
SUBMISSION TO STANDING COMMITTEE
ON SOCIAL POLICY AND LEGAL AFFAIRS
INQUIRY INTO HOMELESSNESS

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The Community Restorative Centre welcomes the opportunity to respond to the the Committees Inquiry into Homelessness. Our submission is focused primarily on the following areas of the Committee's terms of reference, specifically as it relates to people leaving prisons into homelessness in NSW.

5. *Services to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including 6. housing assistance, social housing, and specialist homelessness services;*

6. *Support and services for people at particular risk of homelessness, including:*

- a. women and children affected by family and domestic violence;*
- b. children and young people;*
- c. Indigenous Australians;*
- d. people experiencing repeat homelessness;*
- e. people exiting institutions and other care arrangements;*
- f. people aged 55 or older;*
- g. people living with disability; and*
- h. people living with mental illness;*

7. *the suitability of mainstream services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness;*

8. *examples of best-practice approaches in Australia and internationally for preventing and addressing homelessness;*

OVERVIEW OF THE KEY ISSUE

Between October 2018 and September 2019, 19,680 men and women were released from prisons in NSW.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare notes that [more than half of all people leaving Australian prisons expect to be homeless.](#)

NSW Justice Health data notes (slightly more conservatively) that [9.7% of people in prison identified they had no fixed address or were in unsettled lodgings in the six months prior to their incarceration. A further 15% reported that they had unstable accommodation, moving multiple times in the six months before they came to prison.](#)

If we use the most conservative estimates, it is clear that each year, at least 4000 people leave prison into either homelessness or unstable accommodation. *In NSW there are only 38 specialist beds for people leaving prison who are homeless.* The Community Restorative Centre works with between 400 and 500 people each year leaving prison. Homelessness and housing instability is the single most significant concern for the men and women we work with. It is also a significant driver of

recidivism. This submission outlines both the key issues for this group, the current failures of the service sector to meet the needs of people leaving custody into homelessness, and proposes best practice models for supporting this population.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMUNITY RESTORATIVE CENTRE

The Community Restorative Centre is the lead NGO in NSW providing specialist support to people affected by the criminal justice system, with a particular emphasis on the provision of post-release and reintegration programs for people with multiple and complex needs on release from custody. CRC has almost 70 years specialist experience in this area. All CRC programs aim to reduce recidivism, break entrenched cycles of criminal justice system involvement, and build pathways out of the criminal justice system. CRC works holistically to do this, addressing issues such as homelessness, drug and alcohol use, social isolation, physical and mental health, disability, employment, education, family relationships, financial hardship and histories of trauma. Clients who participate in CRC's long-term intensive reintegration programs have recidivism rates of 12% over 2 years (measured using BOCSAR's tracking service). CRC works with both individuals and their families in the process of reintegration.

History and Founding Principles

CRC was founded in 1951. The principles underpinning its establishment still form the foundations for much of CRC's service delivery. People released from prison have paid their debt to society and have the right to re-establish their lives in the community without stigma, stereotyping or discrimination. They should be offered support that eases their transition back into the community, improves their life options and assists them to build pathways out of the criminal justice system. Families of prisoners should not be punished or suffer from discrimination by the justice system. They should be entitled to support to minimise the effects of having a relative or loved one imprisoned. This support should help sustain their relationships with their relatives in prison, and enable the re-establishment of family upon release of the prisoner, if in the best interest of all parties. People should leave prisons in a better physical, emotional and educational state than when they entered. They should be given a sense of personal dignity and worth and real chances to obtain employment or other forms of community connection and re-establish themselves in the community. Many prisoners are people who have experienced significant social and economic disadvantages that underpin their offending and re-offending. People require support to move out of this cycle. All clients of CRC have the right to support that is non-judgmental and preserves their confidentiality and dignity.

Vision

A just, safe and inclusive society that is working towards decriminalisation and de-carceration.

Purpose

CRC supports individuals, families and communities impacted by the criminal justice system, and works for positive social change.

Values

1. Social disadvantage is an underlying cause of incarceration and people should not be criminalised or discriminated against as a consequence of their disadvantage.
2. Australia's history of colonisation and oppression is reflected in and a cause of the relationship between Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the criminal justice system.
3. The application of the law reflects broader inequalities and is not always just.
4. Imprisonment is overused, is a failed response to crime, causes more harm than good and leads to more imprisonment.
5. For as long as there are prisons, they should be fair, just and humane environments which respect universal human rights.
6. There is a need for community based alternatives to the criminal justice system.
7. People who have been released from prison should not experience perpetual punishment.
8. The families and kin of people who are incarcerated are often serving an invisible sentence and require acknowledgement and support.

All CRC services utilise a human rights framework which recognise the inherent value of all people and aim to create genuine opportunities for people affected negatively by the criminal justice system; People leaving prison and their families have the right to be treated fairly and have the ability to make genuine choices about building pathways *out* of the criminal justice system and into the community.

