

Loddon Campaspe Opening Doors Practice Manual

Version 3 – October 2012



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SECTION 1: Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Manual

This manual is designed for staff of homelessness assistance services funded through the department of Human Services (DHS) in the Loddon Campaspe sub-region.

The **purpose of this manual** is to clearly document the Loddon Campaspe LASN Opening Doors model and the various Opening Doors policies, guidelines and practice principles that are relevant to the everyday practice of staff. The model and practice principles outlined in this manual have been developed and localised by the Loddon Campaspe LASN members.

The manual complements the *Opening Doors Framework*, *Service Coordination Guide* and *Practice Manual* which were launched by the Minister for Housing in mid 2008. This manual provides detail of the LASNs localised Opening Doors model which builds upon the guidelines and practice principles outlined in these three documents.

This manual also sits within the context of the *Homelessness Assistance Service Standards* and the *Homelessness Assistance Guidelines and Conditions of Funding*, which guide the delivery of homelessness and housing services.

This manual does not describe individual agency practices and procedures that sit outside the operation of a coordinated LASN response. This manual only describes the new practice components and principles that form part of the Opening Doors model in the Loddon Campaspe sub-region.

Practice Manual Review Process

The Loddon Campaspe Opening Doors Practice Manual is a 'living document' and will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure that the manual remains up-to-date and relevant for workers.

The manual will be reviewed formally twice a year – at the June and December LASN meetings.

Agencies can also provide updates and feedback about the manual outside of the June and December meetings via the Loddon Opening Doors email address loddon.openingdoors@dhs.vic.gov.au

All updates to the Loddon Campaspe Opening Doors Practice Manual will be made by the DHS regional office, and updated manuals will be uploaded onto the Loddon Mallee Homelessness Network (LOMA) website – www.loma.net.au

1.2 Policy Background

The Victorian Government launched the Victorian Homelessness Strategy (VHS) in 2000. After an extensive consultation and research process the government released the *VHS Directions for Change* report in February 2002, which provided a more detailed blueprint for strategic reform of Victorian homelessness support system.

Clients consulted during the development of the VHS identified that accessing the homelessness service system can be complicated, confusing and time consuming.

In response, the VHS identified the need for **a common assessment and referral approach** across homelessness services to improve the consistency of service provision and to facilitate an integrated service response for service users.

It is generally recognised that prior to the implementation of the Opening Doors framework, the homelessness service system could be complicated and difficult to navigate for consumers. For example in 2002 the VHS identified that there were over 400 entry points to the homelessness service system in Victoria. These consisted of a multiplicity of agencies that offer and provide a variety of different services for people who are homeless. Many of these agencies had their own distinctive approaches to assessment.

With this in mind, in 2005 the Department of Human Services (DHS) Housing and Community Building initiated the *Victorian Statewide Homelessness Assessment and Referral Framework* (SHARF) which has subsequently been renamed **Opening Doors**.

1.3 What is Opening Doors?

Opening Doors is an area based **service coordination framework** of principles and practices that are intended to guide and improve client assessment, referral and resource allocation across the Victorian homelessness service system. Opening Doors is characterised by **visible entry points** and aims to ensure that entry into the homelessness service system is streamlined and simplified, making it easier for consumers to navigate.

Opening Doors **documents best practice**, it is focussed on developing a common process of assessment and referral across homelessness services. Opening Doors aims to deliver better coordination among homelessness services at a local level so that people in crisis can quickly and simply access the homelessness service system.

Opening doors also aims to maximise the resources of the homelessness service system by reducing duplication of initial assessments, and ensures greater transparency and equity of access to homelessness resources.

Key principles underpinning Opening Doors include:

- A consumer focused and strengths based approach
- Equity of access to the resources of the homelessness service system
- Support for skilled workers with training, supervision and efficient tools
- Collaboration and partnerships between homelessness service and the Department of Human Services
- Reasonable care to address the risks faced by each person who is homeless
- Maximising the use of available resources

Key Opening Doors features and tools include:

- Local Area Service Networks (LASNs)
- Visible entry points
- Transparent prioritisation processes
- Common Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) Form
- Common Referral form

As mentioned previously, the Opening Doors model (including the key principles, features and tools) is clearly outlined in the *Opening Doors Framework, Service Coordination Guide* and *Practice Manual*. These three strategic policy documents can all be accessed on the Department of Human Services Website – www.housing.vic.gov.au/homelessness-and-family-violence/homelessness/opening-doors

1.4 Statewide 1800 Number & After Hours

Through the Opening Doors Framework, a Statewide 1800 number and After Hours service has been established for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This is a toll-free telephone service **available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

The Statewide 1800 number is **1800 825 955**

The Statewide 1800 number offers over-the-phone assistance to callers who are experiencing homelessness or require information about housing and support needs.

