

ANNUAL REPORT 2009/2010 ACCOMMODATION SERVICES

Accommodation Service ~ Strategic Plan

Accommodation Services has made it a priority this year to factor in the newly strategic objectives into every aspects of it's daily operations. It has worked hard at operationalising the 'values' of Senses into our day to day procedures and ensuring that staff adopt these as part of their normal working standards. Staff continue to be introduced and exposed to the principles which govern our behaviour and performance as an organisation at the initial orientation program.

We continue to be driven by the strategic objectives and have made significant headway in operationalising these:

- ***Recognised as a leader in service delivery and valued by the Disability Service Commission, the community and others***

Feedback from the sector suggests we are currently gaining respect in this regard with an increase in referrals of potential clients and support of the Disability Services Commission. Managers have attended national and local conferences with the opportunity to gain specialist knowledge and get our name heard. "Procedures, excellence and innovation" have all been placed on the agenda of all meetings within the department.

- ***To grow services to ensure sustainability for the future***

Increased individual funding and growth this year, and recurrent government funding continues to be sought. Plus the exploration of potential clients through referral from the sector including local area coordination. Manager of Accommodation Services remains part of the Building the Workforce committee with a focus on retainment of staff.

- ***Rrespected for its ethical, honest, safe and accountable service delivery***

Managers, Coordinators and direct support staff have been invited to attend national and local conferences to gain deafblindness specific training as well as Alcohol and Drug training for Coordinators and support staff. Training is also being sought in the areas of Challenging behaviours and Alzheimer/dementia care to provide appropriate support to clients with specific needs.

- ***Regarded as a specialist for its unique deafblind expertise***

Risk management has been placed on all meeting agenda's throughout the department. Accommodation Services has been working closely with Specialist Services to ensure that adequate support and training is provided to staff working with clients with specific needs, and in particular with people who are deafblind.

- ***An effective, open and user friendly communicator***

Accommodation Services continues to have clients, family and staff meetings. Contact between Management, Coordinators, clients, staff and families has increased this year, focusing on building and maintaining positive relationships between all parties for now and into the future.

Service Overview

Over the past financial year the SWIMS client data base shows that Senses Foundation provided a total of 67,323. 96 actual hours of direct client support to a total of 50 clients who have been supported in our accommodation services over this period. Included in these hours are the use of agency staff where this action was necessary.

The number of clients in supported accommodation is equal to the opening figure at the commencement of the period as there was an intention to concentrate on existing services and the need to focus specifically on the quality of services we provide rather than growth. However opportunities to provide services to potential clients were still explored but with no new clients taken on this year. One client chose to put their service on hold for a certain part of the year but has recommenced services.

The actual hours delivered on a house and individual client basis compared to Disability Service Commission contracted hours per unit are detailed below.

Service	Contract Hours Full Year	Contract Hours YTD	Total Hours YTD	Difference	Clients
Accommodation Support – Group Homes & Community Living					
Abrolhos	9133	9133	13661.9	4528.90	4
Ashfield	1573	1573	1584.52	11.52	5
Community Living	1284	1284	2018.42	734.42	7
Coode Street	2077	2077	1717.10	-359.90	2
Holder Street	13011	13011	13049.87	38.87	7
Cleveland Street*	1697	1697	1971.95	274.95	3
Hudson Street	1697	1697	1864.90	167.90	3
Verbena Crescent	1697	1697	2699.28	1002.28	3
Walcottt Street	3427	3427	2737.93	-689.07	4

Success*	2788	2788	2963.28	175.28	3 (inc JB & SM)
Individual Accommodation Support					
Bayens J	3,614	3614	3,634.58	20.58	1
Donald T*	2848	2848	1273.58	-1574.42	1
Didcock W	426	426	374.40	-51.60	1
James R*	1196	1196	1113.47	-82.53	1
McGhie M	5126	5126	6127.03	1001.03	1
Micale F*	2198	2198	352.52	-1845.48	1
Micale S	3,475	3475	3489.68	14.68	1
Page B	3016	3016	3072.83	56.83	1
Roeger P	533	533	426.5	-106.5	1
Trainer H*	520	520	54.27	-465.73	1
Webber S	2860	2860	3135.95	275.95	1
TOTAL	64196	64196	67323.96	3127.96	50

- * Cleveland street – Closure of Hollett street in March 2010.
- * Success – includes two existing clients with individual funding (one existing client in emergency care from Holder and a transfer of a client from the Abrolhos service)
- * Direct support of a client has increased due to his degenerative disability.
- * A client was successful in receiving housing under the CDHP with DH&W.
- * A client remains living with her grandparents under a guardianship order and has been allocated ASF funds for an alternative living arrangement. Permanent Host family arrangement not yet in place.
- * A client who lives independently placed her service on hold due to family circumstances for a certain period of the year.

