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# Mission Australia

## Flagship Service Models

This Flagship Service Model has been created for the services delivered by Mission Australia. However, if another community services organisation wishes to replicate the service model in a community where Mission Australia does not deliver it, please contact us to discuss how Mission Australia can support that endeavour.

### What is a Flagship Service Model (FSM)?

The following Flagship Service Model ('FSM') is part of MA's growing suite of national service models. Each FSM is evidence-led and aims to drive consistency and best practice by creating national guidelines that can be customised for local context.

The services documented in these FSMs have been chosen based on what we do best, what we want to scale and what we want to be known for. They also support business development by packaging core offerings that can inform tender responses and proactive opportunities.

### Each FSM contains:

1. **A Theory of Change:** an evidence-led description of why we deliver the service in the way we do and what social impact we hope to achieve
2. **Need & client journey:** a description of the client and/or community need and visual mapping of the client's pathway through the service
3. **An operating model:** a 'Gold Standard' and 'Minimum Viable Service' model, including staffing, caseload ratios (where relevant) and assumptions to drive financial models
4. **Sector standards and accreditation plan:** Expectation for periodic self-assessment and governance (including clinical) frameworks where relevant
5. **A Measurement, Evaluation and Learning ('MEL') plan:** describes the overall integrated approach to monitoring, impact measurement, evaluation and learning about a program over time, including inputs, activities, outputs, processes and outcomes.
6. **Implementation steps:** a guide for the staged localisation of FSMs for local services, including development of local service model and/or operational guide.

Sections 3, 5 and 6 are not included in this externally published version.

### FSMs may be used to inform and guide:

- Proactive Business Development
- MA Funded Programs
- Design and re-design of services
- Modelling for tenders
- Prioritising evaluation
- Quality improvement initiatives.

Note: Flagship Service Models are about sharpening focus on where we have common evidence-informed models and those which we want to strategically scale – they do not articulate everything that MA does. They are also not intended to be entirely prescriptive, but provide guidelines for the local nuancing and contextualisation of the service models.

# Flagship Service Model: Integrated Model of Housing and Support

Name of model	Mission Australia Integrated Model of Housing and Support
Prepared by	Service Design and Innovation Team
Date	May 2021

## 1. Introduction and Background

### 1.1 Purpose and scope of this document

This Flagship Service Model (FSM) describes the **Integrated Model of Housing and Support (IMHS)** Mission Australia (MA) provides for tenants and household members in MA's social and affordable housing properties.

The MA IMHS is somewhat different in scope to other FSM's as it does not describe one service model but rather includes a high-level theory of change articulating our overarching approach to delivering integrated housing and support, and describes a suite of smaller component service models and core functions that together deliver the IMHS. The combination of these smaller models and functions can look different depending on the local area, needs of the community, funding and partnerships available. This document articulates how these components and functions interact with people at various touchpoints of their journey as a tenant in an MA property.

This document also outlines the minimum viable core functions needed to deliver the IMHS, as well as ways that impact can be increased in line with local needs where additional resources are available. It does not include detailed information on each component service model or core function. Details for where to find this documentation are included in Appendix C and will be added to as they are developed on a needs basis.

This FSM does not describe the model of housing and support offered in Crisis or Transitional Accommodation (although this may also be provided in partnership between Mission Australia Housing and Community Services).

Although many of the principles of this model would also apply to Common Ground, Common Ground has a distinct and specific "supportive housing" model relevant to the congregate setting and the intensive support required for the formerly long-term homeless cohort. Therefore Common Ground is also not in scope for this FSM.

As of April 2021, there are five main areas of combined footprint for Housing and Community Services.

MA Community Services and MA Housing also regularly work with other Community Housing Providers (CHPs) and support providers. While the IMHS has been developed for the specific context of an internal partnership, many of the principles and success factors will be relevant and can be used to inform the way we deliver integrated housing and support through external partnerships.

## 1.2 Strategic alignment

The MA Strategy 20-25 identifies our organisational goal as *end homelessness and ensure people and communities in need can thrive* with three externally-facing strategic areas of focus: help Australia end homelessness; supporting people in need to thrive; and partner to strengthen communities. The IMHS engages with each of these focus areas and is a key contributor to meeting our organisational goal.

The IMHS focuses on helping people to access and sustain a safe and stable home. This contributes to: (i) supporting people to exit homelessness; and (ii) preventing tenancies from failing and people entering homelessness.

In addition, stable housing acts as a critical foundation of stability from which individuals can work towards improving their wellbeing, achieving their goals in other life domains and thriving in their community.

Strengthening the communities in which our tenants live is also a core component of this model.

## 1.3 The need for an integrated model

### Homelessness and housing instability in Australia

Homelessness and housing instability are significant issues in Australia with complex causes and consequences. A number of contributing factors, including a shortage of social and affordable housing, high rental costs and inadequate rates of income support are resulting in more people falling into poverty, financial stress and rental stress and becoming vulnerable to homelessness.<sup>1</sup>

Homelessness and housing instability often have serious consequences for other areas of life and people who have experienced homelessness are more likely to also experience unemployment, poor mental and physical health, social isolation and a range of other circumstances. While there is a complex causal relationship between these factors – for example, poor mental health can be both a cause and a consequence of homelessness<sup>2</sup> – there is a well-evidenced relationship between these outcomes and this relationship carries with it significant social and economic costs, not only for individuals directly affected, but also for Australian society.

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<sup>1</sup>RANDOLPH, B., LIU, E., AND BRADBURY, B., *Poverty, Property and Place: A geographic analysis of poverty after housing costs in Australia*, City Futures Research Centre & the Social Policy Research Centre on behalf of the ACOSS/UNSW Poverty and Inequality Partnership

<sup>2</sup>Brackertz, N. Davidson, J. and Wilkinson, A. (2019) *Trajectories: the interplay between mental health and housing pathways, a short summary of the evidence*, report prepared by AHURI Professional Services for Mind Australia, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne.

*Without stable housing, people's lives can quickly reach crisis point and keep people trapped in disadvantage.*

There are significant rates of intergenerational homelessness and other social phenomena including poverty and domestic and family violence in Australia.<sup>3</sup> When homelessness and housing instability continue, individuals, families, and communities can become trapped in cycles of disadvantage that can span generations and require significant investment to break.

Within this context, it may not be enough to simply provide people with a property. In many cases, this needs to be coupled with the support to help people sustain housing, live successfully in the community, and break down cycles of disadvantage. This will have benefits not only for the current generation experiencing homelessness and housing instability but also for future generations.

*Without support, people may not be able to access and sustain stable housing.*

The priority of MA's IMHS is to help people access and maintain stable housing and avoid falling into homelessness. This is an early intervention strategy to both help people avoid homelessness in the first place and, for those who have been homeless, avoid repeat homelessness once they have been housed. MA's integrated model also aims to offer the support if needed as people continue their journey towards independence so that they can ultimately thrive in their community.

#### **The unique opportunity for an integrated model <sup>4</sup>**

Mission Australia is one of the few organisations that provides both housing and support services within the one integrated organisational structure (although there are different legal and regulatory structures).

This presents unique opportunities for stronger, wider and deeper collaborations between teams within Mission Australia. We have the responsibility to leverage these opportunities to create impact through integrated housing and supports for individuals and communities to thrive. We believe that an integrated model will deliver greater impact for the people we serve through opportunities to:

- **Provide a more deeply integrated model of housing and support:** We can better meet the needs of tenants/residents/clients through combining our insight and expertise and designing a truly integrated approach with the person at the centre.
- **Streamline and align our policies and processes:** Doing this will optimise information flow, stop duplication of effort and free staff up to focus on working with tenants/residents/clients to achieve outcomes.
- **Develop our collective expertise:** By sharing skills, knowledge, resources and expertise, we can better identify what works and share and scale it in other places.