During business hours (9.00 am – 5.00 pm) calls to the 1800 number are routed to the caller's closest generalist entry point for a localised response. After hours (5.00 pm – 9.00 am) calls are diverted to the St Kilda Crisis Centre (SKCC) for an after-hours response.

Statewide 1800 Family Violence Number

There is also a Statewide 1800 number and after hours response for women and children who are experiencing family violence.

The Statewide Family Violence 1800 number is run by the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS). The Statewide Family Violence 1800 number is **1800 015 188**

This is also a toll-free service **available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

SECTION 2: Local Area Service Networks (LASNs)

2.1 Purpose of the LASNs

Opening Doors brings together homelessness service providers through the establishment of LASNs, to **develop a shared approach** to assessment and referral processes, resource allocation and service system development.

LASNs are responsible for **developing, implementing and maintaining the Opening Doors model** within their own local catchment areas with the assistance of DHS Regions.

LASNs are made up of the following:

- Homelessness funded agencies
- Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP) providers
- Transitional Housing Management (THM) providers
- DHS regional management and staff
- Regional homelessness networker
- Regional children's Resource Worker
- Representatives from the regional Integrated Family Violence Consortium
- Representatives from the regional Creating Connections Consortium

LASNs have an ongoing responsibility to:

- Develop, implement and maintain Opening Doors in their local catchment areas
- Build on consistency and quality of service delivery practice amongst member agencies
- Meet regularly to share information and undertake key tasks of the LASN
- Provide a forum for information sharing and consultation within the homelessness sector, with DHS and with allied services

LASNs are also responsible for focusing on monitoring the effectiveness of the homelessness service system using evidence to plan future responses, identify service gaps and improve client outcomes.

2.1 Loddon Campaspe LASN

The Loddon Campaspe Local Area Service Network (LASN) comprises all of the **homelessness funded service providers** in the Loddon Campaspe sub-region. All the member agencies in the Loddon Campaspe LASN are responsible for implementing and maintaining the Opening Doors local model and tools in their catchment areas.

Core member agencies include:

- Advocacy and Rights Centre (ARC)
- Annie North
- Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative (BDAC)
- CADARG (Castlemaine Health)
- Cobaw Community Health
- Centre for Non Violence
- Haven
- Maryborough District Health Service
- Njernda Aboriginal Cooperative
- St Luke's Anglicare

Advisory members include:

- Loddon Mallee Homelessness Network
- DHS Regional office

In January 2009 the Loddon Campaspe LASN meetings commenced and the LASN commenced the process of developing and implementing the Opening Doors model in the Loddon Campaspe sub-region. The DHS regional office has the primary responsibility for organising and coordinating the Loddon Campaspe LASN meetings.

Representation at the LASN meeting is at a CEO or program manager/team leader level. Each agency has one voting member and a delegated proxy.

2.3 Loddon Campaspe LASN Entry Points

Entry points, as the name suggests, are the **first point of contact** for people accessing the homelessness service system. Entry points are access points to the homelessness service system that undertake initial assessment, resource matching, referral and prioritisation.

In the Loddon Campaspe there are number of **generalist and specialist entry points**. Generalist entry points undertake initial assessments for all people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness while specialist entry points undertake initial assessment for specific target groups including; Indigenous, youth, Family Violence and mental health.

The Entry Points for the Loddon Campaspe are outlined below. In determining the entry points, the Loddon Campaspe LASN identified the homelessness funded agencies best placed to act as entry points for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in the Loddon Campaspe catchment area. The entry points were determined based on geographical accessibility, visibility, established profile, and worker capacity.

Generalist Entry Points:

Township	Agency Name/s	Service Area (LGA's)
Bendigo	Haven 22 – 30 View Street BENDIGO 3550 Phone: (03) 5442 4288	City of Greater Bendigo Loddon Shire
Castlemaine	CADARG 12 Lyttleton Terrace CASTLEMAINE 3450 Phone: (03) 5472 4299	Mount Alexander
Kyneton	Cobaw Community Health 47 High Street KYENTON 3444 Phone: (03) 5421 1666	Macedon Ranges
Kyabram	Haven 21 Lake Road KYABRAM 3620 Phone: (03) 5852 0019	Campaspe Shire
Echuca	St Luke's Anglicare 114 Hume Street ECHUCA 3564 Phone: (03) 5480 1120	Campaspe Shire
Maryborough	Maryborough District Health Service 75 Clarendon Street MARYBOROUGH 3465 Phone: (03) 5461 0400	Goldfields Shire

Specialist Entry Points:

