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Permanent supportive housing

A ten-year study of entries and exits

Cameron Parsell

Francisco Perales

Ella Kuskoff

Rose Stambe

Stefanie Plage



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Research Summary

Why was the research done?

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) provides quality secure and affordable housing, along with social and health support, to people at risk of and people experiencing homelessness. Just over ten years ago, Queensland's first PSH program was established. Drawing on analyses of tenancy data from the ten-year period between 2012 and 2022, this paper examines tenants' patterns of entry into and exits out of the program. The research aims to generate evidence on tenants' experiences of positive and negative PSH housing outcomes and identify what tenancy and support work could take place to help maximise positive tenant outcomes.

What were the key findings?

Our findings show that, of the 417 tenancies in the program over the ten-year period, the majority (75%) had positive housing outcomes, including sustaining their tenancies, exiting voluntarily with no breaches, or exiting voluntarily with any tenancy breaches remedied. The remaining tenancies (25%) met the criteria for negative outcomes, including exiting into homelessness, exiting involuntarily, and exiting with unresolved tenancy breaches. Tenants who received breaches for rent arrears and behaviour notices were more likely to exit their housing compared to those with no or other types of breaches.

What does this mean for policy and practice?

The two breaches associated with exiting the program offer opportunities for intervention by PSH organisations and practitioners to support positive outcomes. Preventing evictions for rental arrears is challenging as PSH aims to provide normalised housing that enables tenants to control their own income. We recommend practitioners continue to work with tenants to develop a process to respond to people who experience rental arrears in ways that both support tenants' financial autonomy and their ability to pay rent on time. Preventing breaches for behaviour is equally challenging, as these are frequently issued in response to tenants' concerns about the conduct of their neighbours. There may thus be opportunities for mediation and conflict-resolution interventions to address (some of) these behaviour issues. Finally, at the policy level, it is important that in instances where evictions/forced exits cannot be avoided, state governments have a clear and systematic approach to partnering with PSH providers to support this cohort of tenants to prevent them from exiting into homelessness.

Citation

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The authors

Cameron Parsell

The University of Queensland

Email: c.parsell@uq.edu.au

<https://social-science.uq.edu.au/profile/2741/cameron-parsell>

Francisco Perales

The University of Queensland

Email: f.perales@uq.edu.au

<https://social-science.uq.edu.au/profile/4553/francisco-perales-perez>

Ella Kuskoff

The University of Queensland

Email: e.kuskoff@uq.edu.au

<https://social-science.uq.edu.au/profile/3691/ella-kuskoff>

Twitter: @EllaKuskoff

Rose Stambe

The University of Queensland

Email: r.stambe@uq.edu.au

<https://social-science.uq.edu.au/profile/4313/rose-stambe>

Twitter: @RStambe

Stefanie Plage

The University of Queensland

Email: s.plage@uq.edu.au

<https://researchers.uq.edu.au/researcher/24801>

Twitter: @SPQueensland

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1. Introduction

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is a housing model that provides quality secure and affordable housing, in conjunction with various forms of health and social support, to people at risk of and experiencing homelessness. While there is diversity in PSH program design and delivery, they generally share several key aims and components. At a minimum, such programs provide housing which is: permanent; affordable; good quality; accompanied by tenancy and support services; and includes tailored case management for each tenant (Rog et al. 2014). PSH can operate as single-site programs, whereby all housing is located within a single building and often includes onsite concierge and security, or as scattered-site programs, whereby tenants are housed on various properties, often head-leased by the housing provider (Parsell, Peterson, & Culhane, 2017).

In 2012, Brisbane's first single-site PSH program (PSHP) was established. Located approximately one kilometre from Brisbane's Central Business District, PSHP aims to provide people with permanent exits from homelessness, as well as a source of affordable and long-term housing for people receiving low to moderate incomes. The first tenants moved into PSHP in July 2012, and the building was fully tenanted five months later in November. PSHP has 146 apartments, including 135 studios and 11 one-bedroom accessible apartments. Approximately half of the properties are allocated to people on the basis of homelessness and need for ongoing support to sustain a tenancy, and the other approximate half is allocated to people receiving low-to-moderate incomes. PSHP integrates tenancy services with a range of community, social, and health support services. The integrated model pursues the objective of enabling people to sustain tenancies after exiting homelessness, including people who have experienced chronic homelessness and rough sleeping.

PSHP is funded, delivered, and enabled through a collaborative model. The building is owned by the Queensland Government, and it was built with a combination of Commonwealth and Queensland Government funding. Similarly, the Commonwealth and Queensland Government funds the operation of the building through grants, Commonwealth Rent Assistance, and Specialist Homelessness Services funding. A community housing provider manages the 146 residential tenancies, in addition to two commercial properties located onsite. A local social services provider delivers onsite psychosocial and health support. Consistent with the principles outlined in the literature, the support and tenancy providers are distinct organisations, yet they form a close collaboration to deliver the PSH model. In addition to government funding, PSHP was supported with philanthropic contributions: a commercial company built PSHP on a 'cost' (not profit) basis, and other companies likewise provided 'cost' contributions to help with construction and fit out.

PSHP has now been running for ten years. Drawing on analyses of tenancy data from the ten-year period between 2012 and 2022, this paper presents findings on tenants' entries and exits from the program, and offers recommendations for PSHP and similar programs to help maximise positive tenant outcomes.

2. Current knowledge base and questions

The Queensland Government funded an initial evaluation of PSHP, conducted between 2014 and 2015, which provided important insights (Parsell et al. 2015). It found that for people who accessed PSHP because of homelessness: (i) the vast majority of people sustained a tenancy for more than 12 months; (ii) people reported improvements in health and healthcare access after 12 months; (iii) there was little change in self-reported drug and alcohol use after 12 months, and similarly little change in participation in education, training, and the labour market; and (iv) PSHP contributed to a cost-offset of approximately \$13,100 per tenant in the first year of their tenancy compared to the year prior when

they were homeless, owing to a significant reduction in service use when living at PSHP compared to when homeless (Parsell et al. 2017).

The evaluation results were significant, because they demonstrated that people with chronic experiences of homelessness who had not been able to access or sustain housing could indeed exit homelessness when provided PSH. The research showed that what is required to address homelessness is change to existing models of tenancy and support services, rather than assuming that people who are homeless can be changed to fit in with existing housing and support systems. The knowledge produced through the evaluation of PSHP also raised further questions and provoked conversation about how a desirable or undesirable tenancy outcome could be determined.

Informed by the existing knowledge base, this research is guided by four aims:

1. To generate evidence on how exiting PSH, which by definition assumes permanency, can be considered a positive or negative outcome.
2. To identify what tenancy and support work is conducted to sustain tenancies, especially for people who experience significant tenancy problems that might otherwise lead to eviction.
3. To identify what tenancy and support work could take place to avert negative outcomes, such as forced exits or exits into homelessness.
4. To examine whether the PSH model work for all tenants, or is better suited to some more than others.

Some of these aims have been engaged in a recent Australian study examining exits and tenancy sustainment at a PSH site based in Melbourne (Taylor and Johnson 2021). In this research, Taylor and Johnson (2021: 6) observed that sustaining a tenancy in PSH for people with experiences of chronic homelessness is a positive outcome, unless people “exit in obviously favourable circumstances”. They also note that, in PSH models where there is a mix of people being allocated tenancies because of past experiences of homelessness or low-to-moderate income, long tenancies are not necessarily an objective for low-to-moderate income tenants. Taylor and Johnson (2021) note that the literature draws a distinction between people who exit PSH into favourable opportunities elsewhere, or because of problems with their tenancy. They conclude that if people leave unfavourably, this is an indication that PSH “is not suited as long-term housing to everyone” (Taylor and Johnson 2021: 20).

The research at PSHP presented in this paper extends the existing knowledge base. First, we quantitatively examine the circumstances of people with both positive and negative outcomes. The research recognises that leaving housing is part of many people’s typical housing trajectory over the life course. Second, we draw on qualitative interviews with tenancy and support providers to explore their practices and identify what contributed to positive outcomes and what could be done differently to prevent negative outcomes. Our research works from the premise that negative outcomes are not necessarily indicators that PSH is not suited to some people. Rather, we argue and aim to demonstrate that negative outcomes can be averted through adjustments to selected tenancy and support practices.

3. Methods

Informed by the existing evidence for PSHP and the gaps in knowledge, this study addresses four research questions:

1. How long do tenants stay at PSHP?
2. How can tenancies at PSHP be characterised as resulting in a negative or positive outcome?

3. Which tenants tend to experience positive outcomes and which tend to experience negative outcomes?
4. What does PSHP do to promote positive tenant outcomes, and what could be done differently to ensure positive outcomes for all tenants?

This research draws on a mixed-method research design. First, the analyses presented in this paper make use of administrative, quantitative data collated and provided by the housing provider. The data captures details on each individual PSHP tenancy (n=417) since the initiative's inception in 2012.

These data include rich information on:

- the start and end date (if applicable) for each tenancy;
- the tenants' characteristics (e.g., their age, gender, and whether they identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as someone from a non-English-speaking background);
- their pre-tenancy circumstances (e.g., whether they were homeless or low-to-moderate income);
- their experiences and challenges during their tenancy (e.g., whether there were issues related to arrears, unit condition, or tenant behaviour);
- any interventions made by PSHP to sustain tenancies (e.g., issuing a Breach Notice, developing a Sustaining Tenancy Plan, and developing an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement); and
- the exit circumstances of those whose tenancies ended (e.g., the formal method of notice and the tenant's subsequent housing conditions).