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<sup>3</sup> Flatau, P., et al. (2013) *Lifetime and intergenerational experiences of homelessness in Australia*, AHURI Final Report No.200. Melbourne: Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute.

<sup>4</sup> This section is an excerpt from the MA "Collaboration on Support and Housing Charter" developed by a National Working Group in 2019 to articulate the unique benefits of collaboration between MA Housing and Community Services.

- **Leverage our combined scale and footprint:** Through sharing resources, we can achieve more than we could otherwise.
- **Use our combined voice and informed policy positions:** Together we can more strongly advocate for more sustainable funding models, more effective service models and better policy responses for those we work with.
- **Develop and equip our workforce:** This will provide greater development opportunities and career pathways for our staff.

Although this IMHS has been developed for delivery by MA Housing and Community Services, many of the underlying principles and success factors can be translated to a context where MA partners with other organisations – that is, another Community Housing Provider or another Community Services Organisation - to deliver an integrated model.

### 1.4 Foundational Principles and Evidence Base

Based on research, practitioner experience and insights from our clients and tenants, the following evidence-led principles underpin the design of our IMHS. Commissioning a specific literature review was not deemed to be required for this model; rather the model draws on the foundation of organisational knowledge built over many years of delivering our core services in the housing and homelessness sector. This includes drawing on key organisational documents such as:

- MA's National Case Management Approach.
- MA's Recovery Oriented Practice Framework
- MA's Sustaining Tenancies Strategy
- Learning from Lived Experience: A Framework for Client Participation

Each of the principles below is explained in more detail in Appendix B: Foundational Principles and evidence base, accompanied by an explanation of how each principle impacts the model.

Foundational Principles:

1. A Housing First approach
2. Separation of Tenancy Management and Support
3. Holistic and person-centred approach
4. Early intervention to prevent eviction and homelessness
5. Respectful (Care-full) relationships as the foundation for all interactions
6. Invest in building stronger communities
7. Learn through lived expertise
8. Recovery oriented and trauma informed approach

## 2. Service Design and Delivery

### 2.1 Theory of Change

The 'Theory of Change' for the IMHS is underpinned by the foundational principles summarised above, alongside practice insights gathered from Mission Australia subject matter experts.

Figure 1 below shows an excerpt from the Theory of Change that focuses on the short, medium and long term outcomes we believe will result from the various activities and inputs that form our IMHS.

The full Theory of Change can be found in Appendix A. The following sections of this document explain core components of our Theory of Change in more detail.

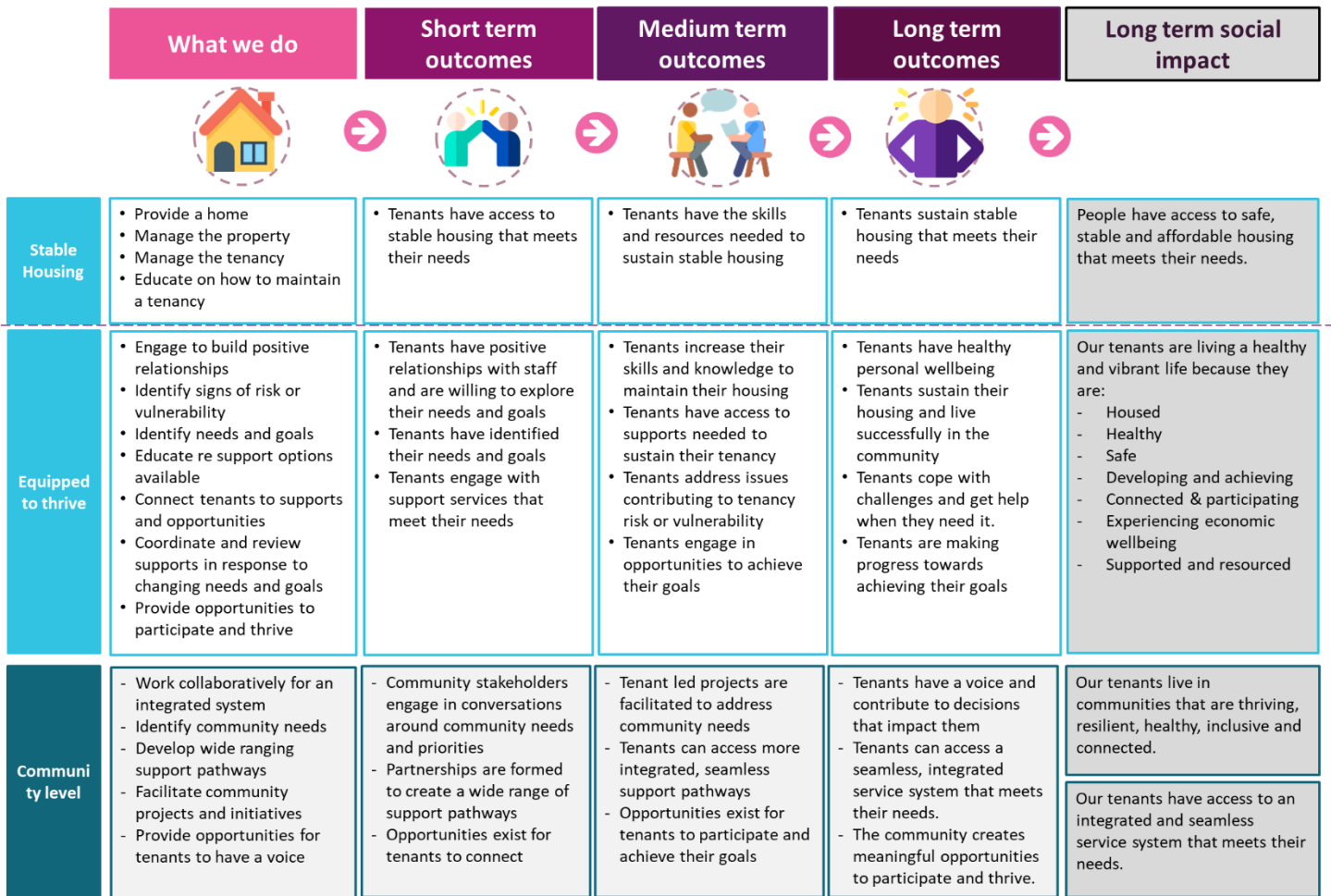


Figure 1: Theory of Change for the Integrated Model of Housing and Support

### 2.2 Target needs group

#### Tenants in social housing have diverse and wide ranging needs

MA's IMHS provides housing and support to tenants and their household members in our social and affordable housing properties to enable them to access and sustain stable housing and to thrive.

