

# **Blueprint for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system in Victoria**

Aboriginal Housing  
Victoria Limited





We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia.

We pay our respects to those who have cared for our land and water for 70,000+ years and continue to care for the places on which we work, live and raise our families.

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# Introduction and guiding principles

## Background and purpose

People living in Victoria are facing a housing crisis, which continues to grow at a concerning pace. Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort or The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework was developed in 2020 by community, for community and sets out a clear vision: that every Aboriginal person has a home. This document takes this work one step further by putting forward a blueprint for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system.

### Background and context

The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework (VAHHF or Framework) was published in 2020 in response to the overwhelming challenges faced by Aboriginal people at risk of and experiencing homelessness in Victoria. The Framework provides the core building blocks for reconceptualising Aboriginal housing in Victoria and outlines a fresh approach to achieving quality housing outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians in a generation. This will enable a shift beyond crisis management of Aboriginal housing, towards achieving housing equity and addressing the drivers of housing outcomes.

**This report is focused on one of the five key objectives of Framework: namely, the need to co-design an Aboriginal focused homeless system in Victoria. This objective is focused on:**

- 

Rebuilding an Aboriginal homeless service system from the ground up;
- 

Providing tailored support for those at high risk; and
- 

Increasing supply of crisis and transitional housing.

### Purpose

**The purpose of this report is to outline a blueprint for what a future Aboriginal-specific system might look like, including detail around open entry points which was indicated by stakeholders as a key priority for building the system. It also outlines a plan to practically implement each of the key system features.**





The system features that are outlined in this paper have been co-designed and developed

with representatives from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) across Victoria, as well as mainstream providers from the broader housing and homelessness sector.




### Approach to designing an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system

This report has been developed through a mixed method approach, including a cross-jurisdictional scan which identified Aboriginal-specific approaches to homelessness across jurisdictions, one-on-one consultations with stakeholders across the homelessness sector and people with lived experience, co-design workshops with stakeholders across the service system, development of an issues report which outlined the key challenges facing Aboriginal people in the current homelessness system and an options report which outlined proposed options for design, which have been taken forward in this report. The approach acknowledges that an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system requires a combination of ACCOs and mainstream services working collaboration.

This report...

-  Is informed by the significant work done to date through development of the Framework, including consultations and discussion groups with community
-  Outlines a conceptual blueprint for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system in Victoria
-  Includes ruled out and proposed options for future design that were co-designed with stakeholders from the homelessness system
-  Includes a plan to guide the practical implementation of key system features, including further detail regarding open entry points

The report does not...

-  Outline a detailed service model
-  Include detailed planning or quantification of needs by region
-  Include costing for specific service models or other parts of the system.

# Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort principles

The design of the system blueprint has been guided by the vision and principles of the Framework, which were developed by community, for community and are outlined below.

Vision: Every Aboriginal person has a home		
Guiding principles	<b>Aboriginal self-determination</b>	Housing responses are designed for and delivered by Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people are the arbiters of good practice
	<b>Rights based</b>	Aboriginal people have the right to adequate housing
	<b>Housing first</b>	The housing and homelessness safety net provides Aboriginal clients with dignity, respect and quality of life
	<b>Outcome driven</b>	The critical mass of Aboriginal people shift from marginal housing to home ownership
	<b>Transparency and accountability</b>	The housing and homelessness system is accountable to the Aboriginal community through transparent, disaggregated public reporting of outcomes for people who seek assistance.
	<b>Cultural safety and access</b>	Aboriginal people can access a system which is responsive to their housing needs and understands their connection to land, culture and family networks
	<b>Strengths based and people centered</b>	Housing is a platform for other services, building on individuals' community strengths to deliver people-centred outcomes that break the cycle of disadvantage
	<b>Capacity</b>	The Framework builds the capacity of Aboriginal community controlled organisations to up-skill, create critical mass for development and engage in productive partnerships with the mainstream
	<b>Economic opportunity and innovation</b>	The Framework provides structures for development of local enterprises associated with land and culture; builds commercial opportunities; and delivers greater wealth to the community
	<b>Culturally safe tenancy management</b>	Housing and tenancy policies support and enable Aboriginal approaches to caring for family

Source: Aboriginal Housing Victoria, 2020, The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework









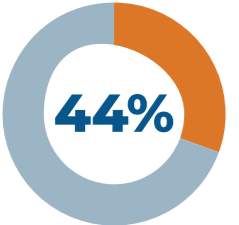
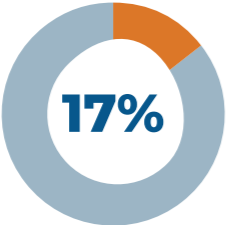

## 2. The need for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness service system



# Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness

Aboriginal Australians are significantly over-represented in homelessness services across Australia and in Victoria. All Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness need to be able to easily access help and support, however there are some groups that are more likely to need specialist support in the homelessness system.

People that require support, such as those outlined on the next page, often have a range of needs. Aboriginal people are more likely to have complex needs than others in housing distress and are more likely to need specialist support. For example people in the following cohorts may require additional support:

 <p>Mental health issues</p>	 <p>Drug and alcohol issues</p>	 <p>Family violence (victims and perpetrators)</p>	 <p>Older people</p>
 <p>People with disabilities</p>	 <p>Contact with and leaving the justice system</p>	 <p>Leaving out of home care. <i>An individual may have multiple vulnerabilities adding a level of complexity e.g. mental health and family violence.</i></p>	 <p>Aboriginal people in Victoria are experiencing contact with homeless services at ten times the rate of other Victorians</p>
 <p>Almost half (44 per cent) of these people were already homeless</p>	 <p>Aboriginal people in Victoria sought assistance from a homeless service</p>	 <p>Aboriginal Victorians depend on social housing around ten times the rate of other Victorians. More than <b>4,000</b> Victorian Aboriginal households (around one in five) have sought social housing through the Victorian Housing Register (VHR)</p>	





**These challenges are present in communities across Victoria, including regional and metropolitan areas. Furthermore, the numbers of Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness is growing in Victoria, with the number of people assessed by homeless services as requiring assistance growing by 33.6 per cent in four years. This reflects the urgency to resolve the crisis.**

Further statistics regarding Aboriginal homelessness in Victoria can be found in the Issues Report. 1. Australian Institute of Health Welfare. Homelessness among Indigenous Australian. Accessed at <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/indigenous-Australians/homelessness-among-indigenous-Australians/contents/summary>

# People accessing the system and the workers who help them

In 2019-20 just under one in six Aboriginal Victorians were homeless (AIHW).\* These people may be facing a range of challenges such as family violence, exiting the justice or the out of home care (OOHC) system, experiencing drug and alcohol issues or mental health issues. Services should be equitable, to ensure that people experiencing any combination of issues can access appropriate supports. Case workers are also increasingly challenged with high-levels of pressure and burnout.

The design of an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system is informed by the stories of people with lived experience who require support and the case workers who assist them. The case studies below provide a snapshot of the types of challenges Aboriginal Victorians and case workers may be facing and have guided the development of the key features of the system to ensure it is people centered.

Individuals experiencing homelessness		
 <p><b>Jarrah:</b> exiting care at 17</p>	 <p><b>Kira-Lee:</b> pregnant with a violent partner</p>	 <p><b>Uncle Terry:</b> spiritually homeless</p>
<p>Jarrah recently left his group home at 17 having spent most of his life in and out of care. He sometimes stays with one of his brothers but he has found a group of friends on the street who have become family. Jarrah often has contact with the police for petty crimes; mostly to do with food and basic survival. He is a regular user of drugs and alcohol – anything he can get off the street.</p>	<p>Kirra-Lee is in her late teens, pregnant with her first child. She has been living with her violent partner and his family and has not been speaking with her family. She has no ID, money or access to a phone. Her partner has been monitoring her all the time and arranged for a traditional adoption of the baby by his parents. Kirra-Lee felt she had no choice but to runaway and has been living on the street.</p>	<p>Uncle Terry is 62 and was placed in a boys' home aged 4. where he was abused. When he left, became involved in petty crime and has been in and out of prison throughout his adult life. Uncle Terry feels he has no connection to country or family, and a spiritual homelessness. He prefers living and drinking with his mates down by the river rather than having to deal with any services.</p>
Workers supporting individuals experiencing homelessness		
 <p><b>Archie:</b> finding crisis accommodation</p>	 <p><b>Mahlee:</b> providing limited support</p>	
<p>Jack is a 32 year old Aboriginal man who is homeless after leaving prison. Archie assesses him and spends a hour on the phone to a local homelessness shelter only to discover there is no vacancy. He spends another two hours calling two other crisis accommodation services but learns Jack had been banned from them previously. Archie then tries the local caravan park which is also full and finally finds a vacancy for the night in a local motel.</p>	<p>Mahlee assesses Kelly, a 27 year old Aboriginal woman with three children who has been evicted from her private rental property. Eventually Mahlee finds transitional housing for the family and identifies that Kelly needs help to maintain her tenancy. She spends two days contacting mainstream services but she doesn't have a direct contact and isn't familiar with all of the programs Kelly may be eligible for. Due to funding constraints over the next three months Mahlee is able to provide low touch low level support only.</p>	

\* This is likely an undercount, given that many people may not be comfortable to identify as Aboriginal when presenting to mainstream services in the current system. Further statistics regarding Aboriginal homelessness in Victoria can be found in the Issues Report.



## Key issues in responding to Aboriginal homelessness

The current responses to Aboriginal homelessness in Victoria are insufficient and fragmented. There are a number of key issues, which are limiting outcomes faced by Aboriginal Victorians at risk of or experiencing homelessness and preventing people like Kira-Lee, Holly, Jarrah, Ann-Maree and Uncle Terry from being supported effectively to move past homelessness, such as those outlined below.



Further information regarding these issues can be found in the Issues Report.

# 3. Framework for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system



# Approach for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system

Attempting to solve each of the current challenges separately will not move the dial on the over-representation of Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness. It requires a fresh approach, starting from a holistic and systems perspective.

The design of an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system in Victoria is guided by an overarching vision and guiding principles which are set out in the Framework. The system will be made up of two parts:

**Service arrangements:** the flow of services supporting clients from entry to exit; and

**System management:** the enablers or mechanisms which underpin and support the management and workings of the system.

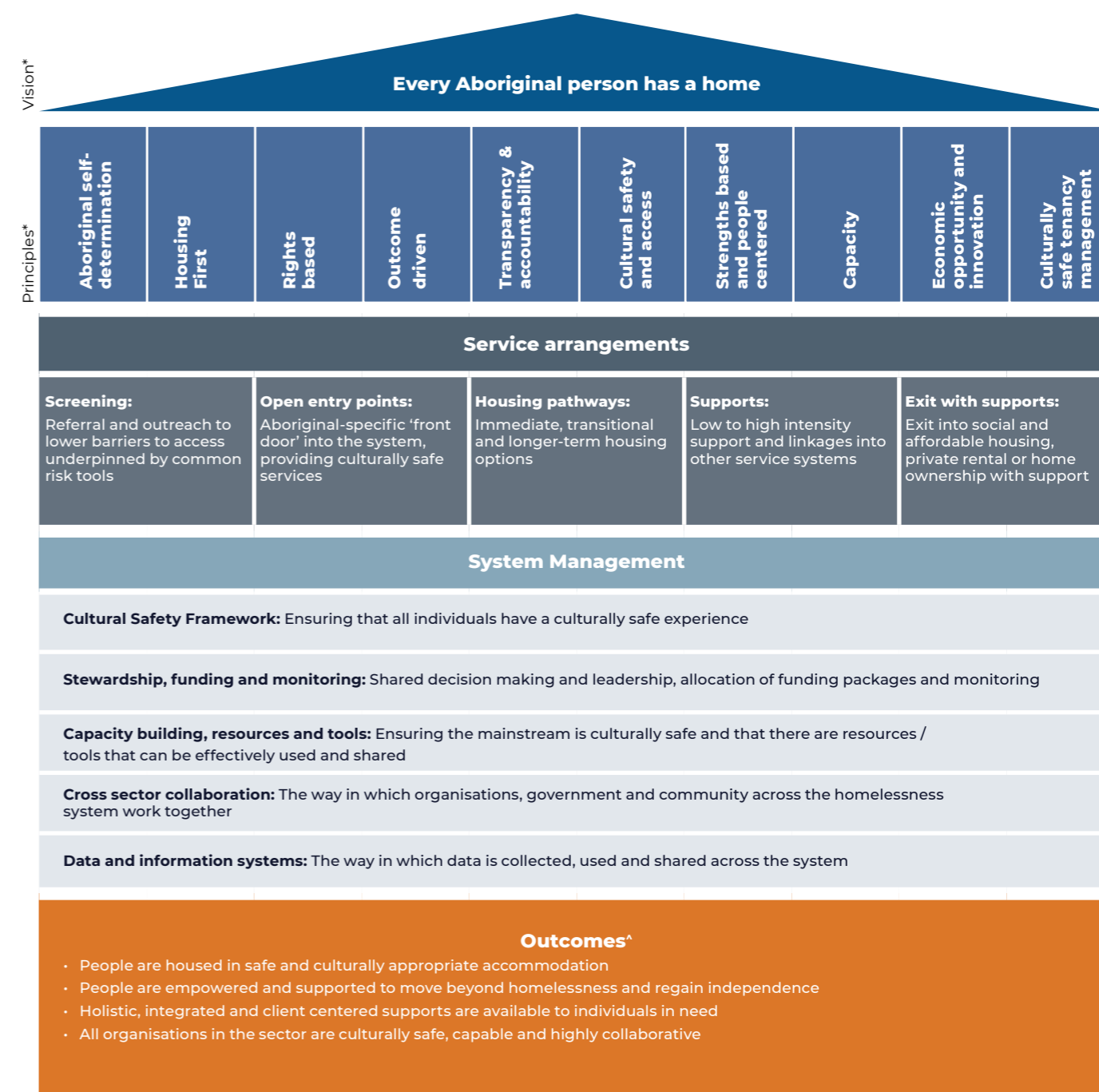
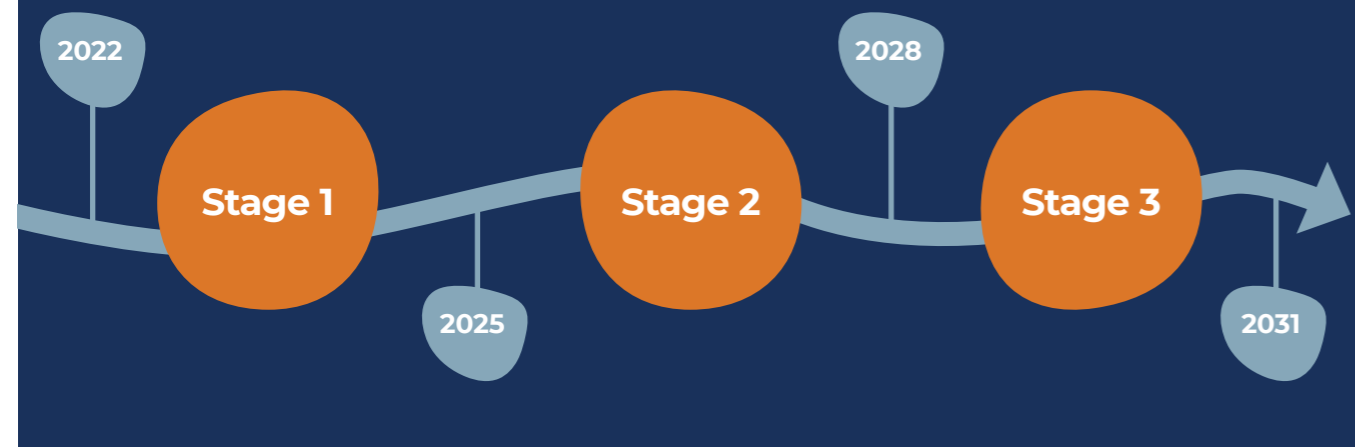
**The remainder of this report outlines the blueprint for system design, including key features of service arrangements and system management.**

