

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TENANCY PRACTICE

A TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT WHEN WORKING WITH TENANTS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

SUE CRIPPS



WHY SUSTAINABLE TENANCIES?

With the growth in the number of properties now managed by community housing providers, it has never been more important to **review** and **plan** strategically to be able to best respond to the **increasing number** of applicants and tenants with a range of complex needs


DEFINING COMPLEX NEEDS

'A framework for understanding multiple, interlocking needs that span health and social issues.

People with complex needs may have to negotiate a number of different issues in their life, for example learning disability, mental health problems, substance abuse.

They may also be living in deprived circumstances and lack access to suitable housing or meaningful daily activity.

Each individual with complex needs has a unique interaction between their health and social care needs and requires a personalised response from services'. (Rankin & Reagan 2004)



WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE TENANCY?

A sustainable tenancy is one that can be maintained successfully by the tenant throughout the life of the tenancy.

For this to happen, certain conditions need to be in place:

- the property needs to be appropriate for their needs
- they need to possess the skills to maintain the tenancy
- they need to meet their tenant responsibilities



A WELL
EXECUTED
APPROACH TO
TENANCY
SUSTAINMENT
CAN:

1

Reduce tenancy
failures

2

Encourage
tenant retention

3

Improve tenant
satisfaction

4

Maximise rental
income

WHO IS VULNERABLE TO TENANCY BREAKDOWN?

- Young people
- People with illnesses or disability
- People with addictions
- Individuals and families escaping domestic and family violence
- Veterans
- Indigenous Australians

BUILDING A SUSTAINING TENANCIES APPROACH

A critical question for each community housing provider to consider is:

What does a sustainable tenancy mean to our organisation?



WHAT DOES A SUSTAINING TENANCIES APPROACH LOOK LIKE?

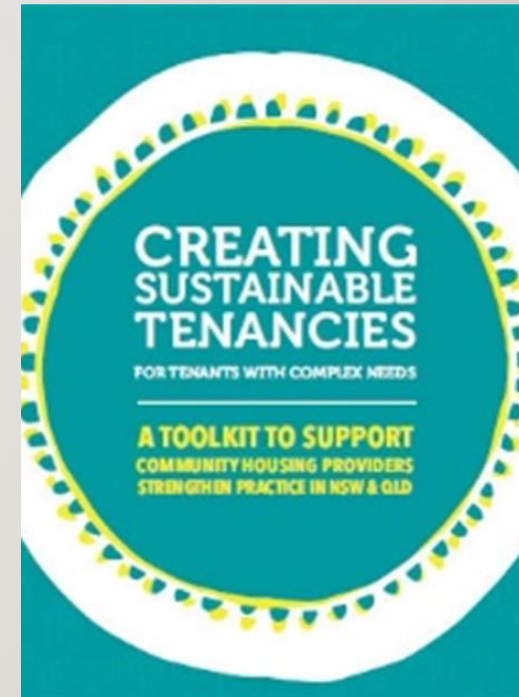
- Allocating the right property for the applicant
- Helping to prepare applicants to take on and establish their tenancy
- Delivering the right message from the outset, for example with regard to paying rent
- Providing practical help to prevent debt from accumulating
- Assessing the risks to sustaining the tenancy and taking action to manage the risks
- Acting quickly when rent payments fall behind

WHAT IS IN THE TOOLKIT?

- **SECTION ONE:** Describing the approach, a policy & pathways tool
- **SECTION TWO:** Working with people affected by hoarding and squalor
- **SECTION THREE:** Trauma informed care when working with people with complex needs
- **SECTION FOUR:** Tools and resources

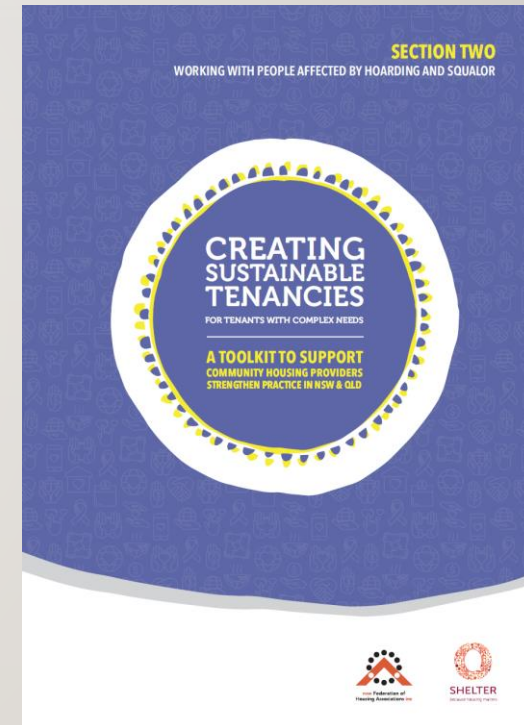
SECTION 1- DESCRIBING THE APPROACH

- Information on a sustaining tenancies approach
- A model to guide sustainable tenancy practice
- A policy template
- Pathways to assist management of high risk tenancies
- A focus on early intervention and prevention work
- Information on motivational interviewing techniques



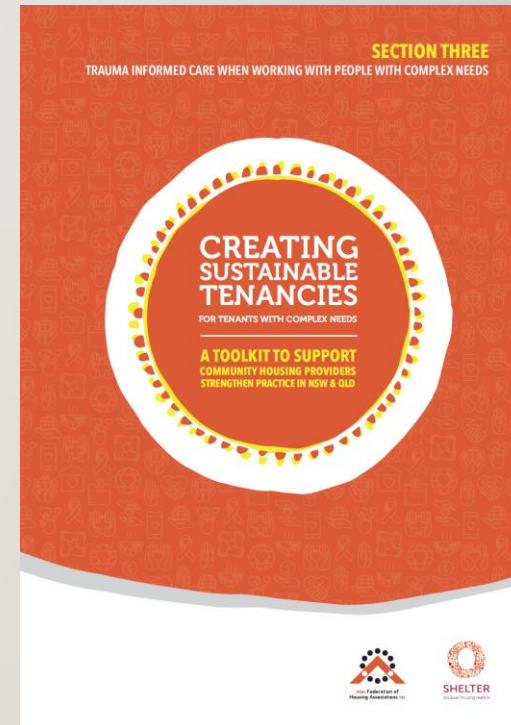
SECTION 2 – HOARDING AND SQUALOR

- Describes an approach to working with tenants who hoard
- A policy template
- Assessment tools used in Australia
- Pathway to assist management of a hoarding situation
- Sample letter to communicate concerns about hoarding



SECTION 3 – TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

- Describes a trauma informed care approach
- Aims to help CHPs understand trauma and review their practice
- A case study to explore the impact of responding in a trauma informed way
- A series of breach letters written in a trauma informed way whilst still complying with the RTA



SECTION 4 – TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- An easy read tenancy agreement
- A quick risk assessment guide for home visits
- Information on approaches to managing aggressive behaviour



A KEY ROLE FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING PROVIDERS

- Opportunity to break the cycle of failed tenancies and homelessness
- Systematic and close support of tenants can be highly effective in enabling tenants to change their behaviour and remain in their home
- A sustaining tenancies approach reduces the social and financial costs associated with failed tenancies
- Feel good about the work you are doing and the quality lives you are helping to grow

