

The service proposal.

The service that we are proposing is to run two specialised, regional refuge services.

The refuges will be for women experiencing domestic violence and requiring refuge and will be run in conjunction with mental health and alcohol and drug services. The needs of women who do not have children will be considered to be of equal importance to those of women who do have children in their care. Mental illness symptoms, drug and alcohol abuse and not having dependant children are all conditions that can exclude women from entering a refuge. Women admitted into the refuges will be expected to undergo assessment and treatment if they are not already accessing it.

The staff employed in these facilities will have the relevant experience to enable them to provide quality care to the clients. Staff will be rostered on duty twenty-four hours a day, as they would be in any other situation with high need clients. The primary reason that refuges don't like to take women with drug and/or alcohol problems/mental illness symptoms is that they cause disruption and exhibit behaviours that upset the other women in the house. Providing a living environment that is specifically catering to these women's needs is solution to this problem and an incentive to offer appropriate and specific care.

The Service Specifications for Homeworks Services

Policies and procedures

Policies and procedures for the safety of the clients and staff and for the efficient running of the houses are being developed in line with the Independent Refuge's quality standards guidelines and the CYPFS policy outlines.

Who will be accepted into the service?

- Women with mental illnesses who have been, or are living, in an abusive relationship.
- Women with drug and alcohol problems who have been, or are living, in an abusive relationship.
- Women who need help with abuse issues, more permanent housing and government agencies
- The children of these women.

Referral to service

Clients may be referred to the service by the following pathways:

- Self
- Other refuges
- Mental health services
- Alcohol and drug services
- Drop in centres and other community services
- Statutory agencies
- Health practitioners
- Family
- Crisis services

Exclusion Criteria

Women will not be accepted into the refuge services if they fit the entry criteria and are able to be accommodated by another refuge.

Who will benefit from our service?

- Mental health services - will be able to confidently refer women who require refuge
- The community - a wider range of women and their children will be able to access help, leave abusive relationships and gain help and support.
- Women with mental illnesses who have been abused – Homeworks Trust will offer them dignity and a home that is not controlled (in abusive situations)
- Women with drug and alcohol problems who have been abused
- Women who need encouragement to make choices
- Women who need help with abuse issues, more permanent housing and Government agencies
- Children of these women
- Refuges - as they will have a referral point for women they wish to exclude from their services
- Police - will have a referral point for women they are unable to place in other refuges
- Courts - a wider range of women will be accessing professional services

Services Provided

Advocacy - with housing, benefits, Lawyers, Court, etc.

Assessment - for mental illness, drug and alcohol use, suicide risk, physical injury, ongoing needs and support

Community Development - on going education for health professionals and others about the specific issues of the client groups.

Case Management - of the clients, to develop plans for their ongoing development.

A number of programmes will be available to women. These will include:

- information about domestic violence, the legislation and options for help and support in the community
- support to access specific treatment related to a woman's alcohol and other drug use/mental illness
- encouragement of the development of cultural values and associations, especially utilising the services of the Maori, Pacific and Asian refuges.
- ensuring the provision of access to Kaupapa Maori, especially accessing appropriate services and healing.
- an introduction to the concepts and practices of self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Rational Recovery, whanau recovery groups and other culturally appropriate organisations.

Children

In all aspects of service provision attention will be paid to the needs of children. This will be reflected in specific services, including:

- parenting support, especially including parenting without violence and abuse

- the provision of support and counselling for children who are suffering the effects of witnessing or experiencing abuse.

Crisis situations

Provision is made for dealing with crises of people attending the services. Policies and procedures are being developed that encourage the use of appropriate-agencies for the resolution of crisis, if staff are unable to resolve them themselves. This will necessitate the development of understandings with services such as the crisis teams, the police and the local drug and alcohol/mental health services. We are unable to advance this until we know what areas the houses will be in.

Who we will network with

Community Funding Agency
 The Ministry of Health
 District Health Boards
 Community Housing
 Mental Health Centres and services
 NGO mental health services
 Drug and Alcohol services
 NGO drug and alcohol services
 Members of the national affiliated refuge movement
 Unaffiliated Refuges
 Domestic violence services
 Domestic Violence Centre
 Public health/health promotion
 Physical health services
 Housing advocacy groups
 Tenancy agencies / services
 University researchers
 Philanthropic trusts
 Church social services
 Feminist groups
 Lesbian groups
 Central government
 Local government councils
 Community boards
 Mayors
 GPs
 Women and men's service clubs
 Other social services

Staffing

The refuges and houses will all require highly skilled, qualified staff with appropriate qualifications, competencies and experience working with alcohol and drug problems / mental illness. All of the staff will be women who have skills and experience working with women and a feminist analysis of domestic violence and the gendered causes of homelessness.

Each refuge will have up to 8 beds. Women who are clinically trained and who will be awake and available 24 hours a day/seven days a week will staff it. There will also need to be one staff member designated to work specifically with children. This will require a minimum of 10 FTE's per refuge.

Cost

The refuge service costing is based on the costings of level four mental health respite services – having clinically trained staff awake and available 24 hours a day/seven days a week. See budget.

Clients who have an income will be expected to contribute to the costs of their stay. This will be negotiated for each client and will be based on current refuge rents – currently these are about \$100 per week for a single woman, \$140 per week for a woman with three children.