The following section describes what is currently in place in relation to each system element, the options that were considered for what the future state could look like.

The options have been informed by analysis of publicly available data\*, a cross jurisdictional scan, consultations with stakeholders and people with lived experience and co-design workshops with key stakeholders.

The introduction of an Aboriginal-specific system would not be able to happen all at once. There are key dependencies such as the availability of housing stock and training a culturally safe workforce across mainstream organisations, which take time to develop.

A staged approach may be the most practical and successful in the long run, as shown on the right. Further detail regarding immediate implementation activities for stage 1 are detailed in Section 4: Implementation plan.



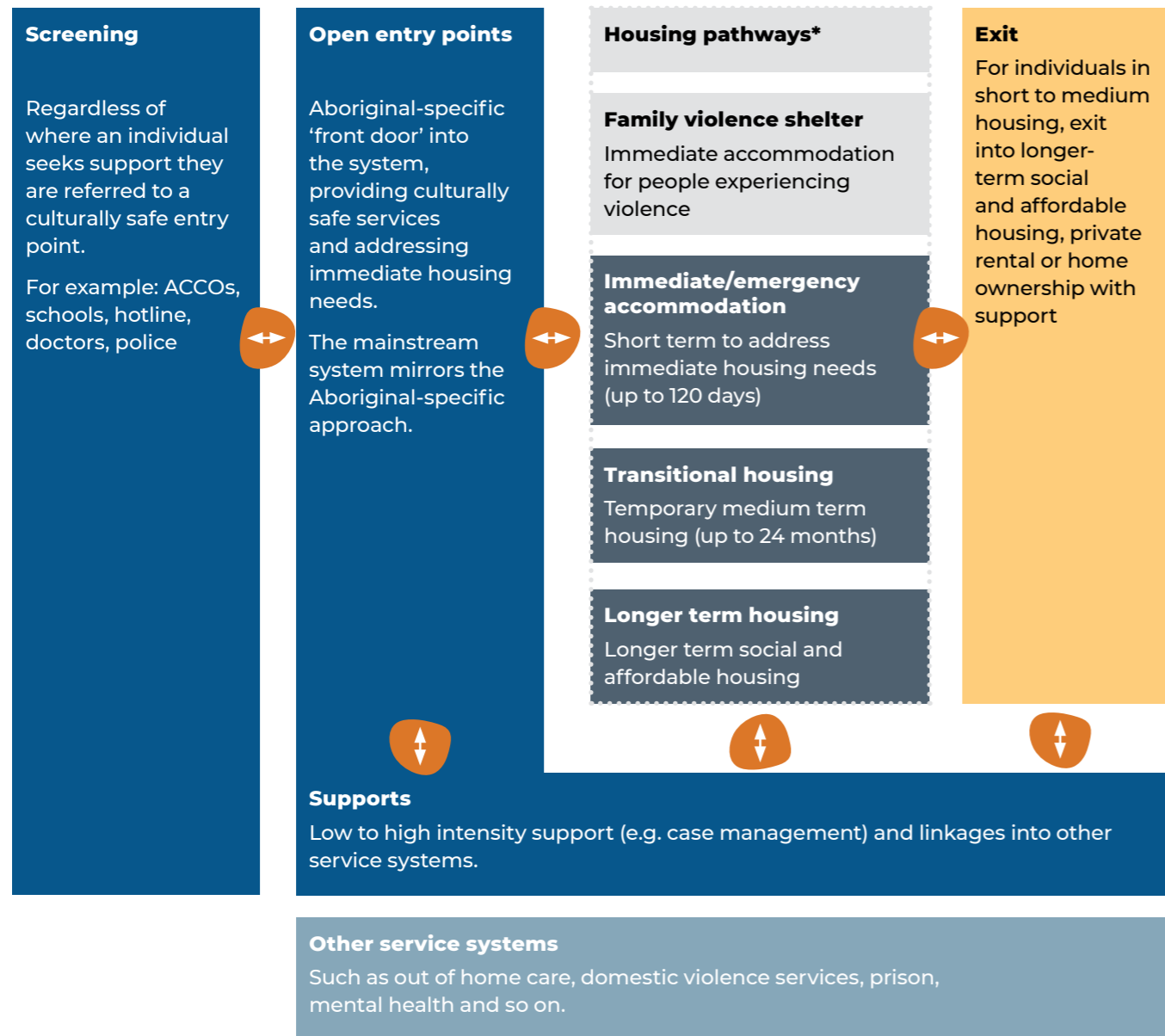
1. Aboriginal Housing Victoria. The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homeless Framework 2021  
 \* Primarily publicly accessible data e.g. AIHW, Homes Vic, Census data, data presented to the parliamentary committee (see issues report). Access to detailed activity data is limited and therefore more in-depth analysis is needed.

\* Vision and principles from the Aboriginal Housing Victoria, 2020, The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework  
 ^ These outcomes also support the delivery of the Closing the Gap target that people can secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need. Outcomes have been mapped to VAHHF outcomes measures in Appendix B: Outcomes Framework

# Service arrangements

The diagram below shows the flow of services from entry to exit for the Aboriginal-specific homelessness system. It is important to note that there will be integration between access and supports, which are linked with properties and that the Aboriginal-specific services will be delivered by ACCOs in this system.

While the diagram maps out the services specific to Aboriginal Victorians, it is important that this links into the existing mainstream service system. Further detail for each of the individual arrangements are outlined in Part A: Service arrangements.



\* Note that pathways are not sequential or in a stepped approach; rather this is a menu of options potentially available / needed.

# System management

The Aboriginal-specific homelessness system will be supported and underpinned by a number of key enablers or mechanisms, as outlined below. This covers both the management of supports, providers and the workforce, as well as the management of housing stock on the other. These cross-cutting enablers will complement and extend the existing systems, enabling the Aboriginal-specific system to be managed appropriately and effectively.

Further detail regarding each of these enablers are outlined in Part B: System management.

## Cultural Safety Framework

Cultural Safety Framework which ensures that all individuals have a culturally safe experience in the homelessness system, regardless of where they seek support

## Cross sector collaboration

The way in which organisations across the homelessness system work together regionally and at a state level

## Capacity building, resources and tools

Ensuring the mainstream is culturally safe, developing and retaining a skilled workforce and building on the footprint and capacity of the ACCOs within the homeless system and to own and manage increased levels of housing stock in the future



## Stewardship, funding and monitoring

Setting the priorities of the system, funding, contracting and monitoring and evaluating outcomes

## Data and information systems

Effective data and CRM system that supports a single view of the client to prevent re-telling of their story and informs effective system-wide decision making

**System management will require the involvement of community, organisations and government and should be co-led with shared decision-making between stakeholders.**



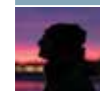

# What the future could look like for clients and the workforce

The five case studies below demonstrate the improved outcomes that an Aboriginal service system could deliver for individuals experiencing homelessness and case workers. The examples below show how improvements to interim and longer term outcomes could be achieved. More detail is provided in Appendix C.

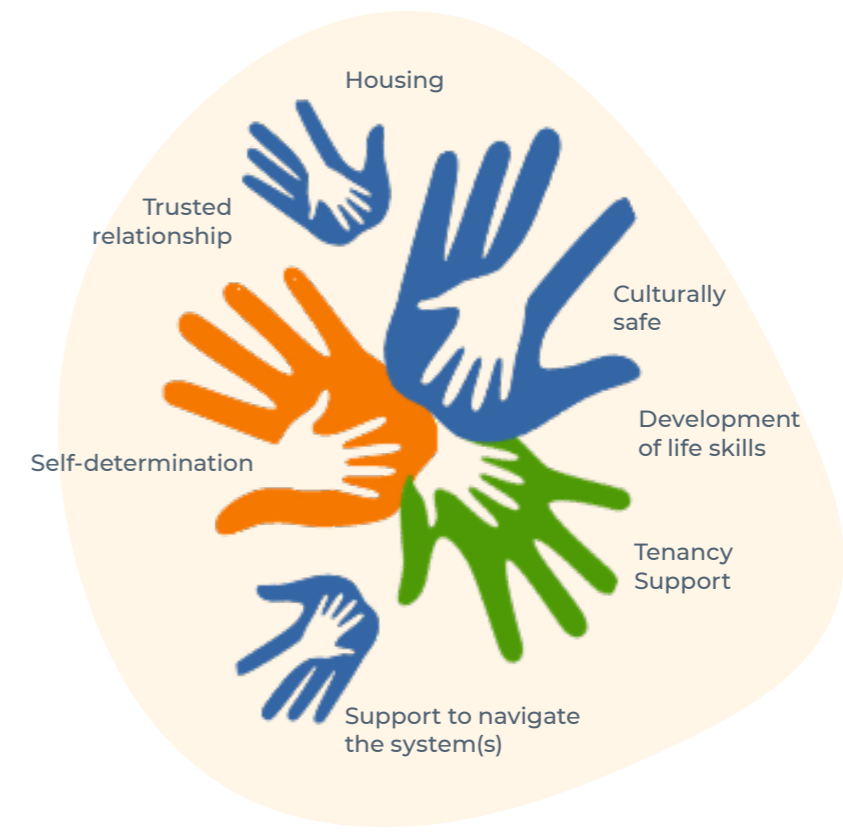
### Individuals experiencing homelessness

 <p><b>Jarrah:</b> exiting care at 17</p>	 <p><b>Kira-Lee:</b> pregnant with a violent partner</p>	 <p><b>Uncle Terry:</b> spiritually homeless</p>
<p>Jarrah is referred to the local ACCO who find immediate crisis housing for him. As part of the ACCO assessment with him they identify what his hopes and plans are.</p> <p>He is referred to an Aboriginal Youth Housing Program which will provide him with stable accommodation for up to two years. He will have access to education opportunities and programs to develop his life skills.</p>	<p>Kira-Lee is referred to the local ACCO through a nurse at an antenatal appointment at her local hospital.</p> <p>The ACCO assesses her and organises crisis accommodation for her at a family violence refuge. She receives legal and case management support through the refuge.</p> <p>A Case Manager coordinates services and Kirra-Lee is referred to a housing program for pregnant women which provides accommodation and wrap-around supports.</p> <p>Through these supports, Kira-Lee develops short, medium and longer term goals so that she is able to live independently with her baby.</p>	<p>Uncle Terry establishes a relationship with the service where he goes for a free lunch. He wants to reconnect with his family and Country.</p> <p>He is referred to the local ACCO who work with him to put a plan in place and he is assigned a Case Manager.</p> <p>He joins his mates at an Aboriginal Men's Health Group and his Case Manager gets in touch with the National Redress Scheme as part of his healing journey.</p> <p>Terry agrees to try living in a hostel managed by a local ACCO where some of his mates are.</p>

### Workers supporting individuals experiencing homelessness

 <p><b>Archie:</b> finding crisis accommodation</p>	 <p><b>Mahlee:</b> providing limited support</p>
<p>Archie is able to access Jack's history which quickly helps him establish the services Jack has used before and that he was banned from. From the record he is also able to contact Jack's parole officer (with permission) and finds out he must be housed away from his domestic partner. They also agree to meet together with Jack to work out a plan collaboratively.</p> <p>Archie is able to identify on the vacancy database a list of potential accommodation options where there is a bed which he discusses with Jack and they agree on a local motel. He is able to contact the local motel directly and book Jack in for the next two nights whilst they explore longer term options.</p>	<p>Mahlee is able to spend more time assessing Kelly's needs completing a culturally safe, holistic assessment. The assessment is more robust and thorough and Mahlee is able to identify why Kelly hasn't been able to sustain her tenancy and what support she will need in her new home.</p> <p>Over the next six months whilst Kelly is in transitional accommodation Mahlee is funded to help her in accessing the support services she needs including securing long-term housing close to her family and the kids school.</p> <p>Mahlee is able to directly connect with mainstream services. She is able to contact her counterpart to enrol Kelly in specialised budgeting assistance program.</p>

The vision for the future is an integrated housing and support system for Aboriginal Victorians experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) homelessness that is person-centred, culturally-safe and underpinned by self-determination. There are collaborative partnerships between clients and workers - working hand in hand to access the supports they need.



