effective work with interim response</p> <p>IAP role not just a portal to referral but is early intervention and prevention; needs to reconceptualise how it is perceived.</p> <p>Disconnect between intensity of resources for 'Towards Home' for rough sleepers (great program) and lack of support for people to prevent them becoming chronically homeless – would be cheaper to provide the support and intervention earlier.</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support the solutions?</b></p> <p>Keeping workers better informed with cultural needs</p> <p>Have young people attend with their support workers to create more inviting space at front door.</p> <p>Meet regularly with other organisations in the local area</p> <p>Advocate for additional resourcing.</p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, State level etc</b></p> <p>Make a list of what entry points provide</p> <p>Network coordination</p> <p>Early intervention needs more recognition to prevent more entrenched housing problems</p> <p>Housing First model</p> <p>Feed up t CEOs through your own networks.</p> <p>Lobby for social housing</p> <p>Rapid re-housing needs to go further.</p> <p>Everybody's Home Campaign.</p>

**Private Rooming Houses (12 participants)**

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the issues/challenges relating to private rooming houses in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p><u>Entry:</u>            Cost/affordability-\$200/240 pw with no alternatives,            Availability,            Poor quality/unsafe,            Not enough incentives for good landlords (cost of compliance) to come into market and provide good accommodation,            Appropriateness for families/women escaping family violence (place of last resort,            Organisations referring people do not always know what the places are like that they are sending people to,            People being displaced and being 'HEFFed and left' in a region that they are unfamiliar with,            Bond monies paid to operators, in many cases, not paid to RTBA.            Insufficient number of appropriate, safe, for purpose rooming houses.</p> <p><u>Occupation issues:</u>            Lack of support once people are placed in RH,            Need for support services to go into RH, (Bolton Clarke, material aid, mental health),            People can't move ahead, issues of poverty,            Priority for services directed towards rough sleepers and people in rooming houses,            NDIS-who determines who is eligible, issues related to access and support to get on NDIS,            Lack of consistency between local governments,            Is there public liability insurance being paid by operator?            No collaboration between services and if there is a collaboration it is often driven by individual workers,            High turnover of workers in sector, worker burnout because of hard low paid work, (although there is a lot of LOVE and some areas have long term workers and stable teams. Build a bridge over the valley of despair),            CAV regulation, regulators spread over wide area. Multiple regulators difficult to co-ordinate/communicate, tyranny of distance/location.</p> <p><u>Exit:</u>            People moving out, WHY-not safe, overcrowded, expensive, difficult and intrusive landlords,</p>	<p><b>What are the solutions for the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Reduce cost of utilities (regulated cost of electricity)            Decrease energy costs (?individual meters for every room)            Solar panels/double glazing, new properties-seminars for existing potential investors            Collaborative work with other agencies            'Healthtime' model taken to rooming houses identified            Working with proprietors            Advocacy services for residents offered by local councils            One stop shop/one regulator            Registration costs for operators continue to increase - Incentives are required.</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support the solutions?</b></p> <p>Council workers attend Healthtime style program within RH,            Councils get out of regulating RH's and CAV take this up, one stop shop for regulation,            Outreach/housing workers continue to highlight massive needs of tenants in these places and advocate for change</p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, State level etc</b></p> <p>An extensive awareness campaign directed to the community and key decision makers.            Local councils work together when revising their rooming house strategies and their internal processes. Consult broadly in the community and with support and housing agencies.</p>

Nothing in regulations about safety (in R/T other tenants/landlord), RH acting as crisis accommodation, can't control who they are putting in there, Big difference between small share house style and very large RH's, State of disrepair, lack of hygiene BUT compliant.			
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### Consumer Participation (9 participants)

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
<p><b>What are the challenges/barriers/ gaps around consumer participation in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Do organisations want feedback? Bureaucracy – organisational Too much focus on one particular need/thing. Feedback fatigue Staff valuing input and feedback Sustainability and organisational commitment Lack of funding Tokenistic feedback – extremes of feedback Consumers picking up sector vocabulary</p>	<p><b>How can consumer participation be improved in the Southern Region?</b></p> <p>Regular meetings regarding consumer participation are occurring Catering participation to consumer needs and being inclusive</p> <p>Other services being able to utilise consumer participation groups Facilitating cultural change across other businesses</p>	<p><b>What advocacy would help/support improving consumer participation?</b></p> <p>LEAG speaking to other services, business and hospitals</p>	<p><b>What are the next steps? Agency level, network level, - mention SHSN Working Group.</b></p> <p><b>Hand out copies of the NW Client Participation Guide and ask for feedback on adapting this guide for the SHSN. Feedback due by 31 July to <a href="mailto:ruth.gordon@launchhousing.org.au">ruth.gordon@launchhousing.org.au</a></b></p>