Social housing is targeted for people on very low to moderate incomes. However, with insufficient housing stock, high demand and new allocations going primarily to those in greatest need, social

housing is increasingly rationed to those with very complex needs and in very vulnerable situations.<sup>5</sup> For example, in 2018-19, 66% of allocations in Australia went to those in “greatest need”.<sup>6</sup>

While our tenants represent a very broad group and encompass a wide range of cohorts with diverse needs, increasingly the majority of our tenants face vulnerabilities and challenges in their lives. The level of support required for them to maintain stable housing and enable them to thrive will vary greatly between tenants, and for the same tenants over time. The range of needs is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

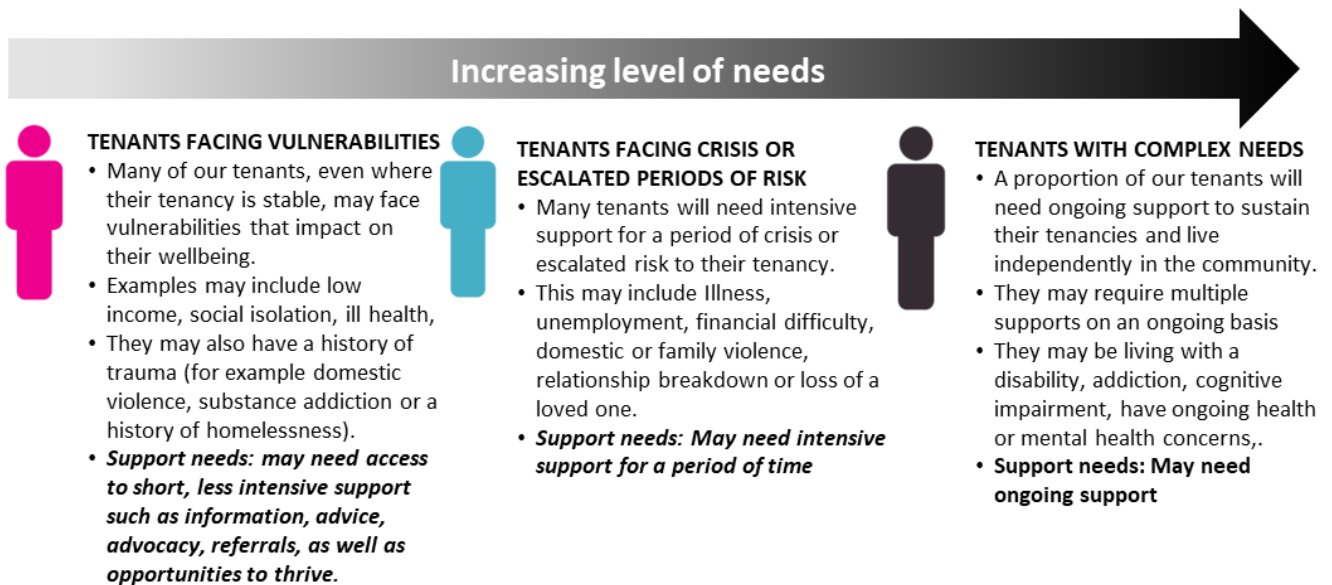


Figure 2: Diveristy of needs in our tenant base

<sup>5</sup> Flanagan, K., Levin, I., Tually, S., Varadharajan, M., Verdouw, J., Faulkner, D., Meltzer, A. and Vreugdenhil, A. (2020) Understanding the experience of social housing pathways, AHURI Final Report No. 324, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/324>, doi: 10.18408/ahuri-4118301.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/housing-assistance/housing-assistance-in-australia-2020/contents/priority-groups-and-waiting-lists>

When challenges or vulnerabilities go unaddressed, or when multiple occur at the same time, they can lead to issues that put a tenant at risk of losing their tenancy and becoming homeless. They may also have a negative impact on wellbeing. Some of the challenges faced by our tenants (or “underlying issues”) and the resulting tenancy risk factors (or “presenting issues”) are illustrated in Figure 3 to the right.

See Appendix F for further examples of vulnerability factors and events triggering risk.

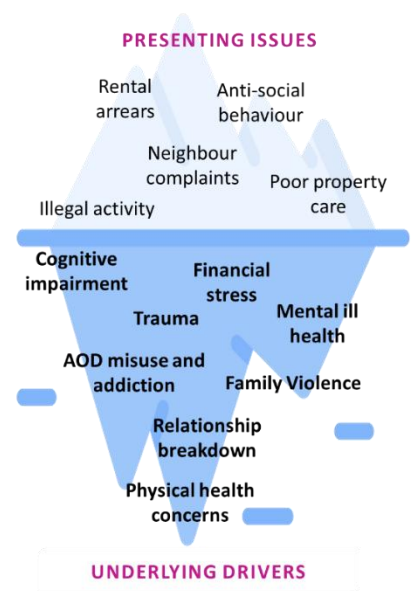


Figure 3: Presenting issues and underlying drivers

Figure 4 below illustrates some of the typical needs people may have during their journey as an MA tenant and the key touchpoints that they may have with housing and support services as they move through life changes. It should be noted however, that at each touchpoint there will be a spectrum of needs and experiences and not all tenants will recognise or articulate their circumstances, or reach out for support. Several of these touchpoints are explained further in Section 2.6 below on tenant pathways.

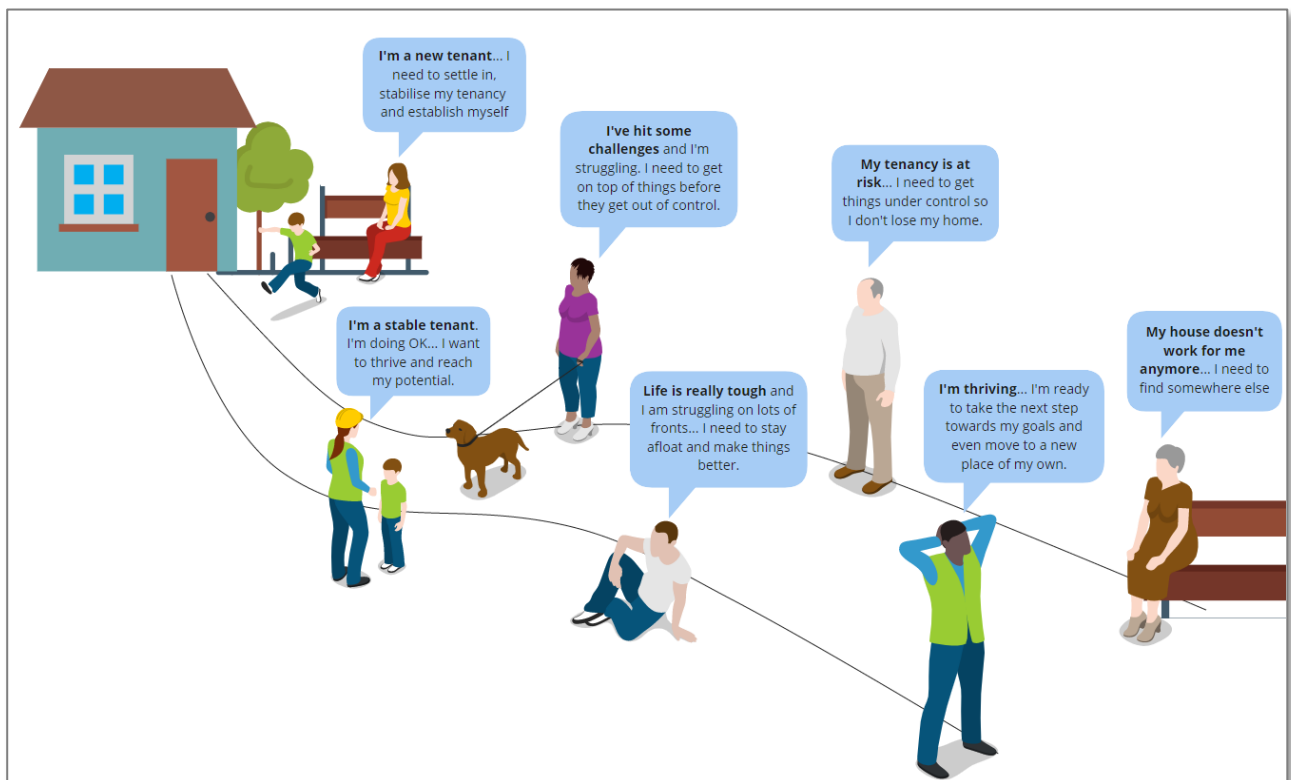


Figure 4: Key touchpoints along the journey as a tenant

**Priority needs groups for support services**

While the IMHS seeks to meet the needs of all tenants and enable them to live a healthy and vibrant life, in most circumstances resources available for individual targeted support will be limited, and access to these services will need to be managed in response to local need. This may involve the identification of priority needs groups within the wider tenant base. These groups should be identified when localising the service.