Township	Agency Name/s	Specialist Response Type	Service Area (LGAs)
Bendigo	Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative 13 Forest Street BENDIGO 3550 Phone: (03) 5442 4947	Indigenous	City of Greater Bendigo Mount Alexander Shire Central Goldfields Shire
	Centre for non Violence Women's Services – Phone: 1800 884 038 Men's Services – Phone: 1800 884 292	Family Violence	City of Greater Bendigo Mount Alexander Shire Central Goldfields Shire
	St Luke's Anglicare 175 – 187 Hargreaves Street BENDIGO 3550 Phone: (03) 5440 1100	Youth	City of Greater Bendigo
	St Luke's Anglicare 32 Forest Street BENDIGO 3550 Phone: (03) 5448 1100	Mental Health	City of Greater Bendigo Campaspe Shire
	Annie North Women's Refuge (non-advertised entry point) Phone: via the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service 1800 015 188	Secure Women's Refuge	Statewide Provider
Echuca	Njernda Aboriginal Corporation 86 Hare Street BENDIGO 3550 Phone: (03) 5480 6252	Indigenous	Campaspe Shire

2.3 Loddon Campaspe Provider Agencies

In the Opening Doors framework provider agencies are homelessness funded agencies that deliver services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness but **do not operate carry out entry point functions.**

Provider agencies bring their resources and expertise to the LASN and participate in negotiations around prioritisation and resource allocation.

Loddon Campaspe Provider Agencies:

Township	Agency Name/s	Specialist Response Type	Service Area (LGAs)
Bendigo	Advocacy and Rights Centre (ARC) 29 Queen Street BENDIGO 3550 Phone: (03) 5444 4364	Support for Social Housing Tenants at Risk	Loddon Campaspe Region

SECTION 3: The Local Model

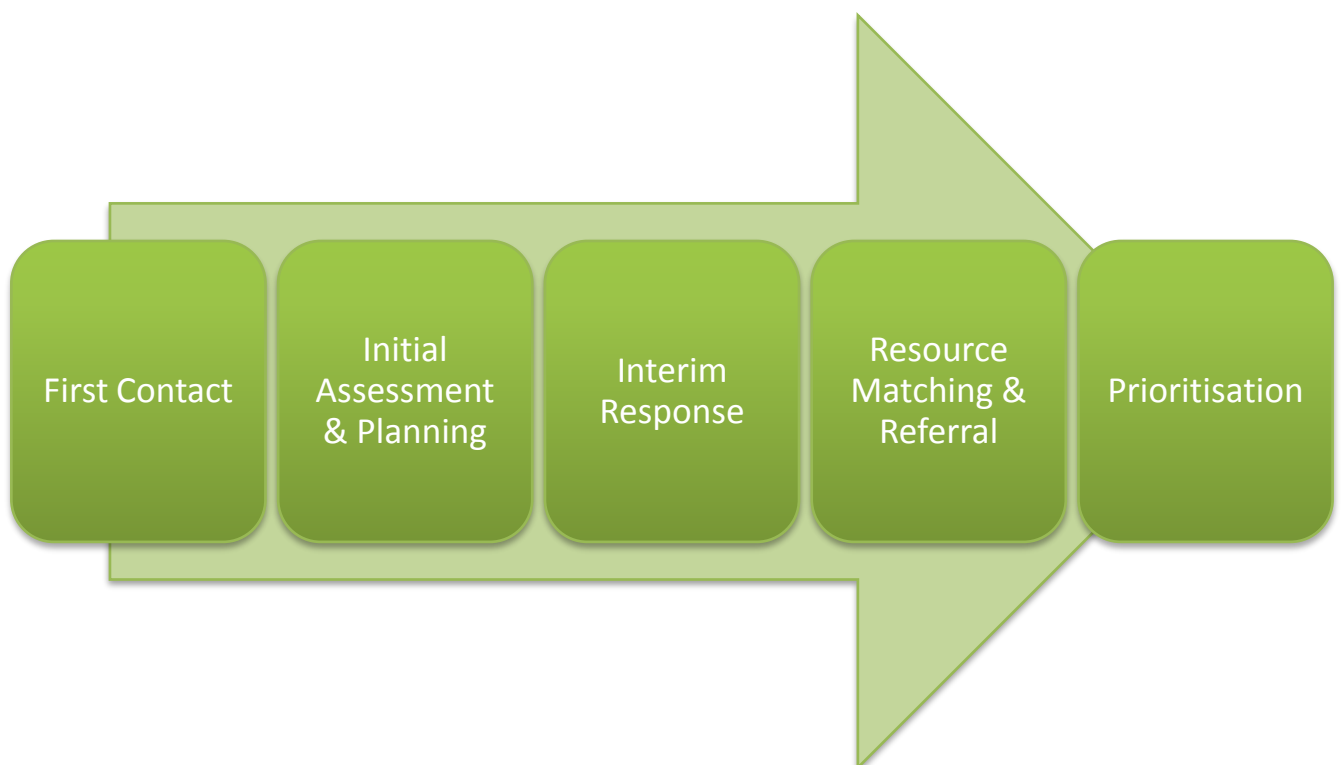
3.1 The Loddon Campaspe Opening Doors Model

