

# Project overview: Consultations to inform the Youth Step-Up Step-Down Service, Youth Long-Term Housing and Support Program and Youth Psychosocial Packages

## 1.1 Project background and context

The Mental Health Commission (MHC) and the State Government have invested significantly in the ongoing reform of the mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) system

In 2015, the MHC released the Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025 (the Plan) outlining the gaps in mental health and AOD services in WA. Over 2,300 individuals and organisations were engaged in the development of the state plan, where children and **young people** were identified as a priority, in particular those at high risk and the need for a dedicated **youth stream of services across the continuum** for young people (aged 16-24) was outlined. The Plan identified mental health and AOD problems as a key contributing factor to **homelessness** and the importance of improving access to **safe housing** and associated community supports to support people to live independently in the community.

**In response to these challenges, the MHC developed 'A Safe Place', an accommodation strategy for people experiencing mental health, alcohol and other drug issues**

In response to the system gaps identified in the Plan, the MHC undertook significant consultation to inform the development of *A Safe Place - A Western Australian Strategy to provide safe and stable accommodation, and support to people experiencing mental health, alcohol and other drug issues 2020-2025* (A Safe Place). A Safe Place identified the key requirement to increase accommodation and support options for people with mental health and AOD issues, including housing stock, **community support (accommodation)** options, and **community bed-based services**. The Strategy also identified **young people** as a population group that are facing barriers to accessing appropriate accommodation and support options.

**Further consultation with young people and other stakeholders identified accommodation services and supports that will make a significant difference to young people**

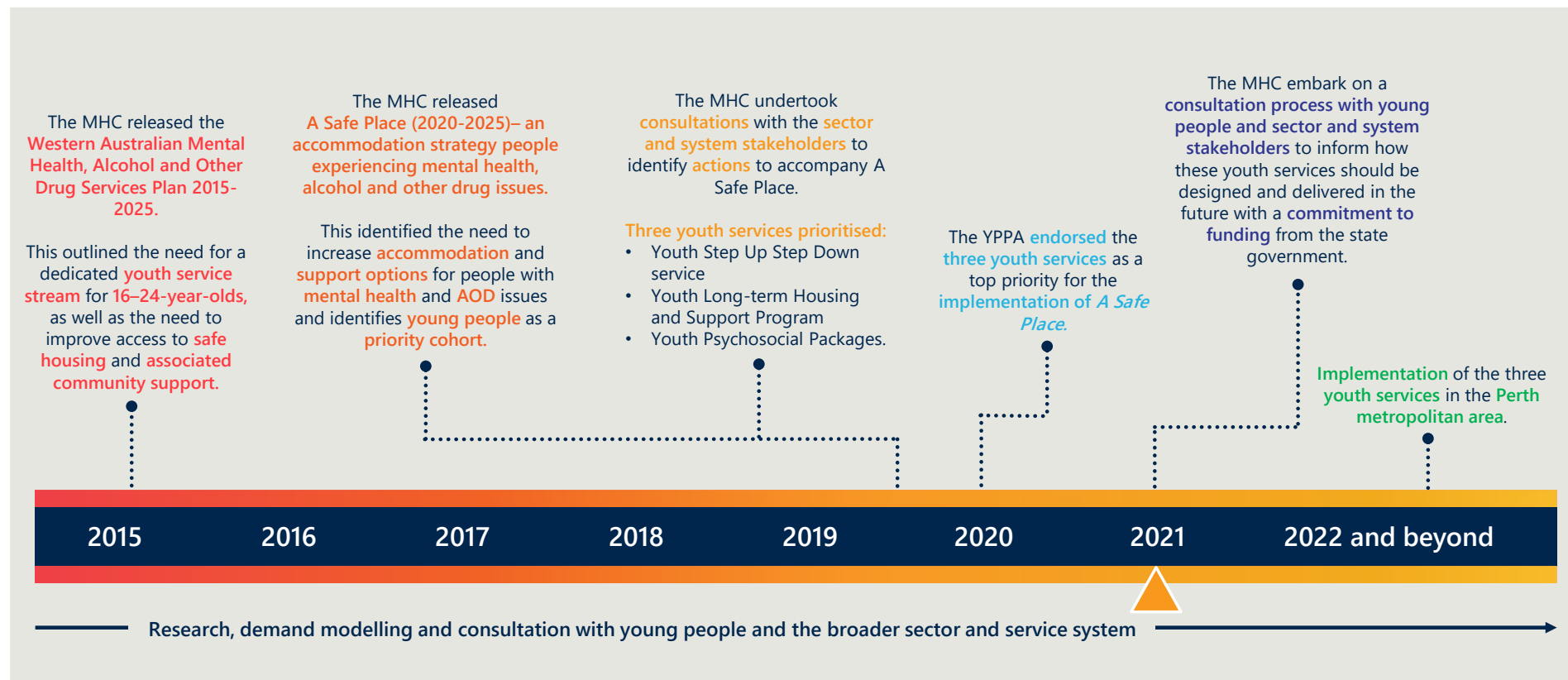
Significant consultation has been undertaken to understand the biggest challenges for young people in accessing safe accommodation and associated community supports. In 2019, the MHC engaged widely across the government, peaks and providers to identify actions to accompany A Safe Place, where a range of initiatives to better support young people were identified. In addition, the Young People's Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Use: Priorities for Action 2020-2025 (YPPA) was developed. The YPPA undertook consultation with young people, hearing their thoughts on challenges in the system and identifying important **areas for action**. As a result of both those consultations, four initiatives have been endorsed by young people and have a commitment to funding from government:

- Youth Step Up Step Down (SUSD) service
- Youth Long-Term Housing and Support Program
- Youth Psychosocial Packages
- Youth Mental Health, AOD Homelessness Service (*Facility design process is underway, with the Model of Service already developed*)

## 1.2 Consultation journey

In 2021, the State Government committed to funding all three of these youth services through the 2021-22 Budget, the result of a long consultation process and commitment to better support young people with mental health and AOD issues in WA. Figure 1 outlines the key events since 2015 which have led to the commitment to these three youth services.

Figure 1 | The consultation journey that has led to the development of the three youth services



### 1.3 Project aim and objectives

The MHC is undertaking consultations with young people, families and carers, service providers, peak bodies, advocates, and government and non-government organisations to inform how each of these youth services should be designed and delivered in the Perth Metropolitan area.

The three in-scope youth services have been identified based on extensive research, demand modelling and consultation with young people and the broader sector and service system. These services are intended to address challenges experienced by young people, in line with the strategies identified by the YPPA. The design process will build on key principles highlighted during these consultations, to ensure that:

- Services focus on **promoting** mental wellbeing and **early prevention** for mental health and AOD issues.
- Services involve **families, carers** and **community** at **all levels** to support young people.
- Services are **easy to find**, are **available** and provide the **right information** to young people.
- Services are **culturally safe, welcoming, inclusive, person-centred** and **holistic**.
- Services **work together**, with a focus on the **individual** and **coordination** and **transition** between sectors and the system.
- Services **support their workforce** to deliver **best practice care** and support young people, families and carers.

Table 1 | An overview of the youth service aims and parameters

<p><b>Youth SUSD Service</b></p>	<p><b>Service aim</b></p> <p>SUSD services aim to <b>reduce and/or prevent hospital admissions</b> by providing a <b>service in the community</b> where people can access additional support to manage their mental health issues.</p> <p>A SUSD is intended to prevent people from entering an inpatient facility by providing additional support for a person to manage a deterioration in their mental health before admission to an inpatient facility is warranted (step up), or where they can go if they are ready to <b>transition from acute inpatient care</b> but <b>need additional support</b> to assist them in re-establishing themselves in the community (step down).</p> <hr/> <p><b>Service parameters</b></p> <p>SUSD services already exist for adults, but this service will be the first in WA for young people.</p> <p>The SUSD will be a 10-bed facility in the Metropolitan area offering both clinical and community support services and 24/7 care for young people aged between 16-24 who have mental health issues, with or without co-occurring AOD issues.</p> <p>The SUSD will offer state-wide access and will not require a formal diagnosis.</p>
<p><b>Youth Long-Term Housing and Support Program</b></p>	<p><b>Service aim</b></p> <p>This program will provide young people with mental health issues, with or without co-occurring AOD issues, with access to <b>long-term accommodation</b> alongside</p>

	coordinated <b>clinical, psychosocial and AOD supports</b> to assist them with their recovery and with <b>living independently</b> in the community.
	<p><b>Service parameters</b></p> <p>This service will be similar to the existing model for adults – known as the Individualised Community Living Strategy (ICLS) service, but similarly to the SUSD, will be the first of its kind for young people.</p> <p>The Long-Term Housing and Support Program will offer 20 packages and include clinical, psychosocial and AOD components and will not require a formal diagnosis.</p>
<b>Youth Psychosocial Support Packages</b>	<p><b>Service aim</b></p> <p>These packages will assist young people <b>living in the community</b>, either <b>independently</b> or in the family home, to <b>increasingly participate</b> in and contribute to community, social, and economic life. Where applicable, the packages will also provide <b>support to the family of young people</b>.</p>
	<p><b>Service parameters</b></p> <p>There will be 30 youth psychosocial packages for young people in the community – they will not require a formal diagnosis to access these packages. The packages may also provide supports for the family where required.</p>

## 1.4 Project steps

The MHC has engaged Nous Group (Nous) to facilitate a consultation process to help inform the Model of Service (MoS) for the three community support and accommodation services for young people. Nous is partnering with the Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) to ensure that young people are at the heart of the design process.

### What is a model of service?

A model of service (MoS) outlines what a service type could offer (based on best practice), how the service could be configured, eligibility, length and frequency of services, roles and responsibilities of staff, consumers and carers.

The project is centred around three key stages:

#### Stage 1: Written submissions and survey (20 August – 10 September)

- Youth survey – delivered by YACWA
- Written submission process – delivered by Nous

#### Stage 2: Consultations to develop the core components of each MoS (13 September – 4 October)

- Youth consultations – facilitated by YACWA
- Sector and system engagement – facilitated by Nous

#### Stage 3: Testing and validating each MoS (5 October – 22 October)