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF IMPRISONMENT AND HOMELESSNESS IN NSW

Disadvantage	Prevalence in NSW Prisons
Homeless (primary or secondary)	24%
Mental health diagnosis	63%
Cognitive disability	8-20%
Experienced traumatic event	65%
Have been in abusive relationship	28% men 71% women
AOD related offence	60%
Placed in care <16 years	14%
Left school by year 10	72%
Juvenile custody	32%

Regardless of expressions of purpose, prisons have always housed our most disadvantaged and disconnected citizens. People in prison have multiple and complex support needs that are frequently not identified or supported in the community. This complexity of need can often mean exclusion from mainstream services. People end up being ‘managed’ in criminal justice system settings rather than being supported in the community. Almost all CRC clients are homeless, and almost all have experienced regular exclusion from services *because* of their complexity of support need. Often for instance, they are not able to access alcohol and other drug services because they also have a mental health condition. Or they are not able to access supported accommodation, because they also have ongoing drug and alcohol addiction. Or, they are not able to access a DV service, because they have just come from prison. Many mainstream services – especially services with accommodation, will not take people direct from custody.

In NSW, the Going Home Staying Home reforms in 2014, identified people leaving institutional settings- including prison- as being a priority group. Within these reforms there was clearly an expectation that mainstream homelessness services would support people leaving prison. Despite an enormous amount of good-will in the sector, the absence of specialist homelessness funding for people leaving prison, in conjunction with an increased prisoner population, and a lack of beds in both the crisis and social housing sector, has resulted in a service sector that is unable to meet the needs of people leaving custody in terms of their housing. This has a significant knock on impact in terms of broader reintegration. It is very difficult to build a life outside of prison, without somewhere stable to live.

CRC frequently encounters advice from government departments to work more collaboratively and improve referral pathways. However, it is clear from our own research into beds, and services in the sector (included in this submission), that the reality for many of the people we work with, is that there are very limited services in the community that are available to provide support.

Thousands of people leave NSW prisons each year with no support services engaged to work with them, no information about how to survive on the outside, no money, no identification, no clothing, no family or friends, and nowhere at all to live. For people seeking to make changes in their lives, including changes around drug and alcohol use, and staying out of prison, the experience of homelessness on release creates an enormous challenge in terms of maintaining such goals.

THE EXISTING SERVICE SECTOR FOR PEOPLE LEAVING PRISON IN NSW

- Over the last 12 months close to 20,000 people were released from NSW Correctional Centres.
- 41% of this population will re-offend within a year.
- AIHW data notes that more than 50% of people leaving prison in Australia expect to be homeless
- More than 70% of people locked up in NSW prisons have been there before.
- NSW Health data shows us that 9.6% of people in prison were in primary homelessness six months prior to incarceration and 24.6% of people in prison either have no fixed address *or* had moved twice or more in the six months prior to incarceration
- Imprisonment increases the likelihood of homelessness
- It is a conservative estimate to observe that there are at *least* 4000 people released each year from prison in NSW each year with nowhere stable to live

At last count, in the community sector in NSW there were *only 38 specialist beds across the sector for people leaving prison. Most of these are short term (less than 12 weeks) crisis beds.*

Women leaving Prison

- 2,720 women were released from prison in the 12 months October 2018-September 2019
- There are 8 specialist women's services, and 7 non-gender specific services in NSW supporting women leaving prison. However, because of limited capacity, each year, only 615 women are able to access a service.
- **This means over 70% of women - or 2,105 women leaving prison do not have any specialist community based support.**

Men leaving prison

- 16,960 men were released from prison in the 12 months, October 2018-September 2019
- There are 6 specialist mens services, and 7 non-gender specific services supporting men leaving prison
- At most 1,479 men leaving prison had access to a service
- **This means over 90% of men – or 15,481 men leaving prison do not have any specialist community based support**

Services for men and women leaving prison

- 19,680 men and women were released from prison in the 12 months, October 2018- September 2019
- 2094 men and women had access to a service

- **This means overall, 89% of all people leaving prison *do not* have access to any specialist support.**

While there are only 38 crisis beds for people leaving custody in NSW, the lack of longer-term support for this group is, however, even more troubling ***There are only 12 negotiated social housing transitional beds across the state for people leaving prison.*** While CRC is a partner in four GSHS services, we do not receive any SHS funding directly to support people leaving prison into homelessness. There are many regions across the state, that CRC and our colleagues in other organisations are not funded, or able to service at all.

Please Note. The tables at Appendix A, overview the funding and capacity of each of the services.

BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HOUSING FOR PEOPLE LEAVING CUSTODY IN NSW

Demand for Homelessness Services and access for people in custody

It is clear that demand for homelessness services across the board in NSW is growing. 73,549 people were supported by NSW homelessness services in 2018/2019 compared to 52,105 in 2011/2012. However, despite this increase in the provision of services, it is very clear that the homelessness sector is not funded or able to adequately meet demand.

More than 20% of people who required accommodation support in NSW did not receive it in 2018/2019. This includes 13,998 people who were homeless and needing crisis or emergency accommodation. While the AIHW data paints a stark picture of the *absence* of services available for those who request it, and details an increase in requests for support from people leaving prison, it is important to recognise that it can not adequately capture the situation for people who did not, or could not request support.