The Opening Doors model in the in the Loddon Campaspe has been developed by the Loddon Campaspe LASN members and continues to be reviewed, evaluated and updated by the LASN. The Loddon Campaspe Opening Doors model was implemented in August 2010.

There are five key elements of the Loddon Campaspe Opening Doors model which include:

- First contact
- Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP)
- Interim Response
- Resource Matching & Referral
- Prioritisation

This local model aims to create common approaches to assessment, resource matching, referral and prioritisation among all entry point agencies. It is expected that all LASN member agencies adopt the Loddon Campaspe Opening Doors model and incorporate each of the five key elements and associated tools into the everyday practice of workers.



3.2 First Contact

In the Opening Doors framework, first contact is an **initial screening for risks and service requirements** and determines whether consumers seeking assistance are homeless or at risk of homelessness. First contact can occur at entry points and provider agencies.

During first contact workers gather enough information about a person or family to determine what type of assistance is required and whether the person or family require an Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) session. In a timely manner workers need to determine:

- Is the consumer in the right place – do they require a homelessness response?
- Does the consumer require an Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) session – do they require support and/or resources or are they just seeking basic housing information?

If the person or family has not come to the right service and they do not require a homelessness response then workers should assist the person or family to locate an appropriate service provider. If a person is only seeking basic housing information, this should be provided in a timely manner.

If the person or family requires homelessness assistance the entry point or provider agency should screen the person/s to determine if they are in a crisis or non crisis situation. The following processes should then be followed:

	Process for Entry Point Agencies	Process for Provider Agencies
CRISIS Person has nowhere to stay that night or is living in a serious DV situation.	An IAP session should be scheduled with a IAP/intake worker that day or the next business day if person presents after 4.30 pm.	Contact the closest entry point on behalf of the client to arrange an IAP session that day or the next business day if person presents after 4.30 pm.
NON-CRISIS Person has a place to stay that night.	an IAP session should be scheduled with a IAP/intake worker within 5 business days	Contact the closest entry point on behalf of the client to arrange an IAP session with 5 business days.

LASN information cards

The **LASN information cards** can be provided to people at first contact so that they can make informed choices about which entry point they would like to access.

The LASN information card also provides people with the homelessness 1800 number which they can ring for assistance in case their housing situation worsens after hours.

3.3 Initial Assessment & Planning

Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) is outlined in the Opening Doors framework as a process undertaken in collaboration with a client at an entry point. IAP specifically involves **identifying, assessing and ranking the unmet needs and risks** of the client and developing action tasks to address the most pressing needs and risks.

The four key components of IAP include:

- Engagement
- Identifying client needs and risks
- Assessing and ranking client needs and risks
- Developing action tasks to address needs and risks

It is important to have **clear communication** with the client during the IAP process which includes being honest about the availability of resources and why particular information is being collected.

The Opening Doors framework promotes a **conversational 'narrative' approach** to initial assessment. A narrative assessment is conducted as a conversation in which the client is encouraged to tell their story in their own way. The narrative approach validates the client's experience and acknowledges them as experts of their own story.

It is the role of the worker to gather information in an informal and conversational way, avoiding asking questions directly from an assessment form. The questions that the worker asks are related to, and guided by, what the client is saying rather than asking a list of standardised questions listed on an assessment form.

The Swinburne Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) manual provides homelessness workers with a **best practice guide** to completing IAP and should be referred to for key questions and considerations.

Initial Assessment & Planning (IAP) form

The Opening Doors Initial Assessment and Planning form should be used to collect the information gathered during any IAP session with a client.

The initial assessment and planning form (IAP form) is an **electronic assessment form** designed to be completed after any IAP session with a client. The form is designed to collect the relevant information required to make an effective referral for case management support or homelessness resources.

Specialist family violence entry points in the Loddon Campaspe LASN are not required to complete the IAP form for intake and assessment purposes, Family Violence entry points in the Loddon Campaspe will continue to use their own specialist assessment forms (CRAF) for intake and assessment which focus on safety and risk.

However, family Violence agencies are required to use the IAP form when they are making a referral to other homelessness agencies for housing or support. The completed IAP form needs to be forwarded by the Family Violence agency before the referral can be accepted.