**2.3 Service outcomes and objectives**

MA’s IMHS aims to support people to access and sustain a safe and stable home, enable them to improve their wellbeing and live a healthy and vibrant life. As outlined in the Theory of Change (Section 2.1), the long term social impact links back to MA Outcomes Hierarchy and the Stronger Communities Domains outlined in our Strengthening Communities Framework.

The long term outcomes for the model are:

Individual Outcomes	Community Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants are in stable housing that meets their needs</li> <li>• Tenants have healthy personal wellbeing</li> <li>• Tenants sustain their housing and live successfully in the community</li> <li>• Tenants cope with challenges and get help when they need it.</li> <li>• Tenants are making progress towards achieving their goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants have a voice and contribute to decisions that impact them</li> <li>• Tenants can access a seamless, integrated service system that meets their needs.</li> <li>• The community creates meaningful opportunities to participate and thrive.</li> </ul>

We achieve this through three key objectives:



### 1. We provide a safe and stable home

Access to a safe, stable and affordable place to live is a basic human right.

It is also the critical foundation of stability that is needed to enable people to make positive changes in their lives and work towards goals in other life domains.



### 2. We equip people to thrive

We help ensure our tenants are equipped with the skills, knowledge and support they need to sustain their tenancy and live successfully in the community.

We connect our tenants with opportunities and support to improve their wellbeing, build independence and achieve their goals.



### 3. We work to strengthen the community

We work to create thriving, resilient, healthy, inclusive and connected communities in which our tenants can participate and thrive.

We work to create an integrated and seamless service system that meets the needs of our tenants.

We work with the community to facilitate opportunities for tenants and community members to meet their needs, reach their goals and thrive.

## 2.4 Activities

Figure 5 below outlines the main activities MA delivers to achieve the three key objectives outlined above.

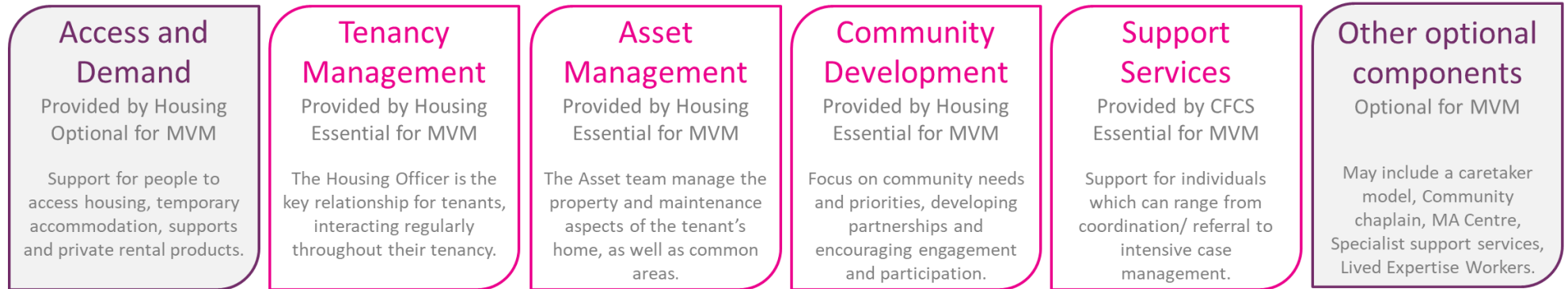
	1. Provide a safe and stable home	2. Build positive relationships with tenants	3. Identify needs & goals	4. Connect to support and opportunities to thrive
Individual Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We provide a home that is safe, stable, affordable and appropriate</li> <li>• We maintain and manage the home and tenancy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We build positive relationships with tenants through respectful and warm engagement through managing their tenancy and home</li> <li>• We proactively help tenants to understand how to maintain their tenancy and participate in the community.</li> <li>• We provide additional opportunities for tenants to connect with our staff, each other and the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We identify signs that individuals may be at risk or vulnerable</li> <li>• We identify tenants who have the capacity and motivation to achieve greater levels of independence and participation.</li> <li>• We engage with tenants to assess their holistic needs and identify goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We help tenants understand the support options and community resources available to them</li> <li>• We connect tenants with supports/ opportunities to meet their needs and achieve their goals</li> <li>• We play a role in coordinating support services for individual tenants where required</li> <li>• We help tenants review their goals and adjust supports as their needs change over time</li> </ul>
Strong Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We work with communities so that they are places in which people can thrive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We engage with community stakeholders and establish partnerships within the community</li> <li>• We work with partners to create opportunities to engage with tenants and community to build relationships and trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We develop partnerships with people who will be “first to see” signs of risk or vulnerability</li> <li>• We work with stakeholders to identify tenant and community needs and goals</li> <li>• We establish and facilitate tenant committees and provide opportunities for tenant’s to have a voice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We collaborate to create a wide range of support pathways and opportunities to meet tenant and community needs</li> <li>• We identify gaps in the system and advocate for them to be filled</li> <li>• We facilitate better access to supports where there are barriers</li> <li>• We initiate and facilitate projects to meet community needs and goals</li> </ul>

Figure 5: The activities in each of the four main stages of the IMHS

## 2.5 Component Models and Core Functions to deliver the IMHS

The activities outlined in Section 2.4 are collectively delivered by a number of core functions and component service models which are introduced below.

It is important to note that not all locations will deliver all of the below components.



While there is some overlap in activities between functions, it is important that roles are clearly defined and each function operates within its own area of focus.

The following table outlines the way the different functions collectively deliver the activities described in Section 2.4

	1. Provide a safe and stable home	2. Build positive relationships with tenants	3. Identify needs & goals	4. Connect to support and opportunities to thrive
<b>Tenancy Management</b> Provided by Housing Essential for MVM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead contact for tenant during all phases of tenancy, interacting regularly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key role in establishing positive relationships with MA as the key contact for tenants throughout their tenancy</li> <li>Proactively helps tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities, and how they can maintain their tenancy and participate in their community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key role in identifying early signs of tenancy risk and vulnerability</li> <li>May provide information or make referrals to specific mainstream supports</li> <li>May identify tenants who have the capacity/motivation to achieve greater levels of independence and participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help tenants understand the support options and community resources available to them</li> <li>Promote community activities and support services</li> </ul>
<b>Asset Management</b> Provided by Housing Essential for MVM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage the property and maintenance aspects of the tenant's home</li> <li>Ensuring common areas are safe and secure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Property condition is strongly linked to tenant satisfaction. In this way, asset officers play a key role in maintaining positive relationships between MA and tenants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asset officers play a role in identifying signs of risk or vulnerability when interacting with tenants or visiting their property</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote community activities and support services</li> </ul>
<b>Community Development</b> Provided by Housing Essential for MVM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May engage with incoming tenants as they establish themselves in their new home and neighbourhood.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plays a lead role in creating opportunities for tenants to connect with our staff, each other and the community</li> <li>Help tenants understand how they can participate in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with stakeholders to identify tenant and community needs and goals</li> <li>Facilitate tenant committees and provide opportunities for tenant's to have a voice</li> <li>Role in identifying tenants who have the capacity/ motivation to achieve greater levels of independence and participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help tenants understand the support options and community resources available to them, especially those not in priority groups for support services</li> <li>Facilitate opportunities for tenants to participate, connect, thrive and have a voice</li> <li>Initiate and facilitate projects to meet community needs and goals</li> </ul>
<b>Support Services</b> Provided by CFCS Essential for MVM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to allocations process where appropriate</li> <li>Support and advocate for incoming tenants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of rapport with tenants to facilitate connection to supports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead role in engaging with individual tenants in priority groups to assess their holistic needs and identify goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead role in connecting individual tenants in priority groups with supports/ opportunities to meet their needs and achieve their goals</li> <li>Coordinate supports, help tenants review their goals and adjust supports as their needs change over time</li> </ul>
<b>Access and Demand</b> Provided by Housing Optional for MVM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting people who are homeless to access housing and housing assistance, access to temporary accommodation, supports and private rental products.</li> </ul>			
<b>Other optional components</b> Optional for MVM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A caretaker may contribute to a safer environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lived expertise workers (LEW) can connect with hard to reach tenants through shared experience.</li> <li>Community chaplains can play a role in building positive relationships with tenants and providing opportunities to connect.</li> <li>A MAC can provide valuable opportunities for people to connect with MA and each other</li> <li>A caretaker may build positive relationships with tenants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A caretaker may identify certain signs of risk or vulnerability</li> <li>LEW and community chaplains can play a role in identifying tenants who are vulnerable and at risk</li> <li>A MAC can play a key role in engaging and identifying people at-risk or vulnerable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A caretaker may provide practical assistance to tenants</li> <li>LEW and community chaplains can play a role in facilitating social connection and opportunities to thrive</li> <li>A MAC can play a key role in making supports and opportunities to thrive accessible to tenants and community</li> </ul>