Although the numbers of people requesting assistance from inside prison has grown, it is also clear that for many people in prison accessing support from community agencies on the outside is impossible. Limited access to phone calls, limited information about what is available, and reliance on program staff within the prisons to facilitate requests frequently mean that people inside prison are simply not able to request accommodation assistance. The over-representation of people in prison with mental health and cognitive disabilities further complicates access to service, as do the numbers of people in prison from highly disadvantaged and inadequately resourced communities. Although there are some limited short-term accommodation supports in place for people on parole (who generally have conditions that require some form of address on release), for the 1/3 of people being released from remand, or after a short sentence, or for people coming out with no parole period, there is no clear accommodation pathway out of prison.

Additional Structural and Service Barriers to Accessing Support

1. There is a chronic shortage of social and public housing, a shortage of crisis accommodation, and an absence of support for people who require specialist support after leaving custody. Crisis accommodation services are overwhelmed by high levels of homelessness across NSW. People leaving custody frequently struggle to secure accommodation for the purposes of bail, parole applications and final release, an issue which also adds to prison overcrowding.
2. In addition to the absence of housing options, there is also, significantly (as described above, an absence of support for vulnerable populations leaving prison). While housing is critical, specialist support services that are able to meet the needs of people leaving prison are absolutely essential in terms of both securing and maintaining tenancies.

3. People in prison *do not* have access to the same homelessness services and products that are available to people in the community. For instance, people in prison in NSW cannot call Link2Home the central homelessness service. People in prison are not considered homeless by the NSW Homelessness service system, until they have literally walked out of the prison gate on their day of release. This means that planning for release is very challenging.
4. People in prison are frequently unable to book crisis accommodation prior to their release which means on the day of release, they have to negotiate finding somewhere to stay. This often has to happen in conjunction with attending multiple other appointments (for instance, parole, mental health, methadone). People often have to do this with very limited (or no) financial resources, high levels of anxiety following release, and often difficulty comprehending what is required of what are often complex and conflicting service systems. For CRC clients, trying (and often failing) to find somewhere to live at what is already a very stressful time is frequently named as a significant risk factor in terms of triggering relapse (in terms of both drug use and returning to custody).
5. Current options for people who are homeless on release include 3-5 nights temporary accommodation (via the NSW government link2home service), couch surfing, rough sleeping or one of the limited specialist crisis beds. The current TA service system for people leaving custody who are homeless requires people to move regularly, attend multiple appointments and inspections, and fulfil obligations in terms of 'proving' searches for accommodation that are often punitive and unrealistic.
6. People leaving prison with highly complex needs frequently rely on support workers to assist them in a very practical way with tasks like driving them to attend property inspections, assisting them to attend medical appointments, facilitating assistance to access Centrelink payments, methadone and disability supports, and assistance with filling out multiple forms, including those necessary to source identification. There are very few services with workers who have capacity or are resourced to assist with this level of intensive casework. There is often a limited understanding on the part of Housing as to the multiple other obligations that people leaving custody have, and the multiple challenges involved in fulfilling tasks like property inspections that are required in order to maintain TA.
7. Barriers to housing (including private rental) for this population extend well beyond the availability of properties (which are limited in terms of affordability). People leaving prison often have poor rental histories and difficulty securing properties as a consequence. In addition, people still frequently leave prison with no money and no Centrelink set up, no identification, no clothes, no access to food, and no supports in place. Many people require support and/or time to organise these aspects of reintegration
8. Despite the best intentions of the Going Home Staying reforms in NSW, the existing mainstream service sector is not engaging with, or adequately supporting people at risk of homelessness who are leaving prison. There are many reasons for this,

including a lack of specialist knowledge, a lack of resources, and a lack of structural capacity for organisations that are already stretched, to take on the complexity and time resources, of working with incarcerated populations.

9. There is insufficient pre-release planning and support prior to release. For some populations (those serving short terms or on remand), there is *no* pre-release planning or support prior to release. The lack of pre-release support in no way reflects on the good will or professionalism staff in the prisons, but rather is indicative of an overcrowded system, and the challenges inherent in addressing complex welfare concerns in institutional settings. It also reflects the low priority that housing and support has occupied for the last decade in NSW Corrections. A fixation on criminogenic psychological programs has meant restructuring service provision inside prison, so that there is now no clear housing and support pathways for vulnerable populations.
10. There is also a significant population who are excluded from the limited specialist supports that do exist because of the nature of their imprisonment. People exiting custody following a remand period, or a short sentence without a parole period are not eligible for Corrective Services funded transitional projects, and frequently do not have contact with any support staff inside Correctional Centres to assist in pre-release planning.
11. People who exit prison into long-term homelessness have the same financial, housing, social and health needs as other chronically homeless people often with more difficulty in securing accommodation or employment due to their criminal history. Many CRC clients express a genuine belief that life would be easier if they reoffended and returned to prison. CRC is committed to building a pathway *out* of the justice system for people who have too often spent their lives being managed in prisons. Housing is a critical part of this picture.