Opening Doors Referral Form & Client Consent

The Opening Doors Referral Form is a Statewide 'common' referral form that is used by all the LASNs across the state to make referrals for homelessness resources. This is an electronic form that includes client consent.

As mentioned previously, in order to secure a homelessness resource including those listed on the Resource Register, a referral needs to be made by the intake/IAP on behalf of the client. This involves sending the common Referral form along with the completed IAP form to the agency holding the resource.

The completed IAP form must be attached to the Referral Form when making any referral, otherwise the referral is incomplete and should not be accepted.



Initial Assessment & Planning Tool

Agency Information

Agency Name:

Staff Member:

Date:

Client Contact Details

Client Name:

Preferred Name/Alias:

Address:

Date of Birth:

Gender:

Phone No:

Mobile No:

Can a worker call you on this number and leave a message? Y N

Alternative Contact Details:

Country of Birth:

Indigenous Status:

Source of Income:

Labour Force Status:

Student Status:

Date of assessment

Is an Interpreter required: Y N

If yes, pICentre for non Violence provide further information:

Household members

Other Names

Surname

Relationship

Gender

DOB enter
year only if
estimate

**Cultural
Identity**

Summary

Needs and Risks

Response Provided (include housing assistance provided or planned and supports needed, provided or arranged)

Housing Allocated

Support Allocated

Next Steps

Target Group (Family Violence, Young People, Indigenous, Families, Single Adults)

Priority Status

Housing Need

Support Need

Assessment of Personal Vulnerabilities

Status of Interim Response

Consent

Client consent to share information

To record freely given informed client consent to share their information with a specific agency/ies for a specific purpose

Name:

Date of Birth:

Sex:

Section 1: Proposed Information Uses and Disclosures

1.1 Referrals

The following service(s) are recommended. It is also recommended that relevant information is forwarded to the agency(s) that provide these services, in order that consumers receive the best possible care.

Service Type Eg. - Housing support - Drug & Alcohol support	Name of Agency	Type of information (including limits as applicable) Eg. - All relevant information - Housing situation only

Section 2: Record of Consumer Consent

2(a) Verbal consent

Worker Use Only

Verbal consent can be used when it is not practicable to obtain written consent.

I have discussed the proposed referrals with the consumer or authorised representative and I am satisfied that the consumer understands the proposed uses and disclosures, and has provided their informed consent to:

Referrals

Signed
.....
(Worker)

Date:

Worker name:

Position:

2(b) Written Consumer Consent

My worker/practitioner has discussed with me how, and why certain information about me may need to be provided to other service providers. I understand the recommendations and I give my permission for the information to be shared as detailed above.

Signed

.....
Signed by Client or Authorised representative

Date:.....

Name:

Witnessed:
(worker)

Worker name:

Position:

Informed of privacy/confidentiality & storage of personal information Y N
 Provided with hard copy of clients rights and confidentiality Y N

3.4 Resource Matching & Referral

In the Opening Doors Framework, resource matching and referral involves working in collaboration with the client to **identify and secure the most appropriate housing and/or support resources**.

Once the client's needs and risks have been identified and ranked through the IAP process, the IAP/intake worker must work in collaboration with the client to identify the most appropriate homelessness support and housing resources available at the time and to make referrals for these resources. In many cases, this response may only partially meet the needs of clients given that **demand far exceeds supply** for homelessness resources.

If a homelessness resource is secured, it is the responsibility of the IAP/intake worker to notify the client of when the resource will be available and to arrange access to the resource.

The **process for resource matching and referral** includes:

1. Check the Resource Register and other relevant databases for available resources
2. Determine if the available resources are appropriate for the client
3. Contact the agency holding the resource to confirm availability
4. Refer the client for the resource using the IAP form (or other forms as outlined on the Resource Register) and the Opening Doors referral form
5. If the referral is successful inform the client and arrange access to the resource

The resource matching and referral process may be completed quickly (eg. during one IAP session) or may take an extended period of time to complete depending on the client's needs and risks and on the housing and support resources available at the time. A client may only require a single resource such as HEF or may require a number of resources.

Appropriate and timely resource matching and referral relies on the intake/IAP workers ability to access accurate and useful information from the client through the IAP process. It also relies on the intake/IAP workers ability to quickly obtain information about resource availability within the homelessness service system.

Resource Register

The Opening Doors Resource Register is a vital tool for workers used as part of the resource matching and referral process. The Resource Register is a web-based register which is used by agencies to **electronically advertise and search for homelessness support and housing resources**.

