

Evaluation of *Melbourne Street to Home*

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Overview of Melbourne Street to Home program

- **Targets the most vulnerable rough sleepers**
- **Assertive outreach**
- **Provision of permanent housing – range of options**
- **Intensive support (up to 12 months after housing is secured)**

Two ways of 'looking'

- **Clients in 1st intake (N=45) compared with clients in 2nd intake (N=26)**
- **Clients at their baseline interview (N=71), after 12 months (N=67), after 24 months (N=57)**
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- **Response rate: after 12 months $67/69 = 97\%$
: after 24 months $57/68 = 84\%$**

Table 1: Demographic characteristics, Cohort 1 and Cohort 2

	Cohort 1 (N=45)	Cohort 2 (N=26)	Total (N=71)
Male	89	88	89
Single (%)	87	85	86
Mean age	46	45	46
Education (%)			
Completed Yr 12	24	16	21
Completed Yr 10 or 11	36	42	38
Left before Yr 10	40	42	41
Income (%)			
DSP	62	81	69
Newstart	29	19	25
Other (govt pension	9	-	6
3 years + on govt pension	89	77	85

Table 2: Comparison of homeless experience, Cohort 1 and Cohort 2

	Cohort 1 (N=45)	Cohort 2 (N=26)	Total (N=71)
1st experience of homelessness 18 or younger (%)	49	50	49
Mean number of years since first homeless	21.3	21.5	21.3
Last time had a home (years)	9.2	9.1	9.2

Table 3: Length of time sleeping rough, Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 (%)

	Cohort 1 (N=45)		Cohort 2 (N=26)		Total (N=71)	
Between 6-11 months	8		0		5	
1 – 2 years	13		12		13	
3 – 4 years	13		16		14	
5 – 6 years	18	79	16	88	17	82
7 – 9 years	15		20		17	
10 years or longer	33		36		34	
Total	100		100		100	

Table 4: Selected health characteristics, Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 (%)

	Cohort 1 (N=45)	Cohort 2 (N=26)	Total (N=71)
Report chronic physical health condition	78	100	86
Three or more chronic physical health conditions	43	65	51
Ever been treated for a mental health disorder	68	84	75
Used psychiatric unit last three months	7	17	10
Report IV drug use (ever)	69	77	72
Used IV drugs preceding four weeks	22	22	22
Health service use			
Used community health service last three months	46	23	38
Used emergency department last three months	40	46	42
Used hospital last three months	27	42	32
Currently takes prescribed medication	70	69	70

Table 5: Housing circumstances (%)

	Referral (N=71)	Baseline (N=71)	12 months (N=67)	24 months (N=57)
Housed	0	23	78	70
Homeless	100	70	12	28
Other	0	7	10	2
Total	100	100	100	100

For Brendan, moving into a new place was:

‘...a challenge ... It's a big step from homelessness into a home, especially when you've been in a chronic homeless situation ... So it is a big leap and it's not one that's easily managed without support. Fortunately, I've had that support from Street to Home’.

With assistance, Anthony was:

‘... managing okay. At first it was scary because I didn't know anyone and I was very lonely. It didn't feel like home at first, that's all. But once you start getting all material stuff it starts feeling like a home ... Yeah, I can handle it now’.

Table 6: General health compared to 12 months ago (%)

	Baseline (N=71)	12 months (N=67)
The same	25	18
Better	38	61
Worse	37	21
Total	100	100

Rick:

‘When you are doing it rough you don’t want to go to the doctors to find out there’s something wrong ... Now that I’m stable I’ve been going to the doctors and found out things are wrong. It’s a bit hard but it is good to know’.

Lamar:

‘I’m doing better. Like I’m sticking to my medication and stuff even though it’s not agreeing with me at the moment. I’ve got somewhere to stay where I can keep my medicine without having to worry about it getting pinched’.

Adrian:

‘I feel a lot better because I’m eating consistently and I noticed the difference straight away’.

Table 7: Amount of bodily pain last 4 weeks (%)

	Baseline (N=69)		12 months (N=67)		24 months (N=57)	
None	30		48		40	
Slight	22		22		25	
Moderate	26		10		18	
Quite a bit	15	48	12	30	10	35
Extreme	7		8		7	
Total	100		100		100	

HOUSING AND GOOD SUPPORT ARE IMPORTANT:

Jacques

‘The housing has definitely helped. Without the housing I don’t know where I’d be. I don’t know if I’d be alive’.

Penny

‘I feel complete now that I’ve got a place ... I know it’s my home and it gives me stability and self-confidence’.

Table 8: Frequency of alcohol use over past four weeks (%)

	Baseline (N=70)		12 months (N=67)		24 months (N=57)	
Daily use	21		13		10	
Every 2 to 6 days	10		8		18	
Once or twice every 1 to 2 wks	13	32	16	36	14	44
About once a month	9		12		12	
Have not drunk alcohol	47		51		46	
Total	100		100		100	

Mitchell:

‘When you are squatting you tend to drink a lot more to numb yourself from the reality of it all. Now that I have my own place ... I don’t drink so much. I am much more comfortable with myself’.

Josh:

‘I used to drink from morning til night when I was on the streets ... I had nothing else to do ... I don’t need to drink now (sober 6 weeks)’.

Eddie:

‘I started abusing alcohol to numb everything I was experiencing because it was so emotionally painful ... When I was homeless I didn’t see anything positive ... I really didn’t care about life ... Since having my own place I have regained some purpose in life’.

Table 8: People who have friends they talk to every week (%)

	Baseline (N=70)	12 months (N=67)	24 months (N=57)
Talk to or see friends every week	63	81	79
Do not talk to/see friends every week	37	19	21
Total	100	100	100

Table 9: Family acceptance (%)

	Baseline (N=62)	12 months (N=61)	24 months (N=40)
Feel accepted by their family	50	51	68
Do not feel accepted by their family	50	49	32
Total	100	100	100

Brendan:

‘Being homeless has done a lot of damage. I’ve always had my children around me. To suddenly have them ordered from you makes you angry ... Now my parental role is restored. My son is at my house now’.

Table 10: Support from significant others (%)

	Baseline	12 months	24 months
I have people I can confide in	56	67	86
There is someone who can always cheer me up when I feel down	53	60	79
When I need someone to help me out I can usually find someone	67	70	86

Table 11: Accepted by society (%)

	Baseline	12 months	24 months
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Feel accepted by society	61	67	70
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Playing a useful part in society	49	70	78
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What I do is valued by others	62	90	91
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Importance of practical support

Doug:

‘Well, they’ve helped me with how to manage my money, how to get on Centrepay, how to pay my bills, how to clean my house’.

Alex :

‘It’s been fantastic. I got assistance with orthopaedics, shoes, housing, everything. They put me in this great place, helped me set it up. It’s been awesome, absolutely unbelievable’.

Brendan:

‘The long-term support is vital ... It’s been really important in my case ... It was just what the doctor ordered ... I’ve never seen this approach before’.

Table 12: Satisfaction with MS2H staff, final interview (%)

	Agree/strongly agree*
Case workers are available when you need them	79
Case workers courteous and respectful	89
Case workers help sort out problems	84

*N=56

Main issue: finding housing

**Provision of housing needs to be included
in the model**