WHAT WORKS AND WHAT IS NEEDED

Our experience, in both service delivery, research, and in providing specialist training in partnership with FACS and Corrective Services across the state for many years, leads us to believe ***there is a need for a state-wide specialist service for people leaving custody and their families***. There is a need for services that are able to cross geographic boundaries (in recognition of the fact that 80% of people incarcerated in NSW prisons are not incarcerated anywhere near their intended place of residence in the community). There is a need for services that are resourced and able to incorporate the critical elements of pre-release engagement and in-reach into the correctional centres. Workers must be able to visit clients and begin the process of engagement prior to release in order to sustain connection during the extremely chaotic post-release period. There is a need for services that are long-term (building sustainable pathways outside of the criminal justice system takes time, especially for people who have survived trauma, and have spent their lives being managed in such settings). Services must have the capacity to be intensive, and primarily outreach. This often means picking someone up from prison on the day of release, and working intensively over the first high risk three months, and then slowly and flexibly tapering support down over 12 months or more. Services must also have housing front and centre of their service delivery design.

Supporting people to build sustainable pathways outside of the criminal justice system requires working across multiple government departments, and a high level of expertise in best practice in reintegration.

Housing First approaches acknowledge that people leaving prison require a base from which to work on other factors that they need to address to avoid returning to custody. It also acknowledges that anyone who is homeless is likely to be living in a constant state of basic survival, making it impossible to address other support needs in practical and psychological terms. People on release from prison require intense assistance in accessing *any* form of accommodation, but permanent accommodation particularly.

CRC workers are explicitly housing advocates for people on release. We recognise that if we don't perform this role, then our clients become homeless. And if they become homeless, their likelihood of returning to prison is extremely high. This advocacy operates on a number of levels. On an individual level, case - workers will assist with housing applications, particularly with regard to ensuring that the clients complex support needs are recognised and understood by people who are assessing their situation. Workers also regularly assist clients to stay calm and manage the stress that is frequently present when people are in housing crisis and there are limited options available. CRC workers will advocate for clients to be (in the first instance) allocated accommodation but also will advocate that they be transferred from accommodation that is unstable or risky. Although not always comfortable, advocacy does sometimes require challenging decisions that are made

(for instance terminations of tenancies), and requesting explanations when it appears that processes have been discriminatory. This kind of individual housing advocacy is however possible because of the strong and positive relationships that have been established over a long time with housing providers partly because the relationship between the support provider (CRC) and the housing provider is deeply reciprocal; for instance, the provider can flag arising issues for them, such as rent arrears or hoarding at an early stage when effective intervention is possible.

CRC also works closely with government and other stakeholders to influence the extent to which housing for this population is recognised as central to breaking entrenched patterns of recidivism. Too often (in both funding allocation and service design) homelessness is framed as just one more disadvantage in a whole series of disadvantages experienced by people who go to prison. However, given what we *know* about the relationship between homelessness and imprisonment, and the massive over-representation of homeless people in prison, it is critical to recognise that housing is much more than just one piece of the reintegration puzzle. It is the key. And if we are to be serious about breaking cycles of recidivism, it is here that we must focus our advocacy and our attention.

There is a need in NSW to revisit funding services which use best-practice, evidence based models of support, and specifically, are able to offer long-term housing and support for people with complex needs including homelessness on release from prison. It has become remarkably apparent that simply 'tacking on' people leaving custody to mainstream services does not work. There are a number of reasons for this, most of which relate to the way in which best-practice with this population requires a long-term, assertive outreach, through-care service, which many services are not able (or willing) to adopt. Despite the high needs of this population, this group face regular exclusion from services *because* of the fact that they have been to prison.

Having a safe and stable place to live is key to breaking entrenched cycles of poverty and criminal justice system involvement. And people who do not have stable accommodation following release from custody are more likely to re-offend and end up back in prison.

Building pathways outside of the criminal justice system that incorporate housing is critical for both the promotion of community safety, and for the people inside our prisons who are too often trapped for in cycles of homelessness and incarceration.

COMMUNITY RESTORATIVE CENTRE BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES IN REINTEGRATION AND HOUSING*

All CRC programs work to implement the following best practice principles when working with vulnerable populations on release from custody. These principles are based both on our own research, and on the international literature exploring best practice in reintegration for people leaving prison. For a detailed unpacking on these principles, please refer to the authors Churchill Fellowship report online here.

<https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/fellows/detail/4075/Mindy+Sotiri>

1. **Reintegration framed outside of the lens of rehabilitation.** There is a need to create and facilitate pathways for people leaving prison that are not explicitly focused on addressing offending behaviour, but rather focused on the creation of an identity outside of the criminal justice system.
2. **Service delivery incorporating systemic advocacy.** Service delivery must include a significant advocacy component that addresses structural barriers for individuals (such as access to housing, employment, education, health and social security benefits), and advocates systemically for change when this is required (for instance in the case of discriminatory employment practices).
3. **Pre-release engagement.** Meeting and working with people prior to release is necessary with respect to building the engagement necessary to sustain the case-work relationship, building trust between someone in prison and the community organisation on the outside, and practically planning for re-entry into the community with complex needs populations.
4. **Holistic, relational and long-term casework models.** People with long histories of trauma in combination with the “referral fatigue” experienced by this group, require long-term support in order to build engagement and trust. Long-term support also allows people the opportunity to develop the skills required to navigate frequently hostile or unwieldy service systems.
5. **Community based outreach.** Services that work with people with long histories of criminal justice system involvement need to operate outside of the criminal justice system, and in the communities in which people are living.
6. **Housing first approaches** (and in some jurisdictions, employment first approaches). Support must be concrete. Most people require a solid base from which they can try and make the changes required to stay out of prison.
7. **Genuine collaboration and work with people with lived experience of incarceration** at all levels of program delivery. The expertise of people who have themselves been to prison is critical in both the design and the delivery of community based reintegration services.