These data were analysed using a mix of univariate descriptive statistics (e.g., measures of central tendency and dispersion); bivariate descriptive statistics (e.g., mean comparisons and cross-tabulations); Kaplan Meier survival curves (to characterise and visualise the timing of tenancy exits); and multivariable logistic regression models (to understand the factors underpinning positive and negative outcomes).

Second, we conducted targeted qualitative interviews with tenancy providers and support providers (n=3). Qualitative interviews augmented the quantitative analyses by examining the practices of professionals designing and delivering PSHP. The interviews sought to understand: (i) what tenancy and support staff did to contribute to tenancy sustainment; (ii) which practices were effective or ineffective at supporting tenants to sustain their tenancy; and (iii) how the tenancy and support provision model and practices could be enhanced to engage tenants experiencing challenges or who were at risk of eviction.

4. Findings

4.1 Entering PSHP

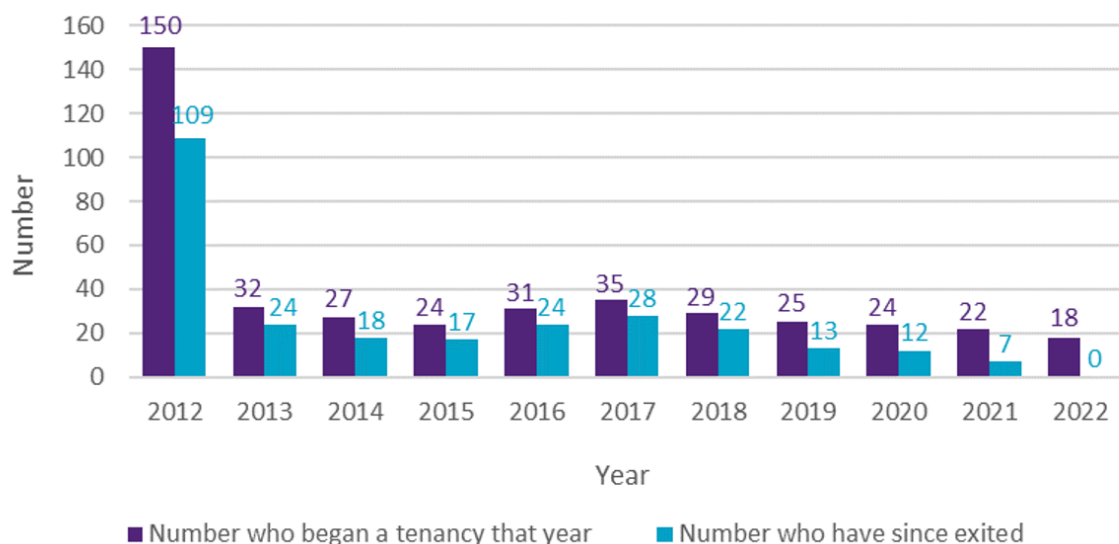
Tenancy allocations

As a model of PSH that adopts a tenancy mix, PSHP aims to allocate approximately 50% of tenancies to people who are experiencing rough sleeping (often chronic) and 50% of tenancies to people who receive low-to-moderate incomes who are not experiencing homelessness at the time of tenancy allocation. For people allocated due to experiencing homelessness, PSHP draws on a range of referral pathways. In a joint process between the housing provider and the support provider, people entering tenancies because of homelessness are assessed based on urgent need for housing (as assessed by

the Vulnerability Index Tool¹), and a need for supports that do not readily exist in standard social housing or housing provided by the market. A property at PSHP is thus allocated to a person sleeping rough when all other housing and accommodation options are deemed to be inaccessible and inappropriate. In this way, PSHP often provides tenancies to people who are not only homeless, but who have also been excluded from housing for many years.

Figure 1 presents descriptive statistics on the people who have entered and exited PSHP between 2012 and 2022. In this figure, the numbers for each year denote how many of the people who enter PSHP in that year have since exited (in any subsequent year up to 2022). For example, the numbers for 2012 indicate that, of the 150 people who started their tenancies in 2012, 109 have since exited. Overall, the results in Figure 1 demonstrate a consistent pattern of movement in and out of PSHP. We can see that PSHP achieved full capacity in the opening year, 2012. Beyond the first year, the data shows a similar number of people entering each year. For example, between 2013 and 2021 (the last year for which we have 12 months of data), an average of 28 people entered PSHP each year, with a range of 22 to 35.

Figure 1. Tenancy entries and exits by year

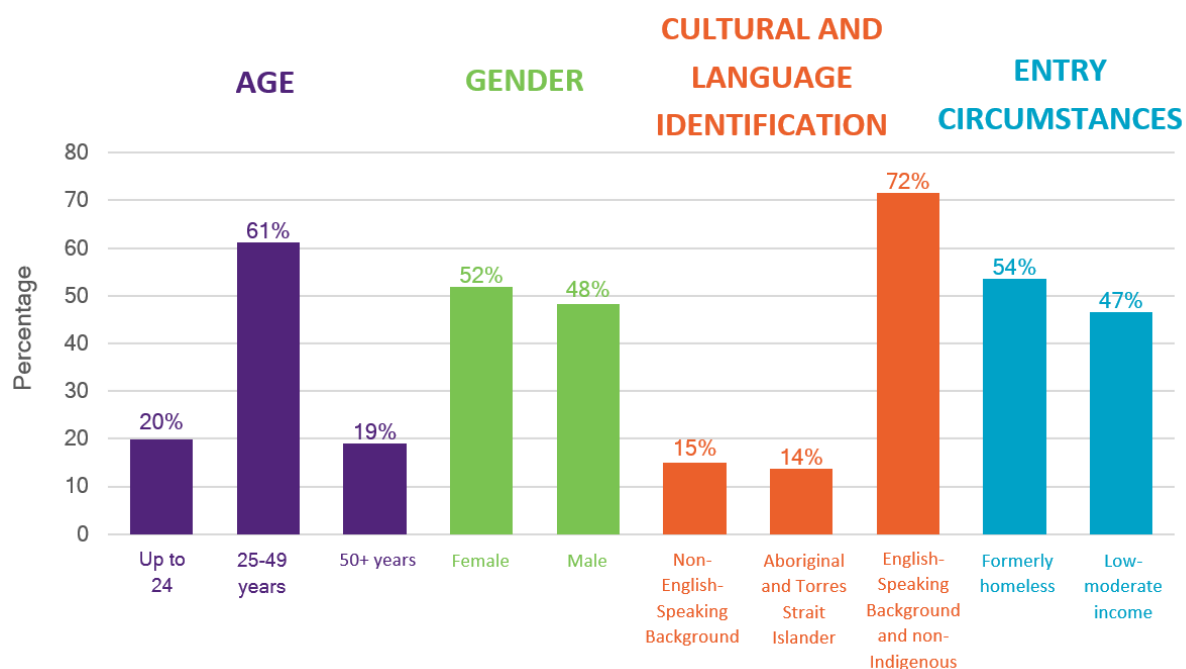


Again drawing on data from the ten years between 2012 and 2022, Figure 2 breaks the data down to look at tenancy allocations over ten years according to age, gender, identification as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as someone from a non-English-speaking background, and entry circumstances. Figure 2 shows that the majority of tenancies are allocated to people aged 25-49 years (61%), with a relatively equal minority allocated to tenants aged up to 24 years (20%) and over 50 years (19%). A slightly greater percentage of tenancies are allocated to women (52%) compared to men (48%). In terms of cultural and language identification, tenants who are non-Indigenous and from English-speaking backgrounds are more likely to be allocated a tenancy (72%) compared to those from non-English speaking backgrounds (15%) and those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

¹ The Vulnerability Index Tool is an assessment tool designed to assist frontline workers who work with homeless clients to identify service needs and prioritise delivery of services to clients who are at the highest risk. The Tool is designed to inform case management and improve clients’ long-term housing stability outcomes (Community Solutions 2015).

(14%). A slightly greater percentage of tenancies are allocated to tenants who are formerly homeless (people sleeping rough) (54%) compared to those with low-to-moderate incomes (46%).

Figure 2. Tenancy allocations by tenant characteristics



Tenancy duration, who stays, and who leaves

The administrative data at hand also allows us to conduct analyses on the typical duration of tenancies. The figures below summarise the distribution of all PSHP tenancy durations, separating these by whether they have ended or not. These durations are visualised using kernel density plots, a technique that enables determining the most typical values (i.e., durations) in the data, and complemented by an array of descriptive statistics (mean, median, minimum, maximum).

Figure 3 shows a kernel density plot summarising the duration of those tenancies that are ongoing (i.e., not yet ended). The distribution displayed in the graph indicates that most ongoing tenancies have been going for 1 to 3 years or 8 to 10 years. The mean duration of ongoing tenancies is 2,112 days (i.e., nearly 6 years), while the median duration is similar (2,177 days, or approx. 6 years). Of ongoing tenancies, the shortest at the time of data collection was less than two weeks (11 days) and the longest was 3,794 days (or just over 10 years).

Figure 4 shows a kernel density plot summarising the duration of tenancies that have ended. The distribution displayed in the graph indicates that most tenancies that have ended lasted for around 1 year. The mean duration of ended tenancies is 836 days (i.e., just over 2 years), while the median duration is 611 days (i.e., approx. 1.5 years). Of ended tenancies, the shortest at the time of data collection was just over 1 month (39 days) and the longest was 3,659 days (about 10 years).