## **Delivery of Support Services**

Depending on local needs, individual support as part of the IMHS may range from low intensity referral and support coordination to higher intensity case management. Support services in a local implementation of IMHS may be made up of more than one service (or contract) supporting individual tenants as part of the IMHS.

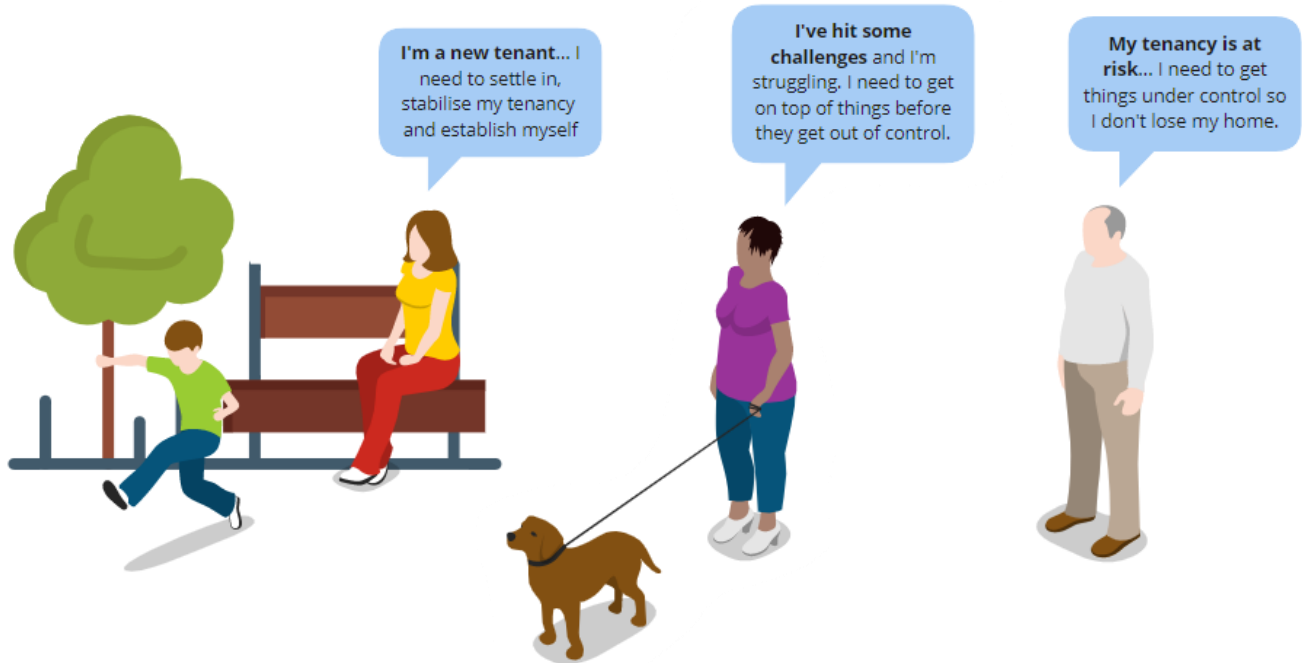
Where possible, support services are delivered by MA Community Services via subcontract to MA Housing. Alternatively, support services can be delivered via formal partnerships with existing stand-alone contracts (e.g. Specialist Homelessness Services).

Tailored Support Coordination Service (TSCS) is the component service model MA has developed specifically for support services as part of the integrated model. A full service model is available for TSCS.

## 2.6 Tenant Pathway

This section contains example journey maps to illustrate the role different component models and core functions may play in engaging with tenants at different touchpoints in their journey.

Three key touchpoints have been chosen:



A fourth key touchpoint is engaging with people who are thriving and ready to move towards goals that achieve greater independence such as education, employment and even moving out of social housing. This cohort is sometimes referred to as the Opportunity Cohort<sup>7</sup> or Transitions Cohort.



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<sup>7</sup> For example, NSW Department of Communities and Justice has described this cohort in "Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW". See Appendix G.

I'm a new tenant... I need to settle in, stabilise my tenancy and establish myself



## Example Journey 1: "Tina" - a new tenant

A neighbour who is also a member of the Tenant Action Group visits Tina and tells her about an upcoming community BBQ

The staff at the playgroup notice that Tina's daughter doesn't interact with the other children. They talk to Tina about connecting with a Child Health service.

### What other stakeholders do...

### What Tina does...

After a viewing, Tina accepts the offer for her and her kids to move in to an MA social housing property.

Tina is given a welcome pack with a lot of information about her new home and her local community

Tina says one of the window locks is broken and asks how to get it fixed.

Tina and her children attend the BBQ and meet several neighbours and also some of the other MA staff.

Tina attends the MA run playgroup. She chats with staff and is introduced to other mums and kids who live in the local area.

Tina continues to attend the playgroup, getting know some other the local mums. With the help of the staff there she also is able to find the right Health Services for her kids.

## Tenant Journey: New tenant

### What Housing Services do ...

Housing Officer, Alexi, provides her with a Tenancy Pack and arranges a time to sign the lease.

Alexi and Tina meet at the Community Centre so she can sign the lease. Alexi takes Tina through all the paperwork and answers her questions.

Alexi calls to check-in with Tina a week after she moves in to see how she is settling in. She notices Tina seems more anxious today so she asks a few extra questions.

Alexi knows Tina's history includes DFV and can see she is anxious about the lock. She explains the maintenance process to Tina. She mentions it to the asset team to ensure it can be addresses quickly.

Alexi visits Tina at a pre-arranged time for her 3 month property inspection. Alexi asks if Tina has any questions, and goes through some of the welcome pack info again now that Tina has settled in.

### What Community Development does...

The Community Development officer, Aran, sends Tina a note welcoming her and encloses a newsletter that provides details of upcoming events.

At the BBQ, Aran notices Tina has two young children and asks if she has heard about the playgroup held at the local MA Family Centre. He introduces her to another mum who attends the playgroup.

I've hit some challenges and I'm struggling. I need to get on top of things before they get out of control.