- #### What will be different for a client in an Aboriginal-specific system
- ✓ I am welcomed into a culturally safe space
  - ✓ I connect with community and culture
  - ✓ I feel people genuinely care about what happens to me
  - ✓ I feel like an equal partner deciding my future and I trust the person helping me
  - ✓ I only have to tell my story once
  - ✓ I have someone to help me navigate the systems I need to deal with such as justice, health, OOHC
  - ✓ I have access to appropriate housing in a location that works for me and my family
  - ✓ I get the support I need to make sure I don't return to homelessness
  - ✓ When things go wrong, I know who to contact and I have help to resolve issues

- #### What will be different for a worker in an Aboriginal-specific system
- ✓ I can easily access information about my client
  - ✓ I know how to access to a range of accommodation options
  - ✓ I have an increasing number of Aboriginal owned and managed properties to place people in
  - ✓ I am increasingly confident that mainstream services can provide culturally safe services
  - ✓ I know who and how to access mainstream services efficiently and effectively
  - ✓ I am funded to provide the level of support my client needs
  - ✓ I am able to intervene early before a crisis develops
  - ✓ I am supported through a community of practice where I can share and learn from colleagues in similar roles
  - ✓ I have learning and development opportunities with other ACCOs and other mainstream services

# Part A: Service arrangements

## Screening



Screening through a 'no wrong door' approach to ensure that people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness are identified earlier and have access to the supports they need.

### What is currently in place

**The current system relies on individuals presenting to services**, typically for direct supports such as financial assistance, food or housing. There are some outreach activities to identify people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, however this is limited by a lack of longer term housing and sustained support. For Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness, or are at risk of homelessness, in particular, there are many barriers to entry. For this reason, they often do not seek the support they may need from the homelessness system.

### Options that were considered for the future\*

- ❌ **Continuing with the current system**, which relies on individuals presenting to entry points to access supports.
- ❌ **Services know how to refer but there is no consistent outreach**, meaning that people who are at risk or are experiencing homelessness may not get access to the supports they need.
- ✅ **A 'no wrong door' approach distributes entry into the homelessness system** amongst various front line stakeholders, including other social services.

### What does the future look like – the proposed option

**A 'no wrong door' approach distributes entry into the homelessness system amongst various front line stakeholders**, including other services such as health, schools, out of home care, drug and alcohol services and so on. This approach ensures equitable access, and that people are not disadvantaged in accessing homelessness supports based on where they ask for help.

In this model, services may identify that people are at risk of homelessness and refer them into an 'open entry point', which may be through ACCOs or mainstream services depending on individual preference. Common risk tools that have been redeveloped for this cultural context are used, which are underpinned by the best available evidence of risk factors, to support all frontline workers to have a common language around homelessness, recognise risk factors and know how to make referrals.

Outreach is an important component of this model to lower barriers to entry, identify people at risk of or experiencing homelessness and prevent people from re-entering the system. Outreach to Aboriginal communities can be done in informal ways, such as through community barbeques or events or through centre-based approaches to lower barriers for entry and provide direct supports such as food which provides an opportunity to engage, build trust and intervene early.

### Key implementation questions:

- How will a common understanding regarding the risks of homelessness be adopted by all service providers and other mainstream services such as health, police and so on to ensure that all frontline workers have a basic level of understanding?
- How will the right approach and channels between agencies be enhanced to ensure that individuals can be referred into entry points seamlessly?
- How will communities and ACCOs identify which approaches to early intervention work best?



\* See Appendix B for option selection description



# Open entry points



Open entry points ensure that Aboriginal Victorians are met with a culturally safe, welcoming and warm environment when entering the homelessness system, and can rapidly receive integrated housing and support services.

## What is currently in place

**There is currently no Aboriginal-specific entry point into the homelessness system** and it is often difficult for Aboriginal people to find the right support. There are Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) processes in place, however there is a need for redesign with community to become more appropriate to an Aboriginal-specific system.

ACCOs often provide support despite not having sufficient funding, requiring them to connect with a mainstream organisation to provide brokerage, housing and services. The extent to which mainstream organisations are culturally safe is inconsistent.

## Options that were considered for the future\*

- ❌ **Regions having a single entry point** or funnel where all referrals are directed to, as this limits choice for individuals, creates a 'waiting room' situation and risks dis-engagement with services.
- ❌ **Mainstream services remain as the primary entry points**, as this doesn't recognise many Aboriginal people are more comfortable accessing ACCOs, and limits brokerage, housing and supports for community.
- ✅ **A network of ACCOs across Victoria are resourced to be 'front doors'** into an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system.

## What does the future look like – the proposed option

**A network of ACCOs across Victoria are resourced to be 'front doors' into an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system, working alongside and in partnership with mainstream services.** They provide a warm, welcoming and culturally safe space for entry, as well as outreach to reach those at risk of or experiencing homelessness in community.

Interactions begin with a yarn and building a trusted relationship, before going deeper into understanding an individual's needs and aspirations for the future (documented within a redeveloped IAP appropriate to an Aboriginal-specific system). A trauma informed, relationship based and intentional approach guides practitioners. Individuals in need are never turned away, regardless of whether they live locally or not.

Within entry points, there is an integration of access functions with support packages, linked with appropriate housing options. ACCOs have access to housing for clients in need (either through brokerage via the Housing Establishment Fund (HEF) or direct access to emergency and transitional housing stock, or other interim responses (IR)), provide low to high intensity case management / navigation and warm referrals to other services. Over time, ongoing capacity and life skill development is provided to prevent people re-entering the homelessness system.

Mainstream organisations work in partnership with ACCOs and provide a culturally safe option for Aboriginal people entering the system. Cultural safety is embedded throughout mainstream organisations and within the Homes Victoria Homelessness Service Guidelines.

### Key implementation questions:

- What will be the model for enhanced ACCO entry points? What capabilities and capacity will need to be developed to meet local need and ensure equitable access across the state?
- What is the process for existing client transfer from mainstream to ACCOs where appropriate and sought by the client?



An Aboriginal-specific ACCO entry point has been identified as an important starting point for introducing the broader system.

These entry points should enhance the service offering of existing ACCOs, supported by a 'no wrong door' approach to screening rather than a 'single point' or funnel for entry. The open entry points should include core functions for access such as:

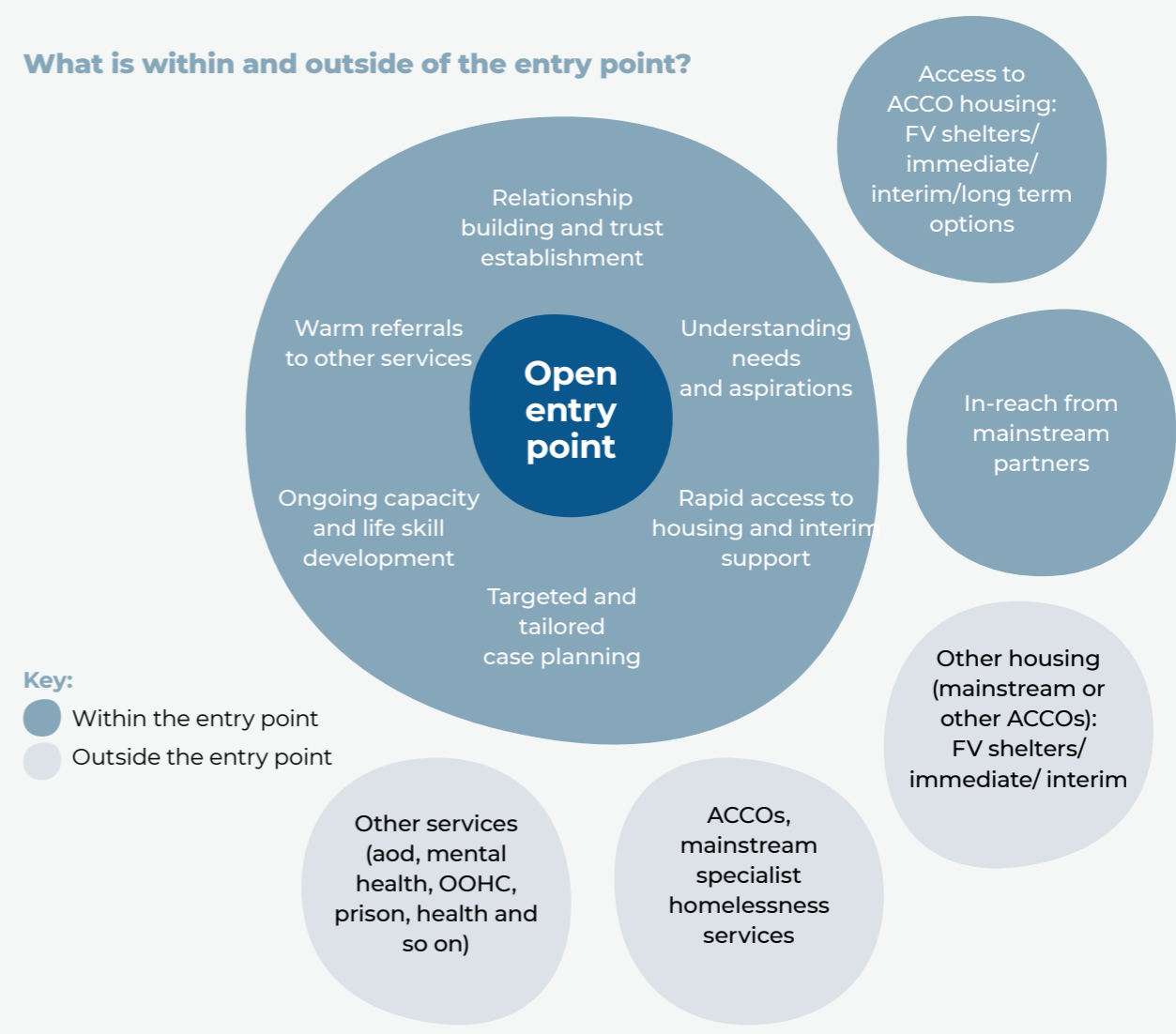
- Relationship building and trust establishment;
- Understanding needs and aspirations, covering Intake, Assessment and Planning (IAP); and
- Rapid access to housing, including short term or interim responses (IR) and/or brokerage via the Housing Establishment Fund (HEF).

Within ACCOs, these access functions are integrated with support packages to ensure they can support their community and clients in need. There are a range of supporting functions, from low to high intensity which include:

- Outreach to identify people at risk or experiencing homelessness;
- Targeted and tailored case management; and
- Ongoing capacity and life skills development.

