



Future Directions for Homelessness

South Australia's Homelessness Alliance



Government of South Australia
SA Housing Authority

Acknowledgement of Country

The South Australian Government acknowledges and respects Aboriginal peoples as the State's first people and nations and recognises Aboriginal peoples as traditional owners and occupants of land and waters in South Australia. Further, that their spiritual, social, cultural and economic practices come from their traditional lands and waters; and that they maintain their cultural and heritage beliefs, languages and laws which are of ongoing importance; and that they have made and continue to make a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the State. We acknowledge that Aboriginal peoples have endured past injustice and dispossession of their traditional lands and waters.

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Message from the Minister

The South Australian Government believes that everyone should have a safe place they can call home. Home is more than a physical place to live. It's where we feel safe, secure and have a sense of belonging. Home supports our physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

In December 2019, the South Australian Government released the *Our Housing Future Strategy 2020-2030*, a 10-year plan for better housing outcomes across South Australia. Through this Strategy, we are committed to working with the specialist homelessness sector to design a new system that will better meet the needs of South Australians experiencing homelessness.

We are committed to:

- preventing people from falling into homelessness
- ensuring people get the right support they need, when they need it
- rapidly rehousing people into safe, stable and long-term housing so they don't cycle in and out of homelessness.

South Australia's Homelessness Alliance is a new way of delivering services. It will improve client and system outcomes by focusing on early intervention and prevention to stop people falling into and repeatedly cycling through the homelessness system.

We will prevent homelessness through innovative solutions and targeted and tailored responses, and when people do experience homelessness, we will get them back into safe and secure housing.

Services will be joined up in their planning and delivery to provide quick and effective responses that prevent and reduce homelessness. By working in partnership, government and service providers will create a genuinely accountable system that delivers better outcomes. This will include intersections with other State Government reforms.

Through these reforms, we are inviting a range of partners with expertise, skills and innovative ideas to work with us to plan and deliver a range of services that are easy to access and are tailored to individual needs.

Our reforms are leading the way in Australia and while our goals are ambitious, by working together we can harness our collective impact to prevent and reduce homelessness in South Australia.

Michelle Lensink MLC
Minister for Human Services



Introduction

South Australia has an enviable standard of living and quality of life. However, a lack of housing security for some individuals and families can compromise their health, safety and ability to engage in social and economic activity.

For many decades non-government organisations have played the key role in the delivery of services to homeless people and those experiencing domestic and family violence across the state. This system has evolved over time based around individual agency responses rather than being structured in a way that promotes and sustains a level of collaboration required to deliver long-term improvements in outcomes for individuals.

Our recent experience in responding to rough sleeping in South Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the benefits and positive outcomes that can be achieved for vulnerable people when multi-agency responses and collective efforts are harnessed. The collective impact of the COVID-19 pandemic response to rough sleeping has seen more than 540 people provided with short-term housing accommodation and support to address underlying needs. This has enabled individuals to have their support and longer-term housing needs assessed with a focus on addressing those needs from a base of stability rather than crisis.

The key to South Australia's Homelessness Alliance is that organisations delivering homelessness services will work together, rather than as separate organisations, to provide services to people who need them.

We are reforming the way homelessness and domestic and family violence services are delivered across South Australia to develop a more integrated, collaborative network of services that better meets the needs of South Australians experiencing homelessness. The reform recognises the power of collective impact approaches to addressing complex issues and the need to work together to address shared challenges. The benefits of a collective impact approach has already been realised through the Adelaide Zero Project (AZP) by bringing existing partners and stakeholders together across both the specialist homelessness services sector and government agencies.

This collective approach creates the opportunity to also address domestic and family violence, mental health, disability, drug and alcohol use, and interactions with our justice system through a shared response to create change.

To deliver this reform, the government has been consulting and working with the specialist homelessness and domestic and family violence sector through a Sector Reference Group to inform the creation of an improved service system.

The overarching ambition of a new service system is to create a **Housing First** approach to enable vulnerable people to live in their own home by:

- reducing the risk of homelessness through preventative measures
- reducing the length of homelessness
- supporting people to access and maintain safe and secure accommodation that enables improved health, wellbeing, education, training and employment outcomes.

For those experiencing domestic and family violence, a **Safety First** response is required, which places the immediate safety needs and stability of women and their children at the centre of decision-making.