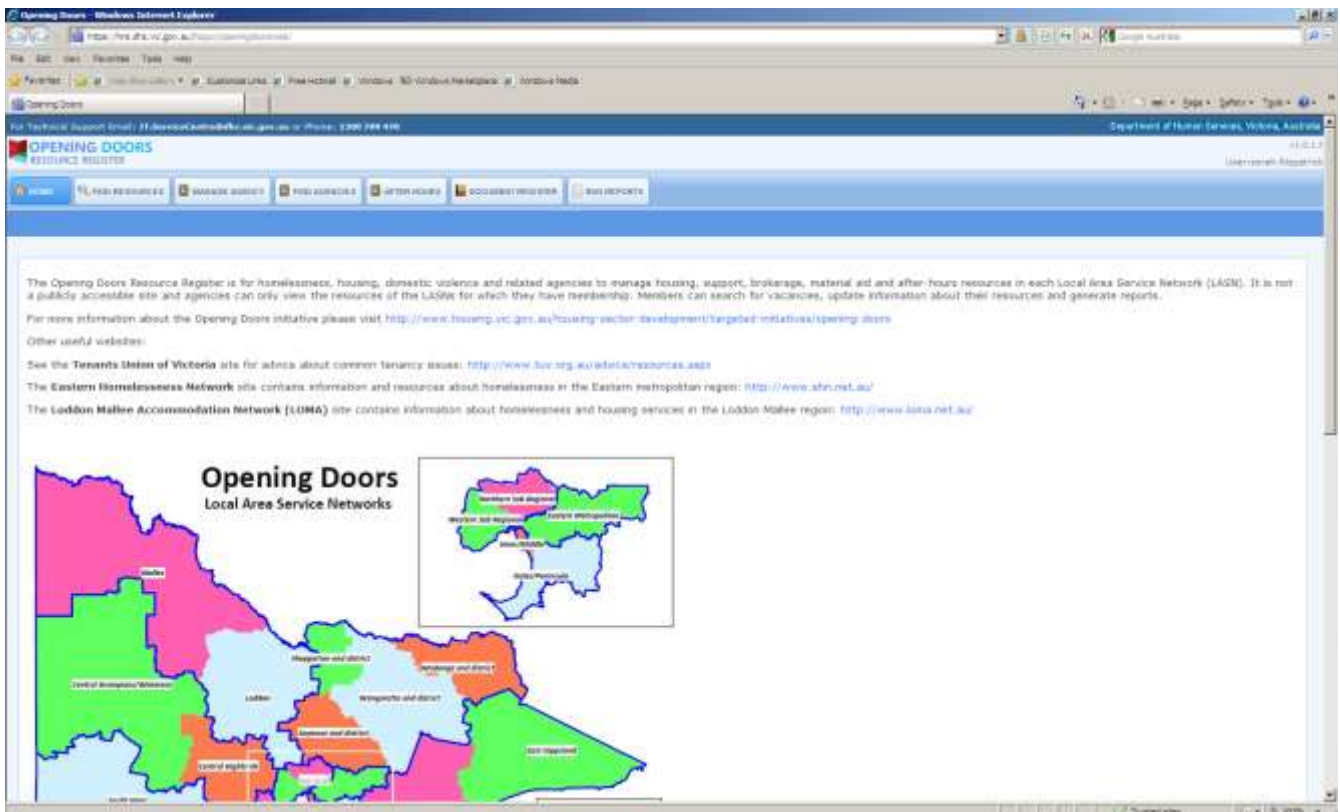
The following resource types can be advertised on the Resource Register:

- Brokerage
- Crisis Support
- Housing Establishment Fund (HEF)
- Housing
- Interim Response
- Material Aid
- Programs/Courses
- Transitional Support (case management support)

It is recommended that workers log into the Resource Register **at least twice a week** to check for available resources. Checking for resources on the resource register should form part of everyday practice for workers.

The Resource Register can be accessed via the Department of Human Services website - <https://hns.dhs.vic.gov.au/dhsportal/wps/myportal>

If you experience technical difficulties with the Resource Register or if you forget your password pICentre for non Violence contact the ebusiness IT service centre on **1300 799 470**



3.5 Interim Response

The Opening Doors Framework requires that all LASNs incorporate Interim Response (IR) into their Opening Doors model. In the Opening Doors framework, Interim Response is described as a strategy to provide **service continuity** to people seeking homelessness assistance when there are no appropriate housing or support resources available.

Interim Response (IR) is an extension of the IAP process, IR is assistance provided to clients while they await the allocation of case management support and/or housing resources through the Opening Doors resource matching and referral process.

The specific interventions provided during IR should aim to **prevent immediate homelessness from occurring** and/or to **stabilise a clients housing situation** as best as possible within the existing available resources. IR should be focused on assisting clients to avoid an escalation of any crisis situation.