## Example Journey 2: "Mina" - a tenant facing vulnerability and challenges

### What other stakeholders do...

The local Emergency Relief service is able to provide food vouchers for Mina to help ease her financial stress.

The Financial Counselor works through Mina's budget with her. He helps her with extra strategies to help avoid and manage similar situations in future.

### What Mina does...

Mina has been a tenant for many years. After an unexpected hospitalization she has been given hardly any shifts in her casual job and is really struggling to make ends meet.

Mina tells Carol on the phone that she has been a bit short of cash. She assures Carol she will pay the extra later in the week.

Mina discloses to Carol that she has had less shifts recently, and has not had enough income to cover all the bills.

Mina shares her challenges with June. She is relieved to admit to someone how hard it has been without feeling like she will risk losing her home.

While June is with her, Mina fills out the online paperwork for Centrelink to get her payments adjusted for her new circumstances.

With the assistance June helps her access, Mina is able to pay back her rental arrears while still paying for the essentials.

Mina has several sessions with the financial counsellor. She also works with the employment service to look for a new job.

## Tenant Journey: Early signs of vulnerability or risk

### What the Tenancy Management team do ...

When reviewing the daily rental arrears report, Carol notices that Mina's rent payment was \$50 less than the amount due. She gives Mina a call to find out what is behind this.

Carol notices Mina sounds unusually anxious. She sends a reminder letter, and makes a note to check-in with Mina again next week.

When Carol checks the report the next week, Mina's rent payment is short even more. She calls Mina and asks more questions.

Carol explains to Mina that there are support services that may be able to help her get back on top of things.

Back at the office, Carol explains Mina's situation to the TSCS Support Coordinator, June.

Carol, Mina and June meet together to agree a payment plan for Mina's rental arrears.

Carol keeps a close eye on Mina's rental payments, and checks-in with her after a couple of months to see how she is going.

### What Support Services do...

June calls Mina and arranges to meet at a local café. She explains TSCS and assures Mina she won't share what they talk about with Carol. They talk about her situation. June listens and asks questions.

June explains some options to Mina and they make some plans. She gives Mina a grocery voucher to help ease his immediate financial stress.

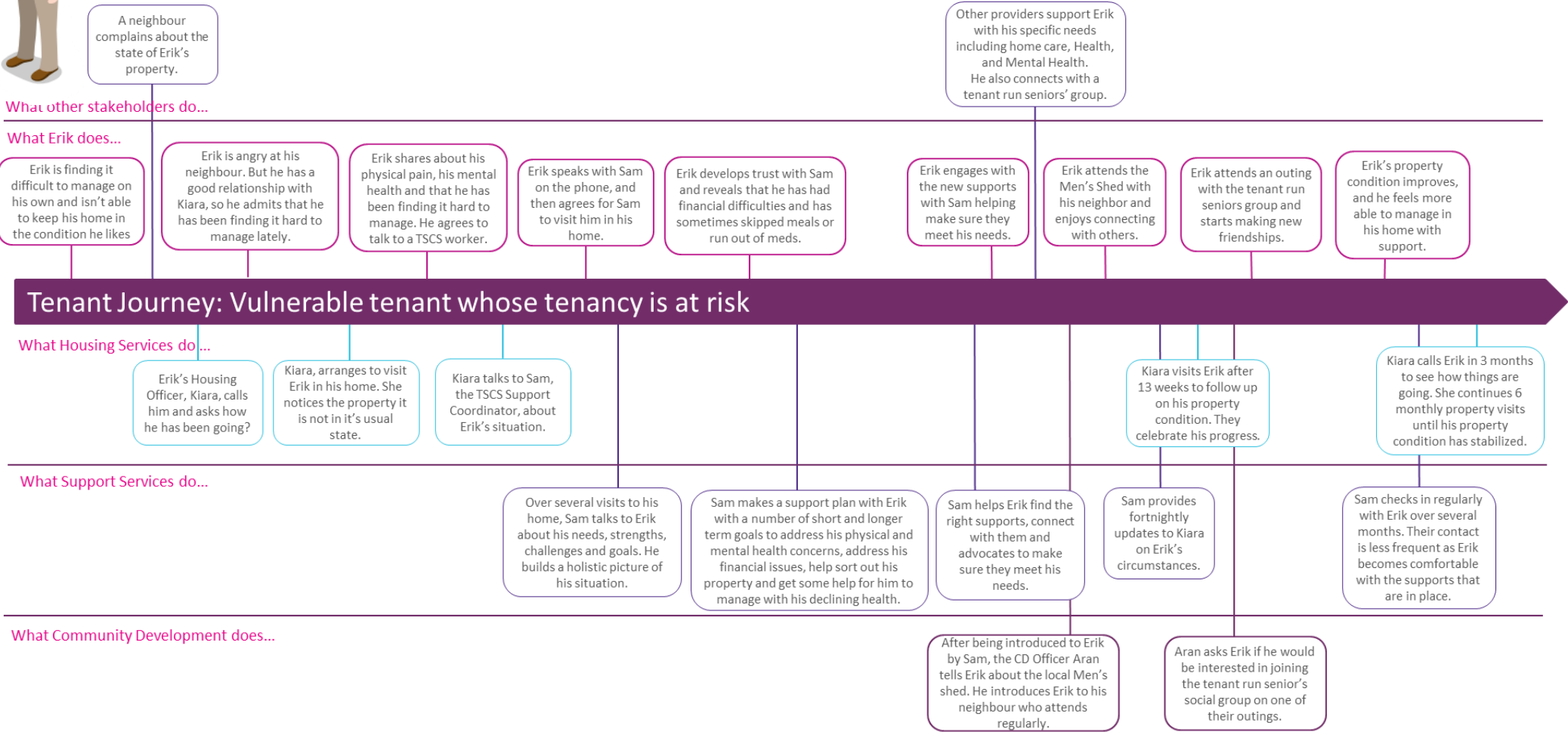
June makes calls to another service to arrange Emergency Relief while Mina's payments are sorted out. She also liaises with Carol about Mina's rental arrears.

June refers Mina to a financial counsellor. June also connects her with a local employment service to help her find more work. June suggests to Mina that she will check in with her in a month to see how she is going.

**My tenancy is at risk...**  
I need to get things under control so I don't lose my home.



## Example Journey 3: "Erik" - a vulnerable tenant whose tenancy is at risk



## 2.7 Critical Success Factors

Although local implementations of the IMHS will vary, there are common factors that are critical to successful delivery of the model to achieve the target outcomes.