*Please note more detail about CRC's Housing First Case Management model is noted at Appendix B and an overview of the success of Housing First is attached at Appendix C

GOOD PRACTICE MODELS AND COMMUNITY LED RESEARCH

CRC (in partnership with UNSW) is currently undertaking a significant evaluation that is tracking outcome data for over 400 men and women who received services from CRC between 2014 and 2017. This research project includes data tracking post-participation in CRC services, a matched comparison study, a large qualitative component and an economic analysis. Outcome data for this research will be available in December 2020. It includes a significant focus on the impact of housing for people leaving prison.

Prior to this piece of work, CRC has in the last four years commissioned three independent evaluations of services (all of which are available on request), and has also undertaken our own analysis of client outcomes utilising the BOCSAR data tracking service. In 2015, CRC found that clients who complete CRC's best-practice through-care and reintegration programs are 12% (measured over 2 years utilising BOCSAR's data tracking service).

	12 month Rates	24 month Rates
All clients	44% reoffended 26% re-incarcerated (n = 387)	56% reoffended 34% re-incarcerated (n = 313)
Completed program	24% reoffended 7% re-incarcerated (n = 148)	38% reoffended 12% re-incarcerated (n = 132)

CRC Programs that Work

CRC currently runs the following programs utilising best practice principles in housing and post-release. These programs boast outcomes that note extremely high engagement, low rates of recidivism, and increased health and well-being amongst program participants. A more detailed case-study of one of these projects, 'The Miranda Project' follows this table.

Program	Staff #	Funding Stream	Target Group	Client # p/a	Support Period	Location
Extended Reintegration Service	3	Corrections NSW	Community Corrections clients on Parole LSI-R Medium to High. Complex	20	12 months	South West Sydney

			needs. Diagnosed Mental illness and/or cognitive impairment			
Newtown Boarding House Project	1	FACS GHSH via partnership with Newtown Neighbourhood Centre	Homeless or risk of homelessness. Willing to reside in Boarding House. Complex needs. Pre and post-release intensive support	40	12 months +	Sydney Metro (Inner West)
Nepean Transition	2	FACS GHSH via partnership with Wentworth Housing	Homeless or risk of homelessness. People with complex needs. Looking to reside in Nepean region. Pre and post-release intensive support.	42	12 months +	Hawkesbury/Nepean
Indigenous Transition	4	Indigenous Advancement Strategy (Prime Minister and Cabinet)	Homeless or at risk of homelessness. Aboriginal people with complex needs. Pre and post-release	120	12 months +	Broken Hill/Wilcannia

			intensive support.			
Transitional AOD Program	11	Central Eastern PHN, Western Sydney PHN, NSW Health, NGOTGP	Complex needs. Self-identified problematic AOD use. Pre and Post release support and counselling	150 (long-term) + 130 (Short term)	12 months +	Central Eastern Sydney, Western Sydney, South Western Sydney, Greater Sydney Metro
Inner City Women's Transition	2	FACS GHSH via partnership with B Miles Foundation	Homeless or at risk of homelessness. Women with complex needs. Pre and post release intensive support	82	12 months +	Inner City Sydney
The Miranda Project	2	Women NSW	Women at risk of criminal justice system involvement and domestic violence	80	12 months +	Penrith (Greater Sydney Metro)

THE MIRANDA PROJECT: A CASE STUDY IN GOOD PRACTICE

About Miranda

The Miranda Project is an innovative, gender specific approach to supporting vulnerable women at risk of both domestic and family violence *and* criminal justice system involvement.

Miranda is co-located with Penrith Women's Health Centre and provides gender specific, specialist support to women who have frequently spent their lives being 'managed' in the criminal justice system, rather than being supported in the community. Many women Miranda works with return from prison to violent situations, because they don't have any other options after release. The Miranda Project is an attempt to disrupt this cycle. Miranda Project workers support women with a range of issues including; social and emotional wellbeing, physical and mental health, child and family contact, legal needs, staying safe, and sourcing accommodation. Miranda achieves this via individual holistic case-management, outreach support in the community, in-reach into the prisons, and a range of social, recreational and educational group activities in a safe women only drop-in space. Miranda offers a vital safe social engagement space, alongside practical support, skill development, and connection with other key services. The Miranda Project is run by women for women, and works to empower women to live lives that are free from the criminal justice system and free from violence.