Figure 3. Distributions of ongoing tenancy durations

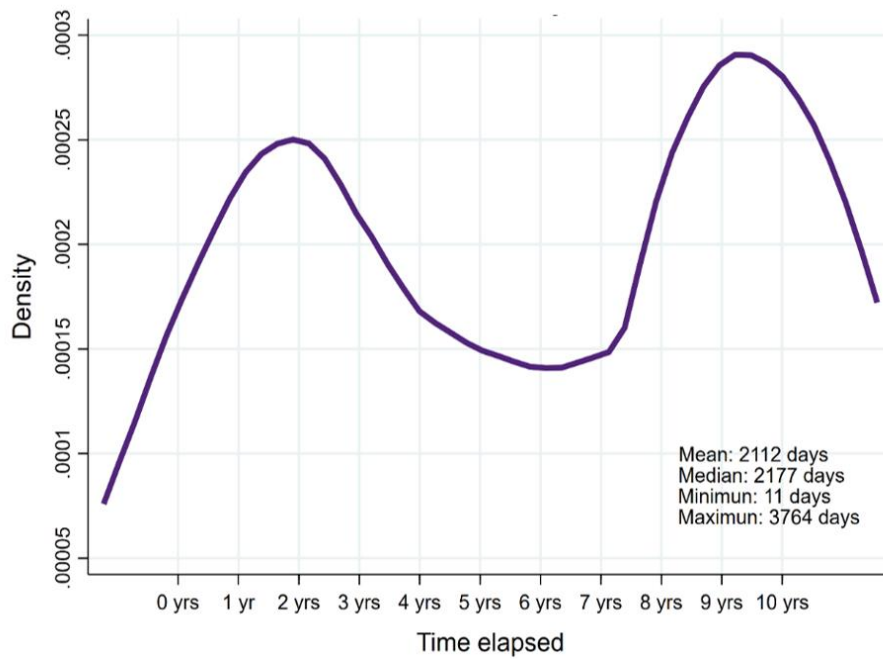
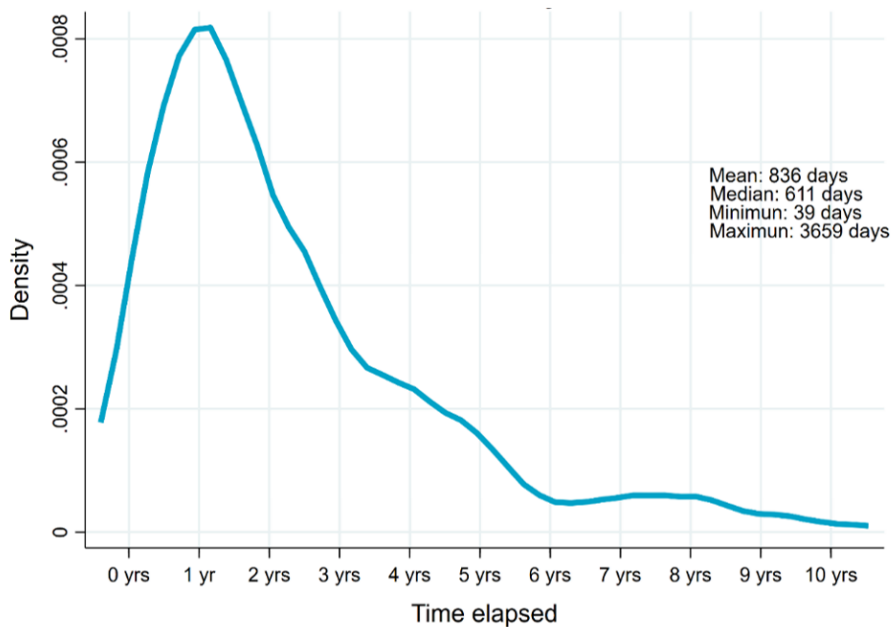


Figure 4. Distributions of ended tenancy durations

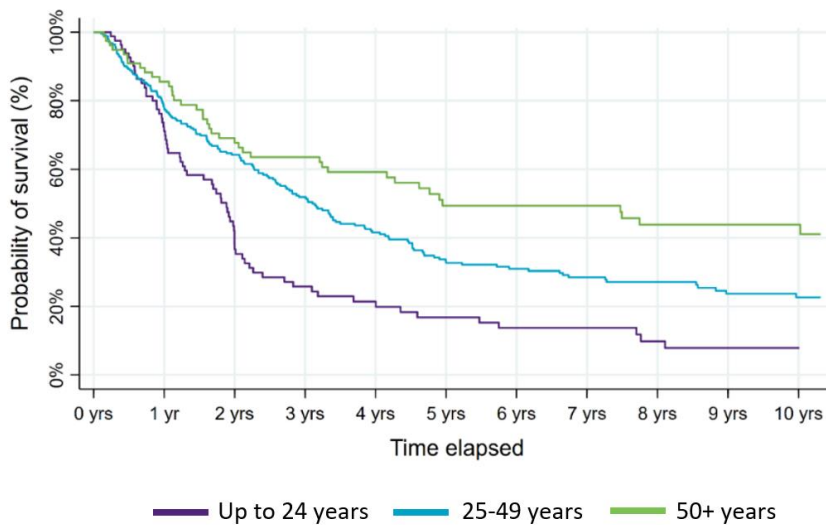


To gain a better understanding of the duration of PSHP tenancies, we applied a series of Kaplan-Meier survival curves. These longitudinal analyses allow us to compare tenancy durations and the timing of exits across different groups, on the basis of age, gender, pre-entry housing circumstances, or cultural or language identification. In the resulting plots shown below, the Y (i.e., vertical) axis represents the % of individuals who remained housed at PSHP, while the X (i.e., horizontal) axis represents the time

elapsed since their entry date. Thus, steeper downward drops in the graph denote a higher likelihood to exit a tenancy.

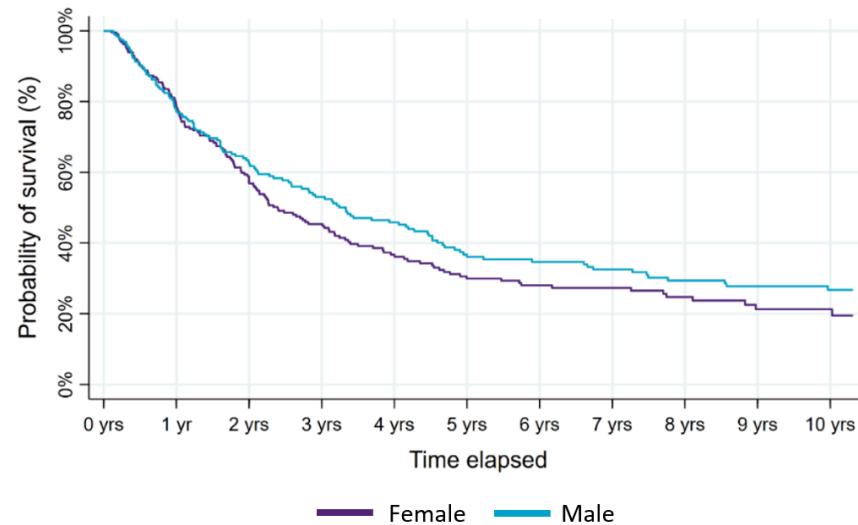
The first of these graphs, Figure 5, compares the duration of tenancies across cohorts defined by their age at entry into their PSHP tenancies. The results reveal a greater likelihood to leave tenancies early amongst younger cohorts (particularly those aged under 24 years), and a lower likelihood amongst those aged over 50 years. For example, at 5 years from the beginning of the tenancy, the percentage of individuals who remained housed at PSHP was 17% for those aged under 24 years, 33% for those aged 25-49 years, and 49% for those aged over 50 years.

Figure 5. Survival rate by tenancy entry



The second of these graphs, Figure 6, compares the duration of tenancies by gender. The results reveal a greater likelihood to leave tenancies early amongst women, and a lower likelihood amongst men. For example, at 3 years from the beginning of the tenancy, the percentage of women who maintained their tenancies was 44%, compared to 53% of men.

Figure 6. Survival rate by gender at tenancy entry



The next graph, Figure 7, compares the duration of tenancies across cohorts defined by whether people identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as coming from a non-English-speaking background. The results reveal that, overall, tenants who do not identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as coming from a non-English-speaking background face a greater likelihood of leaving their tenancies early compared to those who do identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as someone from a non-English-speaking background. Tenants who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and tenants who identify as coming from a non-English-speaking background face similar survival rates for the first 4 years. For example, at 6 years from the beginning of the tenancy, the percentage of individuals who remained housed at PSHP was 44% for those who identify as coming from a non-English-speaking background, 31% for those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and 28% for those who identify as neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander nor non-English-speaking background.

