Evaluation of the 727 Supported Temporary Accommodation service

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Table of contents

Executive summary	i
Section 1. Introduction	1
Section 2. TA models and system challenges	2
Section 3. The TA system in NSW	7
Section 4. The 727 model	9
Section 5. Evaluation framework and results	12
Section 6. Recommendations	21
A1. Research design and limitations	23
References	24

Glossary

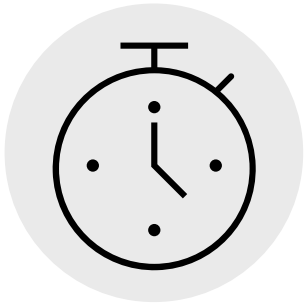
727	The 727 Supported Temporary Accommodation service
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCOs	Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CAP	Crisis Accommodation Program
CHIFVC	Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee
CHP	Community housing provider
DCJ	Department of Communities and Justice
FDV	Family and domestic violence
IHRF	Immediate Housing Response for Families
NSW	New South Wales
NWHN	Northern and Western Homelessness Networks
SHS	Specialist Homelessness Services
TA	Temporary accommodation

Executive summary



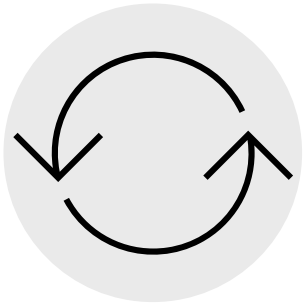
Finding 1

The odds of securing next step accommodation were 3 times higher for 727 clients than for those in motels TA



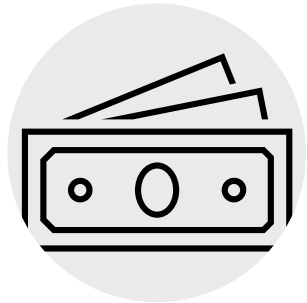
Finding 2

727 supported next step accommodation more quickly than motels TA



Finding 3

727 supported more repeat clients into next step accommodation than motels TA



Finding 4

On average, the 727 service can deliver cost savings of $3,360 per client, per stay, compared to motels TA

Section 1. Introduction

1.1 Evaluating 727

Bridge Housing engaged AHURI Professional Services to conduct an evaluation of the 727 Supported Temporary Accommodation service (727), located in Dee Why, New South Wales (NSW).

The 727 model aims to provide an alternative to standard temporary accommodation (TA) services, which typically rely on purchased nights of accommodation from private motel operators.

Under the 727 model, clients are provided with TA in self-contained studio apartments, with on-site support services to aid the transition to long term, stable housing.

The 727 facility is owned by Bridge Housing, acquired using a $5 million capital grant from Homes NSW and additional debt financing secured through Housing Australia.

Support services are provided by Mission Australia and are funded through Bridge Housing's Private Rental Assistance funding.

This report includes:

1. An overview of the NSW TA system and key challenges
2. An evaluation of 727's client outcomes relative to a standard TA service using motels in Northern Sydney
3. Estimates of potential cost savings for different client groups under the 727 model, compared to standard TA services.

To conclude, the report provides recommendations as to whether the model can and should be implemented at scale.



727 facility and grounds
Source: Mission Australia

Section 2. TA models and system challenges



727 support staff
Source: Bridge Housing

2.1 TA models vary across states and territories

Temporary accommodation (TA) forms a large part of the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) system, providing short-term accommodation for individuals and families experiencing homelessness or in emergency situations that put them at imminent risk of homelessness (e.g. escaping family and domestic violence).

While definitions vary across jurisdictions, TA broadly includes:

1. SHS-managed TA: short-term accommodation managed by SHS agencies, including crisis supported accommodation services, family and domestic violence (FDV) refuges, and youth refuges.
2. Purchased TA: brokered nights of accommodation from private operators, including boarding houses, hotels, motels, hostels and caravan parks.

Definitions of 'short-term' are generally defined by state and territory governments, as well as local residential tenancy legislation that exempts TA from standard tenancy rules based on length of stay.

Specified lengths of stay range from a few days (common for purchased crisis accommodation) to several months (more common amongst youth and FDV refuges).

Increasingly, service providers aim to offer flexible lengths of stay based on a client's individual circumstances (Batterham *et al*. 2023).

2.2 TA generally lacks sufficient funding and integration with other housing and homelessness services

TA has received relatively little research and policy attention compared to other areas of the housing and homelessness systems. This is partly because it is perceived to be at odds with emerging best practice, centred on prevention, early intervention and Housing First responses (Spinney *et al*. 2020).

In addition, the introduction of the National Agreement on Homelessness and the National Affordable Housing Agreement in 2009 ended dedicated capital funding for TA via the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP). Instead, state and territory housing and homelessness strategies became the primary vehicle for funding and administering TA (Batterham *et al.* 2023).

In practice, this has meant that TA lacks sufficient funding and strategic integration with other homelessness and housing services. For example, some jurisdictions administer purchased TA separately to SHS and use eligibility criteria and application processes closer to those used for social housing (Hartley and Barnes 2023).

Most states and territories have centralised systems for accessing TA, such as phone lines or web portals administered by government departments. However, there are often multiple referral pathways, including via assertive outreach teams, FDV services, community housing providers (CHPs), SHS and other agencies. For purchased TA, a lack of central oversight can create safety risks for vulnerable cohorts (e.g. unintentionally placing victim-survivors with perpetrators of violence; CHIFVC 2024).

