

## SETSCoP Meeting Summary Communiqué Housing and Financial Capacity - 19 November 2024

### GUEST PRESENTATION

Mae De Sesto, Manager Accommodation Services, Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) Tasmania  
Homestay Program: Personalised and Supportive Homestay Experiences for New Migrants and Refugees

Presentation slides shared with the Housing Subgroup members and available from the SETSCoP Secretariat upon request. The SETSCoP Secretariat will link SETS staff with MRC Tasmania as requested.

### COP SUBGROUP DISCUSSION

#### 1. SETS providers shared innovative programs that can be learnt from.

- a. This includes a SETS provider securing student accommodation (one-bedroom furnished unit with all bills included) for single clients who have difficulties in finding affordable accommodation. While the number of clients served with this option is currently small, it can help prevent homelessness for those particularly at risk.
- b. A SETS provider shared the Zonta House Rapid Rehousing Program, which is for victim-survivors of domestic & family violence in Western Australia. The program is a pilot and helps support the cost of housing, and may have relevance for SETS.  
<https://zontahouse.org.au/services/rapid-rehousing-program/>
- c. Innovations in housing do need support from government to fund innovations and collaboration.

#### 2. There are a range of common challenges and barriers for SETS clients finding accommodation:

- a. Language barriers
- b. Financial difficulties
- c. Those experiencing domestic & family violence
- d. The intersectionality of these various barriers compound housing issues

#### 3. Challenges in online applications: SETS clients often find online applications for housing challenging, and the system can be confusing even for settlement workers. Examples include the point system to meet ID requirements and navigating different platforms and systems.

#### 4. The housing crisis remains urgent for many SETS clients: The migrant and refugee settlement sector should have a combined voice demanding action from government and policymakers on behalf of new arrivals, migrants and refugees, with settlement organisations wanting to communicate the need for housing planning and policy.

#### 5. Settlement housing roundtables and taskforces: SETS providers have collaborated to initiate local housing roundtables and taskforces.

- a. The CoP has been an avenue to share these ideas. One SETS provider held a taskforce in Western Sydney and invited government officials, the housing department, politicians, homelessness services, and settlement providers to share lived experience stories and work towards solutions.
- b. Picking up on this, SETS providers in Western Melbourne are running Housing Roundtables, each with a theme. They provide a space for settlement service providers, homelessness services, and government to come together on housing. A previous meeting was held on social housing, with staff from the Victorian Housing Register (VHR) presenting and a subsequent discussion on supporting participants into social housing. The next meeting will be held on the private rental market.

#### 6. LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants can be put at safety risk if they are inappropriately housed: Specialist SETS providers are working with HSP and government on this issue around safety.

- 7. SETSCoP Secretariat resource sharing:** The Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) held a Settlement in Practice Webinar on housing. The SETSCoP Secretariat shared the link to the recording: <https://scoa.org.au/webinars/settlement-in-practice-housing-accommodation-solutions/>

## OUTCOMES

Previous years outcomes:

### **SETSCoP Housing Tips & Tricks:**

<https://setscop.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Tips-and-Tricks-for-Helping-SETS-Clients-into-Housing.pdf>

### **Collaboration with AMEP on housing in English Classes:**

There has been ongoing work to support the integration of housing applications and concepts into the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), as many SETS clients are struggling to fill out forms and housing applications. This will support both SETS/AMEP clients becoming familiar with essential English terms, support digital literacy, and making English learning more practical.

The subgroup will collectively work towards concrete outcomes over the coming financial year. Ideas discussed and to be progressed in future include:

- 1. Continue AMEP – SETS housing links** – SETS providers gave an update on their work on collaborating with AMEP to integrate housing into AMEP, including that giving teacher course materials directly supports integration. The SETSCoP Secretariat has shared with LWA who run the CoP for AMEP on this issue. Other ways to support this linkage is through the Department of Home Affairs and directly with AMEP organisations.
- 2. Continue engaging with relevant guest speakers** – For example, the Australia Alliance to End Homelessness.
- 3. Support data on settlement housing** – The Australia Alliance to End Homelessness and SCOA's Road to Belonging Data & Evaluation Working Group indicators on housing.

### **ATTENDEES (35 SETS Staff / 28 SETS Providers):**

Nick Ross (SPG – SETSCoP Secretariat)

Jimena Loreto (SPG – SETSCoP Secretariat)

Nassima (AWOV VIC)

Gula (AWOV VIC)

Jen (Cultura VIC)

Fana (Communicare WA)

Raissa (Communicare WA)

Ruth (54 Reasons)

Chris (SSI QLD)

Zac (SSI QLD)

Magdalena (Intereach NSW/VIC)

Simone (Intereach NSW/VIC)

Kholud (AMWCHR VIC)

Siobhan (Centacare FNQ QLD)

Janine (Centacare FNQ QLD)

Hafiz (VAAN VIC)

Khair (WCEC VIC)

Mae (WCEC VIC)

Keirnan (Multicultural Australia QLD)

Ian (Many Coloured Sky)

Elle (MCC GC QLD)

Najwa (Melkite NSW)

Inas (Arabic Welfare VIC)

Mariam (Arabic Welfare VIC)

Nayif (CatholicCare Toowoomba QLD)

Julia (GSMS Albany WA)

Simone (MiCare VIC)

Linda (Arabic Welfare VIC)

Nicole (Multicultural Australia QLD)

Carmen (Assyrian Resource Centre NSW)

Jesse (SMRC VIC)

Siamak (Iranian Community Organisation NSW)

Deborah

Kim (JSS VIC)

Hiba (Whittlesea CC VIC)

Sandra (Chaldean NSW)

Rain (Sydney MCS NSW)