Figure 7. Survival rate by cultural and language identification at tenancy entry

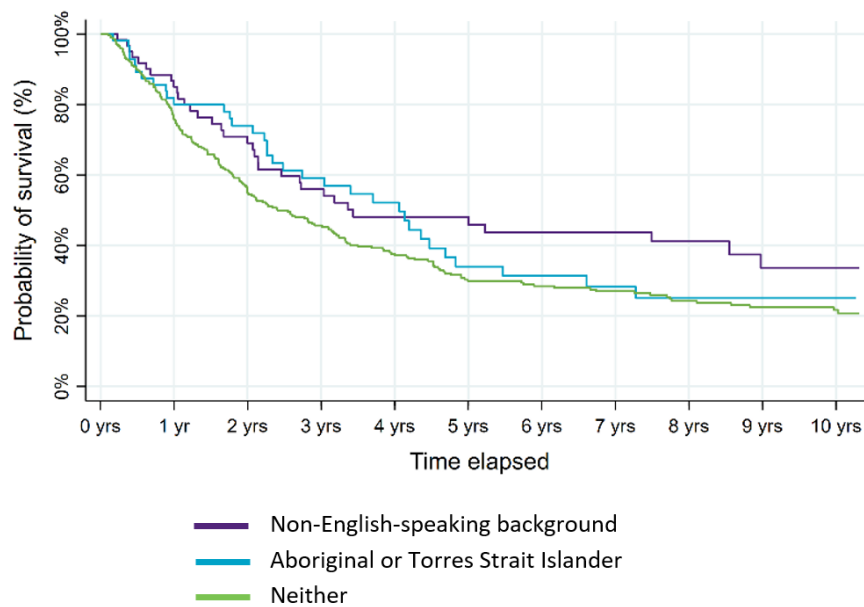
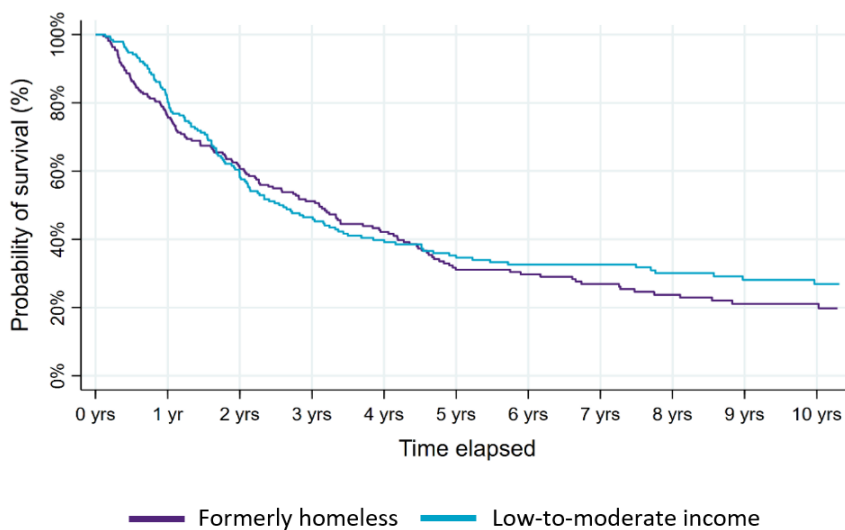


Figure 8. Survival rate by circumstances at tenancy entry



The next graph, Figure 8, compares the duration of tenancies across cohorts defined by their circumstances at tenancy entry (i.e., homeless or low-to-moderate income). The results reveal similar trajectories for both cohorts, with low-to-moderate income tenants being more likely to maintain their tenancies in the long term. For example, at 7 years from the beginning of the tenancy, the percentage of formerly homeless individuals who remained housed in the PSHP was 27%, compared to 33% for tenants with a low-to-moderate income.

Together, these analyses show that the tenancy durations of people living in PSHP are far from uniform. Tenants' length of stay varied greatly, and factors such as demographic characteristics and entry circumstances were associated with their likelihood of exiting PSHP, as well as the timing of their exits. In the following section, we explore the nature of the tenancies themselves, including the tenancy difficulties people faced, how tenants were supported to maintain their tenancies, and where tenants exited to.

4.2 The nature of PSH tenancies

Issuing breaches

Breaches, formally referred to as 'Notice to remedy breach' (Form 11), are a formal mechanism from the Residential Tenancy Act. Breaches are issued when the tenancy manager believes that the tenant is non-compliant with the conditions of their tenancy agreement as outlined in the Residential Tenancy Act. If a tenant is issued a breach, they are required to address the problem in a timeframe specified by the housing provider.

Breaches are issued to tenants for three reasons:

- **Rental arrears breach:** A tenant falls into rental arrears when they fail to pay their rent by the due date. If a tenant falls into rental arrears by more than 7 days, they are issued with a Notice to Remedy Breach (Common Ground Queensland 2020).
- **Unit condition issues:** A tenant may be issued with a Notice to Remedy Breach when the condition of their unit fails to uphold certain health and safety standards.
- **Behaviour notices:** Dangerous, illegal, or antisocial behaviours that interfere with staff or other residents' safety, privacy, or peace can lead to a Notice to Remedy Breach (Common Ground Queensland 2019).

We analysed the data to identify: (i) the percentage of all tenants who received any type of breach; (ii) the percentage of tenants who received each specific type of breach; and (iii) how this varied between tenants who remained housed at PSHP versus those who exited.

Figure 9 shows the percentage of tenants who have ever received any type of breach notice. As the graph demonstrates, a majority of tenants (60%) have never been issued with a breach notice.

Figure 9. Tenants with any type of breach notice

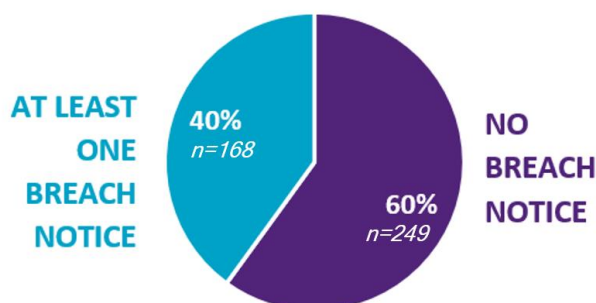
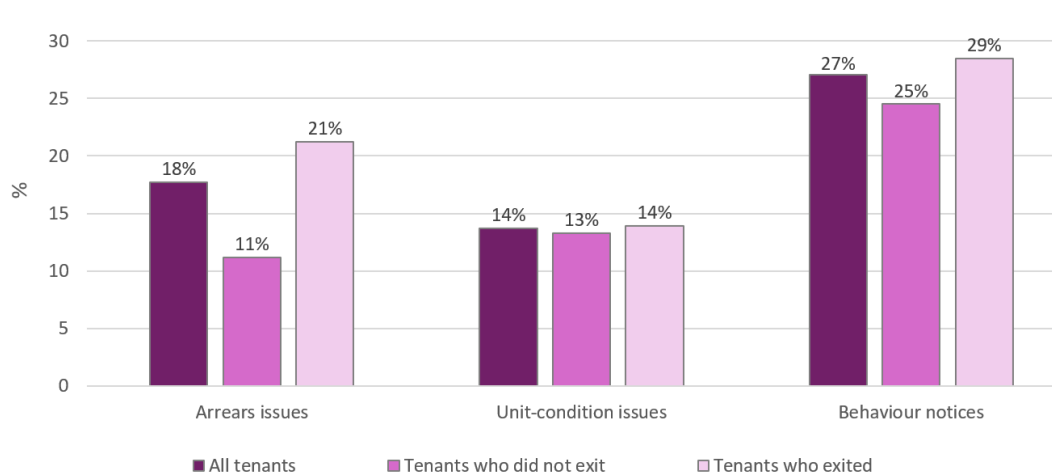


Figure 10 provides a more in-depth look at the 40% of tenants who have received a breach notice by showing which types of breaches occurred and their distribution across all tenants, tenants who maintained their tenancies, and tenants who exited. As the figure shows, the most common tenancy breach involved in exiting is arrears issues. A much higher percentage of exiting tenants had breaches for rent arrears (21%) compared to tenants who stayed (11%). A slightly higher percentage of exiting tenants (29%) also had behaviour notices compared to tenants who stayed (25%). Receiving a breach for unit-condition issues, on the other hand, was not strongly associated with exiting PSHP (13% of tenants who stayed and 14% of tenants who exited received a breach for unit condition issues).

Figure 10. Type of tenancy breaches



It is important here to pause and reflect upon what follows the issuing of a breach. In particular, it is important to consider how a breach can be a mechanism to engage support to address the tenancy problem that the breach pertains to. Given that PSHP aims to support people who exit rough sleeping to make sustainable exits from homelessness, it is reasonable to ask what actions are taken when a breach is issued to support a tenant to address the identified problems.

Figure 11. Actions taken to remedy breaches

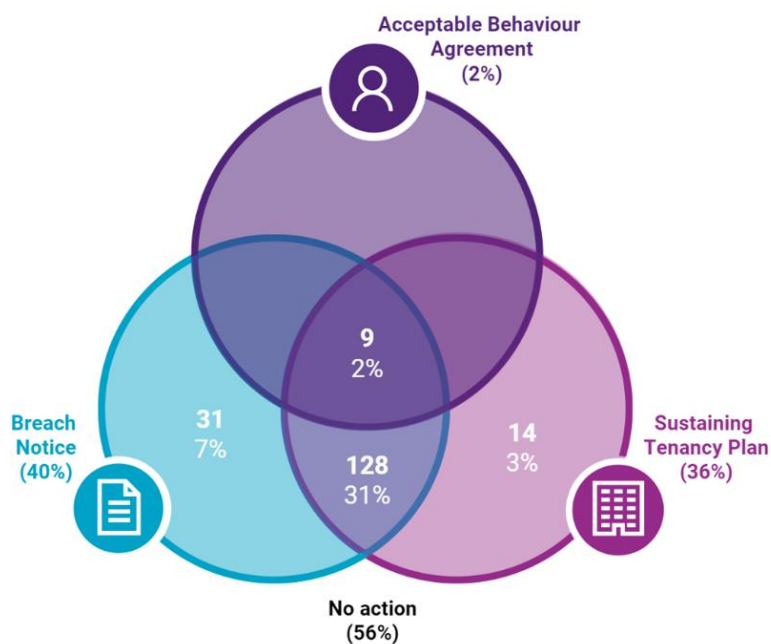


Figure 11 presents the formal mechanisms invoked to support tenants to rectify breaches. In particular, Figure 11 shows that many tenants of PSHP received a breach (40% of all tenants). Further analyses shows that those who entered after homelessness were more likely to receive a breach (57%) than those who entered because of low-to-moderate income (22%). We found that a breach for rental arrears is associated with exiting, and, to a lesser extent, so is receiving a unit-condition breach. Importantly, Figure 11 also demonstrates that breaches were an impetus for support, particularly through engaging tenants in a Sustaining Tenancy Plan. A total of 82% of tenants who received a breach were engaged with a Sustaining Tenancy Plan, with a further 5% of tenants who received a breach also being engaged in an acceptable behaviour agreement.