We will support domestic and family violence reforms, led by the Office for Women within the Department of Human Services, through the creation of a separate domestic and family violence alliance, which will be integrated with the homelessness system.

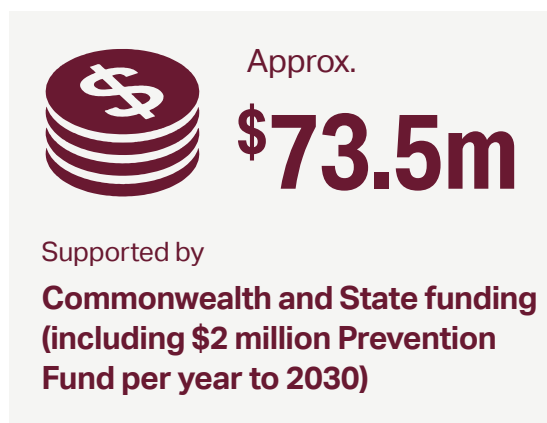
We want to focus on delivering improved outcomes for those most in need and we want our service providers to operate within a framework that encourages joint planning and delivery of services. Large scale improvement in outcomes comes from better cross-sector co-ordination and collaboration rather than from isolated interventions by individual organisations.

This will be a transformational reform that offers the opportunity for our service providers to be supported to work with us through a substantial coaching and support program to collectively achieve common outcomes through South Australia's Homelessness Alliance.



Why are we making changes?

South Australian service data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) shows that in recent years, there has been an increase in the percentage of returning clients to specialist homelessness services, and those receiving assistance have required longer periods of support.



Why are we making changes?

From 2014 to 2019, the rate of returning clients has increased from 55% to 63%, and the rate for clients requiring 46 days or more of support has increased from 52.6% to 57.2%. South Australia's rate in both metrics is significantly higher than the national average.

In addition, data on rough sleeping in the Adelaide CBD collected by Neami National (Street to Home Program) as part of the AZP, showed that between May 2018 and March 2019 an average of 160 individuals per month were identified as sleeping rough and that inflows into homelessness continue to exceed outflows (those being assisted into secure accommodation). The data demonstrates that we need to better prevent people from falling into homelessness and move them faster into secure accommodation when they do.

Data from the 2016 Census showed a significant over-representation of Aboriginal people in South Australia's homeless population. While the homelessness rate per 10,000 non-Aboriginal people was 29.8, the homelessness rate for Aboriginal people per 10,000 Aboriginal people was 273.8. Aboriginal South Australians were also more likely to experience rough sleeping / living in an improvised dwelling when compared to those identified as non-Aboriginal (a rate of 24.6 per 10,000 compared to 1.7), highlighting the need to develop better culturally appropriate responses for Aboriginal South Australians.

Community and non-profit organisations that work together, and funding arrangements that promote this, have been shown to produce improved outcomes at a population level, more effective support for individuals, more efficient use of resources, and ongoing sustainability in social change initiatives.

(Christens & Inzeo, 2015; Weaver, 2014)

South Australia's current homelessness system has been historically developed through arrangements between individual non-government services and State and Commonwealth government funding support. The system has focused on individual services, cohorts and locations rather than leveraging people's lived experience.

"The system does not see the person. It just tells us what we can and can't do with our lives."

Participant at Lived Experience Workshop, August 2019

Increasingly, at a local, national and international level the focus is moving towards more integrated approaches, with an emphasis on engaging and linking service providers, broader government and community resources. The AZP is an example of the power of partnerships and their collective impact, where organisations and individuals from across different sectors all work together with the common goal of ending street homelessness in Adelaide's CBD. AZP is having a significant impact on rough sleeper numbers by focusing on the individual and providing pathways to sustainable housing and support.

Key international examples of integrated approaches to addressing homelessness include the Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness, which has brought together the resources of service agencies and local government to address Glasgow's complex homelessness issues. Similarly, in the United States, the creation of the All Chicago – Making Homelessness History consortium seeks to end homelessness by removing duplicate effort, more effectively using resources, and aligning strategic priorities.



South Australia now has the opportunity to transition to an integrated service response to address homelessness, across the homelessness and domestic and family violence sector, and other services that support people to address the causes of homelessness including health and wellbeing, housing, justice and correctional services.

The South Australian Government is committed to reducing homelessness, including a commitment to achieving Functional Zero for rough sleepers, as identified as a key performance measure within SA Housing Authority's Strategic Plan.