Service Growth

Over the past few years Senses has used many strategies to ensure sustainability and viability of the Accommodation Service Program. Actual hours delivered in 2008/2009 were 56,636.36 compared to 67,323.96 in the current financial year. This represents increased hours and growth of existing funded clients which contributes to the sustainability of the organisation through additional funding. Of these 15% is retained by Senses to meet non direct service expenses and contribute to corporate infrastructure costs. The majority of funds go to meet the costs of direct support services to clients.

Over the past twelve months there have been a number of changes to the service structure including a restructure of the Coordination Areas and the reinstatement of a third Area Coordinator .This was welcomed and necessary to enable better local coordination of services and to be more responsive to issues raised and identified by clients, families and staff. A review of the current structure allowed for a relocation of services under each Coordination Area resulting in the split of two existing 24 hour

homes into different areas to relieve pressure on Coordinators and to be able to concentrate on person centred practice.

The Manager of Accommodation Services has retired from his role of 7 years and taken up a part time project officer role within the program to take on the Housing Development Project. Accommodation Services is thankful that he has chosen to remain part of the organisation as his knowledge and expertise and history with the organisation is absolutely priceless. The Assistant Manager of 2 years has now taken on this role.

In early 2009 an additional part time Assistant Manager was appointed who undertook specific tasks such as the new roster system and other operational projects. This position was initially set up to alleviate some of the overall pressures put on Management. However while this position contributed to continuous improvement of services in many areas, it didn't specifically meet its original intentions of alleviating day to day pressures and is now being utilised across all Client Services programs.

Accommodation Services has been proactive in revising existing rosters, particularly those of the 24 hour homes to ensure that only essential services are provided without compromising quality of care so that we meet our contractual obligations with DSC.

Person Centered Practice

Person Centered Practice still remains a challenge with a huge focus on improvement with the aim to become leaders in this area. Senses Foundation was successful in receiving a Quality Service Improvement Grant for the 2009/10 to further this work and explore implications of the new Quality Management Framework within the Accommodation Service. Over the twelve months there has been progress on person centered planning and action for a number of people within the organization.

Individual Planning is a significant issue for Accommodation services and remains a priority in providing the most appropriate level of support and advocacy for its clients. Accommodation Services already does this naturally within service delivery in many areas but is working within its own structure as well as Client Services at consistent approaches among all areas to ensure formal recognition.

As a result, Senses is seeing enhanced interaction between Accommodation, Community Services and Specialist Services with both formal and informal interactions between the teams improving the outcomes for people receiving broad services within Senses.

Client Level of Support

The degree of support provided to clients vary according to the needs of the individuals. Eleven clients continue to require full time support and reside in one of two twenty four hour community homes. One existing client and two new clients requiring full time support has resulted in the opening of a new twenty four hour community home in Success. The program continues to provide support based on the individual and focuses on the need to keep people as independent as possible in order for them to remain living independently within the community. This within a high support environment or one with minimal or drop in support. Support provided includes personal care, transport, mobility, communication, mealtime management, budgeting, social and emotional support and general day to day living skills, all depending on the person's abilities.

A vacancy still remains at the Verbena group home and has been flagged with the Disability Services Commission. To date, there have been no potential clients suitable for an accommodation service within this home however Senses continues to keep this vacancy open for consideration if a new or existing client is compatible and an urgent need exists.

New and Existing Services

Accommodation Services has been approached throughout the year by a number of prospective clients requiring a new service or transfer to our accommodation service. These clients have individual funding and have been referred by members of the community or from the Disability Services Commission. Individual needs assessments were conducted on all of these clients to determine eligibility and suitability within the Program. Senses foundation took on three new clients who were successful in receiving individual accommodation support funding and with two of these clients successful in receiving accommodation through the Community Disability Housing Program, DSC.