Responding to breaches

The understanding of breaches from tenancy and support staff at PSHP dovetail with this quantitative data. Findings from our qualitative interviews corroborate that the primary means of assisting tenants in addressing issues identified through a breach is a Sustaining Tenancy Plan². A Sustaining Tenancy Plan can be instigated by either the tenancy or support provider, and it can be initiated either once a breach has been issued or prior to a breach. A support provider representative described it as:

A Sustaining Tenancy Plan [is implemented] when there is an issued identified by [the housing or support provider], often via feedback from tenants, and we feel three parties need to work on.

The support provider representative went on to say that the Sustaining Tenancy Plan:

... should be the absolute core of everything we do as sustaining tenancies is our priority.

In practice, a Sustaining Tenancy Plan assumes many forms in terms of length and nature of engagement. In the first instance, the plan involves the support provider meeting with the tenant to discuss the concerns. This discussion may lead to long-term work between the support provider, the tenant, and even external services, such as mental-health professionals. PSHP practitioners described working with the nuances of individual situations, behaviours, and contexts to devise individualised plans to implement strategies and activate supports to encourage behavioural change. Tenant engagement with PSHP staff is at the core of a Sustaining Tenancy Plan. However, on some occasions, tenants do not engage. Indeed, a the support provider practitioner noted that tenants often do not engage, suggesting:

We feel, broadly speaking the more likely you are to have challenging/anti-social behaviours the less likely you are to engage in the process.

Tenants may not, for example, respond to requests to meet to talk about establishing a Sustaining Tenancy Plan. In some rare circumstances, a Sustaining Tenancy Plan is opened and operationalised in the absence of the relevant tenant. Moreover, much of the support work provided by the support provider takes place outside of formal Sustaining Tenancy Plans.

There is an important reason why Sustaining Tenancy Plans can be initiated even when a tenant does not participate. PSHP aims to permanently end homelessness for people, and thus the tenancy and

² A Sustaining Tenancy Plan is the formal mechanism to initiate a type of intervention or support to disrupt the problems that are placing a tenancy at risk. Given that a breach can be the trigger toward formal eviction proceedings at QCAT (Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal), a Sustaining Tenancy Plan ultimately aims to reduce the likelihood of eviction.

support providers are committed to doing whatever is within their capacities to avoid tenants being evicted. This includes work to sustain a tenancy through addressing problems placing a tenancy at risk, even when the tenant is not a party to the Sustaining Tenancy Plan. Sometimes tenants do not understand the nature of the tenancy problem; indeed they may not accept that a tenancy problem exists, and thus they may be unwilling to engage in a Sustaining Tenancy Plan.

Corroborating our quantitative findings, both the support and housing provider practitioners described two core problems that result in breaches and risks of tenancy issues, and if left unresolved, the risk of eviction. These are rental arrears and behaviour issues. Rental arrears are the clearest problems to identify and evidence. Our interview participants explained that when rental arrears occur, it is often following a tenant removing the automated rent deduction from their income (Centrepay through the Australian Government, Services Australia). This is the clearest breach to evidence, in that there is an objective amount of rent due on an objectively defined date. Similarly, there is an objectively measured sum of money that is required to be recovered. Although there are likely to be extremely complex issues that might underpin the payment of rent, such as trauma and substance use, it is a straightforward process to identify the problem and set up a plan to pay off the debt.

Behaviour issues, particularly those behaviours that result in a breach (Behaviour Notice, see Figure 10), are less clear. There is often a disagreement between the tenant and the PSHP practitioners about whether a behaviour problem has occurred, and thus disagreement about what – if anything – needs to change to remedy the problem. Both the support and the housing provider practitioners argued that behaviour issues are primarily about a tenant's behaviour negatively impacting upon another tenant (or multiple tenants). This negative impact is described as one tenant making other tenants feel fearful or intimidated, especially through violence or threats of violence. It is the housing provider that issues the breach, but the support provider representative pointed out that it is mostly other tenants that will make formal complaints about a tenants' behaviour that provokes the housing provider issuing a breach for behaviour issues.

A support provider practitioner explained that staff at PSHP often view tenant behaviour differently than do tenants. The practitioner explained that, as PSHP professionals, they are trained and paid to work with people experiencing problems that may place tenancies at risk, but for tenants, the behaviour of their neighbours can be annoying, or even threatening. The support provider practitioner explained:

Relatively minor things such as verbal outbursts are little concern to us. But a neighbour does not have any of that context and may view the behaviour as a major impact on their life and pressure/feedback the housing provider to take action.

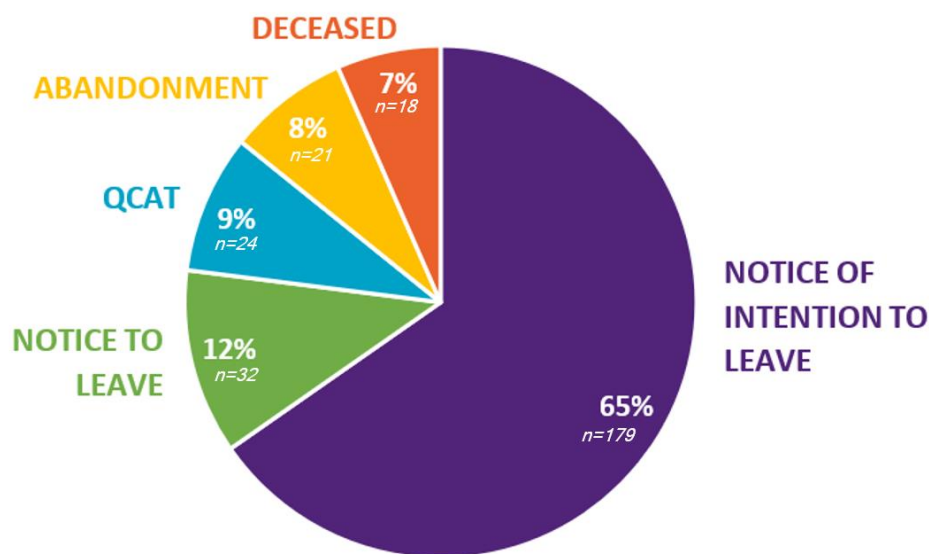
Behaviour issues and associated breaches underly the complexity of the work undertaken at PSHP to sustain tenancies. The above quote illustrates the importance of support and tenancy staff helping tenants understand the perspectives and experiences of the tenant cohort, alongside understanding the tenancy expectations. Supporting tenants to change behaviours that cause other tenants to be fearful is challenging. Ideally, according to PSHP practitioners, intervention, such as a Sustaining Tenancy Plan should be activated prior to issuing a breach for behavioural issues to reduce the shame and impact of punitive measures. PSHP are committed to preventing evictions, but on some occasions breaches for behaviour problems – which may ultimately lead to an eviction – may be the necessary means required to ensure other tenants' right to a safe and secure environment. In this context, Sustaining Tenancy Plans are critical to realising PSHP objectives. The large proportion of tenancies

that are characterised as positive outcomes in the next section give a strong sense to the work that is conducted through Sustaining Tenancy Plans.

Exits: The why and the where

We now take a closer look at the data on exits. We focus on the reason why people exit PSHP, and their pathways upon exit. As part of the ending to a tenancy, the housing provider records the reason for exit from a selection of criteria (as shown in Figure 12, numbers rounded and do not add to 100%). Further, most people who exit provide information about the housing they will access after PSHP. However, this does not happen in all circumstances, particularly if people abandon their property.