Critical Success Factor	What does this mean?
<b>1. Property allocations are carefully considered to ensure they meet the needs of individuals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Housing is offered to tenants that is appropriate to meet their individual needs to increase their chances of a successful tenancy. This includes a wide range of considerations including the physical design as well as factors such as location, building dynamics and community connection.</li> <li>✓ Consideration is given to neighbour dynamics and community settings when making new housing allocations.</li> <li>✓ The allocation process is designed so that decisions to offer a property are informed by the appropriate information.</li> </ul>
<b>2. A proactive approach is taken during the allocation process and in the first 3-6 months to set tenancies up for success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We actively identify whether supports may be required during the tenancy allocation and establishment process.</li> <li>✓ More frequent contact between Housing Officers and tenants occurs in the early stages to build rapport, check-in and address any issues quickly.</li> <li>✓ Information is provided on supports available and how to access them should they be needed.</li> <li>✓ Tenants are proactively supported to understand their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, how to maintain their tenancy.</li> <li>✓ New tenants are encouraged to connect to and participate in the community.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Positive relationships with tenants are built on respect and dignity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Staff treat all tenants with respect and dignity and have an understanding of MA's Trauma Informed Practice Framework.</li> <li>✓ Rapport Building skills are considered a core competency for all tenant facing staff.</li> <li>✓ The time required to build and maintain positive relationships is considered in determining Housing Officer portfolio size and Support Services caseloads.</li> <li>✓ Opportunities are created to connect with tenants. Staff across different teams participate in events and activities to leverage the relationship building opportunities they provide.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Staff who interact with tenants are equipped to identify signs of risk and take appropriate action.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All staff who interact with tenants are trained to recognise and respond to the early signs that a tenancy is at risk.</li> <li>✓ Responses to risk maintain a separation of tenancy management and support as per the foundational principles.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Mechanisms exist to quickly identify the most appropriate support pathways in response to signs of risk or vulnerability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ When signs of risk are identified, clearly defined protocols exist to guide staff on appropriate action to take.</li> <li>✓ Responses to risk and assessment of need are carried out by someone with the appropriate skill set.</li> <li>✓ Mechanisms exist to triage the most appropriate support response when signs of risk are identified (e.g. Joint Referral Committee).</li> </ul>
<b>6. Tenants who are identified as at risk are assertively engaged</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assertive engagement strategies are used to engage people whose tenancies are at risk. This may require persistence over time and tailored engagement strategies.</li> </ul>
<b>7. Support is proactive and flexible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Support can accommodate periods of higher intensity support during crisis or periods of high tenancy risk</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Tenants are proactively engaged at the start of a tenancy to set them up for success and address any issues early</li> <li>✓ Duration of support is flexible according to individual needs. Where needed, tenants are connected to ongoing supports, especially those with complex needs.</li> </ul>
<b>8. Strong collaborative partnerships are developed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Partnerships are developed with those who are the first to identify signs of risk</li> <li>✓ Partnerships are developed to create wide ranging support pathways, referral networks and opportunities to thrive</li> <li>✓ Key partnership areas include Mental Health, NDIS/LAC, Aged Care/Home Care, Employment Services, AOD, Complex Case Management – either delivered by Mission Australia or by other community service providers</li> </ul>
<b>9. Internal teams collaborate closely within clearly delineated roles, systems and information sharing protocols.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A formal SLA or MOU is in place.</li> <li>✓ Regular and effective communication protocols are established at all levels.</li> <li>✓ Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.</li> <li>✓ Appropriate privacy, consent and information sharing protocols are defined between teams.</li> <li>✓ Governance structures are in place to support teams to navigate issues and conflicts of interest.</li> </ul>

## 2.8 Practice Standards

Mission Australia’s Recovery Oriented Practice Framework should underpin engagement with tenants at all times.

Tenant facing roles should be provided with training in:

- Trauma informed care
- Responding to critical situations (eg managing aggressive behaviour)
- Mental Health First Aid
- Cultural competency
- Managing difficult conversations

### Community Housing Provider Registration

Mission Australia Housing is registered as a Tier 1 Community Housing Provider under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH). Community housing providers are registered under the NRSCH in one of three tiers of registration. Tier 1 providers face the highest level of performance requirements and regulatory engagement, reflecting that these providers are involved in activities that necessitate management of a higher level of risk based on:

- operating at large scale, meaning any serious non-compliance has the potential to impact on a large numbers of tenants and assets

- ongoing development activities at scale, meaning any serious non-compliance has the potential to affect the viability of the provider.<sup>8</sup>

The National Regulatory Code sets out the performance requirements that registered housing providers must comply with in providing community housing under the National Law. It does not prescribe how providers should run their businesses but rather focuses on the achievement of outcomes in the following areas:

- Tenant and housing services
- Housing assets
- Community engagement
- Governance
- Probity
- Management
- Financial viability.<sup>9</sup>

The NRSCH has established metrics and indicators for operational and financial measures.<sup>10</sup>

The NRSCH applies for all states excluding VIC and WA which have their own registration. MA Housing are currently also registered in WA and in VIC.

### **Delivery of Support Services**

Support services should be delivered in accordance with MA's National Case Management Approach.

Staff delivering support to the complex cohorts within our social housing properties require qualifications, skills and experience in delivering person centred and holistic evidence-based practice approaches, including:

- Recovery oriented practice
- Trauma informed care
- Mental Health First Aid
- Responding to challenging behaviour
- Critical incident management
- Cultural competency
- Motivational Interviewing
- Stakeholder coordination and engagement skills

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<sup>8</sup> [https://www.nrsch.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/file/0005/288230/D\\_Tier\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://www.nrsch.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0005/288230/D_Tier_Guidelines.pdf)

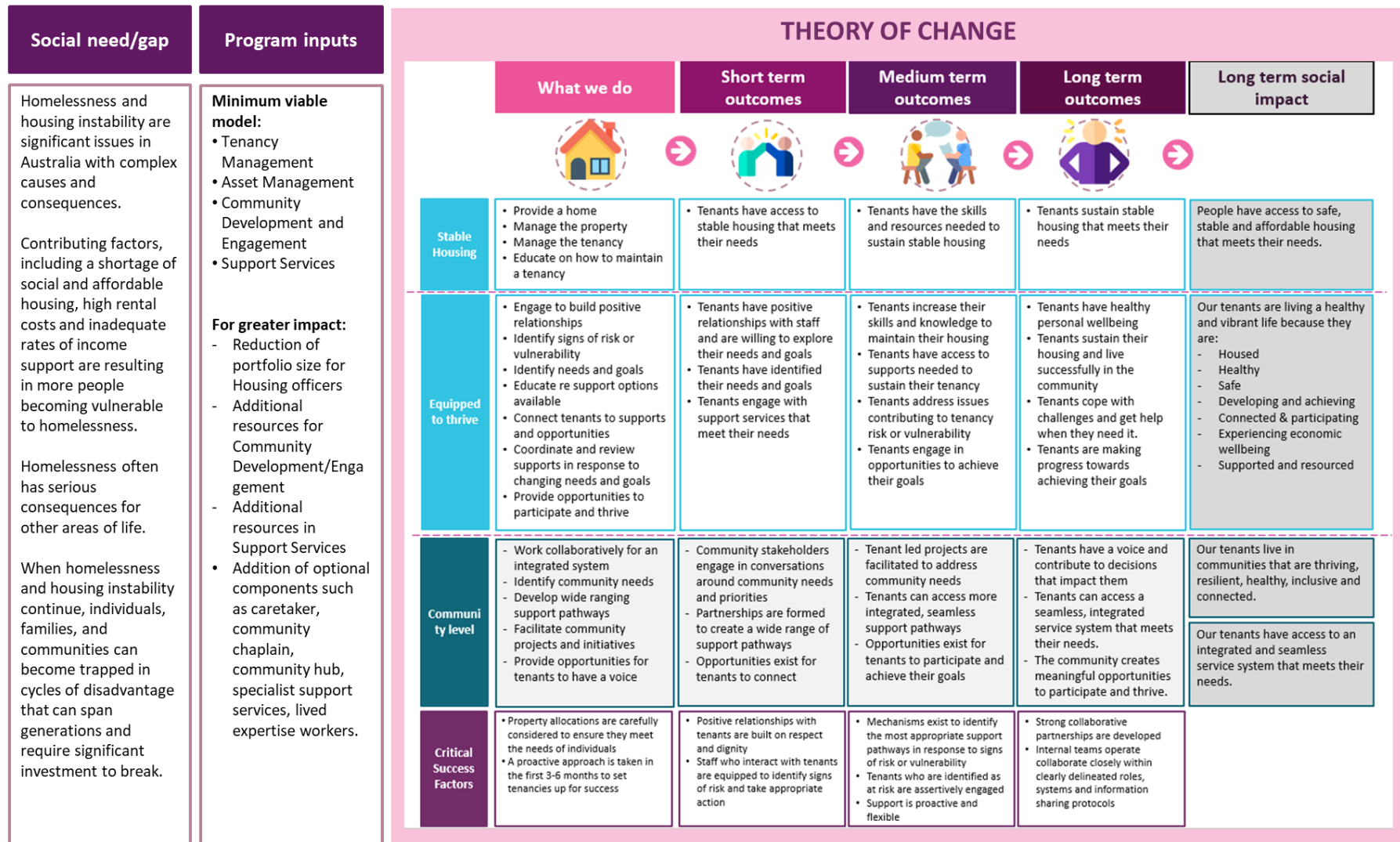
<sup>9</sup> [https://www.nrsch.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/file/0004/288319/General\\_FS.pdf](https://www.nrsch.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0004/288319/General_FS.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.nrsch.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/534375/Metrics-and-Indicators.pdf](https://www.nrsch.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/534375/Metrics-and-Indicators.pdf)

