



ACT
Mental Health
Consumer Network

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Dear Sarah

Review of CHS Procedure: Supported Accommodation – Eligibility and Referral to MHJHADS Managed Housing ACT Accommodation

This letter has been prepared by the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network (the Network) in response to the invitation from Canberra Health Services (CHS). It incorporates both written and verbal feedback received from consumers in relation to the CHS Procedure: Supported Accommodation – Eligibility and Referral to MHJHADS Managed Housing ACT Accommodation (the Procedure). The Network welcomes the invitation to provide feedback on the Procedure.

We note that the Procedure is a revised version of the *CHS Operational Procedure: Supported Accommodation – Eligibility and Referral to MHJHADS Managed Housing ACT Accommodation* for which we provided feedback on in April 2023.¹ In view of this, while consumers provided fresh feedback on the Procedure, the limited nature of the changes between versions means that much of the feedback provided in April

¹ *Submission: Canberra Health Services Operational Procedure – Supported Accommodation: Eligibility and Referral to MHJHADS Managed Housing in the ACT*, ACT Mental Health Consumer Network, (2023, 20 April), https://actmhcncn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2a-CHS_OP_Supported-Accommodation.pdf. Referred to as 'the Submission (2023)'.

2023 remains valid today. As such, this letter refers to our prior submission where relevant.

Consumers acknowledged the important role of Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol and Drugs Services (MHJHADS) managed housing as a critical but limited service that supports some of the ACT's most vulnerable residents. Additionally, consumers approved of tenancy protections as they relate to hospital admissions, as well as the long-term to permanent nature of the tenancies. However, consumers also raised concerns about changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the effects this could have on the program.

Consumers disapproved of the statement that 'a waitlist will not be kept if there are no vacancies to fill' (p. 5). Consumers instead preferred a statement to the effect that people who are eligible for the program are kept on a register of interest so that they can be notified when a room becomes available, and thereby engage with the application process. Consumers also stressed that CHS should be collecting data about the demand for this service. We also note on this point that, in view of our recommendations regarding waitlists, the proposal to simply not keep a waitlist is not an adequate solution to the concerns expressed by consumers previously.²

Consumers repeated the concerns expressed in April 2023 that as long as all residents in a single household are required to choose the same NDIS provider then the independence and rights of people accessing this program will be infringed and the quality of support compromised.³

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this feedback, please do not hesitate to contact us on (02) 6230 5796 or policy@actmhc.org.au.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Policy. The Network looks forward to receiving further consultation requests in future.

Yours sincerely



Dalane Drexler
Chief Executive Officer

² Ibid., pp. 3-4.

³ Ibid. p. 4.