Client 1

A young man in an emergency accommodation who was taken from his family home under a Guardianship Order issued by the State Administrative Tribunal was allocated accommodation support funding in 2010 and was successful in receiving accommodation through the CDHP program. Senses was asked by the Office of the Public Advocate to remain his primary service provider and manage his service on a permanent basis and he moved into his new Success residence with two other young men. His mother has been incarcerated in prison for up to nine years and to date there has been limited contact. This young man also has a twin sibling who also receives accommodation support and has regular weekly visits her and their grandparents.

Client 2

A young man who is deafblind and who was previously provided with regular respite on a regular basis and now residing at one of the 24 hour group homes was successful in receiving accommodation support funding and Senses Foundation was asked by the Office of the Public Advocate to continue to be the primary service provider. This person has continued to flourish in all areas of his daily living, in particular the ability to at times walk unaided and obtain healthy body weight. This young man has been successful in receiving accommodation under the Community Disability Housing Program, DSC and in May 2010 moved into his new home in Success with two other compatible young men with full support.

Client 3

Senses Foundation has become the service provider of a young deafblind man who was residing in emergency accommodation within DSC until a suitable provider could be identified. In May 2010 this young man moved into a new home allocated under the Community Disability Housing Program and receives full support by trained staff. Accommodation Services has been working closely with Specialist Services to ensure that the appropriate level of support is provided in the areas of communication and dealing with any undesirable behaviours.

Client 4

A young woman, a twin sister of an existing Senses client, who currently resides with her grandparents under a guardianship order was successful in receiving accommodation support funding. DSC has supported Accommodation Services to pursue an alternative care arrangement for this young lady and are currently pursuing a potential permanent host family. This young woman currently receives support during the week and as a result is now engaged in supported open employment, has begun handling her own finances, attends counselling and is able to catch public transport independently.

Client 5

Senses Foundation continues to provide accommodation support to a woman living in the Willagee area. This person's service has been consistent over the past twelve months with Senses managing to remain above the benchmark rate. Senses is unable to meet her individual needs and provide a sustainable service at the decreased funding amount.

Over the past 12 months this service has continued to stabilise primarily due to the positive impact of consistent and experienced staff. Senses has worked extremely hard to make the appropriate reductions to ensure that her service remains within its contractual obligations. This person herself has worked really hard to make this work and despite a number of hurdles, has developed a really positive relationship with Senses and continues to uphold her own responsibilities.

Disability Services Commission has supported requests for funding to be retained above a benchmark figure in order to allow the person to remain living independently and Accommodation Services has now been successful in receiving funds above her fair level of funding on an ongoing basis.

This person also has successfully trialled a world first electronic toileting system which enables her to attend to her needs when support is not available. This is a huge triumph for this person in the area of respect and independence.

New Client Structure

After the position of Coordinator Area (A) remaining vacant for many months as a result of the financial constraints last year, a Joint Supervisor was created as well as the ongoing need for a part time Coordinator Area (C). The Joint Supervisor enabled the support and coordination between the two 24 hour group homes, while the part time Coordinator Area C oversaw a number of individual options in the southern suburbs.

However in October 2009 the Coordinator Area (C) resigned and the Joint Supervisor took on both these roles. At this time, with support of Senior Management it was determined that a need for three full time Area Coordinators existed for the long term sustainability of the program and to address risk management and accommodate future growth. At this time an overall review of the area structure was conducted.

As a result a third full time Coordinator was newly appointed in January 2010 and the Coordinator Area C increased to full time. With three full time Coordinators a review of the Area Structure resulted in the relocation of one of the 24 hour group homes into Area C to ensure equality among the areas and to maximise opportunity for person centred practice.

In June 2010 a change in the on call system for Accommodation Service has resulted in all three coordinators no longer being on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Coordinators are now on call one week out of three and was implemented to address sustainability and growth of the program in the future. The new on call system allows all clients, families and staff continued support at any time of the day throughout the week and in particular after hours and over the weekend if an emergency arises. This has assisted in the retainment of Coordinators who have the expertise and knowledge in the disability area required.

Individual Service Planning

Accommodation Service continues to provide an Individual Service Plan for seven clients who are individually funded through the Disability Aged Care program. Funds continue to be recurrent for the support of these specific individuals. The intent of this funding is to assist in addressing the changing needs of some of these aging clients which is a real challenge for Accommodation Services but is also a sector wide issue. However we are working closely with Specialist Services and external professionals to determine appropriate care and planning for the future of these individuals to keep them in their own homes.