While there has been a recent focus on rough sleeping through initiatives such as AZP, we recognise that street homelessness and rough

sleeping are not the only forms of homelessness that government and service providers must address. This includes young people at risk, people with disability, our ageing population and aboriginal people. We need to find better ways to reduce the number of people at risk of homelessness through improved early intervention and prevention approaches, with AIHW data showing that South Australia's proportion of resources applied to preventative services is much lower than the national average.

We need a service system that works as one - sharing decisions and collective responsibility to achieve our common goal of services and supports for people that are easy to access, effective and joined-up.

Progress to date

South Australia's Homelessness Alliance reform is a key component of a suite of reforms. To support the development and implementation of our new service system several key initiatives are being delivered including:



New **12-month reform contracts** have been executed for existing homelessness and domestic and family violence service providers for 2020-21, incorporating outcomes and flexibility to address challenges as a first step towards outcomes based contracts that better enables collaboration.



A new **Housing Advice Advocacy and Engagement Service** will commence on 1 October 2020 incorporating a new lived experience service.



Expressions of interest released for the first **\$6 million allocation from the \$20 million Homelessness Prevention Fund**.



A centralised **Homelessness Services Access Point** commenced on 1 July 2020 demonstrating partnership and collaboration to achieve both client and system outcomes.



A **Homelessness Sector Reference Group** has been established with broad service provider representatives and is providing SA Housing Authority with feedback and advice on reform priorities and sector readiness.

Reform principles

The homelessness reforms are being developed in line with key reform principles shown below:

Client service principles



Person-centred

- A Housing First response that stabilises a person in crisis by first placing them into housing.
- Tailored responses that recognise the diverse circumstances and unique needs of each person, with services and supports beyond housing provided to address the personal and structural hardships that often cause homelessness or keep people in homelessness.
- A Safety First response for women and their children experiencing domestic and family violence, including keeping them in their own home where safe to do so.



Relentless and resilient

- Actively, persistently and assertively engage with people at risk of, or currently experiencing homelessness.



Flexible support

- Respect people's capacity to build their own lives, acknowledge their own strengths, and ensure choice and control is in their hands. Support is flexible, immediate and available for as long as it is needed.



Cultural integrity and diversity

- Services and supports that build trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are culturally safe and respectful of Aboriginal people's connection to country.
- Services and supports that respect the diversity of all clients.



Community connection

- Support that enables people to live in their own home, within their local community, with the goal of maintaining their social and cultural connections.

Sector principles



Respecting lived experience

- An approach that incorporates the voice and perspectives of people with lived experience into all policy, practice, and service decision making.



Partnerships and collaboration

- An aim to grow the capability and capacity of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, together with culturally appropriate service provision across all services.
- Working towards increased integration through the promotion of partnership and collective impact responses to service delivery.



Dynamic leadership

- Contribution and leadership from all organisations to develop a culture of innovation, to share knowledge and skills, be willing to take educated risks, and learn from each other as genuine partners.



Transparency and accountability

- The creation of transparency and accountability through the incorporation of lived experience voices, the development of best practice monitoring, evaluation and reporting practices, and the adoption of a state-wide outcomes-based approach.



Efficiency and effectiveness

- A commitment from all organisations to sector integration and collaboration and the allocation of resources collectively to achieve client outcomes.



Outcomes we need

Through the reforms we are seeking a long-term commitment to change and create new ways of working together.

We are committed to reducing the risk of homelessness and the time people spend in the homelessness system. We want those experiencing homelessness to have access to services that focus on their strengths and abilities and helps them to achieve independence and improved wellbeing. We want people to have positive client experiences of our homelessness services whenever they use them.

We want to create a homelessness service system where government and non-government service providers work together to deliver outcomes for those in need. We want a collaborative model where partners share responsibility and accountability.

We look forward to working closely with service providers over the coming 24 months to develop and embed a robust outcomes measurement framework with supporting key performance measures and data systems.

Through the reform process, SA Housing Authority and the service system will jointly deliver these outcomes by transitioning to:

- strengths-based, housing led and tenancy sustainment approaches
- more early intervention and prevention
- new creative and innovative solutions
- collaboration between government and non-government service providers across multiple sectors
- proactively identifying and addressing gaps in provision, unmet need, blockages and barriers
- data informed, whole of system mindsets.

We want to create a culture that places innovation and outstanding performance at the forefront and brings partners together rather than working competitively.