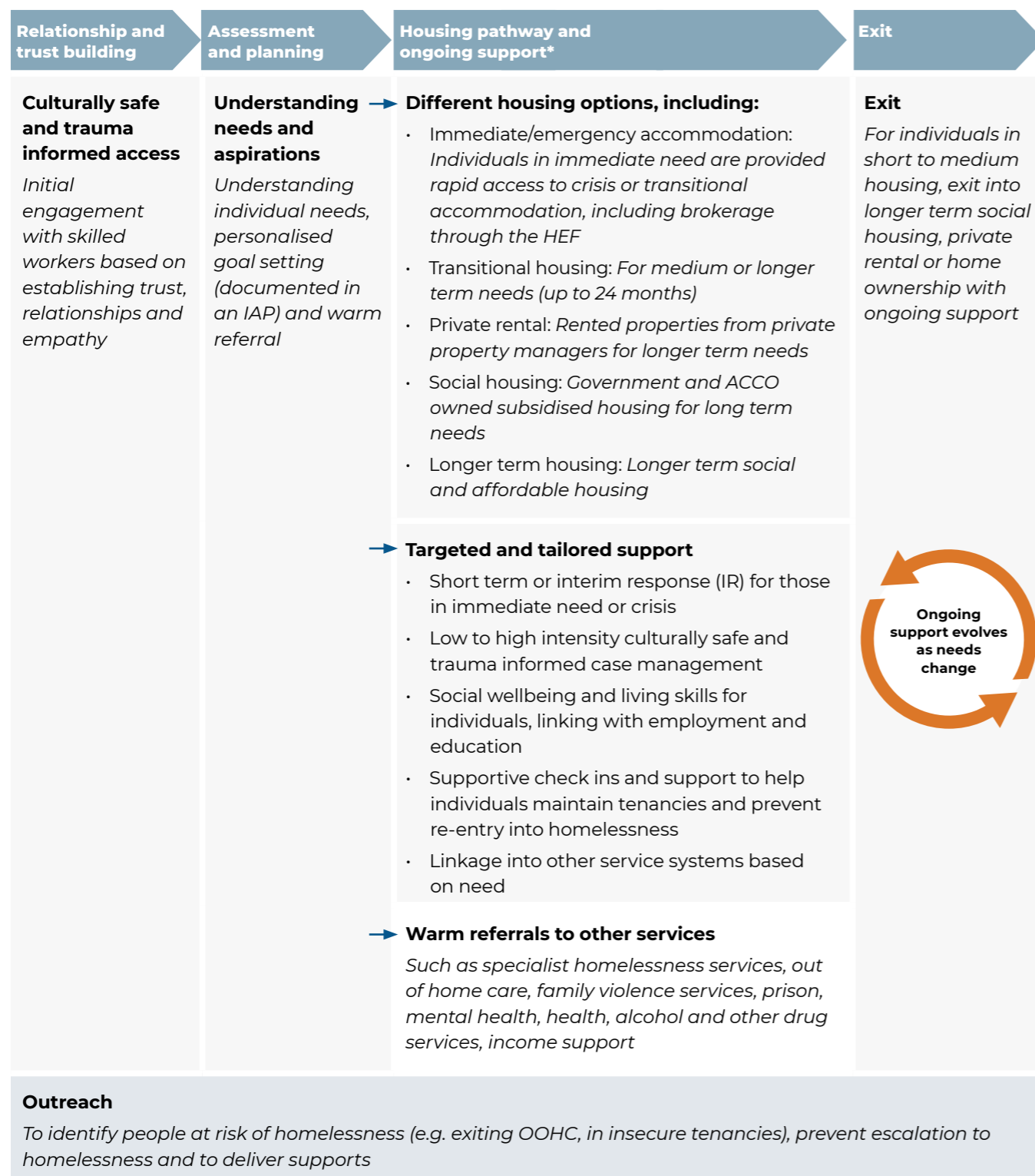
**It is important to note that the establishment of an entry point will help to provide further clarity around demand of Aboriginal people seeking assistance, the type and quantum of support services that are needed to address their needs and the different culturally safe housing options.**

## What is within and outside of the entry point?



# Open entry points

The below diagram provides an outline of the proposed flow for the service model through an Aboriginal-specific entry point, as well as additional housing and support services that are required for Aboriginal clients in need. As depicted below, it is important to note that for an Aboriginal-specific system, the access functions should be integrated with support packages and linked with appropriate housing options, ensuring that ACCOs can effectively support their community and clients in need.



\* Note this is not a stepped approach where people transition from each housing type, but a menu of different housing options that may be needed.

# Supports



Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness have access to culturally appropriate, wrap-around Aboriginal-specific support services, which are linked to properties. They have support to navigate the complexities of the system including housing, mental health, justice, child protection, Centrelink and so on.

## What is currently in place

**People are not consistently receiving the support services that they need.** The lack of consistent service availability, and lack of services, mean that people are bounced back and forth between services. As a result, people become despondent and disengage from the system, which often causes re-entry into homelessness.

This is compounded by low service literacy with people unaware of what services are available or how to access them. Providers themselves are also not always aware or able to easily access other services on behalf of their clients. Support is often time limited; ending before the person is able to adequately support themselves.

Tenancy management can be mostly compliance focused, and needs to be shifted to become more supports-based.

## Options that were considered for the future\*

- A single service** that provides all services for an individual, since some support needs to be provided by specialist providers.
- A centralised service model** which funnels people into services. Support should be provided locally where possible.
- Individuals are set up for success in the community and organisation they choose or are comfortable with** and have access to the supports they need.

## What does the future look like – the proposed option

**Individuals are set up for success in the community and organisation they choose or are comfortable with and have access to Aboriginal-specific service delivery.** Organisations provide low and high intensity supports to help individuals navigate the system, providing case management / navigation

and facilitate links into other service systems as required. These supports will be linked to properties and can be provided by case managers from ACCOs or mainstream services, depending on the preferences and/or needs of individuals, and therefore collaboration between the two is critical.

Case managers will provide individualised support packages to develop client goals to promote self-determination and self-management, improve the persons' service literacy, establish consistent and effective lines of communication across providers and co-ordinate services in collaboration with the individual through warm handovers. Part of these support packages will also include the provision of culturally appropriate accommodation. Where appropriate, case conferences are held with all relevant service providers to agree, and deliver, an individualised plan for high risk / needs clients.

Ongoing support for sustaining tenancies is provided, including developing additional skills and capabilities, to prevent re-entry into homelessness. There is also a focus on prevention based programs that are designed by community and local organisations, as well as programs and services targeted at different cohorts, such as youth in out of home care so that risks of homelessness can be addressed in advance.

## Key implementation questions:

- What are the key cohorts for which targeted programs should be designed?
- What other preventative approaches can be designed and implemented by community?
- How can tenancy management shift from being mostly compliance focused to being more supports-based?
- What is the time-frame for support packages and are they linked to properties?





## Housing pathways



Adequate social and affordable housing stock is developed for Aboriginal Victorians through the Big Housing Build, which is well located across the state, as well as transitional and crisis accommodation. The success of an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system relies on the availability of appropriate, culturally safe crisis, transitional and longer-term housing stock.

### What is currently in place

There is a **significant undersupply of culturally safe housing** for Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness. The closure of Aboriginal hostels has created a service gap in the system, which has been left unfilled. As a result, clients are staying in transitional housing for longer periods of time or staying with extended family, which can result in overcrowding.

Furthermore, social housing is not well located meaning that people are often moved away from their communities to be housed and do not have suitable access to employment or educational opportunities, causing re-entry into homelessness.

### Options that were considered for the future\*

- ❌ **Large-scale developments in outer suburban areas**, as this isolates individuals from employment and educational opportunities, as well as communities in metropolitan areas and does not result in stable housing outcomes in the long term.
- ✅ **Adequate quantity and quality of housing** specifically for Aboriginal Victorians developed through the Big Housing Build to enable choice and culturally safe living arrangements, including social and affordable, crisis and transitional accommodation.
- ✅ **Leverage leased and rented properties** in the private market to reduce time in transitional or crisis accommodation.

### What does the future look like – the proposed option

**Adequate quantity and quality of social and affordable housing stock specifically for Aboriginal Victorians to enable choice and culturally safe living arrangements in the longer term.** This includes longer term social housing and the ability to leverage leased and rented properties in the private market to ensure people are not moving from one transitional or crisis arrangement to the next. It is important to note that building and acquiring stock

is not specifically part of the brief to develop an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system, but is part of the Big Housing Build which is being run in parallel by the Victorian Government.

Housing stock is suitably distributed geographically across metropolitan, regional and rural areas to enable choice for individuals to be within close proximity of their communities. Stock that is being developed is aligned with the types of people that are in need of housing support, such as single males, families and Elders.

Aboriginal hostels are redesigned to increase the availability of culturally-safe short-term housing, ensuring that they are fit-for-purpose, safe and well located. A youth focussed housing and support model is developed and trialled to target young people aged 16 – 24 years to provide a personalised and stable supportive living and education environment for two to three years. Suitable housing options are available for individuals who would like to live on country, including Elders.

While permanent stock is being developed, short term solutions are explored including the private sector providing short-term transitional housing. Sustaining tenancies programs such as Aboriginal Tenants At Risk (ATAR) and APRAP (Aboriginal Private Rental Assistance Program) are expanded to ensure that individuals receive tailored support to maintain tenancies and prevent re-entry into homelessness. In the longer term, ACCOs have increased capacity to own and manage housing stock. ACCOs have greater transparency over available and upcoming housing stock across the system.

#### Key implementation questions:

- How will targets be embedded into existing strategies and approaches to ensure there is adequate housing stock for Aboriginal Victorians?
- Are there innovative funding options that could help to increase housing stock?
- How will new housing stock account for various housing models to support different cohorts?



## Exit with supports



Individuals receive ongoing support when exiting the homelessness system and transitioning into longer term housing. This will prevent re-entry into homelessness and build capacity to sustain tenancies and increase uptake of private rental and home ownership.

### What is currently in place

There are **some services that provide individualised support for people beyond exit**, which ranges from between six months to two years in duration. This support is intended to advocate for the rights of renters, to build people's literacies in tenancies and help people if they fall behind in rent. While ACCOs provide some care packages to people after exit, funding is limited and ACCOs generally have to apply to mainstream services to receive packages. Some providers find that two years of support is not long enough to build the capacity of individuals to have successful tenancies and move into sustainable and affordable housing for the longer-term.

### Options that were considered for the future\*

- ❌ **Exit with no ongoing support**, as this increases the chance of people re-entering into homelessness after exit.
- ❌ **Short-term support after exit**, since building the capacity of individuals to sustain tenancies requires longer term support beyond the initial six to nine month 'honeymoon' period
- ✅ **Existing post-exit supports are built upon and extended** in duration to ensure transitions into longer term social housing, private rental or home ownership is well-managed and supported.

### What does the future look like – the proposed option

**Existing post-exit supports are built upon and extended** in duration to ensure transitions into longer term social housing, private rental or home ownership is well-managed and supported for every individual exiting the homelessness system. Homelessness services flow seamlessly through to long term housing, especially for high risks groups who require additional supports such as mental health, drug and alcohol and leaving out of home care. There is sufficient funding available to enable agencies to provide service packages for immediate support post-exit.

Supports are person-centred and include living skills programs to build capacity for sustainable independent living to prevent re-entry into the homelessness system and increase Aboriginal uptake of private rental and home ownership. Consistent and ongoing check ins are important to help identify any increases in risk factors earlier and there is an opportunity for early intervention before a crisis develops. Mentorship programs are also offered covering specific topics such as DFV, prison justice, drugs and alcohol and mental health. The intensity of post-exit supports will differ based on risk factors and will flex up and down as required in parallel to building individual capacity.

A key dependency to ensure successful transitions into longer term housing is that there is enough long-term affordable housing available for people exiting the homelessness system.

#### Key implementation questions:

- What is the right timeframe for ongoing supports to be offered after exit?
- What additional programs are required to support individuals exiting the homelessness system?



# Part B: System management

## Cultural Safety Framework



The services that Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness choose to access are consistently culturally safe, respectful and welcoming regardless of the service they choose to access, including ACCOs and mainstream organisations.

### What is currently in place

**Aboriginal people often find approaching the mainstream 'scary', 'cold' and lacking a culturally safe environment.** There is inconsistency across mainstream organisations about the level of cultural competency and they often rely on ACCOs to respond to client's cultural needs, rather than developing local capabilities within their own service.

The DHHS Cultural Safety Framework was developed in 2019 so that all individuals have a culturally safe experience regardless of which providers they choose to access. However, currently there are no mechanisms to enable monitoring of the delivery of culturally safe services.

### Options that were considered for the future\*

- ❌ **Reliance and accountability on ACCOs to provide culturally safe services** is not sufficient as cultural safety needs to be embedded across all services supporting Aboriginal people.
- ✅ **Aboriginal Victorians are comfortable in approaching and engaging with the service of their choice** and are supported in culturally safe ways.

### What does the future look like – the proposed option

**Aboriginal Victorians are comfortable in approaching and engaging with the service of their choice** and are supported in culturally safe ways. Services are respectful, friendly, welcoming with staff trained in culturally informed and trauma-informed practice. Annual cultural safety training is mandatory for all staff in the sector.

The Cultural Safety Framework is embedded across all organisations so that all individuals have a culturally safe experience in the homelessness system, regardless of where they seek support. The Framework is monitored and maintained with services held accountable for delivering culturally safe services.

Mainstream services know where and how to access additional support on cultural safety if needed through a combination of ACCOs and other Aboriginal organisations. Cultural safety across organisations is strengthened through continuous education and ongoing improvement.

Cultural safety is monitored and overseen through local forums which support stewardship and commissioning and involves Elders and people with lived experience of homelessness in partnership with government. This will help to determine the best way for cultural safety to be delivered in the local context and links in with the devolved model of decision making, which was outlined in the pages above. Further detail on the devolved model of stewardship and commissioning is included on the following page.

### Key implementation questions:

- Who will lead and drive the embedding of cultural safety across the system (including governance) and how will it be done?
- Who has the appropriate cultural safety knowledge to be able to regulate it and how will it be done? How will it be monitored?
- What partnerships would be effective to enhance cultural safety?





# Stewardship, funding and monitoring



An Aboriginal-controlled agency leads the stewardship of the system, in partnership with other key agencies. They support a place-based approach to management, package allocation and monitoring, with shared decision making through devolved or local commissioning tables. Importantly, the planning and management of supports and housing is integrated and underpinned by a dynamic approach to managing supply and demand.

## What is currently in place

**There is currently no dedicated steward for Aboriginal specific homelessness services,** and there is currently no dedicated steward for Aboriginal specific homelessness services.

**There is a perception that mainstream providers receive the majority of funding and brokerage** and ACCOs feel that they rely on the mainstream to get access to funding for housing, brokerage and services. The current system has a non-transparent approach to funding and securing funding is competitive, which does not encourage a collaborative approach between service providers. ACCOs do not have clarity over the funding that is available and there is no clear logic around metrics or monitoring performance.