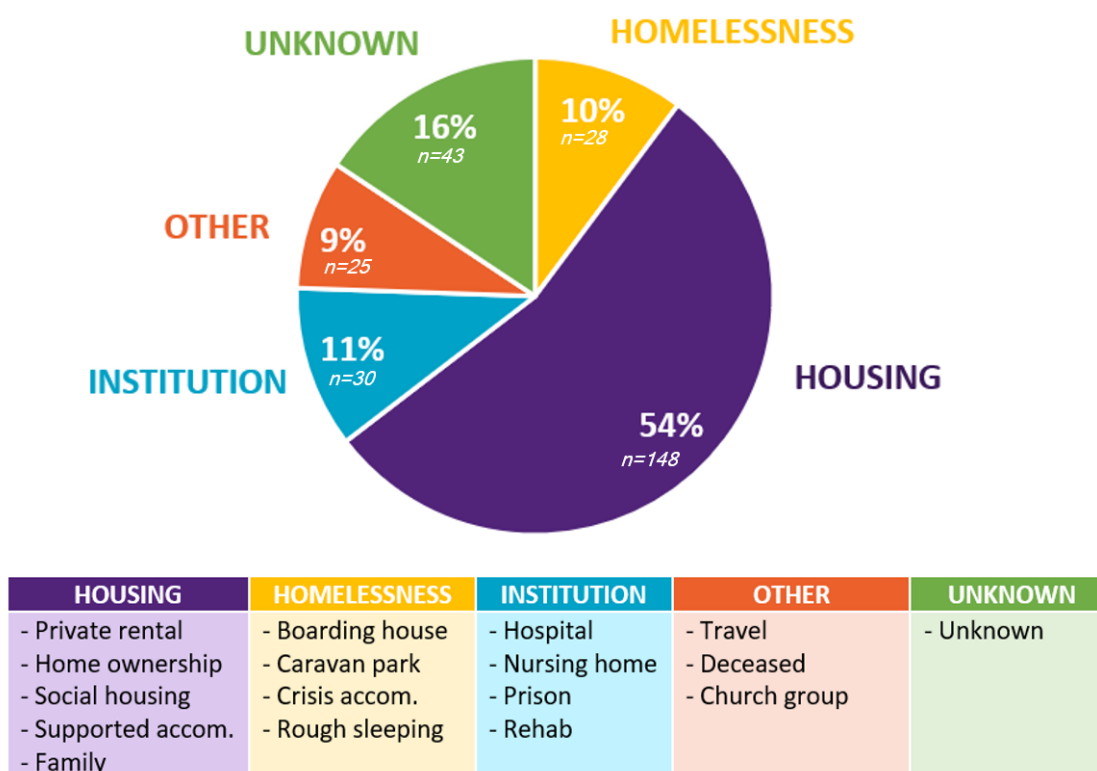
Figure 12. Reason for exit



At face value, Figure 12 suggests that of the 274 people who have exited PSHP, the majority, some 65%, chose to leave (notice of intention). A relatively small percentage of people – 9% – were formally evicted through QCAT or left under overtly negative circumstances through a notice to leave issued by the housing provider (12%). A small but non-insignificant proportion abandoned their property (9%). From the data on reasons for exit, it is not possible to conclusively draw assertions, but it can be provisionally assumed that abandonment, for some tenants at least, is associated with tenancy problems, including a limited understand of tenancy obligations and rights. Thus, through QCAT, notice to leave, or abandonment, it is probable that some 29% of tenants who exited did so under unfavourable circumstances.

Figure 13 presents data that addresses the question of where people exited upon leaving PSHP. Based on the best data available, we can observe that most tenants, approximately 54%, exited PSHP and gained other housing. A small proportion, about 10%, exited into homelessness. These two exit pathways, housing or homelessness, clearly indicate positive or negative outcomes. Yet there is a sizeable number of people for whom we cannot readily infer positive or negative outcomes based on their exit pathways. In addition to the 16% of people without exit data, it is not possible to conclude whether an institution outcome represents a positive or negative tenancy. Even if people exit to prison, this may be a custodial outcome that has no relationship to their housing.

Figure 13. Exit pathways



Moving to other institutions, such as nursing homes and health facilities, also provides insufficient detail to disentangle positive from negative outcomes. In the next section, we address these data gaps by providing a more nuanced picture of how positive and negative tenancies can be characterised with the available data, and identifying who was more likely to achieve them.

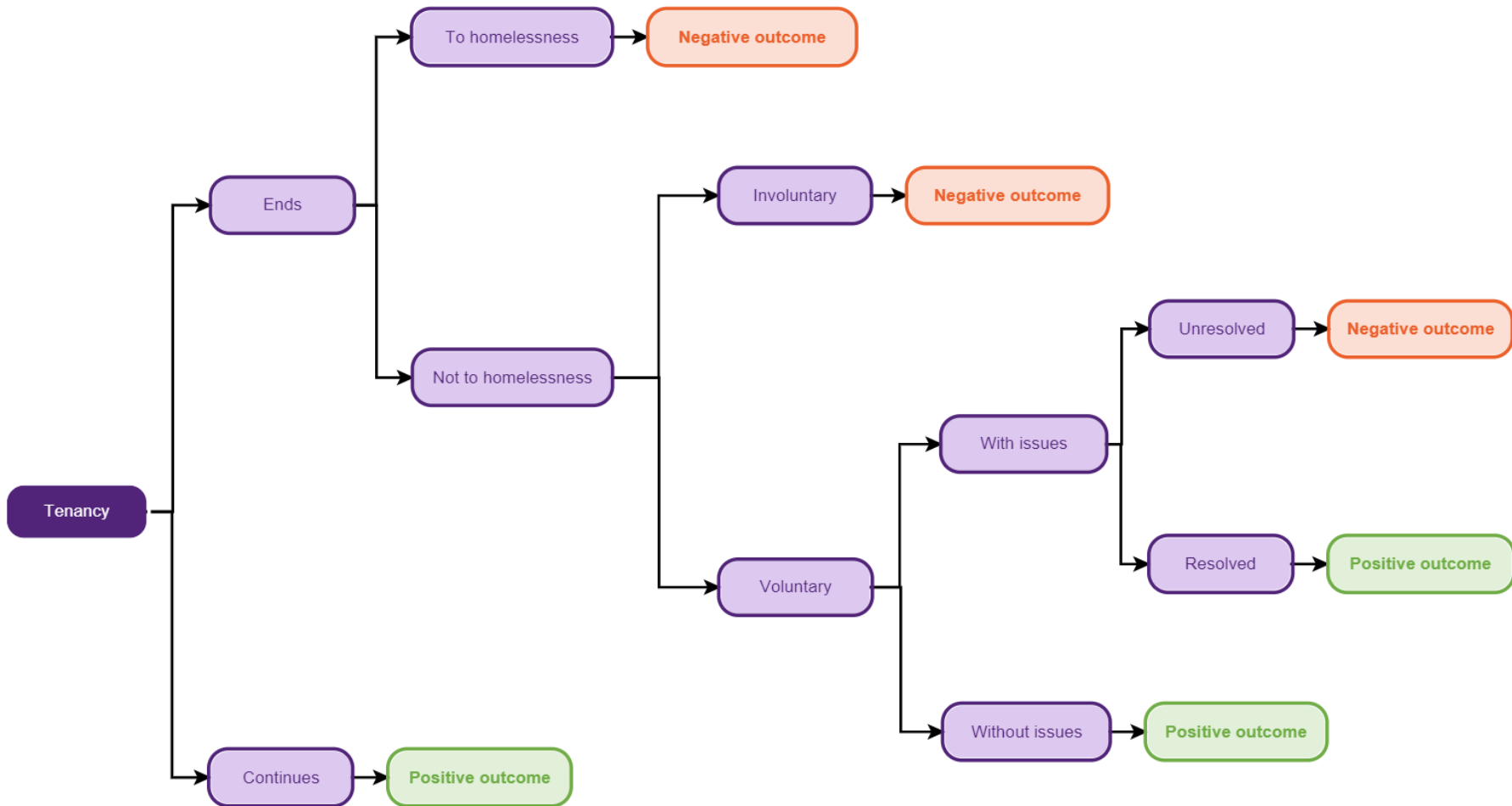
4.3 Positive and negative outcomes

An outcomes framework

We can reasonably assume that a negative outcome occurs when someone exits PSHP (or any form of housing) through a formal eviction mandated by the courts or leaves PSHP and enters homelessness. However, we have to this point not engaged in analysis or interpretation on what constitutes a positive or negative outcome for tenants at PSHP. It is not the case that people exiting PSHP always equates to a negative outcome. Nor is it the case that tenants’ reasons for leaving, as presented in the previous section, are indicative of a positive or negative outcome. Rather, to better determine a positive or negative outcome, we can couple data on the reasons why people exit with additional information, such as the housing or homelessness status of people upon exit, along with information about whether breaches were remedied. Examining multiple data sources recognises that some tenants may experience an undesirable exit – such as receiving unremedied breaches – even though they are not formally evicted. Our analysis is likewise attuned to the work of both the support and housing provider practitioners to assist people sustain tenancies in light of challenges.

To develop a framework to distinguish between positive and negative outcomes, we reviewed the literature and drew on the experiences of professionals working at PSHP. As shown in **Figure 14**, we identified three pathways through which a tenant can experience a negative outcome, and three pathways through which a tenant can experience a positive outcome.

Figure 14. Positive and negative outcome framework



We conceptualise negative outcomes to include the end of a tenancy where a person: (i) enters homelessness, (ii) involuntarily leaves their tenancy, such that the tenancy provider initiates the exit process (issuing a Notice to Leave or progressing a QCAT process), or (iii) leaves with unresolved breaches (i.e., breaches that have not been remedied in the specified time-frame). The latter is important, as it takes account of what might otherwise appear as a voluntary and thus positive outcome. Yet unresolved breaches are likely to indicate a negative outcome, whereby a person is not leaving PSHP of their own volition or experienced challenges that the PSH supports could not remedy. Positive outcomes are conceptualised as including a person who (i) does not exit PSHP, (ii) exits voluntarily, not to homelessness, and without any breaches, or (iii) exits voluntarily, not to homelessness, and with any breaches remedied. The support provider representatives explained that positive outcomes where people leave PSHP may be part of people forming new relationships, re-connecting with culture, child birth, and engaging with new employment opportunities. Although we do not have the quantitative data to substantiate the prevalence or nature, positive exist may be part of people's successful life transitions.