Funding arrangements vary considerably across jurisdictions and programs. Some TA models combine government funding with co-contributions from service users. Co-payments can be *ad hoc* (e.g. paying for one day a week), based on a fixed percentage of income (e.g. 25-30%), or may be charged at a flat rate. This variation can create uncertainty and financial stress amongst TA clients, making it difficult to save for more sustainable housing (Kuskoff *et al.* 2025a).

There have been recent efforts to integrate TA with support services, recognising that some form of short-term accommodation will always be needed as a safety net. For example, the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025-2035 prioritises safe and accessible crisis accommodation with person-centred supports (Homes NSW 2025, Outcome 2).

In parts of NSW, TA providers are members of local service networks that meet regularly to assess clients' needs and design longer-term housing solutions (Batterham *et al.* 2023; Homes NSW 2025).



727 common area
Source: Bridge Housing

Figure 1. On Census night (2021), NSW had approximately 1 bed in crisis accommodation for every 7 people experiencing homelessness.

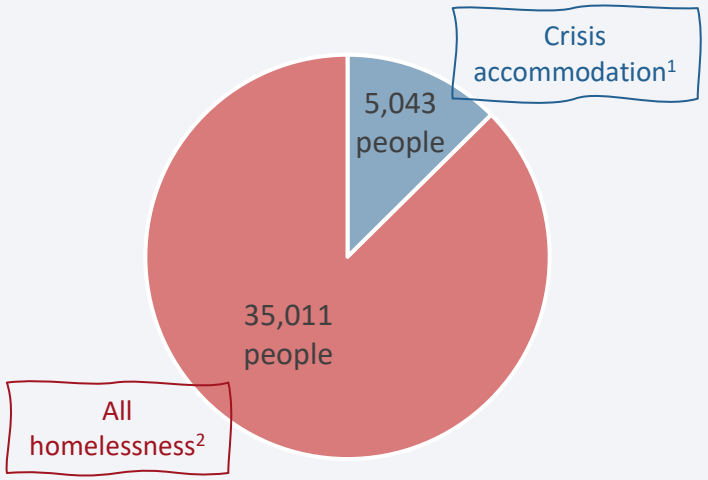
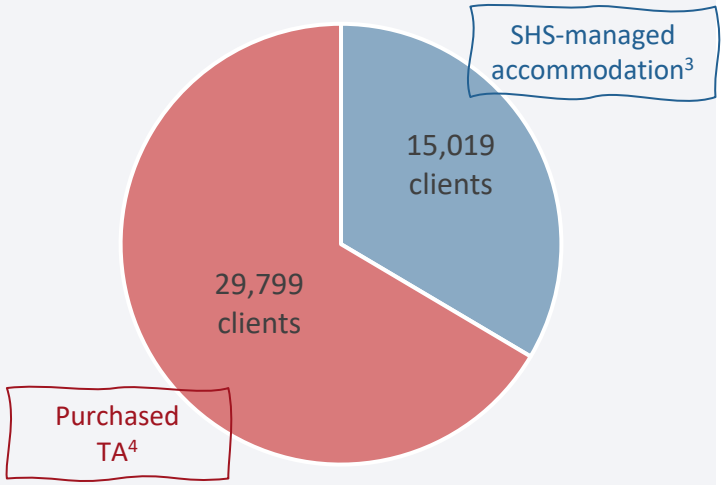


Figure 2. In NSW, there were approximately 2 clients in purchased TA for every 1 client in SHS-managed accommodation in 2023/24.



2.3 Demand for TA significantly exceeds supply

In NSW, 50 *per cent* of SHS clients who needed short-term or crisis accommodation did not receive it in 2024/25 (AIHW 2025). This level of unmet demand significantly exceeded the national benchmark (31%).

Beyond this, research indicates significant 'hidden demand' not captured by official statistics. This includes people couch-surfing, staying in cars, or living in overcrowded dwellings due to insufficient or inadequate TA options (Bullen 2023; Batterham *et al.* 2023). In NSW, there was approximately 1 crisis accommodation bed available for every 7 people experiencing homelessness on Census night (ABS 2021; Fig. 1).

With the cessation of the CAP, there has been limited capital funding for new TA supply. As a result, service providers increasingly rely on existing stock and purchased TA from private hotel and motel operators. In NSW, the ratio of clients in purchased TA relative to SHS-managed properties was around 2-to-1 in 2023/24 (AIHW 2024; DCJ 2024; Fig. 2).

In Australia and elsewhere, the use of purchased TA expanded following the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some research indicates that purchased TA during this period provided people with a greater sense of safety, privacy and agency compared to traditional TA (Hartley *et al.* 2021; Robinson *et al.* 2022; Padgett *et al.* 2023). Non-congregate hotels were also found to deliver positive health outcomes relative to traditional congregate shelters (Colburn *et al.* 2022).

However, these studies were conducted in the context of emergency funding and widespread hotel vacancies. More recent research highlights a shrinking pool of private operators, particularly during holiday seasons and in regional areas (Kuskoff *et al.* 2025; CHIFVC 2024).

Limited motel options mean that the quality of purchased TA is highly variable and rarely matched to clients' needs (Batterham *et al.* 2023). For example, motel rooms often lack kitchen facilities and essential amenities, making them particularly challenging environments for families with children, people with special dietary needs, and those on low-incomes (Kuskoff *et al.* 2025; NWHN 2021).