## Options that were considered for the future\*

- ✓ **A single or integrated steward for the system,** to oversee, monitor and ensure integration of housing and support.
- ✓ **A local commissioning approach,** with a devolved model of shared decision making between community and government.
- ✓ **Flexible support packages,** which can be allocated through local level commissioning based on the needs of individual communities.

## What does the future look like – the proposed option

**An Aboriginal-controlled agency leads the stewardship of the system and support a place-based approach through a devolved model of decision making and package allocation.**

A devolved model of responsibility ensures that the system is Aboriginal controlled and underpinned by the principle of self-determination. Further detail regarding the devolved model is outlined on the following page.

There is transparency around funding that is available to ACCOs to provide holistic, person and family-centered support and to plan effectively. The lead agency allocates packages to local level tables based on community demand and need and local tables are responsible for allocating packages to providers, ensuring that support is integrated and linked with culturally safe housing.

There is transparency over monitoring through the VAHHF Annual Report Card and outcomes relating to Objective 4: An Aboriginal Focused Homelessness System are reviewed and updated to reflect outcomes that are outlined in this blueprint. There is clear accountability for oversight and monitoring of the system by the lead agency.

**The integration of supports with housing and devolved model of decision making and funding represent key shifts away from the centralised and transactional approach which is currently in place.**

### Key implementation questions:

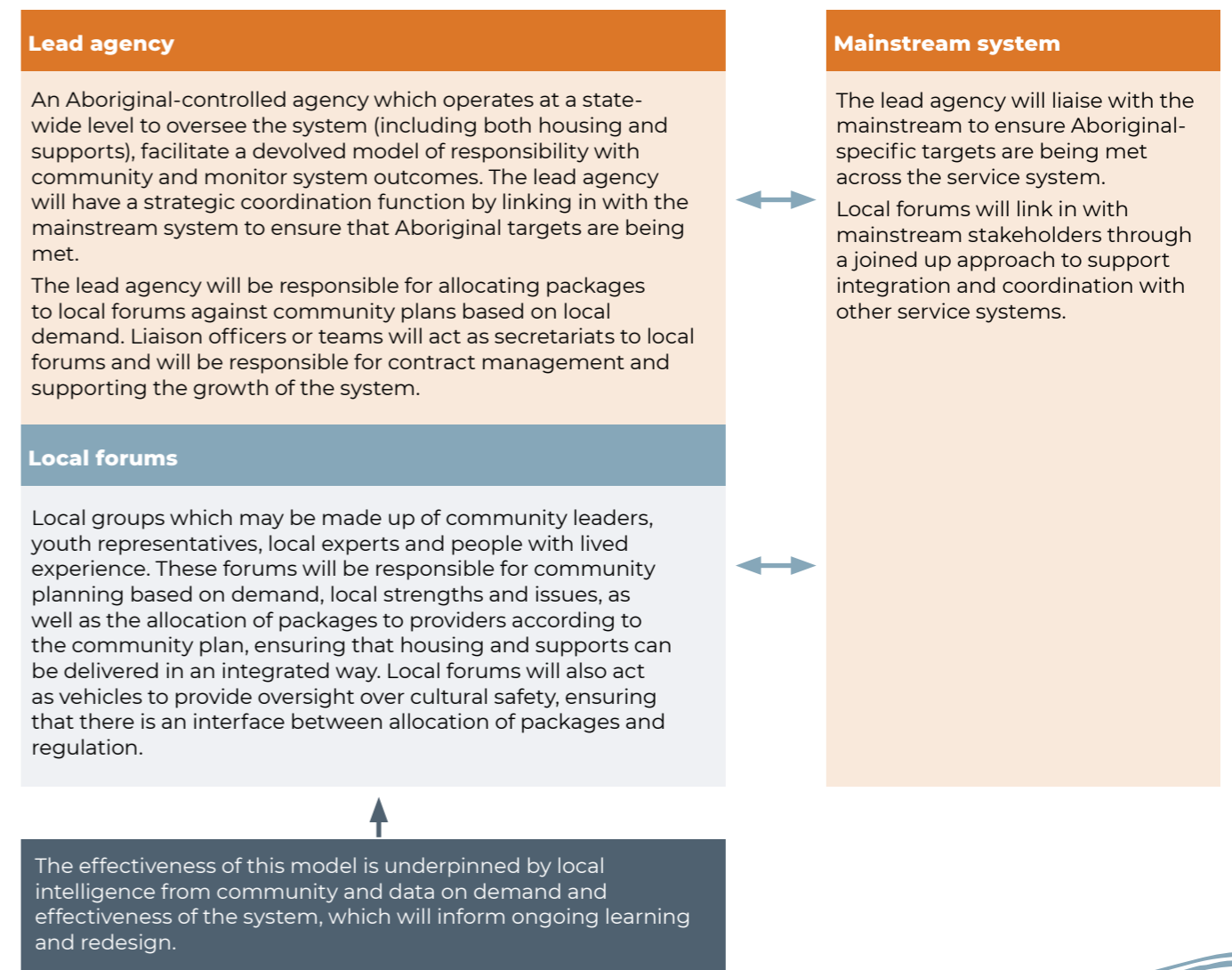
- Who will lead and be responsible for oversight and monitoring?
- What are the accountability mechanisms for this model?
- What would an innovative funding model for services and brokerage look like?



A devolved model of stewardship and commissioning will support the management and development of the system over time. A lead agency will work in partnership with local Aboriginal-led forums, supporting a place-based, devolved model which supports Aboriginal control and self-determination.

A devolved model of commissioning ensures system management is informed by local voices and is guided by the needs and aspirations of community. This dynamic system management approach will be informed by demand, supply, performance, changes in need and external factors such as COVID-19. This model supports self-determination by enabling government and community to work together in a relationship-based and transformational way to address individual needs holistically. 'Importantly,

this model will allow the system to move away from a reactive crisis driven approach to an approach focused on the full continuum of care. A devolved approach will also help to ensure that holistic Aboriginal-specific service delivery can be provided to Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness, including through the integration of housing and supports. A proposed model of devolving decision making and commissioning is outlined below.



\* A longer list of options was developed for this system element and are included in Appendix C: Option selection.

## Stewardship, funding and monitoring

The devolved model is expected to operate through a four stage commissioning cycle, as outlined in the diagram below. It is important this approach is consistent with broader reforms across the mainstream homelessness sector (e.g. Homelessness to a Home), while also devolving key elements of system management to support Aboriginal-control and self-determination.



## Cross-sector collaboration



Collaboration across organisations provides greater opportunity for partnerships and wrap-around supports for individuals experiencing homelessness. There is a shared understanding and shared accountability for delivering services.

### What is currently in place

**Cross-sector collaboration between ACCOs and mainstream agencies varies across the sector**, with examples where there are effective, collaborative relationships and partnerships while there are other examples of less strong connections.

There are no well-established structures which promote and support cross-sector working. There is a reliance on individual relationships and knowledge rather than established and transparent processes known to all.

Connections between other sectors such as the justice system, child protection, mental health and AOD are inconsistent and often limited. Relationships with sectors such as real-estate are limited.

### Options that were considered for the future\*

- ⊗ **The system remaining as is.** Without cross sector collaboration there will be limited improvement in holistic support for Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness.
- ✓ **There is cross sectoral cooperation** with organisations engaged in an alliance or network of organisations at a regional or community level across the state.

### What does the future look like – the proposed option

**There is cross sectoral cooperation with organisations engaged in an alliance or network of organisations at a regional or community level across the state** with diverse perspectives and resources to address complex challenges more effectively. Services collaborate to provide flexible, integrated and multidisciplinary support. There are different layers of collaboration:

Supporting an individual including multi-disciplinary case conferencing for high risk / needs individuals; organisations routinely make contact with each other to connect people needing their services and provide 'warm' handovers.

Partnerships between organisations are normalised and allow for the provision of a full range of services to individuals without relying on a single person or organisation. This also builds trust and a shared awareness and avoids the need for additional navigation between services.

Locally based collaborative forums engaged in decision making about how to address the needs of Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness in their local area.

An Aboriginal homelessness community of practice which creates opportunities for learning, building capability, knowledge exchange including sharing best practice. This includes a diverse range of organisations and sectors.

These provide a level of systemisation of collaboration, however it is important that collaboration is not over-formalised as this may stifle its effectiveness.

### Key implementation questions:

- What other semi-formalised or systemic structures can be established to promote better collaboration?
- Are there additional resources required to facilitate cross-sector collaboration?
- What opportunities are there for collective or shared outcome measures?





## Capacity building, resources and tools



There are mechanisms for identifying and developing capability and capacity across the sector, in both ACCOs and mainstream services, including annual cultural safety training.

### What is currently in place

**ACCOs manage limited housing stock and are generally under-resourced and stretched. Mainstream services rely heavily on ACCOs to meet the cultural needs of clients.** The expertise of ACCOs is highly valuable for supporting Aboriginal people and in building the cultural capacity of the mainstream. However, ACCOs are under-resourced and therefore should not be solely relied upon to provide this capacity building support.

There are few shared resources and tools resulting in inconsistency across organisations.

### Options that were considered for the future\*

- ❌ **ACCOs are solely responsible for capacity building**, since the cultural burden should not fall solely on ACCOs as they already feel under-resourced
- ✅ **Ongoing program for cultural safety**, to ensure all services are culturally safe
- ✅ **A program for co-location of staff** to ensure reciprocal capacity building on-the-job
- ✅ **ACCO-specific capacity building program** or network to build ACCO capacity.

### What does the future look like – the proposed option

**ACCOs are supported in their practice to be able to offer more and strengthened support services and to develop their organisational capacity**, including the management of housing stock in the future if they choose.

Capacity building is delivered through an ACCO-specific capacity building program or network supporting enhancement of service delivery capability, organisational financial management, management of housing stock and so on. Funding is a critical dependency for the success of this, given that ACCOs are currently stretched from a resourcing perspective.

**An ongoing program for cultural safety is developed, which is mandatory for all staff across mainstream providers** to ensure that practice and governance is aligned with the Cultural Safety Framework. This will ensure that all service providers are culturally safe and supported by a highly capable and skilled workforce which is developed, supported and retained.

There is a program for co-location or short-term secondment of staff between ACCOs and mainstream to ensure reciprocal capacity building on-the-job. Enhanced relationships enable improved streams of communication between providers so that individuals can be provided with seamless and holistic supports. A professional support network is developed that promotes ongoing learning and mentoring.

Communities of practice are developed for learning, building capability, knowledge exchange including sharing best practice across ACCOs and mainstream services.

#### Key implementation questions:

- What are the key skills that need to be developed in ACCOs and in mainstream services?
- How will the workforce be developed to provide culturally-safe and appropriate case management / navigation?
- How will accountability be built into this model?



## Data and information systems



Enhanced mechanisms for data sharing are developed to prevent re-telling of stories which enables individuals to control the information that is shared with providers.

### What is currently in place

**Data collection across the system is inconsistent** and workers are required to collect and record different data through different platforms at each stage from Intake Assessment and Planning, referral and accessing specialist homelessness services.

While the existing Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP) enables SHS agencies to record client information, case notes and client goals, there is very limited sharing of information across the system and with other providers, meaning that people often have to retell their story and relive their trauma. Some data systems do not have the facility to record people's Aboriginality and data is not accurate as it is not collected in a consistent way.

### Options that were considered for the future\*

- ❌ **A centralised platform** that collects more information than is needed
- ✅ **An effective data and CRM system** that supports a single view of the client to prevent re-telling of their story, leveraging the existing work being undertaken by Homes Vic.
- ✅ **An effective data and CRM system** that supports an understanding of the need and system-wide performance and improvement, leveraging the existing work being undertaken by the Homes Vic.

### What does the future look like – the proposed option

**An effective data and CRM system that supports a single view of the client** to prevent re-telling of their story and informs effective system-wide decision making. Integrated and dynamic technology platforms and systems enable more seamless connection of supports across service systems to ensure that people are receiving individualised supports based on their needs. The starting point will be to utilise existing data systems, such as SHIP, noting that a review would be required to ensure it is fit for purpose for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system.

Access to a database displays a comprehensive and transparent view of accommodation availability (potentially crisis, short-term, transitional and long-term housing), ensuring live updating of accommodation data. Service providers update availability so that individuals can make informed decisions about their accommodation options at any given time.

There are important considerations relating to a common CRM system, including privacy, personal ownership and access to personal data. Information can be accessed by approved services only, with informed consent by individuals, ensuring individual control over data.

Data that is collected via the entry point will inform a more detailed understanding of demand for system planning and the extent of supports and housing required for individuals in need.

#### Key implementation questions:

- Do all organisations own their own CRM?
- Can current data systems be built upon, or is a whole new system required?
- How will access to information be managed and overseen?
- How will the privacy of highly sensitive and personalised data be secured?
- How to leverage the existing work that is currently underway?