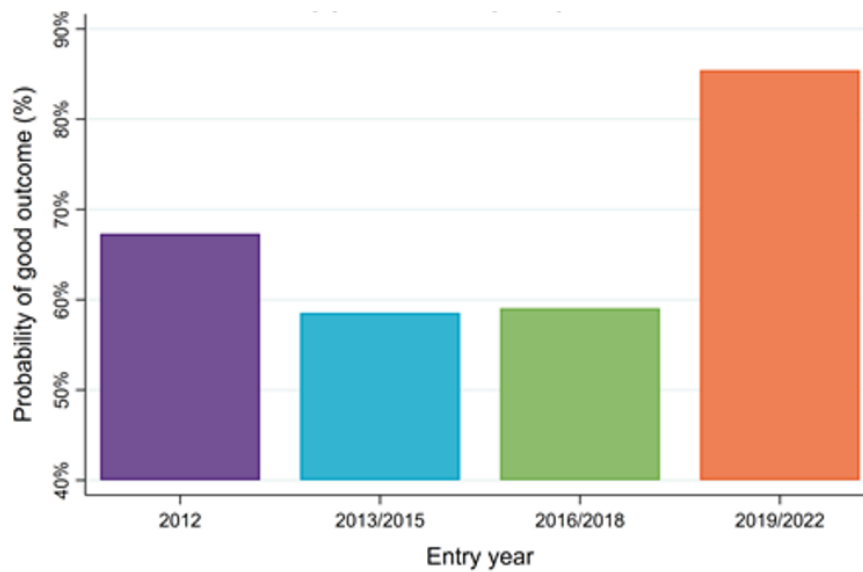
Probabilities of positive and negative outcomes

Having developed a conceptual a model for identifying positive outcomes and negative outcomes within the context of PSHP tenancies, here we present data to illustrate the probability of tenants experiencing either outcome. Descriptive statistics indicated that, of the 417 tenancies at PSHP over the ten-year period, the majority could be characterised as involving a positive outcome. Specifically, 312 tenancies – or approximately 75% – meet the criteria for a positive outcome, whereas 105 tenancies – or approximately 25% – can be defined as involving negative outcomes. Of the 312 positive outcomes, 30 exited voluntarily with tenancy issues resolved, 139 exited voluntarily with no breaches recorded, and 143 did not exit. Of the 105 that were characterised as negative outcomes, 28 exited into homelessness, 60 exited involuntarily whereby tenancy manager initiated exit, and 17 exited with unresolved breaches.

To better understand the factors promoting (or deterring) positive vs. negative outcomes, we fitted a multivariable logistic regression model. In this model, the outcome variable is the indicator of a positive outcome (value 1), compared to a negative outcome (value 0) described above. The explanatory variables are five characteristics of tenants, measured at the time of tenancy entry: entry year, age group, gender, identification as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as someone from a non-English-speaking background, and pre-tenancy housing circumstances. The results of these logistic regression models are more insightful than those of descriptive statistics, as the model coefficients yield the independent effects of each of the explanatory variables on the outcome – net of the value of the other explanatory variables. This multivariable approach minimises the risk of confounding and increases the validity and robustness of the results and, as such, the conclusions drawn from them. To ease the interpretation of the regression models, we transformed the key results into marginal predicted probabilities and presented them graphically in Figures 15 to 19. In these figures, the Y (i.e., vertical) axis gives the predicted probability of a positive outcome amongst individuals in the cohorts captured within the bars represented in the X (i.e., horizontal) axis.

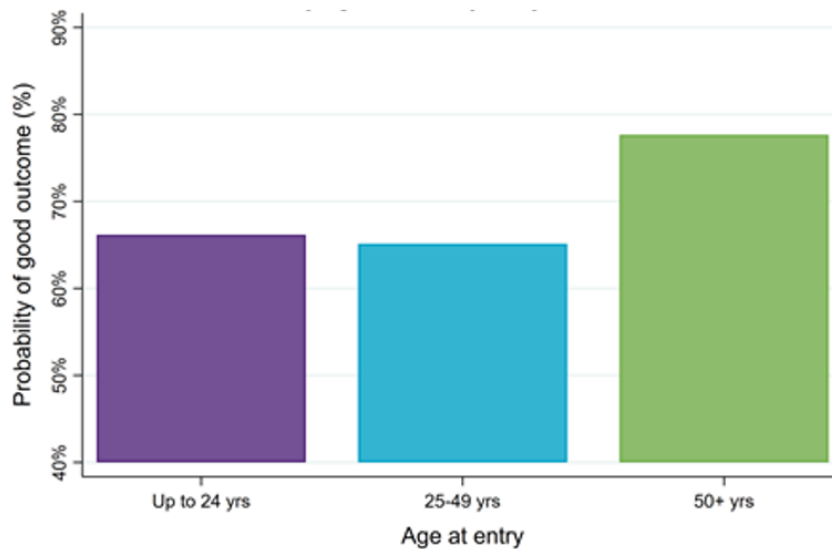
The first of these figures, Figure 15, compares the predicted probability of experiencing a positive outcome across individuals who were housed in different years. The results indicate that, all else being equal, those who began their tenancies in years 2019-2022 were particularly likely to experience a positive outcome (87%), followed by those who began their tenancies in year 2012 (76%) and, finally, those who began in years 2013-2015 (71%) or 2016-2018 (65%).

Figure 15. Probability of a positive outcome by year of tenancy entry



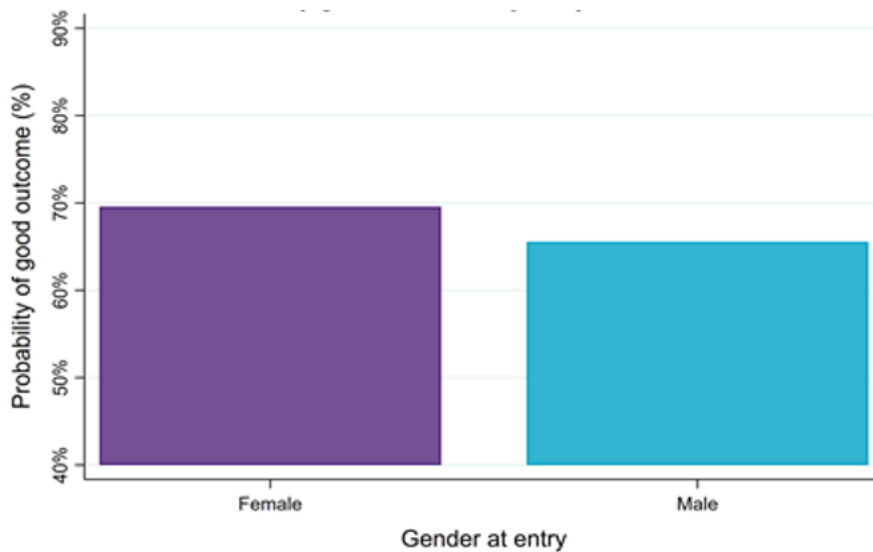
The second of these figures, Figure 16, compares the predicted probability of experiencing a positive tenancy outcome across individuals in different age groups. The results indicate that, all else being equal, those who are aged over 50 years at tenancy entry were particularly likely to experience a positive outcome (81%), with those aged up to 24 years (78%) and those aged 25-49 years (72%) being relatively less likely to do so.

Figure 16. Probability of a positive outcome by age at tenancy entry



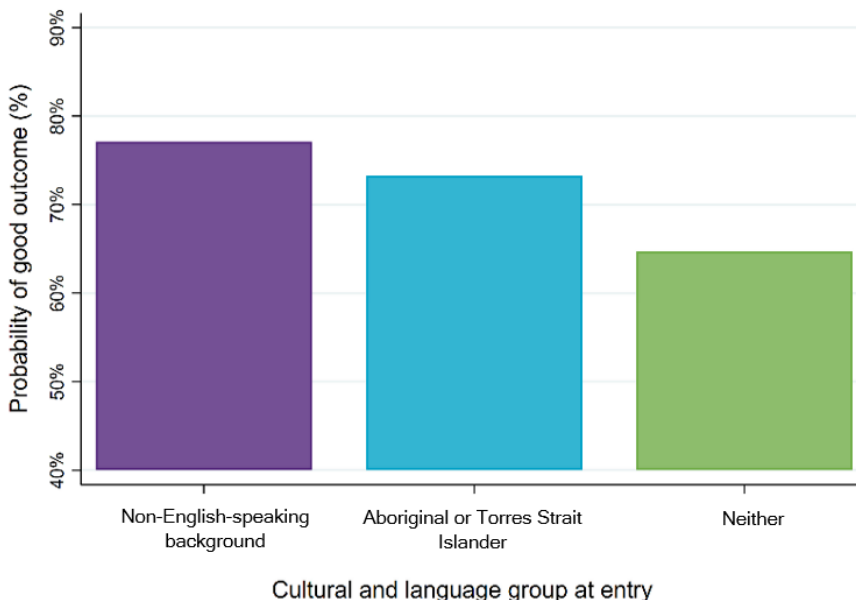
The third of these figures, Figure 17, compares the predicted probability of experiencing a positive outcome according to tenants' gender. The results indicate that, all else being equal, women (79%) are more likely to experience a positive outcome compared to men (70%).