Difficulties sourcing purchased TA limit clients' say over location, often dislodging individuals and families from their support networks, workplaces, and schools (Batterham *et al.* 2023).

Numerous studies also document safety and security issues with purchased TA and congregate shelters, particularly for young people, women and transgender people (Kerman *et al.* 2023; Mackie *et al.* 2019; Williams *et al.* 2024).

Notes:
1. ABS Census (2021), Estimating homelessness, People in supported accommodation for the homeless. This category approximates SHS-managed shelters, refuges, and other crisis accommodation services that provide temporary accommodation and support services to people without secure housing.
2. ABS Census (2021), Estimating homelessness, All homeless operational groups
3. AIHW (2024), Specialist homelessness services annual report 2023–24, Table CLIENTS.25: Clients, by total nights of accommodation
4. Department of Communities and Justice (2024), Annual statistical report 2024/25, Temporary Accommodation, households assisted

2.4 Supported TA models are emerging, but limited

In recent years, a diverse range of crisis and temporary accommodation models has emerged. TA facilities span traditional congregate-style shelters to homelessness resource hubs that co-locate flexible accommodation options with allied health and social services (Batterham *et al.* 2023).

TA support models have become more tailored to the needs of specific cohorts. For example, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) operate TA centres that integrate culturally-specific case management, variable lengths of stay, and exits into ACCO supported housing programs (Doherty and McNicol 2021; Yumba-Meta 2025).

Youth refuges have also undergone major transformation, shifting toward purpose-built facilities with self-contained units, working with singles, couples and families through counselling, family mediation, life skills courses and other developmental support (Edmanson 2025).

Despite these improvements, the literature highlights inherent challenges with TA due to its transient nature and time-limited support. Effective case management involves collaboration between service providers and clients to identify individual needs and desired outcomes. This process is difficult to facilitate through short-term interactions and takes time to yield results (Brocious *et al.* 2022). Moreover, clients' capacity to engage with supports is often adversely affected by the uncertainty and insecurity of TA (McMordie 2021; Batterham *et al.* 2023).

Inflexible rules and conditions are a further stressor for TA clients. To manage congregate settings, TA facilities generally impose strict rules based on deficits and risks (e.g. drug and alcohol bans or visitation policies). Consequently, staff time and resources are often tied up with policing rules rather than providing case management and support. This can alienate people with high support needs, leading to disengagement with services (Blood *et al.* 2017).

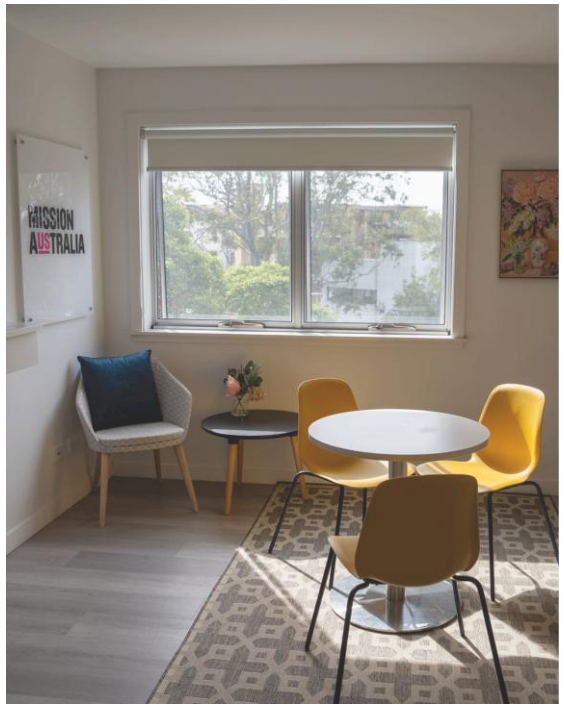
In addition, some TA systems require evidence that clients are attempting to secure independent housing. This sets unrealistic expectations, particularly in tight rental markets and for people with low incomes or limited rental history. Inflexible evidence requirements may also adversely impact clients' eligibility for TA extensions (Hartley *et al.* 2023).

Finally, many of these challenges are exacerbated under purchased TA arrangements. This is due to shorter lengths of stay, strict rules enforced by private operators without appropriate training, and limited SHS support (Kuskoff *et al.* 2025a).



727 support services
Source: Bridge Housing

2.5 A lack of exit options leads to extended stays and repeat presentations



727 common area
Source: Bridge Housing

Although most TA models are designed to provide a short-term emergency response, clients often stay for extended periods due to a lack of feasible exit pathways (Batterham *et al.* 2023; Williams *et al.* 2024; Kuskoff *et al.* 2025a).

This has been a longstanding constraint on the TA system, identified in several policy reviews over last four decades (Bullen 2010). However, research suggests that these challenges are worsening due to long-term underinvestment in social housing (Flanagan *et al.* 2020) and an escalating shortage of affordable private rental housing (Reynolds *et al.* 2024). Additionally, funding models based on throughput measures tend to reinforce poor housing outcomes and repeat presentations (Flatau *et al.* 2017).

The lack of affordable exit pathways from TA creates bottlenecks within the housing system. Due to extended stays in SHS-managed TA, service providers are often forced into *ad hoc* arrangements with privately-operated hotels, motels and caravan parks. These arrangements are highly insecure, and clients frequently alternate between providers.

An evaluation of the Immediate Housing Response for Families (IHRF) in Queensland found that 53 *per cent* of families who exited IHRF-funded motel accommodation did so into other forms of crisis accommodation. Only 32 *per cent* exited into long-term housing, while 13 *per cent* disengaged with services. Only 104 families of the 1,046 who exited the IHRF managed to secure private rental accommodation (Kuskoff *et al.* 2025b).