# 4. Recommended way forward

## Implementing the recommended way forward

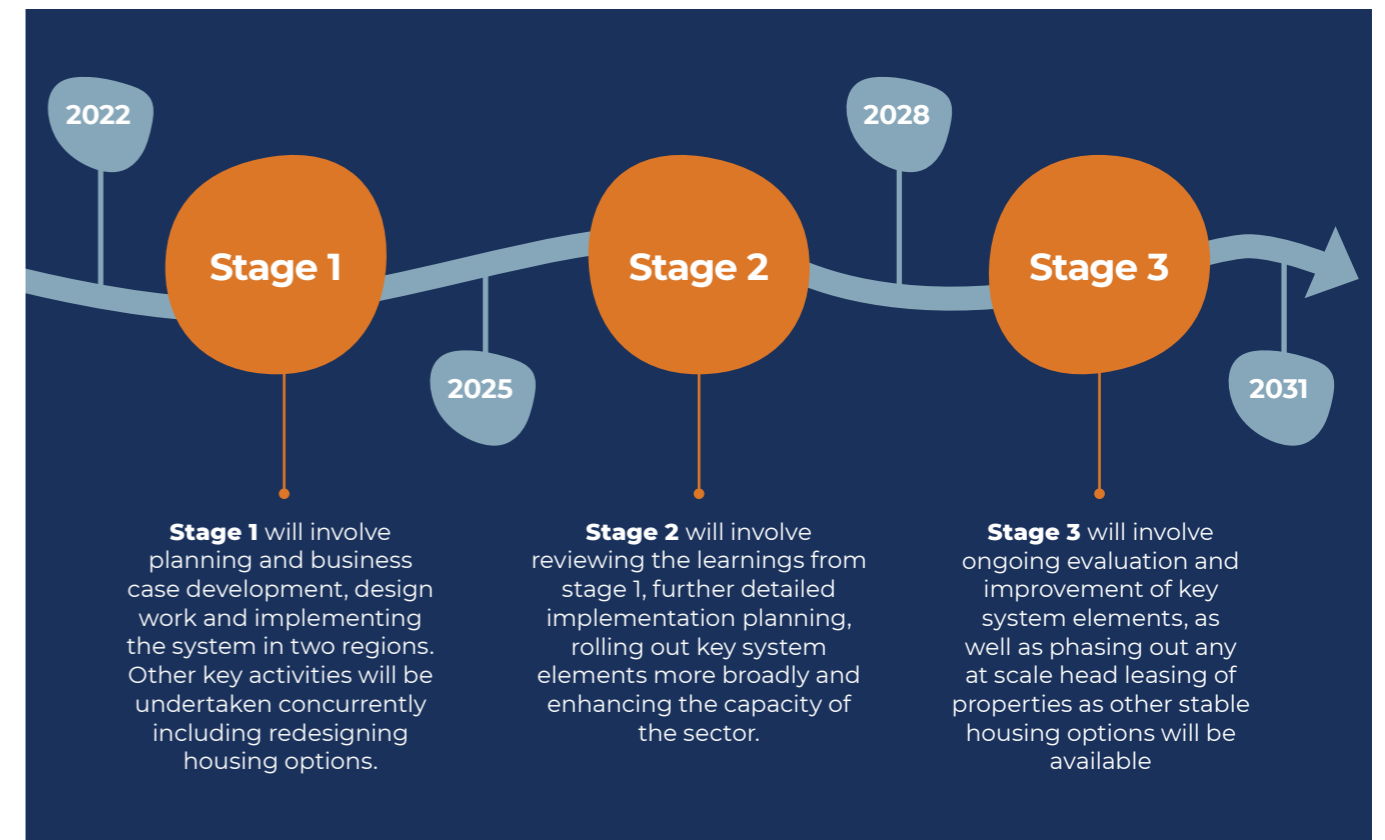
The introduction of an Aboriginal-specific system would not be able to happen all at once. It is important to have a clear view of how it will be transitioned in, noting that this will be informed by ongoing learning, refinement and consultation.

A phased approach may be most practical and successful in the long run, with a 'near star' guiding immediate steps and a 'north star' setting the longer term ambition. A continued focus on learning could then help the system adapt and improve along the journey.

Initial stages of implementation will focus on designing and implementing the system in two geographic areas. The first phase of implementation will have to be underpinned by and linked with other system elements to operate successfully, including stewardship and funding models, cultural safety training and enhanced collaboration between ACCOs and mainstream providers.

There are a number of key dependencies on which success of the system rely upon. Given that these dependencies will take time to develop, it is crucial that there is a focus on them in the short-term to set the system up for success in the longer-term. Some of the key dependencies include:

- Increasing current levels of housing stock by building, upgrading or repurposing accommodation. It is important to note that building and acquiring stock is not part of the brief to develop an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system, but is part of the "Big Housing Build" which is being run by the Victorian Government; and
- Delivery and embedding of cultural safety in mainstream services and ensuring the workforce across the sector is able to provide culturally safe services.



The following pages detail the immediate implementation activities to be conducted during stage 1 in 2022 and 2023.



# Transitioning to an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system

Detailed planning of an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system is focused on the first two years of implementation. This initial period of implementation is focused on designing key system elements in further detail and implementing the system in two areas. Further design work, demand data and learnings from first phase of implementation will be required to further inform and build out the next phase of transition and implementation planning beyond the initial period outlined.

Category	Implementation activities	2022											
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Business case and planning	Develop planning and business case for funding	█	█	█	█	█							
	Set up lead agency or functions						█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Select two regions for initial implementation				█	█	█						
	Ensure access to short-term culturally safe housing						█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Design first phase of implementation	Design stewardship, funding and monitoring model						█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Design service model for entry points						█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Design cultural safety education program						█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Design evaluation framework										█	█	█
First phase of implementation	Implement entry points and new system in two regions												
	Implement system management and collaboration in two regions												
Evaluate and plan	Evaluate implementation of the new system in two regions												
Concurrent activities	Reinvent and launch Aboriginal hostels									█	█	█	█
	Design and implement Aboriginal-specific youth foyer model in selected sites									█	█	█	█
	Design and launch an integrated CRM									█	█	█	█

Category	Implementation activities	2023											
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Business case and planning	Develop planning and business case for funding												
	Set up lead agency or functions												
	Select two regions for initial implementation												
	Ensure access to short-term culturally safe housing												
Design first phase of implementation	Design stewardship, funding and monitoring model												
	Design service model for entry points												
	Design cultural safety education program												
	Design evaluation framework												
First phase of implementation	Implement entry points and new system in two regions	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
	Implement system management and collaboration in two regions	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Evaluate and plan	Evaluate implementation of the new system in two regions									█	█	█	█
Concurrent activities	Reinvent and launch Aboriginal hostels	█	█	█	█	█							
	Design and implement Aboriginal-specific youth foyer model in selected sites	█	█	█	█	█							
	Design and launch an integrated CRM	█	█	█	█	█							

## Year 1 and 2 – implementation activities

Initial implementation will be focused on undertaking detailed design of the entry points, funding model and other key system features, commencing the transition to the system through implementation in two regions and identifying learnings to inform future stage transition planning.

Part of the first phase of implementation will also involve a review of existing resources and tools across the sector to support redevelopment to ensure they are fit for purpose for an Aboriginal-specific

homelessness system. Year 1 and 2 will also involve building key dependencies, such as housing stock, transforming IT and establishing foundations for stewardship to prepare for the future.

Category	Key activities	Description	Indicative timing	Proposed lead
Business case and planning	Develop planning and business case for funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the blueprint outlined in this report, undertake detailed planning work to support implementation of the new system in two regions and develop a business case to secure funding for design, first phase of implementation and evaluation.</li> </ul>	January – May 2022	TBC
	Set up lead agency or functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm the lead agency and set up an implementation team, as well as regional teams supporting the local forums.</li> <li>Develop operating models for the lead agency, including the roles and responsibility of each team.</li> </ul>	June – December 2022	TBC
	Select two regions for initial implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select two geographic regions to implement the Aboriginal-specific entry points (in existing ACCOs who are interested and ready to engage in the first phase of implementation) and key system features.</li> <li>Establish two local level stewardship and commissioning forums in selected regions.</li> </ul>	July 2022	TBC
	Ensure access to short-term culturally safe housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support the first phase of implementation, ensure availability of immediate housing options through increasing access to leased, head leased properties or hotel accommodation, consistent with the approach in the H2H program.</li> </ul>	June – December 2022	TBC

Category	Key activities	Description	Indicative timing	Proposed lead
Design first phase of implementation	Co-design stewardship, funding and monitoring model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake mapping of current local forums</li> <li>Undertake the detailed co-design for the stewardship, funding and monitoring model, ensuring that there is alignment with broader reform directions such as the H2H program, while also recognising the importance of devolving key elements of system management to support Aboriginal-control and self-determination.</li> </ul>	June – December 2022	TBC
	Co-design service model for entry points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the information included in this report, co-design a detailed service model for open entry points in consultation with key stakeholders and people with lived experience. The service model design will ensure integration of access functions and available support packages, linked with properties.</li> <li>The service model will include the redevelopment of culturally safe common risk tools to support frontline workers in recognising homelessness risk factors and making referrals to entry points.</li> <li>Develop templates and tools to support data collection that informs demand, learning and future planning.</li> </ul>	June – December 2022	TBC
	Co-design cultural safety education program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with an appropriate agency(s) to develop cultural safety training packages to be rolled out across mainstream services in the two regions, aligned with the cultural safety framework.</li> </ul>	June – December 2022	TBC
	Co-design evaluation framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-design the framework which will be used to evaluate the first phase of implementation in the short term and also guide future evaluation activities of the entry points and system as it is rolled out more broadly.</li> </ul>	June – December 2022	TBC



Year 1 and 2 – implementation activities

Category	Key activities	Description	Indicative timing	Proposed lead
First phase of implementation	Implement entry points and new system in two regions	Implement entry points and key system features with ACCOs in two geographic areas. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of open entry points, in line with the service model outlined in Part 3A of this report.</li> <li>Sufficient support packages for ACCOs taking part in the first phase of implementation, which are linked to properties.</li> <li>Implementation of cultural safety training for mainstream providers in the regions.</li> <li>Collection and analysis of data according to the data templates that were designed.</li> <li>Linkage or integration with other sectors to ensure access to relevant services</li> </ul>	January – December 2023	TBC
	Implement system management and collaboration in two regions	Implement system stewardship and commissioning approach to support the selected regions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of lead agency functions to support the two regions</li> <li>Establishment of local forums in the two regions, noting this may also leverage existing local commissioning work in related sectors.</li> <li>Set up and support for communities of practice for Aboriginal homelessness workers in the two areas to facilitate learning, information sharing and relationship building.</li> </ul>	January – December 2023	TBC

Category	Key activities	Description	Indicative timing	Proposed lead
Evaluate and plan	Evaluate implementation of the new system in two regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guided by the evaluation framework, undertake a preliminary process, outcomes and economic evaluation of the first phase of implementation, ensuring the approach supports learning and is informed by community.</li> <li>Once the system is rolled out more broadly, confirm evaluation approach and timing to ensure that the system is monitored and evaluated at appropriate intervals.</li> </ul>	August 2023 – February 2024	TBC

**Concurrent to designing and implementing the system, there are a some additional implementation activities that can be undertaken, including:**

Reinvent and launch Aboriginal hostels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redesign and recommission Aboriginal hostels and partner with an Aboriginal organisation to develop properties to ensure Aboriginal Victorians have culturally safe housing options.</li> </ul>		TBC
Design and implement Aboriginal-specific youth foyer model in selected sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with VACCA and other mainstream organisation to implement an Aboriginal youth foyer model in two agreed locations to determine demand and uptake for wider roll out.</li> </ul>	September 2022 – June 2023	TBC
Review and redevelop key tools and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and redevelop key system tools and resources, such as the IAP, to ensure they are fit-for-purpose for an Aboriginal-specific system.</li> </ul>		
Review CRM to ensure it is fit-for purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a review of the existing CRM and provide recommendations to expand or refine functionality to ensure it is fit-for-purpose for an Aboriginal-specific system.</li> </ul>		TBC

# Appendix A: First phase of implementation

## Preparing for the first phase of implementation

In planning and preparing for the first phase of implementation of the new system it is essential that it is underpinned by data, recognising that there are limitations to the current data available. This section provides an overview of key data requirements to inform planning, as well as a series of reference assumptions which could be further validated and refined through detailed planning and design work.

As identified earlier in this document, there is a need for better and more transparent data collection, as it is a key element of detailed implementation planning and will inform the business case.

As a starting point, it is suggested that the following data should be collected to inform the development of a business case and initial planning:

- The number and types of funded services provided by each ACCO (currently 17 ACCOs funded to provide homelessness services);
- The volume of activity per service per ACCO noting the significant range of 6 – 329 ACCO clients per region (as shown in Figure 2);
- Length of time services are provided for, particularly support services;

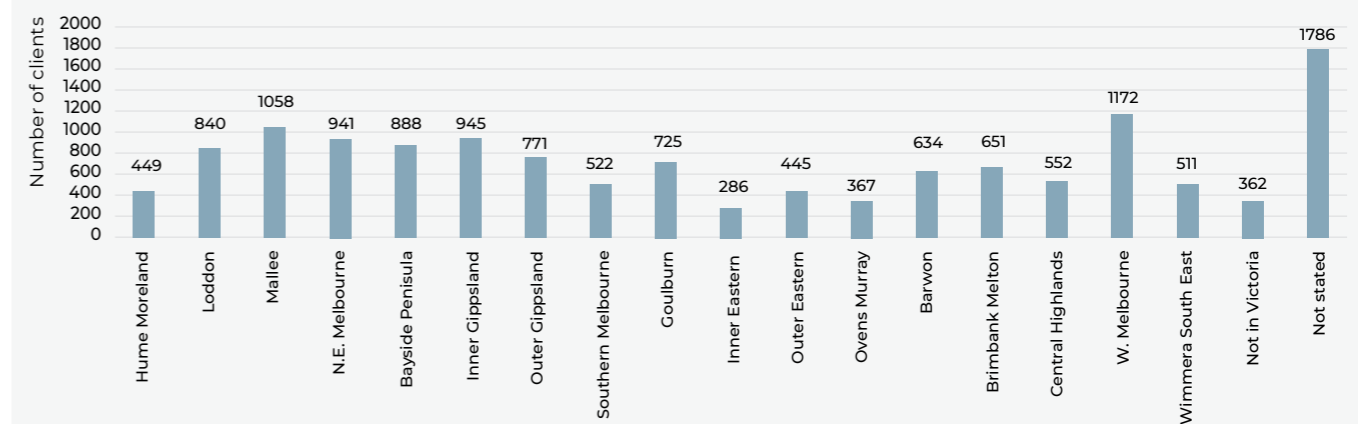
- Referrals to external services, including the number and type of service;
- Referrals received from external services, number and type;
- Staffing profiles and caseloads per ACCO; and
- Client and staff feedback.