The most recent independent evaluation of Miranda found:

In 2018/2019, of the 71 women supported via Miranda case-management, only 5 (or 7%) returned to custody. The majority of the women supported by Miranda were either in violent situations, at risk of returning to violent situations, or looking to leave violent situations. Early indications from the independent evaluation of this program are that 90% of women who have connected with Miranda, have become significantly safer as a consequence.

250 women have participated on the Miranda project since 2017

- 90 of these women have participated in long term intensive case work
- 100% of Miranda Project clients are at risk of criminal justice system involvement and at risk of domestic and/or family violence.
- 86% of women who have engaged with Miranda have remained in the community
- 14% have returned to custody
- 62% have increased housing stability
- 62% have increased safety (from domestic and family violence)
- 49% have increased financial well-being
- 46% have improved compliance with community orders
- 41% of all Miranda clients to date identify as Aboriginal
11% identify as being from a cultural and/or linguistically diverse community
- 63% of clients identify as having a mental illness

- 60% of Miranda clients are mothers, with clients collectively reporting a total of 156 children.

The women connected with Miranda are often facing a choice between homelessness, returning to violence, and returning to prison. While the Miranda project supports women with their immediate crisis, thus averting street-homelessness, re-imprisonment, and returning to violence, the longer-term impact of the project in terms of breaking the cycle of intergenerational violence and imprisonment is even more significant. 70% of the women connected with Miranda also have children. 42% of the women receiving support are Aboriginal. Miranda provides women the possibility of reconnecting with children, and keeping families safe. Children of imprisoned parents are some of the most vulnerable in our community, and many of the children of the clients of Miranda have been, or are, at risk of serious harm.

Run by women, for women, the Miranda Project supports women attending court, on community orders, and exiting prison. It is both a diversionary option (and can be considered under sections 11 and 12 of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999, *and* a response to over-incarceration. Working on both sides of prison walls, Miranda employs two full-time Aboriginal specialist workers, and one part time manager, and provides holistic support including: casework, advocacy, group activities, access to victims counselling and connections with other key services. At the heart of Miranda is the ambition to support women live lives free from the criminal justice system, and free from domestic and family violence. Miranda aims to halt the increase in the women's prison population through the provision of genuine support and the development of alternative pathways within the community. Miranda is co-located with Penrith Women's Health Centre and so facilitates connection with mainstream health services, offers a community hub, and also provides specialist support.

APPENDIX A: OVERVIEW OF ALL SERVICES FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE LEAVING CUSTODY IN NSW

Project	Client # p/a	Funding p/a	Frontline Staff #	Beds
Inner City Women's Transition (CRC) FACS/GHSH	82 (40 long term)	247,904	2	3 (GHSH negotiated)
Guthrie House (Corrections/GHSH)	20	1,071,536	9	5
Penrith Nepean (CRC) GHSH FACS funded	40 total 7 women (17.5%)	\$183,182 (total) \$32,056 (Women)	2 (0.35)	3 (1 for women, 2 for men) Negotiated transitional GHSH beds
Specialist Men's TSA (Glebe, Rainbow, Namatjira, Freedom, Adele (Corrections + some GHSH)	104	\$2,000,000	??	25
Friendship House (Self funded)				2
				38 beds across the sector

Women's Services

Project	Client # p/a	Funding p/a	Frontline Staff #	Beds
Miranda Project (CRC)	58	348,178	2	0
Inner City Women's Transition (CRC)	82 (40 long term)	247,904	2	3 (GHSN negotiated)
Guthrie House	20	1,071,536	9	5
Rosa Coordinated Care	50	\$520,000	4 (p/t)	0 (But negotiating beds as part of casework)
Beyond Barbed Wire (Barnardos)	25	120,000 (?)	1?	0
Success Works (Dress for Success)	20 (growing)	206,345	2 p/t	0
Central Coast Women's Moving Forward	10	20,000	1	0
Women's Justice Network	70-100	470,000	2.6	0
8 services	365 Clients	\$3,003,963 funded	22-23	8

Non-gender specific specialist services for people leaving custody or at risk of justice system involvement With Gender Break-down

Project	Client # p/a assuming 7% women where # not provided	Funding p/a (assuming 7% where not provided)	Frontline Staff #	Beds
ITS (Various service providers)- 26 locations	960 (total) 144 women (15%)	3,003,000 (total) \$450,450 (Women)	26 (3.9)	0
ERS (CRC) Corrective Services funded	20 total- 2 women (10%)	352,000 (total) \$35,200 (Women)	3 (0.3)	Negotiated with FACS
Penrith Nepean (CRC) GSH FACS funded	40 total 7 women (17.5%)	\$183,182 (total) \$32,056 (Women)	2 (0.35)	3 (1 for women, 2 for men) Negotiated transitional GSH beds
Newtown BHOP (CRC) GSH FACS funded	40 total 5 women (12.5%)	\$105,988 (total) \$13,248 (Women)	1 (0.125)	0
Indigenous transition Broken Hill (CRC) (Federal Indigenous Advancement funding)	107 total 27 women (25%)	\$660,345 (total) \$165,086 (Women)	3 (0.75)	0
AOD Transition support (CRC)- 4 funding streams NSW (health and federal health)	115 total 30 Women (26%)	\$1,015,948 \$264,146	9 (2.34)	0
Samaritans Recovery Point (NSW Health funding)	233 total 21 women (9%)	\$336,661 (total)- estimate from AR \$30,299	5 (0.45)	0
8 service types:	1615 Total	\$5,657,124 (total)	49 (Total)	
	236 Women	\$990,485 (for women)	8(equivalent for women)	