Beyond this, the increasing number of clients in TA has flow-on effects for social housing wait times. In NSW, the number clients waiting in TA for an initial housing assessment doubled during the 2023/24 financial year. In June 2024, there were 9,280 outstanding applications waiting for an initial assessment and nearly half (44%) had been waiting for more than three months (Audit Office of New South Wales 2025). Alarmingly, the Audit Office of New South Wales (2025) found that the administrative work required to manage clients in TA was adversely affecting assessment times for social housing applications.

This creates a vicious cycle within the housing system. On the one hand, clients are staying in TA for extended periods because of a lack of exit options. On the other, the administrative burden of keeping people in TA is preventing timely exits into social housing and increasing TA providers reliance on purchased TA.

Section 3. The TA system in NSW

3.1 The NSW Government intends to move away from the purchased TA model

In NSW, the government agencies responsible for TA policy are Homes NSW and the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). In 2023, increased the initial length of stay from two to seven days before having to reapply and removed the limit of 28-days per person per year.

Within the first three days of starting TA, clients must develop a support plan with their local housing office, outlining how they will find alternative accommodation (NSW Government 2025). In addition, clients must apply for social housing within 14 days if they meet eligibility criteria and accept the first reasonable offer they receive (Audit Office of New South Wales, 2025).

To be eligible for TA, an individual must:

- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident who is 18 years or older, or accompanied by a parent or guardian
- meet the social housing income eligibility limit
- have no more than $5,000 in assets, unless they are fleeing FDV
- be facing imminent homelessness and unable to find alternative accommodation (Audit Office of New South Wales 2021).

TA services are provided by several CHPs and some SHS agencies using brokerage funding. Typically, TA is provided in low-cost hotels, motels, caravan parks, boarding houses, and similar facilities. TA clients are generally referred to SHS and other local services for support; however, the level of assistance received varies depending on local agencies' outreach capacity (Hartley and Barnes 2023, p. 14).

The NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025–2035 articulates an intent to shift away 'from commercial hotels and motels to temporary accommodation models delivered by the homelessness and housing sectors' (Homes NSW, 2025, p. 27). Within this policy context, the 727 model presents a potential alternative to purchased TA.



727 exterior
Source: Bridge Housing

3.2 The 727 model offers an alternative to purchased TA

The 727 Supported Temporary Accommodation model responds to the lack of SHS-managed accommodation in Northern Sydney[5] and TA providers' reliance on purchased TA from commercial motels. Commercial motels often lack appropriate facilities, proximity to required health and social services, and access to case management and housing supports. In addition, TA expenditures have increased due to escalating motel rates.

To address this, Bridge Housing acquired 727 Pittwater Road Dee Why in August 2024 using a $5 million capital grant from Homes NSW and additional debt financing secured through Housing Australia.

In October 2024, Bridge Housing and Mission Australia signed a 12-month support agreement (with an option to extend), outlining key service outcomes and obligations for the 727 service.

The service provides temporary accommodation, alongside on-site case management designed to:

- facilitate a sustainable transition to alternate accommodation through SHS, refuges, crisis, private rental or social housing
- minimise the duration of stay in TA
- alleviate the negative impacts of homelessness on individuals' wellbeing and stability.

Under the service agreement, Bridge Housing is responsible for property and service delivery costs, including accommodation costs, maintenance costs, and loan repayments to Housing Australia. Bridge Housing also conduct initial intake assessments to determine eligibility for TA.

Mission Australia is responsible for providing crisis support to clients residing at 727, paid for through Bridge's Private Rental Assistance funding. Support services include assistance to find alternate accommodation and to buy necessities, such as food and other essential items.

In line with NSW policy, 727 residents over the age of 18 are required to make a 'TA contribution' that goes toward accommodation costs. This is generally set at 25% of a person's assessable income and 15% of any Family Tax benefits Parts A and B. People escaping FDV are not be required to make a TA contribution.



Essentials provided to 727 clients
Source: Bridge Housing

5. This region encompasses the Northern Beaches, Mosman, North Sydney, Lane Cove, and Willoughby local government areas.

Section 4. The 727 model



727 self-contained studio
Source: Bridge Housing

4.1 Eligibility criteria are set by NSW policy with some provider discretion

To be eligible for 727, applicants generally must be Australian citizens or permanent residents, aged 18 or older, and meet the income and asset thresholds set out in the Homes NSW TA eligibility policy (Section 3.1). However, Bridge Housing can use their discretion to provide housing assistance to clients who do not meet eligibility criteria.

The 727 facility has self-contained studios that are designed for singles and couples without children. Families with children are referred to more suitable TA services.

Bridge Housing conducts an intake assessment to determine eligibility for 727. The intake process assesses a clients' income, previous history with TA, support needs, and eligibility for other housing options.

Once assessed as eligible for TA, clients are referred to Mission Australia who conduct a risk assessment. The assessment aims to identify possible sources and triggers of risk to inform mitigation strategies and client supports.

Clients sign an occupancy agreement with Mission Australia, outlining property rules, payments, termination conditions, and other occupant responsibilities.

The length of assistance is based on clients' ongoing eligibility for TA rather than an entitlement to a specific period. Ongoing provision of TA requires that clients meet the agreed conditions in their TA support plan. These include accepting alternate accommodation, adhering to the terms of the occupancy agreement and actively engaging with the on-site support offered.