Client Achievements

The direct support staff and Coordinators have been instrumental in the progression of the personal development and maintenance of independency of our clients within the community. There have been a number of client achievements supported or acknowledged over the past year.

Our newly built Cleveland street Home has been a massive accomplishment for three clients who have waited for close to 10 years to have permanent and secure accommodation. It's taken close to three years and a partnership with Foundation Housing and the Department of Housing to have this land property developed according to the needs of these three young men. The three men moved in March 2010 and are extremely happy with their new home, the security it now offers and a place they call their own.



A client was approved for housing under the Community Disability Housing Program and moved into a unit in 2009 after privately renting for a number of years awaiting permanent and more affordable accommodation. He is extremely happy with his new home and his local community. He has made his new unit a real home and loves the the security that his new home offers for the future. He is continuing to do well living independently in the community and feels a sense of belonging.



A client living with her grandparents under a guardianship order has been supported by Accommodation Services to obtain part time employment. This client with the assistance of a supported employment agency works two days per week at Department for Communities in West Perth. She now is able to catch public transport to and from work independently which involves catching the bus into Perth from Fremantle and then a CAT into West Perth. Her position involves working in an office administration role and has the responsibility of general admin tasks, filing, photocopying, folioing of files, mail outs, alphabetical and numerical filing, folding and stuffing envelopes and now has been asked to assist a co worker with a disability with transport training. She is thrilled with what she has achieved, takes a lot of pride in her work and we are very proud of her. This has been life changing for this client.

Two deafblind clients and a client with a vision impairment have occupied a newly purchased home through the Community Disability Housing Program. This new home was spot purchased by the Department of Housing and Works and chosen in conjunction with Accommodation Services and Specialist Services to ensure it met the individual needs for this group of young men with sensory impairments. The house is fairly young and in a new thriving area with young families. The three men have settled well into their new home and are being supported 24 hours a day. Accommodation Services works closely with the Office of the Public Advocate and has formed a really positive and strong working relationship with the guardians and public trustees to see that their overall needs are being met.



A client living independently within the community living program was recently awarded with a certificate of 30 years of service. This client has worked for 'Goodwill Industries' a business service for people with disabilities for the past 30 years and is a very committed, reliable and punctual worker. He continues to live independently in the community with minimal support and is a very valuable member of society. He is extremely proud of his hard work and dedication and enjoys what he does.

Self Advocacy Group

As part of the 2008 citizenship project it was recommended that a Self Advocacy Group be established within Accommodation Services. A number of Senses adult clients have formed a Self Advocacy Panel to help and advise other Senses clients to resolve personal difficulties being experienced in life and/or with any aspect of their service. The aim also for the members to enhance their own ability to self-advocate and live independent lives. Panel meetings are being held once per month, taking in turns at each of the panel members homes with two Senses staff members who have volunteered to assist in facilitating these meetings.

The Panel has been functioning as a peer based advocacy service within Senses for people it supports in Accommodation Services. The Panel have been discussing advocacy issues generated through a referral basis and/or identified from within the group. It then offers solutions and advice and necessary steps to support fellow residents. The group also invites non members to the meetings once per month to offer advice and bring other ideas to the table and to also develop an understanding of the role of the group.



Future Housing Developments

A part time project officer has been appointed over the next two years to assist in the development and expansion of the Accommodation Services with particular reference to the development of physical facilities including three new groups which includes Gosnells, Medina and Swanview. This as a result of land acquired through The Department of Housing and Works in partnership with the Disability Services Commission. The Project Officer remains responsible for drafting guidelines for the



inclusion of people with disabilities, their families, and direct support workers in the facility planning process, a service provider perspective into building specifications and design and the negotiation and interaction with Department of Housing and Works and Disability

Services Commission into the design development and housing acquisition process. The three properties being developed will provide an accommodation service for at least 15 additional people with disabilities. The Gosnells property pictured above is at the final planning stage with the development of the two other properties, Medina and Swanview to progress once final plans are confirmed.

Standards Monitoring

During the year there were no external monitoring by independent consultants appointed by the Commission due to review of the Standards Monitoring Process and the new Quality Management Framework being implemented throughout the disability sector. There were a couple of internal reviews conducted during the year including Hudson Street on standards 2,3 & 8 plus a follow up audit and a infection control audit at Abrolhos Loop. There were no required actions from these audits, however any suggestions by the monitor were taken seriously and implemented if results in service improvement.