We want a system that will deliver the following key outcomes across South Australia:

Client outcomes



People are safe and able to sustain long-term housing.



Fewer people experience homelessness.



People are rapidly rehoused to reduce the length of time they are homeless.



People do not experience repeat homelessness.



Increase economic and social participation for people with capacity.

System outcomes



Services are easy to access, effective and joined-up.



Lived experience is used to guide service and system development and implementation.



Increase in client satisfaction with the services provided through the homelessness system.



Overall funding can be shown to be used in a far more effective way.

South Australia's Homelessness Alliance

In delivering a joined-up system, we are seeking partners to work together in an alliance model, to deliver outcomes for those in need. An alliance is not a separate legal entity; it is a formal collaboration where the partners share responsibility and accountability.

Alliance partners will share in the design and delivery of services and approaches on a 'best for outcomes' basis according to the alliance principles. The alliance culture puts innovation and outstanding performance at the forefront. It is designed to bring partners together rather than working at arms-length.

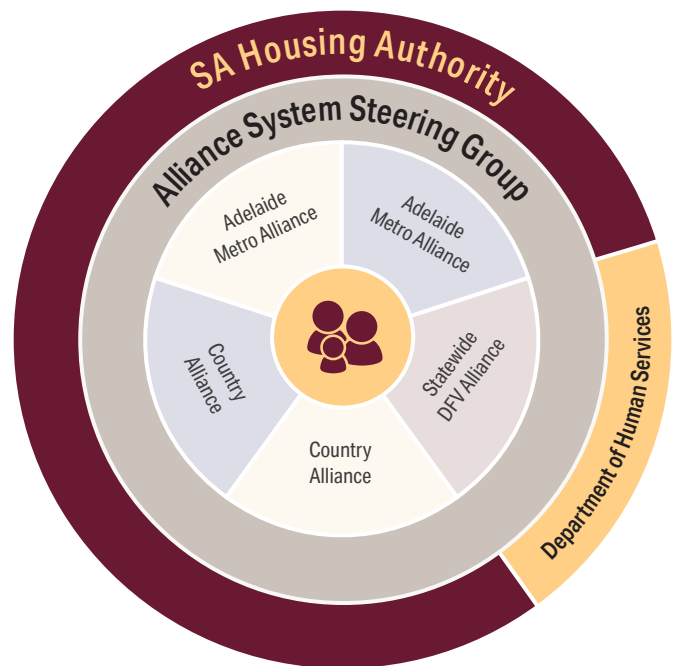
Success is measured on a best for outcomes basis, not by reference to performance of individual alliance partners, creating a joint incentive to achieve outcomes.

Our alliance framework requires a long-term commitment to change and create new ways of working. Service provider partners will need to demonstrate their commitment and contribution to making the alliance a success.

The scale and broad geographic distribution of homelessness demand in South Australia requires a more integrated response at a regional level. It is proposed that **four alliances** are created across the greater Adelaide metropolitan area and through country South Australia. It is recognised that the alliance structure within country South Australia may be different than that in the greater metropolitan area based on several factors, including distance between localities, local needs, service provider presence and other factors.

To support the reforms underway in the Domestic and Family Violence sector, a statewide domestic and family violence alliance will be established and integrated within the homelessness system.

These alliances will be responsible for planning and delivering **Housing First** homelessness services and **Safety First** domestic and family violence services for South Australians in need, with a state-wide, system-wide steering group to provide oversight and to ensure linkages between alliances.



Service providers will be asked to come together as pre-formed alliances to make collective bids as part of the upcoming tender process, including an identified leader (commissioning partner). We expect providers will bring different skills, knowledge, and abilities to each alliance and regardless of size or background, each member of the group will need to:

- commit to and be capable of creating and working in a collaborative, co-productive environment to achieve common goals, sharing responsibility, risks and opportunities
- be committed to consultation and engagement with stakeholders who can assist the partnership to meet the agreed outcomes
- be prepared to assign resources to avoid duplication and ensure a 'best value' approach
- collect, share and analyse data to better inform decisions and monitor progress towards client outcomes



- demonstrate an understanding of homelessness needs in South Australia and are committed and motivated to seek sustainable solutions
- be ready to lead and deliver a complex transformational change agenda across not only their region but across the whole service system.

No organisation can be successful alone. We expect that alliances will comprise a mix of large, small and specialist organisations prepared to work together. Alliances will be able to tender for one or more of the proposed regional contracts.