Total Women's Services Funding

WOMEN	Funding	Numbers p/a	Per woman break down pa	Front line staff in NSW	Beds
Specialist Women's	\$3,003,963	365	\$8,230	23	8
Non-Specialist (Women's)	\$990,485	236	\$4,196	8	1
Total Women's funding and numbers	\$3,994,448	601	\$6,646	31	9

Total Men's Services Funding

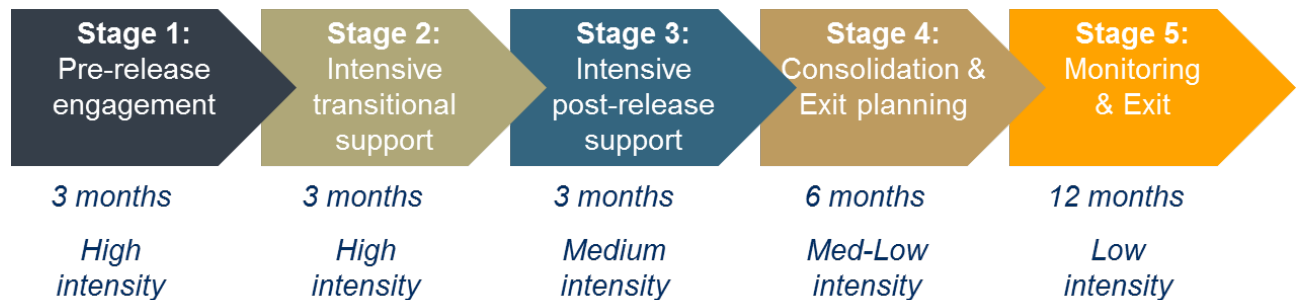
MEN	Funding	Numbers p/a	Per man break down pa	Front line staff in NSW	Beds
Specialist Men's TSA (Glebe, Rainbow, Namatjira, Freedom, Adele (Corrections + some GSH))	2,000,000	100	\$20,000	Not clear	25
Friendship House (Samaritans)	Self-funded				2
Non-Specialist (Men's) Corrections + some GSH	4,906,869	1456	\$3,370	43	2
Crisis Beds (in Matthew Talbot, Hope)					UNSURE (used to be 8- none)

Hostel, Foster House					
Total Men's funding and numbers	6,906,869	1556	\$4,438		29

Total Men and Women	Funding	Numbers p/a	Per man break down pa	Front line staff in NSW	Beds
					38

APPENDIX B: CRC CASE MANAGEMENT MODEL

The preferred CRC model utilises a five stage case-management model that is outlined in detail in below. In summary, this model is as follows:



Stage 1: Pre-Release Engagement

Pre-release engagement (up to three months prior to release) is a core principle in best-practice post-release support. Pre-release contact facilitates the following four processes:

1. **Engagement:** between the case-worker and client. This is a fundamental tool in terms of sustaining contact and engagement post-release (particularly when the client is at risk of relapse into drug and alcohol misuse on release).
2. **Vision:** people approaching the end of their sentences tend to have a strong sense of what it is they would like their lives to look like when they get out of prison. Working with people around this vision is a valuable case-management tool post-release (and also assists with engagement). This is when the desistance process in terms of formulation of an identity outside of criminal justice settings is able to commence.
3. **Planning:** including practical planning around organising housing, obtaining identification, and Centrelink payments, and planning around family restoration, child access, relationship building, employment and education prospects, criminogenic needs program continuity, community corrections collaboration, and parole conditions.
4. **Bridging:** When specialist transitional case-workers visit people in custody prior to release, and then are also there on the day of release, they form in many ways the metaphorical bridge between prison and the community. For people on release from custody, knowing that they will have a worker they already know alongside them from the point of release alleviates the pressure and stress of transition, and affords people the opportunity to start the post-release journey from an optimistic place.

Stage 2: Intensive Transitional Support

This stage is focused on responding to common post-release crises (including relapse into drug and alcohol use) and supporting clients through the frequently chaotic period immediately following custody. Practical support on the day of the release, and then ongoing intensive support during the first four to twelve weeks is key to both sustaining

engagement, and moderating the frequently stressful initial transitional period. CRC caseworkers work closely with parole officers and other service providers during this stage, to ensure consistency of service provision and adherence to orders.

