

Communique:

Summary:

- The subgroup discussed the pressing housing issues in regional areas
- Action points regarding the urgent issue were discussed, including exploring links to responsible government departments

Discussion points:

- Housing crisis a major issue. Services that can provide temporary housing are at capacity. People are already homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and have no avenues to overcome that situation. Some properties might be available, but these are in even more remote areas which do not have access to transport or regular buses
- Digital literacy as a barrier to apply for rentals. Newly arrived migrants unfamiliar with processes of applying for rentals, limited English language
- Clients relocating to main cities due to difficulties in finding housing
- Significant increases in rental prices. Especially in areas that have experienced floods and natural disasters. E.g. Shepparton after floods
- People currently living in sheds and properties that are overcrowded
- Some new arrivals staying in motels which is very expensive
- Local teams currently using their local networks within the community to assist clients
- Emergency preparedness. A SETS provider commented how they have been working with Victoria Police and ambulance services to inform their clients of what these services provide in emergency situations
- Rental agencies have asked for support from SETS providers to deal with clients but this relationship is not reciprocal when SETS providers need help to support clients experiencing complex housing situations. How could these dialogue between agencies and SETS providers could be opened?
- How could a dialogue be also opened between SETS providers and government departments to explore solutions?
- Cost of living making it even more challenging for clients to stay in regional areas
- The need for SETS providers to have connection with migration agents. Lack of understanding of implications of sponsoring someone.
- The need for training that equips clients with competitive skills in the job market
- Driving support programs mostly aimed at women. Clients struggling to pay for driving lessons which adds on to the cost of living

Next meeting: Tuesday 11 July 2023. Nick Ross to share calendar invitation

Attendees (10):

Minandi Rudman (SPG)

Maria Rosales (SPG)

Victoria (Pilbara CLS WA)

Maggie (Bundaberg Centre QLD)

Amanda (Uniting VIC/TAS)

Laura (Communicare WA)

Martine (Bendigo Community Health Service VIC)

Lowilla (Uniting VIC/TAS)

Elisangela (Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services VIC)

Daniel (Multicultural Council of Wagga)

Kate (South West Healthcare VIC)

Hayley (South West Healthcare VIC)