To facilitate cultural capability, alliances will develop and sustain partnerships with appropriate organisations (particularly Aboriginal community-controlled organisations) where possible. Through the tendering process preference will be given to collective bids that include Aboriginal organisations as partners.

We want to create an integrated system where all partners embrace the following behaviours:

- joint decision-making on a 'best for outcomes' basis
- a charter that embeds a culture of 'no fault, no blame, no legal disputes'
- good faith behaviour at all times, with a 'best for outcomes' mindset
- genuine shared responsibility for all of the risks involved in achieving the outcomes
- transparency through open reporting on all activities, including sharing of performance data.



We are excited about the future and what we can all achieve together, and we are looking for innovative and creative organisations that want to join us in delivering **South Australia's Homelessness Alliance**.

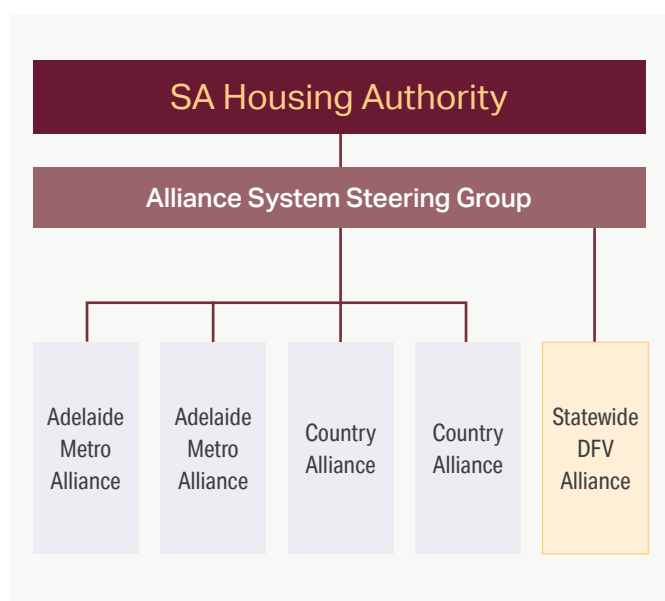
Governance

A key element of the new system will be the creation of a new governance structure that shifts from government simply managing individual contracts with individual agencies to a new system where service providers and SA Housing Authority work together to strategically plan the delivery of services, identify and resource emerging needs, and monitor whole of system outcomes. Through this reform, government will continue to manage contract performance, but in a more transparent, responsive and proactive manner.

To support the reformed system an overarching **Alliance System Steering Group** will be formed to:

- support the alliances
- monitor whole-of-system performance in achieving outcomes
- facilitate cross partnership capacity and capability building, including commitment to alliance behaviours
- assist in building common operational practices and systems, including domestic and family violence services, across South Australia.

The **Alliance System Steering Group** will comprise senior representation from SA Housing Authority and from each alliance.



Key tasks for the **Alliance System Steering Group** include:

- supporting the alliances through their transition into full mobilisation
- embedding lived experience in service planning and delivery
- developing shared vision, leadership, cross sector collaboration, prevention strategies and workforce development
- facilitating cross alliance partnerships and involvement of Aboriginal-controlled organisations
- developing and implementing an outcomes measurement framework
- creating aligned practices through the development of regional action plans; standardised data collection; sharing and reporting systems; and multi-agency review mechanisms for highly vulnerable people and By-Name Lists.

Each alliance will adopt a governance and operational structure comprising an **Alliance Leadership Team** with an Alliance Manager appointed to lead the team in the delivery of its outcomes. Each Alliance Leadership Team will comprise representation from its members along with representatives from SA Housing Authority.

Each alliance will share responsibility for all activities under the agreement and will implement appropriate systems and processes to operate the partnership, support staff and monitor activity and outcomes. Success will be measured through collective performance and not the performance of individual organisations, creating a shared incentive to achieve the key objectives.





Funding and duration

In 2020-21, the amount of funding made available to the homelessness system in South Australia through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) was \$71.5 million.

It is anticipated that similar annual funding will be available to be applied across the regional alliances over the life of the contract. In the first instance, contracts will be funded for up to two years to align with the expiry of NHHA on 30 June 2023. Demonstration of early progress under the alliance model will be a key factor in future funding and duration decisions. The partnerships will always be required to operate within the existing funding allocation and aligned to NHHA requirements.