Occupancy agreements are terminated if Bridge Housing determine that a client has become ineligible for TA (e.g., if they exceed the income eligibility limit or find alternative accommodation).

4.2 Case management primarily aims to support clients into alternate accommodation

Bridge Housing creates a TA support plan with clients at entry, which includes the calculation of co-payments and a list of activities that clients need to complete to remain eligible for TA. These activities centre on engagement with support services and adherence to TA terms and conditions.

During their stay at 727, clients are supported by Mission Australia to find alternate accommodation and to fulfil their support plan obligations. Mission allocates a case manager to clients and maintains on-site staff during weekdays and on-call staff after hours. Mission staff ensure clients regularly contact Link2Home for SHS vacancies, attend appointments with potential housing options, and assist with gathering necessary documentation. Case managers also support connection with health professionals and other external agencies as needed.

Mission aims to respect client's autonomy and choice, and tailors support to clients' individual needs and strengths. However, given the short-term nature of TA and the requirements set out by Homes NSW policy, Mission adopts an assertive case management approach to prevent clients losing access to TA.

Assertive case management involves proactively reaching out to clients who are struggling with engagement or missing appointments. Case managers aim to intervene early in potential issues to minimise the risk of disengagement.

Ultimately, Mission's primary goal is to minimise the time clients reside in TA by actively supporting alternate accommodation as quickly as possible. The 727 service is a short-term emergency response and is not intended to replace SHS or long-term accommodation.



727 exterior
Source: Bridge Housing

4.3 Successful exits include situations where clients secure ‘next step’ accommodation

‘Next step’ accommodation	Unplanned exits
Obtains **affordable or social housing**, if eligible as determined by NSW Pathways	Client has not accepted an offer to move into a Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) funded property or program
Approved for **private rental** through a real estate agent or property owner	Client has not met the requirements set out in their TA support plan (e.g., failure to complete an application for housing assistance within the required timeframe or make required co-contributions towards the cost of TA)
Obtains **transitional accommodation** while awaiting social or community housing, including identified supported transitional properties, boarding houses, shared accommodation, SHS or low-cost private rentals	Client has damaged property or engaged in behaviour that breaches 727’s terms and conditions
Enters a **specialist program**, such as a detoxification unit, rehabilitation program or mental health program	Client chooses to move out of TA with or without a housing offer
Obtains **other secure and sustainable housing**	

Section 5. Evaluation framework and results

5.1 The 727 service is designed to improve housing outcomes and reduce TA costs

727 is an alternative to purchased TA, providing fit-for-purpose accommodation and on-site support to help clients navigate service systems and to find alternate accommodation.

This evaluation assesses the performance of the 727 service against its stated aims below.

Through person-led case management and access to necessary services, 727 aims to:

1. support clients to achieve goals in their case management plans, including securing next step accommodation
2. reduce the average number of days in TA through improved referral pathways to SHS and other housing services
3. reduce repeat TA instances by helping clients secure sustainable accommodation
4. reduce the cost of TA by lowering the number, frequency, and duration of TA instances.

Over the longer-term, Bridge Housing and Mission Australia intend to promote stronger collaboration between community organisations and SHS providers to (1) reduce the overall number of TA consumers and address homelessness on the Northern Beaches, and (2) further develop the 727 service into a model for future funding contracts and opportunities.



727 opening
Source: Bridge Housing

5.2 Evaluation framework and comparison group

The evaluation compares 727 with a standard TA service across four dimensions outlined in the evaluation framework (right).

Outcomes data for 727 were provided by Bridge Housing and Mission Australia. Data for the standard TA service (hereafter, the Motels Program) were provided by another NSW-based tier-1 CHP and include clients who were placed in commercial hotels or motels in Northern Sydney. The Motels Program did not provide on-site support services, but clients were expected to engage with SHS where appropriate. This contrasts with 727's purpose-built TA facility and on-site support services.

Beyond this, the two services operate under similar conditions. Both CHPs fund TA services through Private Rental Assistance funding. Consequently, TA clients in 727 and the Motels Program are subject to the same eligibility criteria set out by Homes NSW, including income and asset limits, residency status, and demonstrated housing need (p. 7).

Both cohorts are required to work with their respective CHPs to develop a TA support plan that outlines a clear exit strategy from TA. Under both services, exit pathways include securing a private rental property, moving into a boarding house, returning to family or community supports, or pursuing longer term social housing options where eligible.