# APPENDIX A: Theory of Change

## Flagship Service Model: Theory of Change Integrated Model of Housing & Support

*Needs group: MA's integrated model provides housing and support to tenants in our social and affordable housing properties. While our tenants represent a very broad group and encompass a wide range of cohorts with diverse needs, increasingly the majority of our tenants face vulnerabilities and challenges in their lives. The needs of each tenant to maintain stable housing and enable them to thrive will vary greatly between tenants, and for the same tenants over time.*



## APPENDIX B:

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# Foundational Principles and Evidence Base

### Housing First

We believe that a safe place to live is a basic human right, and that people are more able to make positive changes in their life when they have the platform of somewhere stable and safe to live.

Housing First models are based on the following principles<sup>11</sup>:

- People have a right to a home
- Housing and support are separated
- Flexible support for as long as it is needed
- Choice and self-determination
- Active engagement without coercion
- Social and community inclusion
- Recovery oriented practice
- Harm reduction approach.

Some of these individual principles are explored in more detail below.

How this impacts the model:

- We provide access to accommodation that is appropriate, affordable, stable and long-term
- Appropriate **support is offered** to those who need it, however this is on a **voluntary basis** and provision of housing is not conditional on engagement with support services.

### Separation of Tenancy Management and Support

The provision of housing should be separate to the provision of support. This aligns with the Housing First principles that provision of housing is not conditional on engagement with support services. It also enables the foundation of trust between support workers and tenants where they know that what they disclose to support workers will not impact on their tenancy.

How this impacts the model:

- **Tenancy management and tenancy support are delivered separately** through strongly maintained collaboration and coordination within clearly-delineated roles, systems and information sharing protocols.

### Holistic and person-centred approach

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<sup>11</sup>Housing First Principles for Australia (<https://www.ruah.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Housing-First-Principles-web-1.pdf>). The Housing First Principles for Australia were adopted by the Homelessness Australia Board on 5 March 2020.

We take a holistic view of individuals and the underlying factors contributing to housing instability and vulnerability.

People and their circumstances are unique. The underlying drivers of housing instability and vulnerability are complex and inter-related. The best outcomes are enabled when we work with people holistically in response to their unique situation and needs.

How this impacts the model:

- Tenants should have access to housing that is appropriate for their individual needs. This includes choices that support their individual preferences and recovery goals and should include factors such as building design and location.
- We recognise that there may be underlying factors contributing to housing instability or vulnerability that will be unique for each individual. The best support pathways are determined in conjunction with the tenant based on the individual's unique circumstances.
- Support and case management are delivered in accordance with our Case Management Framework. In particular support is:
  - Holistic and strengths based – based on assessments of needs and strengths across all life domains
  - Person-centred – responding to the needs, strengths, preferences and unique circumstance of each individual
  - Tenant-led and goal oriented – responding to the goals and motivations identified by the tenant.
  - Evidence informed – techniques such as motivational interviewing are used to develop insight into the individual's situation.

### **Early intervention**

Early identification of tenancy risk allows support to be offered early so that people can be stabilised in their existing tenancies and avoid falling into homelessness.

We work to identify risk and provide the right support at the earliest opportunity before a situation escalates and to prevent eviction and homelessness.

How this impacts the model:

- We collaborate internally and externally with those who are the first to identify signs of risk to enable early identification and response for tenancies at risk.
- Assertive engagement strategies are used to engage people whose tenancies are at risk.
- We take a proactive approach during the allocation process and early days of a tenancy to understand the tenant's needs and identify risk factors so tenancies are set up for success.
- Support services are flexible and proactive to accommodate periods of higher intensity support during crisis or periods of increased tenancy risk. This includes the early days of a tenancy and periods of transition.
- Where tenancies have become unsustainable, we prioritise rapid access to alternative appropriate accommodation to prevent people falling into homelessness.

## **Respectful (Care-full) relationships as the foundation for all interactions**

The quality of relationships formed between workers and tenants is a critical factor in tenants achieving meaningful outcomes. Positive relationships and interactions with providers of housing and support services are critical in shaping positive experiences for tenants in social housing, particularly because many tenants in social housing have experiences of serious trauma and disadvantage.<sup>12</sup>

How this impacts the model:

- Rapport building with tenants is recognised as a valuable activity for all tenant-facing roles. This must be invested in as a foundation for positive outcomes for tenants.
- Tenants are treated with dignity and respect at all times.

## **Invest in building stronger communities**

Through the approach outlined in our Strengthening Communities Framework, Mission Australia works with tenants, their neighbours, local services and the broader community to create social change through improving engagement and wellbeing, building aspiration, increasing participation and community cohesion.

How this impacts the model:

- We invest in strong partnerships across the service network and community stakeholders, through the use of the Mission Australia Partnership Framework.
- Referral pathways include informal, volunteer, community and mainstream services and organisations to facilitate social connection and to support people to achieve independence, particularly in pro-social community settings.
- Tenants and communities are given a voice through participation in Tenant Groups and other opportunities.
- We work with tenants and communities to identify and address their local priorities and achieve their goals.

## **Learn through lived expertise**

We believe that it is a person's right to participate in decisions that affect them and we promote and look for ways to enable clients and communities to have an active role in the way their services are designed and delivered.

Genuine client participation is important for MA because clients bring a unique perspective of the issues that affect them and they can help us to do things better. We recognise clients as experts in their context.

How this impacts the model:

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<sup>12</sup> Flanagan, K., Levin, I., Tually, S., Varadharajan, M., Verdouw, J., Faulkner, D., Meltzer, A. and Vreugdenhil, A. (2020) *Understanding the experience of social housing pathways*, AHURI Final Report No. 324, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne, <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/324>, doi: 10.18408/ahuri-4118301.

- We listen to tenants and community members in the design and delivery of our services.
- We establish Tenant Groups and other forums for our tenants to have a voice.
- We are committed to seeking tenant feedback and acting on what we hear. This includes through annual tenant satisfaction surveys, and by supporting tenants to make complaints and appeal decisions where they are not satisfied with outcomes.
- We seek to employ lived expertise workers where possible and appropriate.

### **Recovery oriented and trauma informed approach**

An understanding of trauma-informed care is integral to a recovery oriented approach. The recovery journey is best supported when an individual feels safe physically and emotionally.

A recovery approach aims to support people accessing our services through providing dignity, compassion and respecting a person's agency and self-direction over their own life.

The key principles of trauma-informed care include safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration and empowerment, and an understanding of trauma and its effects on individuals and their support networks. It involves creating safe physical and emotional spaces and supporting individual choice and control.

How this impacts the model:

- We treat all tenants with dignity and respect
- We engage with people in a way that is empowering and promotes agency
- We prioritise emotional and physical safety.