IR should involve **building on the action tasks** developed during the IAP process to address the clients **presenting needs and risks**. The action tasks can include, but is not limited to:

- Assisting clients to complete housing applications including public housing and private rental
- Providing clients with financial assistance (eg HEF, emergency relief funds) to purchase emergency accommodation
- Safety planning with clients
- Assistance to access legal support or advocacy

These action tasks should not be confused with a case plan developed with clients receiving case management support, which is more detailed and holistic. The IR action tasks should be focused on the **short-term** in order to address the client's **most pressing and imminent needs and risks**.

The action tasks and any **interventions provided during IR should be realistic and achievable** by both worker and client through low-level support, IR should not focus on complex or longer-term goals that cannot be appropriately addressed or achieved through low-level support.

Many clients will have their needs and risks addressed adequately through IR and therefore will not require a referral for case management or other homelessness resources.

Case Management

Homelessness case management (also known as Transitional Support) is **high level, collaborative and client-focused** support provided to clients in order to assist them to effectively meet their **individual housing and support needs** and to move them towards independence.

Case management differs from Interim Response as case management focuses on a client's short-term needs and risks as well as their longer-term and complex needs and goals while Interim Response focuses solely on the client's immediate short term needs and risk. Case management also involves developing a holistic **case management support plan** in collaboration with the client, whereas case management support plans are not developed with clients receiving IR.

The following are key functions of homelessness case management:

- Undertaking in-depth assessments that build upon the Opening Doors initial assessment
- Developing holistic case plans in collaboration with clients
- Ongoing assessment and evaluation of clients housing and support needs
- Coordination of referrals and support with other homelessness services and allied health providers
- Regular case coordination meetings with case workers to lead integrated support planning
- Support to establish links with education, employment and training
- Support to obtain income support
- Assistance to develop or improve living and life skills
- Assistance to access a range of longer term housing options including applications for public housing, private rental and affordable housing
- Assistance with family issues including family reconciliation and mediation services
- Supporting clients to establish build relationships with community organisations and to establish support networks within their community
- Advocacy and support to obtain legal assistance
- Emotional support and counselling
- Development of exit planning in collaboration with clients

3.6 Prioritisation

In the Opening Doors Framework, prioritisation is outlined as a process that manages demand for homelessness resources through **'best matching' resources to clients most in need** through an agreed upon prioritisation process that is **objective, consistent and transparent**.

Prioritising people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness is acknowledged as the one most difficult and complex aspects of homelessness service provision. Where demand far exceeds supply, one client receiving a homelessness resource means that other clients miss out. Making decisions about assisting one person over another is understood to be a difficult and stressful process for workers.

Prioritisation only needs to take place when **more than one client requires, and is eligible for, a homelessness support or housing resource**. If there is only one client/household that requires and is eligible for a homelessness resource when it becomes available, then the resource can be allocated to that client/household without undertaking the prioritisation process.

The following are key principles of the Opening Doors prioritisation process:

- Prioritise appropriate resources for persons/households with the greatest housing and support needs,
- Match available resources to the person/household whose needs will best be met by that particular resource,
- Ensure capacity to respond to people with high and complex needs and those requiring early intervention,
- Regularly review prioritisation processes to ensure that available resources are being matched appropriately to those in need,
- Ensure that service exclusion practices are not built into prioritisation processes and tools,
- Ensure that prioritisation practices are consistently understood and applied by all LASN member agencies.

Prioritisation Grid

The Opening Doors prioritisation grid must be used as a **decision making guide** when prioritising clients for a homelessness resource including case management support. This grid looks at both the housing circumstances and support needs of a client in order to determine their priority level.

If more than one client is assessed as being at the same priority level, the personal vulnerabilities of the client including the client's individual capacity to cope with their current circumstances should be considered.



Opening Doors: Prioritisation Grid

Loddon Campaspe Local Area Service Network

1. Current Housing Circumstances

<p>HIGH Client is experiencing Primary Homelessness and is sleeping rough (eg. on streets, in car, in tent)</p> <p>or</p> <p>Client living in a family violence situation at immediate risk of harm to self and/or children.</p>	<p>MEDIUM Client is living in temporary/crisis accommodation</p> <p>and</p> <p>this accommodation is potentially detrimental to the clients wellbeing</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>this accommodation option has broken down or is ending soon which could result in primary homelessness</p>	<p>LOW Client is living in temporary/crisis or unsuitable accommodation</p> <p>and</p> <p>this accommodation option cannot be sustained in the longer term due one or more of the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - overcrowding - ongoing living costs - family or neighbourhood conflict issues
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2. Risks Associated with Current Housing Circumstances