Family Meetings

Family meetings were held at Holder, Hudson, Hollett and Coode street with other meetings offered to a number of other homes. Communication is undertaken with various other family members where it is difficult for them to attend any planned meetings. This year we did things differently and invited clients to be part of these and used them as an opportunity to not only to brief families on developments and for the members to give feedback on areas of improvement or concern but for families, clients and staff to informally catch up.

Replacement Physical Facilities

During this period there have been a number of changes to premises within the Accommodation Services Program.

- One client in December 2009 moved from a privately rented unit into a spot purchased DH&W unit under the CDHP program after renting privately for a number of years.
- In March 2010 four clients temporarily renting privately at Hollett street moved into their new purpose built home in Cleveland Street through Department of Housing and Works after waiting many years for permanent housing and accommodation.
- A four bedroom home was spotted purchased in Success by Department of Housing and Works under the Community Disability Housing Program for three clients in urgent need of a full time accommodation service. These clients occupied the premises in May 2010.

Arrangements for Senses to formally hand over responsibility for maintenance, repairs and rental arrangements of its Department of Housing properties to Uniting Care West are nearly complete. Accommodation Services has been working closely with Uniting Care West to ensure this can be achieved with minimal disruption, with Uniting Care West waiting on formal documentation from Department Housing and Works to complete the handover.

Combined Application Process

At the beginning of this period a total of eight cap applications were automatically submitted including a number of the Community clients now living independently for whom the current level of funding is inadequate. None of these were approved during the year. A decision was made during this period to reduce the number of automatic submissions due to individual circumstances and at the end of this period a total of four applications remain automatic resubmissions.

Two additional applications were submitted during this period for specific accommodation support funding and both were successful. The two clients successful were twin siblings both under guardianship orders. One of the siblings was initially provided with emergency accommodation with interim funding through DSC at an existing 24 hour community home and with recurrent funding through cap has moved into his new home in Success with full support. The other female sibling has been provided with interim support through IFS while living with her grandparents but has been funded through cap for an alternative living arrangement, in particular a permanent host family.

Accommodation Services was successful in receiving alternative funding through the Community Living Plan for an individual who is provided with minimal support during the week and requires additional support to engage and participate in his local community. Senses is currently seeking an appropriate support worker to take on this mentor role and is excited about the wonderful things this opportunity can provide for this person.

Events

Disability Sector Support Worker Awards

Two direct support workers were nominated for the Disability Support Worker Awards and invited with other senior staff at a formal dinner held at the Burswood on Saturday 27th March 10. This event was organised through National Disability Service. Both staff were finalists on the night and was an opportunity for accommodation services to acknowledge the valuable work of these employees and to express appreciation of their valued role within the organisation.

Deafblind Awareness week

In May 2010 the Manager, Coordinators and a number of direct support staff attended the deafblind training facilitated by international specialists during deafblind awareness week. Attendance at this training provided support and assistance for staff who support our deafblind clients. As a result staff feel more confident about the care they are providing and have been inspired about what they can achieve for not only people who are deafblind but all people they support.

National Deafblind Conference

The Manager and Assistant Manager of Accommodation Services attended the National Deafblind Conference held in Melbourne on 28-30 April 2010 with fifteen other Senses staff members. The Conference focused on Deafblindness in Australia and brought international speakers into the Australian deafblind arena. This was a wonderful opportunity for Accommodation Services to be part of this event as it allowed us to have a better understanding and knowledge of the needs and issues faced by people who are deafblind. The conference highlighted the importance of what people have to offer and the significance of empowerment in the lives of people with disabilities. Accommodation Services strongly focuses on the need for staff to be provided with the knowledge and experience to really make a difference to the people they are working with and in particular the skills and training for working with people who are deafblind.

Budgetary Performance

The final figures to the close of this financial year on 30th June 10 indicate still an overspending in Cost Centre 610 Accommodation Services. The majority of the overspending is due to over providing of contractual hours at Abrohos Loop and other costs being charged to the wrong cost codes over the entire program. Significant work has been done the past few months to reduce direct support hours in some of the homes, in particular the Abrolhos Loop service, where additional support is not necessary which will address this issue for the new financial year.

The bottom line deficit for Accommodation Services is to be offset by underspending in Disability Aged Care area and other savings in Client Services overall.

Jodi Perkin
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