1. **First day.** This model includes practical support on the day of release from custody. CRC workers collect clients from the prison gates and transport them to their place of accommodation. Workers assist clients with attending the multitude of appointments that are frequently required, including: attending housing, attending Centrelink, attending Community Corrections, and acquiring basic necessities (including clothes, toiletries and basic food items). This practical support tends to form the basis of the post-release casework model in the initial stage of transition, but this welfare support operates as a stepping stone towards a therapeutic and change focused, case-worker/client relationship as the project unfolds.
2. **First week.** Case-workers are in contact with clients daily and will assist them with all practical requirements during this period.
3. **First quarter.** The intensity of support and contact lessens as the initial transitional period progresses. During this period, clients are assisted to move into stable housing, plan their finances (including managing Centrelink benefits) and also assisted to connect with family and friends where appropriate. Specific supplemental support (sex offender, drug/alcohol, family reconnection and mentoring for women) also commences during this period where appropriate.

Stage 3: Intensive Post-Release Support

Case work at this stage is individually tailored to the needs of individuals and is largely dependent on how they are tracking in the post-release process. However, for most clients this part of the support period is focused on achieving long term housing outcomes, stability in family and social relationships where they exist, as well as building new links and pathways into the community.

This part of the case-work process is designed to start building community living 'life skills' and connecting clients with opportunities that are un-related to the criminal justice system. This might be in the form of employment, education and training. However for some clients (particularly those with highly complex needs), these opportunities might be related to facilitating involvement in social or sporting clubs, brokering gym memberships, and facilitating and modelling leisure and recreational activities (including for instance bush walking, going out for coffee, involvement in interest based groups or sports clubs and centres). In addition to these pathways, this stage is also when clients will be encouraged to start working on any identified criminogenic risk factors and suitable community programs will be identified in order to respond to these.

Stage 4: Consolidation and Exit Planning

The last stage of the intensive case-management process involves consolidating the work carried out in the previous six months, and planning for client exit. At the end of this period, it is anticipated that clients will be in secure housing, will be engaged in some form of community activity, hooked into other community services where necessary, and will be continuing to be forward thinking about continued desistance from crime. This part of the

case-management process drops gradually in intensity, as clients gain confidence in their ability to live in the community in an engaged and productive manner. All CRC programs emphasise the transition from incarceration to independence; services are designed to facilitate this movement, and care is taken not to perpetuate the culture of dependency often created in large institutions such as prisons.

Stage 5: Monitoring and Exit

When clients have completed their time on the program, CRC continues to support them via the Low Support Telephone Roster which will check in with exited clients between once a fortnight and once a month. Flexible and ongoing assistance is offered if clients are struggling and require ongoing support.

APPENDIX C: HOUSING FIRST OVERVIEW

There is significant data available outlining the successful outcomes of housing first programs internationally with regard to supporting chronically homeless and/or vulnerable populations sustain tenancies (and achieve multiple other outcomes). There are a smaller number of Australian evaluations of Housing First projects which also have remarkably positive results- although the scale of Housing First approaches in Australia has not been of the scope of those in Europe or the US.

In Europe where Housing First approaches have been operating for close to two decades, there is a significant research base showing that outcomes for Housing First clients (in terms of sustaining tenancies, as well as other health and well-being measures) are significant. Rates of tenancies sustained for more than 12 months (across a number of large scale housing first projects) range from 80% to 98%.ⁱ

Project	City	Tenancy sustained for more than 12 months
Discus Housing Service	Amsterdam	97%
Discus Housing Service	Copenhagen	94%
Turning Point	Glasgow	92%
The Casas Primero Housing First Service	Lisbon	79%
Un Chez-Soi-d'abord	4 cities in France	80%
Housing First	Vienna	98%

In the US, similar large scale evaluations and longitudinal studies have replicated the successes in terms of sustaining tenancies as those found in Europe. One significant longitudinal study comparing outcomes for people at risk of homelessness who accessed traditional programs to those accessing housing first programs, found that 88% of people utilising Housing First services sustained tenancies for two years. This was compared to 47% of people accessing alternative servicesⁱⁱ.

Other metanalyses have found that between 80% and 88% of Housing First recipients in the US sustain tenancies for more than 12 monthsⁱⁱⁱ. In an evaluation of the core Housing First Canadian program, 73% of Housing First participants were stably housed for over two years^{iv}.

In Australia, Common Ground and other Housing First projects have had comparable results. The Mission Australia MISHA project found 97% of people housed through the project were still in stable and secure accommodation two years after intake^v

ⁱ Busch-Geertsema, V. (2013) Housing First Europe: Final Report – <http://housingfirstguide.eu/website/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/FinalReportHousingFirstEurope.pdf>
<http://hf.aeips.pt/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Pascale.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Johnson, G., Parkinson, S. and Parsell, C. (2012) *Policy shift or program drift? Implementing Housing First in Australia*, AHURI Final Report No. 184, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/184>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Tsemberis, S. (2010) 'Housing First: Ending Homelessness, Promoting Recovery and Reducing Costs' in I. Gould Ellen and B. O'Flaherty (eds) *How to House the Homeless* Russell Sage Foundation: New York)

^{iv} Goering, P., Veldhuizen, S., Watson, A., Adair, C., Kopp, B., Latimer, E., Nelson, G., MacNaughton, E., Streiner, D. and Aubry, T. (2014) *National At Home/Chez Soi Final Report* Calgary, AB: Mental Health Commission of Canada. –

^v Conroy et al (2015) *From Homelessness to Sustained Housing*, Research Report for Mission Australia, UNSW