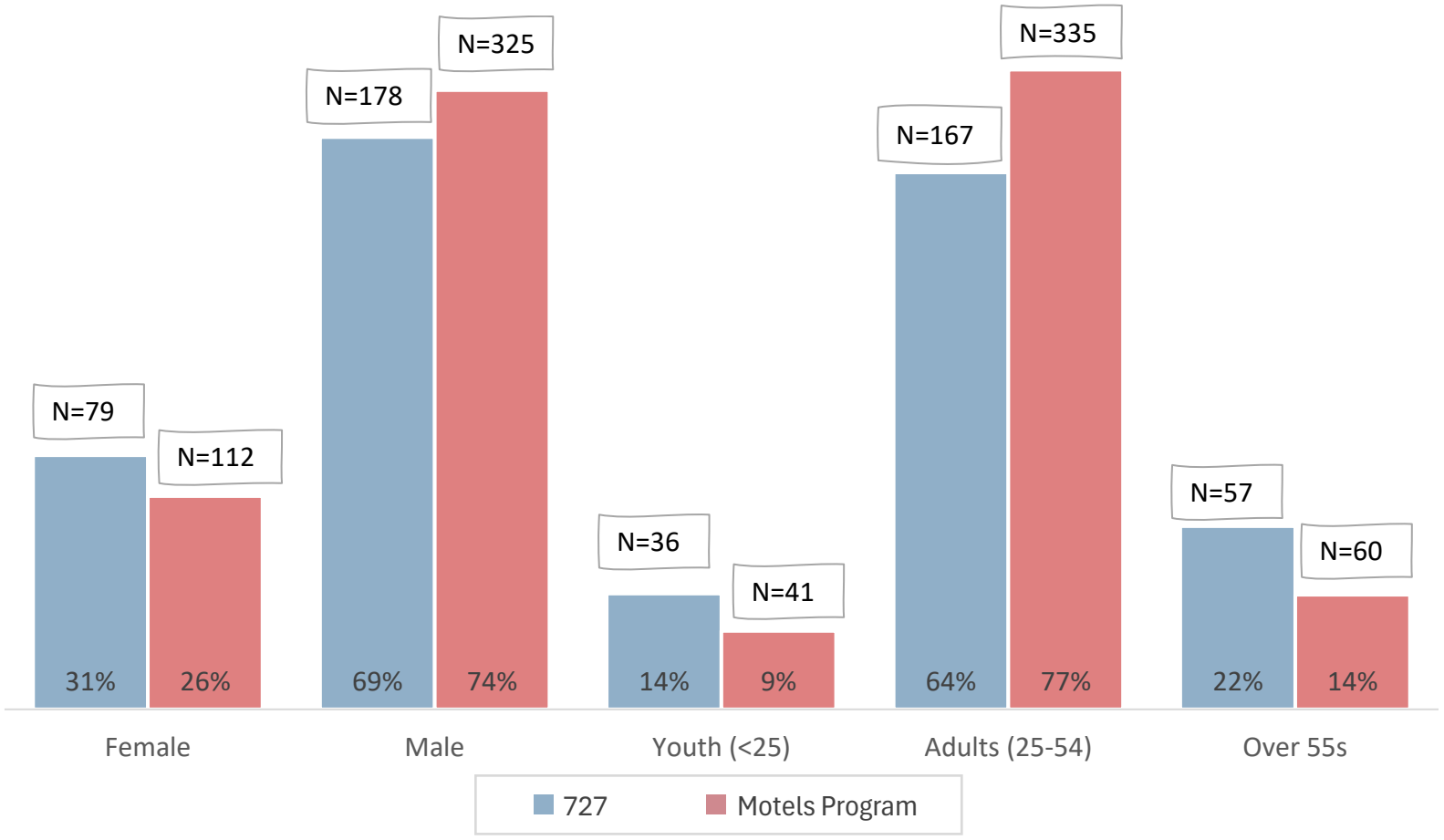
It is possible that a very small number of clients received services from 727 and the Motels Program during the study period. For this reason, the evaluation focuses on the last service a client received before attaining next step accommodation (see A1, p. 23 for further information).

AIMS	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	METRICS
Support clients into 'next step' accommodation (Section 5.3)		
Support clients to achieve goals in their case management plans, including securing next step accommodation	Does the 727 service support more clients into 'next step' accommodation than standard TA services?	Percentage of clients supported into 'next step' accommodation
Improve housing referral pathways (Section 5.4)		
Reduce nights in TA through improved referral pathways to SHS and other housing services	Does the 727 service support clients into 'next step' accommodation more quickly than standard TA services?	Length of stay in TA prior to 'next step' accommodation
Reduce repeat instances of TA (Section 5.5)		
Reduce repeat TA instances by helping clients secure sustainable accommodation	Does the 727 service support more repeat clients into next step accommodation? Are there fewer repeat instances of TA, relative to standard services?	Percentage of repeat clients supported into 'next step' accommodation Number of repeat instances of TA
Reduce cost of TA (Section 5.6)		
Reduce the cost of TA by lowering the number, frequency, and duration of TA instances	Does the 727 service produce cost savings, relative to standard TA services?	Per client cost associated with various client profiles

Notes:

- 'Next step' accommodation includes social and affordable housing, private rental accommodation, SHS accommodation, specialist rehabilitation or disability programs, and other forms of secure housing (p. 11).
- Repeat instances of TA include cases where a client receives either 727 services or motel/hotel accommodation more than once over the evaluation period. Clients are required to apply for TA extensions and self-fund nights of TA in some instances. This created breaks in continuous TA stays, requiring some data remediation to accurately determine the number of repeat instances. A step-by-step guide of this remediation process is available on request.

Figure 3. Support periods, by program and cohort



Note: The 727 cohort also includes three clients with non-binary gender identities (1%). These clients have been excluded from the analysis to avoid potential identification. Age brackets were chosen to align with eligibility criteria for NSW housing assistance programs (e.g. Rent Choice Youth for people aged 16-24 and the Social and Affordable Housing Fund with a stream for people aged 55 and over.

The evaluation period covered 17th December 2024 to 18th February 2026, a period of 14 months.