<p>HIGH There are significant safety risks associated with the clients current housing arrangements.</p> <p>or</p> <p>The client and any accompanying children are at immediate risk of harm if they continue to maintain these current housing arrangements.</p> <p>or</p> <p>The client is experiencing severe health problems (mental, physical or emotional) that are likely to significantly worsen in their current housing arrangements.</p>	<p>MEDIUM There are some risks associated with the client's current housing circumstances however these risks are not imminent.</p> <p>or</p> <p>The client is experiencing some health problems (mental, physical or emotional) that could worsen in their current housing arrangements.</p>	<p>LOW There are few/no risks associated with the client's current housing arrangements</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Risks are related to ongoing affordability.</p>
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3. Support Needs

<p>HIGH Client has multiple and/or complex support needs</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>the clients support needs are likely to have a major impact on the clients functioning/wellbeing/health if not addressed immediately</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>the clients support needs require intensive assistance and support</p>	<p>MEDIUM The client has one or more significant support needs</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>these support needs are having some impact on the clients functioning/wellbeing/health</p>	<p>LOW The client has one or more support needs</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>these support needs can be addressed through case management support.</p>
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4. Priority Grid

Priority Level	Current Housing Circumstances	Risks Associated with Current Housing Circumstances	Support Needs
A	High	High	High
B	High	High	Medium
	High	Medium	High
C	Medium	High	High
	High	Medium	Medium
	Medium	High	Medium
D	Medium	Medium	High
	Medium	Medium	Medium

5. Prioritising Client's of the same Priority Level

When there are client's assessed as being at the same priority level the following factors need to be considered:

- The personal vulnerability of a client, which includes their individual capacity to cope with their current circumstances and the risks posed to their wellbeing. This also includes their level of access to formal and informal supports.
- The length of time the client has been waiting on the prioritisation list for a resource – all other factors being equal, a person who has been waiting longer would be prioritised over someone who has been waiting a shorter time.

6. Personal Vulnerability

<p>HIGH Individual/household is experiencing a level of crisis significant enough to impact on their capacity to manage independently</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>The client has no access to formal or informal support from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Friends • GP/Allied health professionals • Other community supports 	<p>MEDIUM The client faces no immediate and significant risks, however, if the situation is unlikely to improve, the individual/household's capacity to cope in the current situation will be impacted and their needs will be likely to escalate</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>The client has some access to additional supports.</p>	<p>LOW The client exhibits good copings skills</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>The client has access to additional supports including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Friends • GP/Allied health professionals • Other community supports
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SECTION 4: Local Resources

4.1 THM Allocations Panel

In the Loddon Campaspe LASN all Transitional Housing Management (THM) properties are managed by Haven. **Applications for THM properties are assessed by a THM allocations panel.**

As part of Opening Doors Framework the makeup of the THM allocations panel was reviewed and modified. The panel is made up of three senior representatives from Haven transitional housing team.

Members of the LASN can periodically sit in on an allocations panel in order to observe how the panel operates.

The panel will use the Opening Doors prioritisation grid as a guide when assessing all eligible applications. The panel will seek to 'best match' clients to available THM properties. A representative from the allocations panel will email all workers who submitted an application and advise the worker if their application was successful or unsuccessful.

The panel will be convened by a senior level representative from the transitional housing team **within three working days** of referrals closing.

Advertising THM properties on the Resource Register

Haven will advertise all vacant THM properties (without nomination rights) on the Resource Register within 24 hours of the property becoming tenantable.

Referrals for vacant properties will be accepted for **three working days**, after such time the property will be unpublished on the Resource Register and referrals will close. **Only referrals received within the allocated timeframe will be deemed eligible and will be considered by the Panel.**

Applying for THM properties listed on the Resource Register

To apply for a THM property listed on the Resource Register workers must forward a completed **Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) form** to Haven. The IAP form must include the following client details:

- Household details (including details of OoH debts)
- Housing support needs and history
- A housing exit plan (including timelines)

Workers should take note of the THM property details outlined on the Resource Register including property location, target group, number of bedrooms and property type. Workers should only refer appropriate client/s for a THM vacancy based on the property details.

The IAP form along with the Opening Doors referral form should be emailed or faxed through to the Bendigo Haven office.

Cross-Regional Referrals

When a worker is seeking to refer their client to a transitional property **outside of their funded service area**, the worker must first contact the homelessness support agency closest to the transitional property location to **arrange/negotiate a case management referral**. If accepted, confirmation of this referral must be documented and attached to the IAP form. **Such referrals that do not include this documentation will not be considered.**

Nomination Rights

When a property with **Nomination Rights** becomes available, the nominated agency will have **5 working days** to put forward an appropriate client for the property. If the nominated agency isn't able to put forward a client within this timeframe the property will be published on the Resource Register and all agencies may submit referrals.