As shown on the right, Homes Victoria data collected to date provides a high level overview of the number of Aboriginal clients accessing homelessness services by region and the number of ACCO clients by region.

However, there is significant variation in these numbers and further validation is required (as well as an assessment of the readiness and capacity of ACCOs) to inform selection of initial locations and services. This will be important to guide the number and type of staff required for the first phase of implementation.

**In 2020-21, 105,500 people were supported by Victorian Specialist Homelessness Services including 10,459 who identified as Aboriginal clients. ACCOs (both homelessness and family violence funded Specialist Homelessness Services) supported 4,149 people in 2020-21, of which 3,609 identified as Aboriginal clients.**

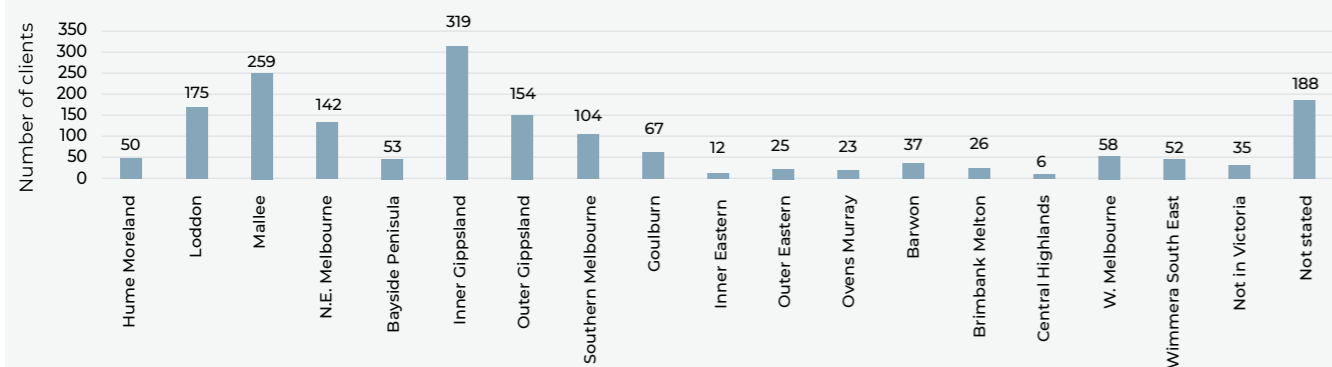
Figure 2





### Preparing for the first phase of implementation

Figure 2



Note that this data was supplied by Homes Victoria and is based on geographic regions rather than ACCO specific

## Indicative assumptions

There are a series of indicative assumptions that will support preliminary costing for stage 1 of implementation. The assumptions listed below are based on the blueprint for system outlined in this report and stage 1 of implementation, as detailed in the implementation plan.

It is important to note that specific demand data was not available to inform these assumptions and further work will be required once the data outlined on the page above is available. The assumptions listed below

are therefore subject to refinement through business case development and detailed design work for the service model.

Cost Category	Item	Indicative cost inputs	Description
<b>The below assumptions provide an indicative view of the resourcing required for the lead agency to support the implementation of the system in two regions. The assumptions are preliminary and subject to refinement through further consultation, design and planning.</b>			
Management – lead agency	Management time to support organisational responsibilities	Not available	A proportion of time required by CEOs of agencies responsible for implementation activities to oversee and guide their teams on each of their implementation activities.
Resourcing – lead agency (for driving and delivering)	Business case team	Not available	A project team within the lead agency to undertake further data analysis, planning and develop the business case to secure investment in the system. This would involve full time work for a minimum of three months. The lead agency may choose to contract an external organisation for development of the business case.
	Lead agency	Not available	It is assumed that the following teams will be required within the lead agency for stage 1 of implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management team leading the project</li> <li>• Strategic coordination team to drive implementation of the system and ensure integration with the mainstream during stage 1.</li> <li>• Liaison team to liaise with local forums and undertake contract management.</li> </ul>

Indicative assumptions

Cost Category	Item	Indicative cost inputs	Description
Resourcing – lead agency (for driving and delivering)	Design, implementation and evaluation team	Not available	A project team of to lead design, implementation and evaluation work for stage 1, including developing an evaluation framework, designing stewardship and funding model and service model for entry points. The team will also oversee the implementation process and will be responsible for collecting and analysing data and information for the evaluation of the first phase of implementation. Members of this team will also focus on the redesign of Aboriginal hostels and design and implementation of youth foyers.  The lead agency may choose to contract an external organisation at various stages throughout stage 1 to lead sub-components of the design and evaluation work, such as design of the entry points or evaluation of the first phase of implementation.
	Data and CRM team	Not available	A project team who will be responsible for developing data templates and overseeing data collection during the first phase of implementation. The team will also be responsible for reviewing existing data systems and identifying the approach to ensure it is fit-for-purpose for the system.
	Cultural safety	Not available	Contracting relevant experts and partnering with an organisation to design cultural safety training and deliver to mainstream services. It is assumed that this will be full time for the first three months of implementation.
<p><b>The below assumptions provide an indicative view of the resourcing and capital requirements to implement the entry points and system in two regions. These assumptions are subject to refinement through further consultation, design and planning. The pay grades listed below are based on the SCHADS award rates.</b></p>			
Resourcing – ACCOs and mainstream	Team leader	SCHADS Level 8 @ \$102 k per year	A team leader per ACCO will be required to lead the first phase of implementation and liaise with the lead agency as needed.
	Open entry point team*	SCHADS Level 7 @ \$95 k per year	Senior and experienced staff per ACCO who have expert inter-personal and assessment skills. These staff will be able to sign-post which services people need, provide warm handovers, develop an initial plan and act as advocates if necessary.

Cost Category	Item	Indicative cost inputs	Description
Resourcing costs – ACCOs and mainstream	Navigation team*	SCHADS Level 7 @ \$95 k per year	Senior experienced staff per ACCO who can work independently without direction, create partnerships and networks across the housing, homelessness and other sectors involved in addressing the needs of Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness. It should be noted that this cost could potentially be part of the housing and support package offered to clients.
	Community outreach team	SCHADS Levels 6 + 7 @ \$88-95 k per year	2 – 3 staff members per ACCO that undertake community outreach activities to identify people who may be at risk of or experiencing homelessness. It is assumed that this role would be part-time (approximately half the week) for these team members.
Capital costs	Support packages for first phase of implementation	Not available	Support packages that are linked with housing options will be made available for ACCOs and mainstream providers in the two selected regions. Earlier work done to design the stewardship and funding model in stage 1 will be necessary to determine the cost inputs for this item.
	Computers	\$1,500 per computer	Computers for team leader and each staff member in open entry point and navigation teams.
	Capital works	Not available	Capital works may be necessary to ensure services have a warm and welcoming environment and have private rooms for client intake and assessment and space for families to be occupied. Cost for this item will depend on individual sites and appropriateness of existing space and facilities.

\* This assumption is subject to refinement through further consultation, design and planning based on the demand for services, the skills required for these new, expanded roles





# Appendix B: Outcomes framework

## A potential approach to measuring outcomes

As outlined in the system framework, an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system seeks to achieve a number of outcomes. A potential approach to the measurement of these outcomes is outlined below, with proposed outcomes mapped to measures from the VAHMF Annual Report Card. Further consultation and refinement will be needed to support the further development and finalisation of the potential outcomes, and identify data gaps to support measurement over time.

Outcomes	Outcomes measures*
People are housed in safe and culturally appropriate accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M4a – Unmet need for short term/ emergency accommodation</li> <li>• M4b – Unmet need for medium/ transitional accommodation</li> <li>• M4c – Unmet need for long term accommodation</li> <li>• M13 – Victorian Government spending on social housing per head of population</li> <li>• M14 – Proportion of Population on the Housing Register Waiting List</li> <li>• M15 – Recipients of New Victorian Public Housing Allocated</li> <li>• M16 – Recipients of Mainstream Community Housing Units Allocated</li> </ul>
People are empowered and supported to move beyond homelessness and empowered to live the life they want	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M1 – Presentations to Specialist Homelessness Services System (SHS) per capita</li> <li>• M3 – Proportion of clients who exit the SHS homeless who were homeless on entry</li> <li>• M5 – Presentations to SHS following housing crisis</li> <li>• M6 – Presentations to SHS following exit from custody</li> <li>• M7 – Presentations to SHS following exit from a psychiatric facility</li> <li>• M8 – Presentations to SHS following exit from out of home care</li> <li>• M12 – Returning Specialist Homelessness Services clients</li> <li>• M17 – Private Rental Market</li> <li>• M18 – Transition from SHS into Private Market</li> <li>• M19 – Home Ownership Rate</li> <li>• M20 – Number Assisted by Government Shared Equity Program to Purchase a Home</li> </ul>
Holistic, integrated and client centered supports are available to individuals in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M9 – Proportion of Specialist Homelessness Services clients with unmet need for drug/ alcohol counselling</li> <li>• M10 – Proportion of Specialist Homelessness Services clients with unmet need for mental health support</li> <li>• M11 – Proportion of Specialist Homelessness Services clients with unmet need for family violence support</li> </ul>
All organisations in the sector are culturally safe, capable and highly collaborative	<p><i>Outcomes measures to be developed.</i></p> <p><i>Further data needs to be collected and analysed to measure this outcome.</i></p>

\*The outcomes measures are from the VAHMF Annual Score Card. Additional outcomes measures may need to be further developed.

# Appendix C: Option selection










## Summary of proposed options









Option selection was informed by analysis of data, a cross jurisdictional scan, consultations with stakeholders and people with lived experience and co-design workshops with key stakeholders. The rationale for the selection of options for each of the system features is outlined in the table below. The options are outlined in more detail in the body of the report pp. 18-33.

System element	Options	Rationale for option selection
Screening	❌ <b>Option 1:</b> Continuing with the current system	The current system relies on individuals presenting to access support. Without sufficient outreach, people who are at risk or are experiencing homelessness may not get access to the supports they need if they choose not to present.
	❌ <b>Option 2:</b> Services know how to refer but there is no outreach	
	✅ <b>Option 3:</b> A 'no wrong door' approach	This approach distributes entry into the homelessness system amongst various front line players, including other social services, and ensures equitable access so that people are not disadvantaged in accessing homelessness supports based on where they ask for help.
Open entry points	❌ <b>Option 1:</b> Regions having a single entry point or funnel where all referrals are directed to	This approach limits choice for individuals, creates a 'waiting room' situation, as people become stuck at one point and barriers create risks of dis-engagement with services.
	❌ <b>Option 2:</b> Mainstream services remain as the primary entry points	This does not recognise many Aboriginal people are more comfortable accessing ACCOs, and limits brokerage, housing and supports for community.
	✅ <b>Option 3:</b> A network of ACCOs across Victoria are resourced to be 'front doors' into an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system.	They provide a warm, welcoming and culturally safe space for entry, as well as outreach to reach those at risk of homelessness in community.



Summary of proposed options

System element	Options	Rationale for option selection
Supports	 <b>Option 1:</b> A single service that provides all services for an individual	This would not be appropriate since some support needs to be provided by specialist providers.
	 <b>Option 2:</b> A centralised service model which funnels people into services	Support should be provided locally where possible, which is not enabled through this model.
	 <b>Option 3:</b> Individuals are set up for success in the community and organisation they choose or are comfortable with and have access to the supports they need.	This approach promotes self-determination and self-management, improve the persons' service literacy.
Housing pathways	 <b>Option 1:</b> Large-scale developments in outer suburban areas	This isolates individuals from employment and educational opportunities, as well as communities in metropolitan areas and does not result in stable housing outcomes in the long term.
	 <b>Option 2:</b> Adequate quantity and quality of housing specifically for Aboriginal Victorians, funded through the Big Housing Build	This will build supply and enable choice and culturally safe living arrangements.
	 <b>Option 3:</b> Leverage leased and rented properties in the private market	This will reduce time that people are spending in transitional or crisis accommodation.
Exit with supports	 <b>Option 1:</b> Exit with no ongoing support	A lack of ongoing support after exit increases the chance of people re-entering into homelessness.
	 <b>Option 2:</b> Short-term support after exit	Building the capacity of individuals to sustain tenancies requires longer term support beyond the initial six to nine month 'honeymoon' period.
	 <b>Option 3:</b> Existing post-exit supports are built upon and extended in duration	This will ensure transitions into longer term social housing, private rental or home ownership is well-managed and supported to prevent re-entry back into homelessness.