As services are transformed, the alliances will be expected to ensure that the funding is being directed to the activities that will most effectively deliver the reform outcomes. This will be a key performance measure.

Agreements

A formal alliance agreement will be entered into for each alliance specifying the following:

- governance and management arrangements
- nomination of representatives to the **Alliance System Steering Group**
- alliance behaviours and charter
- outcomes and services to be delivered
- funding
- scope of activities
- contracting arrangements
- duration and program
- outcomes measures and performance indicators
- open-book reporting
- information sharing
- statutory and policy compliance requirements.

Outcome measurement and performance indicators will be agreed by SA Housing Authority and alliance partners. As the alliances progress, measures and key performance indicators will be refined to ensure that resources are always being directed in the best way to reflect new information and emerging client needs.

Scope of alliance services

While most current contracts with homelessness and domestic and family violence services are due to expire at the end of June 2021, a small number of services have longer contract terms resulting from the early acceleration of some reform activity.

Out of scope of tender:

Services that underwent early acceleration of reform activity such as



Homelessness Services
Access Point



Housing Advice Advocacy and
Engagement Service



Youth 110



Coober Pedy Homelessness
and Domestic and Family
Violence Service



40 beds election commitment



transitional accommodation
facilities for remote visitors.

While the providers for these out of scope services have been determined and they will not be directly included in the first-round of tendering processes, these services should be incorporated into the relevant activities of alliances.

There may be other services that are deemed to be out of scope, and these will be identified prior to the tender process due to commence by December 2020.



Joining the alliance model

The release of this document is a key step in the process of engaging with all service providers in delivering a new outcomes focused service system.

This will be a transformational change across the service system. To support the transition to an alliance model, a substantial coaching program will be delivered.

Through **October and November 2020**, a series of **Alliance Workshops** will be conducted that will focus on engaging with and supporting service providers to assist in the development of a new alliance approach for the service system. These workshops will cover topics such as:

- forming of alliances
- alliance model/s
- alliance behaviours
- how to tender for an alliance
- alliance contracts
- transitional arrangements.

Following the workshops, a tender is scheduled to be released in the period **December 2020 through January 2021** seeking the submission of tenders for the provision of homelessness and domestic and family violence services from 1 July 2021.

Service providers will be asked to come together as pre-formed alliances to make collective bids as part of the tender process, including with an identified consortium leader (commissioning partner). We expect providers in the group will bring different skills, knowledge and abilities to an alliance.

A tender assessment process will follow that will include interactive tendering sessions for shortlisted respondents.

The tender process is expected to be completed in **March 2021** and a transition period will occur in the period **April to June 2021** ahead of new service contracts formally commencing on **1 July 2021**.

The first six months of operation will see an alliance mobilisation phase from **July to December 2021**.

We are excited about the future and what we can all achieve together. We are looking for innovative and creative organisations who want to join us.

Join us in delivering South Australia's Homelessness Alliance

Details about the Homelessness Future Directions and the Alliance workshops are available at www.housing.sa.gov.au/homelessness

For further information contact the Office for Homelessness Sector Integration within SA Housing Authority: housingohsi@sa.gov.au



Procurement timeline

Alliance awareness building and tender

Oct 20 - Mar 21

A series of formal and informal initiatives developing awareness and understanding of the new Contract Model within both the sector and SA Housing Authority.

The initiatives will support and enhance the sector and SA Housing Authority's understanding in collaborative contracting and ability to be alliance-ready as they navigate the procurement process.

SEPT 20

Future Directions for Homelessness public release

OCT / NOV 20

Alliance workshops

DEC 20

Tender released to sector

FEB / MAR 21

Tender evaluations

MAR 21

Contract agreements with alliances

MAR 21

Government approvals

Alliance mobilisation

Apr 21 - Dec 21

A series of initiatives undertaken with alliance partners in the first six months of the Contract Agreement to successfully mobilise the alliance.

The mobilisation will align the expectations and vision of alliances early while establishing the foundations of successful delivery through a robust governance structure, role clarity and communication protocols.

APR 21

Transition in of alliance

JUL 21

Mobilisation of alliance

Continuing high performing alliance delivery

Jan 22 - Ongoing

Ongoing coaching support and development for alliances over the duration of the contract.

Supporting and constructively challenging the alliance team through individual and team coaching, health checks, 90 day planning and more to hold accountability to the shared vision and delivery of a high performing service.

JAN 22

Ongoing alliance delivery





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