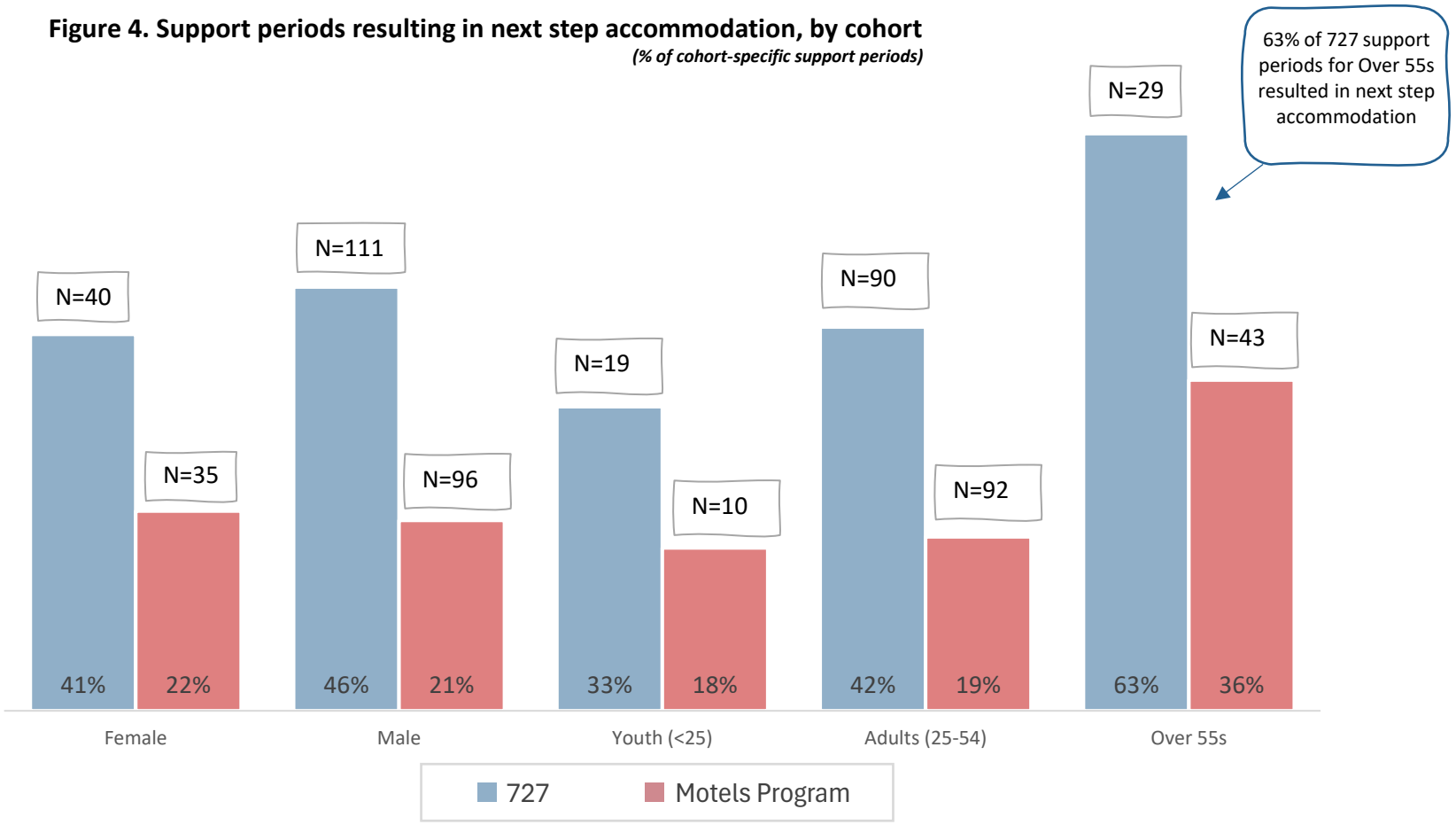
During this time, 727 delivered fewer total nights of TA and support periods than the Motels Program, with a similar mean number of nights per support period and a slightly higher median.

727	**Motels Program**
• 8,042 nights of TA	• 14,902 nights of TA
• 339 support periods	• 620 support periods
• 259 individual clients	• 437 individual clients
• mean of 23.7 nights per support period	• mean of 24.0 nights per support period
• median of 14 nights per support period	• median of 11 nights per support period

In terms of client demographics, 727 supported a higher percentage of females, young people (<25) and over 55s. Despite this, 727 and the Motels Program both predominantly supported males (69% and 74%, respectively) and adults aged between 25 and 64 (64% and 77%, respectively).

5.3 The odds of securing next step accommodation were 3 times higher for 727 clients than motels clients

Figure 4. Support periods resulting in next step accommodation, by cohort
(% of cohort-specific support periods)



727 delivered more support periods that resulted in next step accommodation than the Motels Program.

This result is statistically significant ($p<0.0001$, Chi-Square Test).

