

Focusing Homelessness Program Investment to Outcomes

A Current and Future State Report

WHAT WE HEARD:

The local context has a significant role in facilitating positive outcomes.

Practice expertise and local intelligence could be harnessed as valid sources of data in making decisions.

A focus on a collective 'systems-approach' at the local level has the potential to amplify existing efforts for more cohesive, person-centred service systems.

There's a sense that current processes, tools and behaviours around investment tend to prioritise a focus on whether a service is 'compliant' with specifications and contracted targets, rather than whether service users are achieving positive outcomes.

Contract managers are a critical pivot point in the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) investment system, and have significant influence on the way services deliver programs and share information.

Data collection could be improved to better understand what might be working (or not), and what might be going on (in terms of trends, needs and strengths) at the neighbourhood and community levels.

SHS providers do not have the same visibility of data as government counterparts. This is a significant limitation in being responsive to community needs and planning collaborative, place-based responses.

There is a general consensus that the investment system could be improved – but no clear consensus on how or where to start.



Industry and Government stakeholders have proposed a roadmap for the way forward to a future where the investment system is focused to outcomes.

1↓

Building a healthy commissioning system, by:

Focusing the system towards learning and continuous improvement

Recognising the need for a baseline level of quality; reorient the purpose of reporting, meetings and collaborative forums towards a focus on learning and continuous improvement as a local service system.

Harness the role of the system facilitator within contract management

With a unique perspective, awareness of local context, strong relationships and understanding of government policy, contract management are well positioned to bring elements of the system together in support of place-based strategies and learning and improvement at the local level.

Using co-production and collaboration across the commissioning cycle (including the voice of all stakeholders in the system, including service users)

Co-production and collaborative place-focused decision making processes could leverage the value of unique knowledge, skills and expertise across the system – involving people who use services, their friends and families, providers and commissioners (contract managers, programs and policy staff) – to co-design and co-produce service systems which take into consideration the diversity of evidence and perspectives available.

2↓

Focusing investment on evidence and outcomes, by:

Building, sharing and using all forms of evidence to inform investment decisions

Across the system, there is an appetite for more diverse ways of building, sharing and using all forms of evidence in order to develop a greater shared understanding of what is working, or not, in contributing to outcomes at the local level. In part, this will require greater transparency of the (de-identified and aggregated) data collected and information held by government and industry. Use and validity of practice-based, contextualised evidence will also need a greater focus.

Focusing investment instruments and processes on outcomes

In program and contract management, there is an opportunity to reconsider the current investment settings and decision making practices in a collaborative way, to enable new service models and respond to emerging trends.

3↓

Recognising and building adaptive capacity and capability across industry and government, by:

Strengthening the culture and behaviours of partnership

To work differently, there is a desire for adaptive leadership – a shift not only in the tools and processes which govern investment, but also the way people behave, the stories they tell and ultimately, the culture across government and industry.

Adopting a long-term change agenda

Commitment to a vision and change agenda takes time and significant energy and a shared commitment to reform which is sustainable in the longer-term.