System element	Options	Rationale for option selection
Cultural Safety Framework	 <b>Option 1:</b> Reliance and accountability on ACCOs to provide culturally safe services	Cultural safety needs to be embedded across all services and the cultural burden should not fall solely on ACCOs that are already under-resourced.
	 <b>Option 2:</b> Aboriginal Victorians are comfortable in approaching the service of their choice	This way, all individuals have a culturally safe experience in the homelessness system, regardless of where they seek support.
Stewardship, funding and monitoring	 <b>Option 1:</b> Single or integrated steward for the system	To oversee the system (including both housing and supports), facilitate a devolved model of responsibility with community and monitor system outcomes. The lead agency will have a strategic coordination function by linking in with the mainstream system to ensure that Aboriginal targets are being met.
	 <b>Option 2:</b> A local commissioning approach	Community is represented and involved in decision-making regarding funding and monitoring. This will enable a view of what is going on 'on the ground' in regional communities so that services are reflective of the true needs of individuals.
	 <b>Option 3:</b> Flexible support packages	Flexible packages can be allocated through local level commissioning based on the needs of individual communities.
	 <b>Option 4:</b> Block funding	Block funding often does not reflect changes in demand for services, meaning that people miss out on available funding
	 <b>Option 5:</b> Enrolment model	This model enables individuals to voluntary enrol with services of their choice and services receive funding per enrolment, however it also creates a competitive model of funding.
	 <b>Option 6:</b> Capital build funding is available through the Big Housing Build	This will ensure that there is adequate funding to develop housing, but that it does not come out of the funding to provide wrap-around supports for individuals.

## Summary of proposed options

System element	Options	Rationale for option selection
Capacity building, resources and tools	❌ <b>Option 1:</b> ACCOs are solely responsible for capacity building	The cultural burden should not fall solely on ACCOs that are already under-resourced.
	✅ <b>Option 2:</b> Ongoing program for cultural safety	This will help to ensure that practice is aligned with the Cultural Safety Framework and that all service providers are culturally safe and supported by a highly capable and skilled workforce.
	✅ <b>Option 3:</b> A program for co-location or short-term secondment of staff	This will enable reciprocal 'on-the-job' capacity building and enhanced relationships will enhance the supports that individuals receive.
	✅ <b>Option 4:</b> ACCO-specific capacity building program	Capacity building is delivered through an ACCO-specific capacity building program or network supporting enhancement of service delivery capability, organisational financial management, management of housing stock and so on.
Cross-sector collaboration	❌ <b>Option 1:</b> The system remaining as is	Without cross sector collaboration including workforce training and support, there will be limited improvement in holistic support for Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness.
	✅ <b>Option 2:</b> There is cross sectoral cooperation with organisations engaged in an alliance or network of organisations at a regional or community level across the state	Services collaborating will ensure that there are diverse perspectives and resources to provide flexible, integrated and multidisciplinary support for individuals.
Data and information systems	❌ <b>Option 1:</b> A centralised platform that collects more information that needed	It is important that the amount of personal data/information is minimised for privacy reasons.
	✅ <b>Option 2:</b> An effective data and CRM system that supports a single view of the client	Integrated and dynamic technology platforms and systems enable more seamless connection of supports across service systems to ensure that people are receiving individualised supports based on their needs and prevent people from re-telling their story.

# Appendix D:


## Current and future state personas






## Case studies – current and future state

The following three example case studies below provide a snapshot of the types of challenges Aboriginal Victorians may be facing currently and the improved outcomes that an Aboriginal service system could potentially achieve for individuals experiencing homelessness\*.

 <b>Kirra-Lee</b> <b>Current state</b>	<b>Future system</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kirra-Lee is in her late teens and pregnant with her first child. She is in her third trimester and has limited antenatal care</li> <li>• She has been alienated from her community and isn't speaking with her family after they asked to leave when she became pregnant. She was living with her partner and his extended family. He had organised for his parents to traditionally adopt the baby, which Kirra-Lee does not agree with.</li> <li>• Her partner monitors her all the time and he is frequently violent. Kirra-Lee has no proof of ID, no income and no access to a phone. She felt completely isolated and alone.</li> <li>• She ran away from her partner and is sleeping rough on the streets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kirra-Lee attends an ante-natal appointment at her local hospital. The nurse realises something is not right but Kirra-Lee is reluctant to share any details and she asks the Aboriginal Liaison Officer to meet with Kirra-Lee.</li> <li>• The ALO contacts a local family violence agency who arrange for crisis accommodation at a refuge. She also arranges for transport to the refuge where she is welcomed by the staff.</li> <li>• The Refuge arrange for Kirra-Lee to meet a lawyer to discuss her legal options including an order of protection from her partner and his family. They also arrange for a Case Manager who will case manage and support Kirra-Lee.</li> <li>• Kirra-Lee meets her Case Manager at the refuge who will support her through the next 12 months. Together they start to develop a plan including arranging to reconnect with her family.</li> <li>• She refers Kirra-Lee to a housing program (the 'House') for young pregnant women in her local area where she will be able to access stable housing. Part of the program will be the provision of an experienced mum as a mentor and a support group for other young mums. As a victim of violence she will also receive trauma counselling.</li> <li>• At the 'House' Killara continues to work with Kirra-Lee, along with the staff at the House. Together they help her obtain formal identification documents, accompany her to Centrelink to arrange financial support and to the bank to set up an account.</li> <li>• The Case Manager proactively contacts Child Protection to discuss Kirra-Lee's situation. A case conference is organised with Child Protection, the House, legal services and specialist DV services and Kirra-Lee is invited to participate in the meeting (if she wants to). They establish short, medium and longer term goals to support Kirra-Lee to be able to live independently with her baby. Further meetings are scheduled after the birth of her baby.</li> </ul>

 <b>Uncle Terry</b> <b>Current state</b>	<b>Future system</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncle Terry is 62. He was removed from his family aged 4 and placed in a boys home 400km away where he was told his mother didn't want him. He was taught nothing about his Aboriginal heritage while growing up in the home, and remained isolated from his family but also other Aboriginal people.</li> <li>• He suffered physical, psychological and sexual abuse at the home leaving lifelong emotional and psychological scars. He left the home with little education and nowhere to go. It wasn't until many years later he learnt he was very much wanted by his mother and had eight siblings. By the time he discovered where they were, his mother had passed.</li> <li>• Terry become involved in petty crime and has been in and out of the justice system most of his adult life.</li> <li>• Uncle Terry feels he has no connection with country or family, facing a spiritual homelessness. He prefers living and drinking with his mates down by the river rather than having to deal with any social services – ACCO or mainstream.</li> <li>• Being homeless is actually very easy, you know. It starts, you're drinking somewhere, the tracks, behind a building, and you pass out. You wake up in the morning and you've already spent your first night on the street ... Next thing you know, you're sleeping there and meet other people who know where to go ... I learned how to live on the streets, so there's no big pressure for me any more to find something different</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncle Terry regularly goes to a service that provide free meals. The staff have built a relationship with him and he agrees to join some of his mates at an Aboriginal Men's Healing Group.</li> <li>• Terry decides he wants to reconnect with his family and with Country and starts to think about a future.</li> <li>• The staff at the lunch club organize a Case Manager for Terry who works with him on identifying what he would like to do. Together they plan a series of actions which will lead to permanent housing and support.</li> <li>• The Case Manager contacts an Aboriginal Engagement Advisor in the National Redress Scheme as part of his journey of healing.</li> <li>• Terry agrees to try living in a hostel managed by a local ACCO, as long as it's somewhere where he can hang out with his mates. He doesn't want to be on his own all the time.</li> <li>• A drug and alcohol counsellor meets with him and the longer term plan is for a residential rehab program. In the meantime the counsellor follows up regularly with Terry and his Case Manager.</li> </ul>

\* Disclaimer: the future state assumes there will be collaboration across ACCOs, mainstream services and support services and that culturally safety is embedded across the system

## Case studies – current and future state


Jarrah	Future system
<p><b>Current state</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At 17 Jarrah is struggling to find independence and often spends time on the streets at night. He was moved into out of home care at the age of 3 and was in and out of foster and residential care until he recently left his group home.</li> <li>After leaving care he was initially provided with a place in a rooming house, which he hated.</li> <li>He had sporadic contact with his family over the years and sometimes stays with one of his brothers or aunties. He has found a group of friends on the street who have become family. They look out for each other and Jarrah has learnt where to go for a free feed and places where they can sleep at night.</li> <li>Jarrah often has contact with the police for petty crimes. These are mostly to do with food and basic survival. He is a regular user of drugs and alcohol – anything he can get off the streets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jarrah is picked up by the police for shoplifting food from a local supermarket. The police contact the local ACCO who arrange for emergency accommodation through a youth crisis service.</li> <li>A Case Manager meets Jarrah in the morning and organises temporary accommodation for him. They meet regularly over the next few days so the Case Manager can assess Jarrah's needs and what he would like for the future.</li> <li>Jarrah is referred into a youth housing program that will provide stable accommodation for two years and a program of support to develop his life skills and independence. He will have access to educational opportunities, development of life skills and employment pathways. Drug and alcohol support will also be provided.</li> <li>There is availability in three weeks so the Case Manager arranges for temporary accommodation until then. During that three weeks the Case Manager checks in with Jarrah regularly and works with him to identify his short term goals like getting his finances sorted out and making sure he has access to regular meals. He also arranges an introduction to a drug and alcohol counsellor and Jarrah asks his Case Manager to come with him.</li> <li>The Case Manager takes Jarrah to the youth housing program and introduces him. He will meet regularly with Jarrah and his housing program team over the first three months to ensure a smooth transition.</li> </ul>

## Case studies – current and future state (worker)

The following two example case studies below provide a snapshot of the types of challenges a worker supporting Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness and the improved outcomes that an Aboriginal service system could potentially achieve for the worker.

Mahlee	Future system
<p><b>Current state</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kelly is a 27 year old Aboriginal woman with three children who presents at the ACCO office asking for help. She has been evicted from the rental property she was in and has nowhere to go.</li> <li>Mahlee assesses Kelly and identifies the initial priority is stable housing.</li> <li>After an initial two nights in crisis accommodation, Mahlee finds transitional housing for the family.</li> <li>Mahlee identifies that Kelly needs help to maintain her tenancy and needs to develop her skills in domestic budgeting, repair issues and debt counselling. Mahlee also needs help with her financial situation and also needs assistance to procure household items.</li> <li>Mahlee spends two days contacting mainstream services trying to get Kelly the support she needs because she doesn't have a direct contact and she also isn't familiar with all of the programs Kelly may be eligible for.</li> <li>Due to funding constraints over the next three months Mahlee is able to provide low touch low level support only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mahlee is able to spend more time assessing Kelly's needs. She spends time with Kelly to complete a culturally safe, robust and holistic assessment. This includes Kelly bringing her kids into the office for a couple of hours so she and Mahlee can spend time together while the staff look after the kids.</li> <li>The assessment is more robust and thorough as Mahlee is able to identify why Kelly hasn't been able to sustain her tenancy and what support she will need in her new home.</li> <li>Over the next six months whilst Kelly is in transitional accommodation Mahlee is funded to help her in accessing the support services she needs including securing long-term housing close to her family and the kids school.</li> <li>Mahlee is able to directly connect with mainstream services. She is able to contact her counterpart to enrol Kelly in specialised budgeting assistance program.</li> <li>At the end of the six months, they review Kelly's progress against the original plan and Mahlee is funded to continue working with Kelly for the another six months, when they will review progress again.</li> </ul>

## Case studies – current and future state (worker)

 <b>Archie</b> Current state	Future system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jack is a 32 year old Aboriginal man who exited the prison system yesterday and is now homeless. He comes to the ACCO for help.</li> <li>Archie assesses him and identifies the priority need is for housing.</li> <li>Jack has been in the homelessness system prior to going into prison but can't remember the names of the places he stayed before. He also can't remember the contact details for his parole officer.</li> <li>Archie calls a local homelessness shelter to check for availability for the night. He spends an hour trying to get through only to discover there is no vacancy.</li> <li>He spends another two hours trying to contact two other crisis accommodation services but learns Jack had been banned from them previously as a result of his behaviour. Information which Jack hadn't shared with Archie.</li> <li>Archie then tries the local caravan park which is also full and finally finds a vacancy for the night in a local motel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When Jack presents to the ACCO for help, Archie is able to access Jack's history which includes information about which services he had accessed previously.</li> <li>He is also able to identify Jack has been banned from several local accommodation providers due to his erratic behaviour.</li> <li>From the record Archie is able to access the name and contact details for Jack's parole officer. Archie asks Jack's permission to contact the parole officer so Archie can check if there are any relevant conditions regarding accommodation that he needs to be aware of.</li> <li>Archie is able to contact Jack's parole officer and finds out that Jack must be housed away from his domestic partner. He is now aware of the appropriate geographic region where Jack can be housed. They also agree to meet together with Jack to work out a plan collaboratively.</li> <li>Archie is able to identify on the vacancy database a list of potential accommodation options where there is a bed which he discusses with Jack and they agree on a local motel. He is able to contact the local motel directly and book Jack in for the next two nights whilst they explore longer term options.</li> <li>Rather than spending hours locating crisis accommodation, Archie is able to time with Jack in completing a through assessment and understanding what his needs and goals are.</li> <li>Archie documents this in Jack's records which will be updated as a plan is developed in consultation with Jack and his parole officer.</li> </ul>

# Appendix E:

## Approach to designing the system





# Approach to designing the system

The design of an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system is informed by, and builds on, the significant amount of work already undertaken including Mana-na worn-tyeen maar-takoort and the Victorian Inquiry into Homelessness. Additional input was provided through the following mixed methods approach.