Figure 17. Probability of a positive outcome by gender at tenancy entry



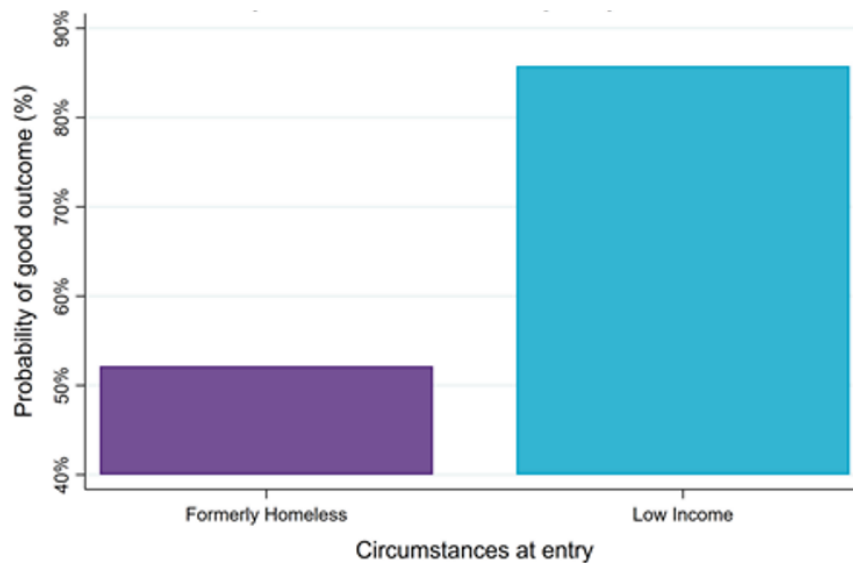
Next, Figure 18 compares the predicted probability of experiencing a positive outcome across individuals who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as someone from a non-English-speaking background and those who identify as neither. All else being equal, the results demonstrate that tenants who identify as coming from a non-English-speaking background are the most likely to experience a positive outcome (81%), followed by those identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (80%) and those who identify as neither (73%).

Figure 18. Probability of a positive outcome by cultural and language identification at tenancy entry



Last, Figure 19, shows the predicted probability of experiencing a positive outcome by tenants' housing circumstances at tenancy entry. All else being equal, the results indicate that tenants with a low to moderate income (92%) exhibit a substantially greater likelihood of experiencing a positive outcome compared to people who entered PSHP because of homelessness (61%).

Figure 19. Probability of a positive outcome by circumstances at tenancy entry



5. Recommendations

What could be done differently? Addressing this question first requires acknowledging that PSHP is indeed achieving its intended outcomes. The data presented in this paper substantiates many successes. Here, we list a series of suggested refinements to the PSHP model to increase its capacity to foster positive tenancy outcomes and to avert negative tenancy outcomes. This involves supporting people who do leave under involuntary and under sub-optimal circumstances, as well as engaging with tenants to identify their long-term aspirations.

The work conducted through the Sustaining Tenancy Plan no doubt has averted numerous evictions and negative outcomes more broadly. Averting breaches is significant, as a support provider practitioner explained, because breaches often erode trust between staff and tenants. For some tenants, however, Sustaining Tenancy Plans do not achieve positive outcomes. It is important that prior to any tenant being issued with a breach, they are first given the opportunity to participate in a Sustaining Tenancy Plan. For tenants who have a Sustaining Tenancy Plan, yet the risks to their tenancy remain or become imminent, a higher level of intervention may be appropriate. For example, onsite support providers understand that some tenants do not engage with support or their tenancy provider because of a range of health and personal reasons that likely require intervention from external professionals.

Further, although approximately half of all tenants are allocated a tenancy because of homelessness, far more than half of the tenant cohort receive formal support from PSHP practitioners. The demand for support exceeds the funding for the provision of onsite support. At the organisational level, active efforts must be made to ensure that external service providers, which are often public institutions, provide tenants with the resources and intervention necessary to meet their needs and ultimately prevent eviction into negative outcomes. In this respect, averting evictions/forced exits requires PSHP working to ensure that the broader service system is working to assist people who are most marginalised in society. Indeed, an eviction/forced exit is only going to exacerbate a person's marginalisation.

The two breaches associated with exiting PSHP, rent arrears and behaviour notices, illustrate the complexity of averting eviction/forced exit, and they also offer ways forward. Preventing all evictions

for rental arrears is challenging as people have the control over their income, including government benefits. Even if tenants have automatic rent deduction, through Centrepay for example, they are free to retract this automatic deduction without advising PSHP. Indeed, PSHP aims to provide normalised housing, and thus tenant autonomy and tenants' capacity to control their own income is central to the PSHP vision. It is thus not viable or desirable to prevent evictions for rental arrears by trying to remove tenant autonomy. This research recommends that the housing and support providers conduct further work – such as through the Sustaining Tenancy Plan – to develop and systematise a process to respond to people who experience rental arrears.

Breaches for behaviour are frequently issued because other tenants raise concerns about the conduct of their neighbours, including feeling threatened by them. In addition to the evidence in this research showing that Sustaining Tenancy Plans work to reduce evictions and undesirable exits, there may be opportunities for mediation and conflict-resolution interventions to address (some) of these behaviour issues. This may take the form of PSHP support professionals undertaking mediation and conflict resolution training. Indeed, and as mentioned below, this possibility could be pursued through tenants themselves developing skills and strategies to resolve conflict (conflict experienced by themselves and others).

In addition to mediation and conflict resolution, we recommend examining what change might occur to enable greater tenant participation in PSHP. Greater tenant participation may be a means for tenants to address some of the behaviours that lead to breaches and ultimately eviction/forced exit. Within the housing literature, there are numerous forms that tenant participation can assume, including tenants participating in the delivery and governance of housing owned by the state. Creating the practical and resource conditions for tenant participation requires a lot of work and commitment, especially given that conscious strategies need to be put in place to ensure that all tenants have the opportunity to participate if they choose to. One way to progress this idea would be to add a survey question in the next tenant survey to garner whether tenants are interested in greater participation. Although tenant participation can be seen as a normatively appealing idea because it represents tenants as capable individuals, there are many significant issues to think through. For example, tenants may be more willing than the housing provider to evict people they see as problem tenants. Tenant participation needs to thus work from the premise of inclusion rather than exclusion.

Even under optimal conditions, there will always be some tenants who experience eviction/forced exits. It is important that there is a systematic process in place whereby the Queensland Government makes arrangements for alternative housing for this cohort of tenants. We recommend that whenever eviction/forced exit occurs, the Queensland Government has a clear and systematic approach to partnering with PSHP to support those individuals leaving their tenancies. This may take the form of allocating the exiting PSHP tenant a property in social housing, and then offering a suitable social housing tenant/applicant a tenancy at PSHP.

Additionally, this study has also contributed to the conversation about positive and negative outcomes, but this initial conversation has not involved tenants. It is critical that tenants are engaged to develop the model of positive and negative outcomes. Tenant participation may take the form of tenants themselves progressing a research project to extend the work on what constitutes a successful tenancy.

Finally, to further advance knowledge about the successes and limitations of PSHP and PSH (or indeed, social housing more broadly), it will be important to (i) collect systematic data on the circumstances surrounding people's exits (e.g., the reasons and the subsequent housing arrangements), and (ii) draw together other government data sources to identify people's housing and homelessness pathways in

the weeks, months, and even years after exiting. These longitudinal and linked data will significantly contribute to advancing knowledge on what outcomes can be achieved by PSH, and what changes need to be made to more effectively assist people excluded from mainstream housing pathways. The Queensland Government, for example, holds a wealth of data on the housing and homelessness status of people post-PSHP, in addition to a range of other data that identifies people's wellbeing (health, criminal justice). Accessing this data will help further the evidence base about what PSHP represents in terms of contributing to long-term positive outcomes. Indeed, and finally, the evidence generated in this paper, coupled with the previous PSHP research projects, constitute an important evidence base. We recommend that the Queensland Government engage with this evidence, along with other peer reviewed research, to make policy decisions. The evidence, including the evidence presented in this paper, provides an important framework for Queensland to extend permanent supportive housing at scale.

6. Limitations

There are a number of important limitations to report. This study does not draw on the experiences of tenants. Indeed, the study does not make any assertions about the first-hand experiences of people at PSHP. We recommend that subsequent work engage with tenants so that they can play determining roles in developing the evidence about what constitutes success at PSHP, and permanent supportive housing more broadly. Engaging with tenants will be important to understand in greater depth what successful and unsuccessful exits look like. Further, close empirical engagement with tenants will add to our understanding about what is done to achieve positive outcomes, including preventing eviction. The study is also limited by virtue of the absence of data that currently exists on people who exit PSHP. Although we have good data on the reasons people leave, and some data on where people intend to go upon exit, we know little about people's housing and indeed life trajectories post-PSHP. Assessing data on people's housing post-PSHP would be important to better develop our knowledge about whether successful or unsuccessful outcomes were achieved. Moreover, longitudinal data on people who leave PSHP would help further determine what enduring life outcomes PSHP contributes to.

7. Conclusion

Reflecting on the operation of PSHP over the first ten years, the data clearly demonstrate significant successes in line with the original vision for Queensland's first model of PSH. Drawing on a unique opportunity to analyse the complete dataset held by the housing provider, along with in-depth interviews with both the support provider and the housing provider practitioners, this paper has provided evidence of the contributions achieved and the potential opportunities for enhancing the capacity of PSHP to pioneer innovation moving forward.

Important among the findings identified in this research is that permanent supportive housing is critical to enable people to exit rough sleeping and improve their lives. The support services coupled with permanent and affordable housing are core. Examining the data closely, however, we can see that permanent supportive housing does not mean that all people will – or indeed ideally should – stay at PSHP indefinitely. For a range of significant reasons, including – gaining employment, forming a relationship, having children, connecting with culture – people will leave PSHP. Exiting PSHP cannot only be seen as a positive feature of the life course and people's housing trajectories, but it is the permanent housing provided through the housing provider that enables these positive outcomes. Thus, we have found that 'permanent' housing is fundamental to the model, but permanent does not mean that people stay forever. This research has contributed to a more nuanced understanding of what success and permanency mean at PSHP and permanent supportive housing more broadly.

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