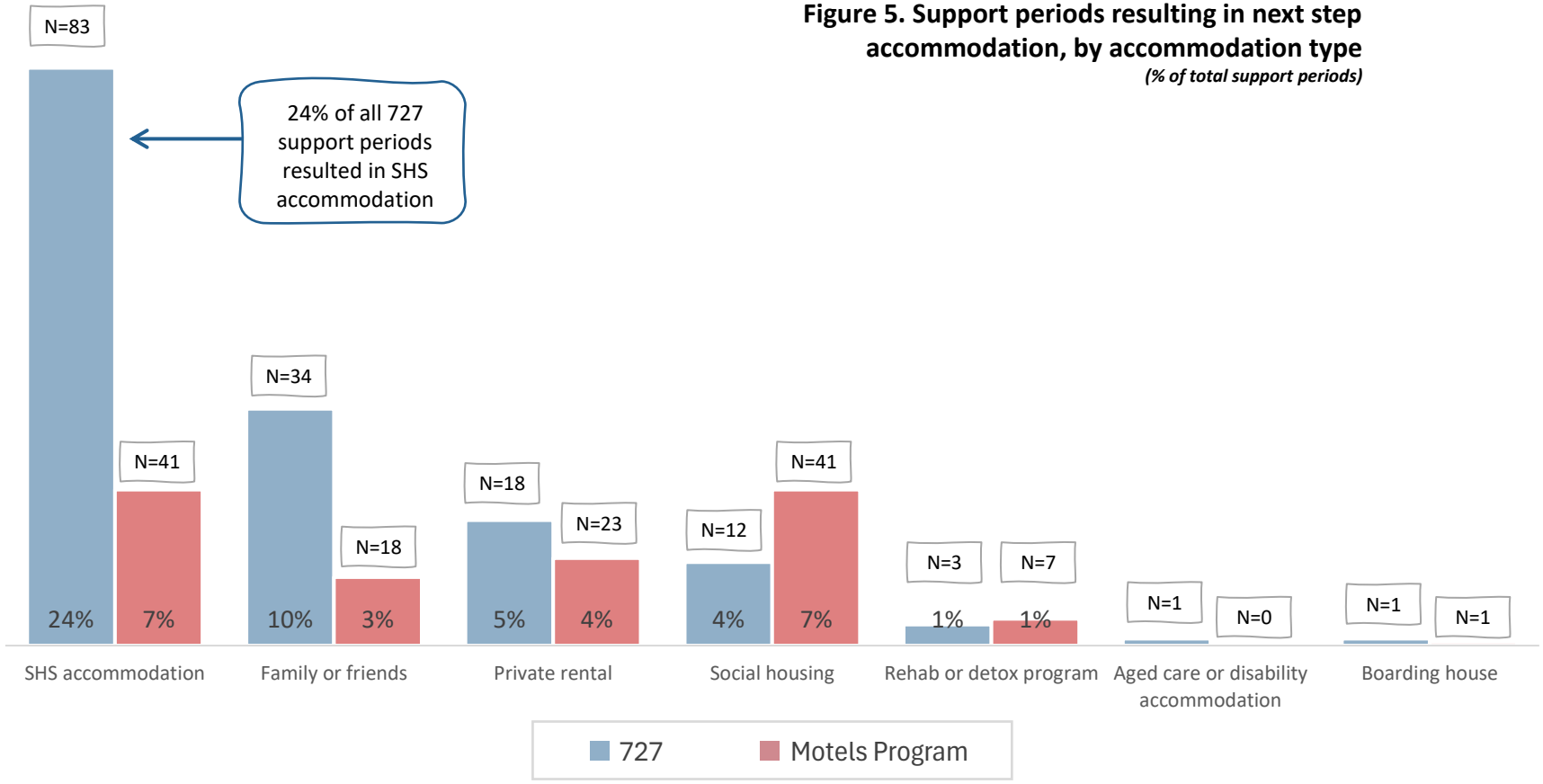
727 delivered 152 support periods resulting in next step accommodation (45% of total support periods). In contrast, the Motels Program delivered 131 support periods (21% of total support periods).

Hence, the odds of 727 clients securing next step accommodation versus not (0.81:1) was just over three times higher than the odds for motels clients (0.27:1). This positive association was statistically significant (95% CI = [2.28 – 4.05]).

727 performed better across all gender and age groups (Fig. 4), with the largest differences in the *Over 55s* (27pp), *Male* (26pp), and *Adult* (23pp) cohorts.

Figure 5. Support periods resulting in next step accommodation, by accommodation type

(% of total support periods)



Nearly one quarter of 727 support periods involved clients moving into SHS accommodation (24%).

This result was 18 percentage points higher than the Motels Program (7% of total support periods).

This reflects Bridge Housing and Mission Australia's established pathways into local SHS. For example, Mission Australia operate Ebbs House, a transitional accommodation facility in Brookvale, located approximately 4km from 727.

Only 4 per cent of 727 support periods resulted in clients securing social housing (N=12), slightly less than the Motels Program (7% of all support periods, N=41). This was primarily due to the shortage of social housing in Northern Sydney, limiting allocations directly from TA.

Ultimately, TA is a short-term emergency response and is not intended to replace SHS or long-term accommodation. In line with this intended purpose, the data suggest that 727 focuses on securing the first available housing option that meets clients' needs. To examine this further, the following section evaluates length of stay in TA prior to attaining next step accommodation.

5.4 727 supported faster transitions into next step accommodation than the Motels Program

Table 1. Mean and median number of nights before attaining next step accommodation, by cohort

	Means no. of nights		Median no. of nights	
	727	Motels Program	727	Motels Program
Female	20.5	56.4	15.0	37.0
Male	31.9	40.4	23.0	33.0
Youth (<25)	28.3	43.9	24.0	23.0
Adults (25-54)	28.7	45.5	22.0	33.5
Over 55s	29.1	42.5	22.0	37.0
All	28.7	47.7	22.0	34

Note: Means and medians are calculated for support periods resulting in next step accommodation (N=152 for 727 and N=132 for the Motels Program)

727 supported next step accommodation more quickly than the Motels Program.

This result is statistically significant (p=0.0005; Mann-Whitney U Test).

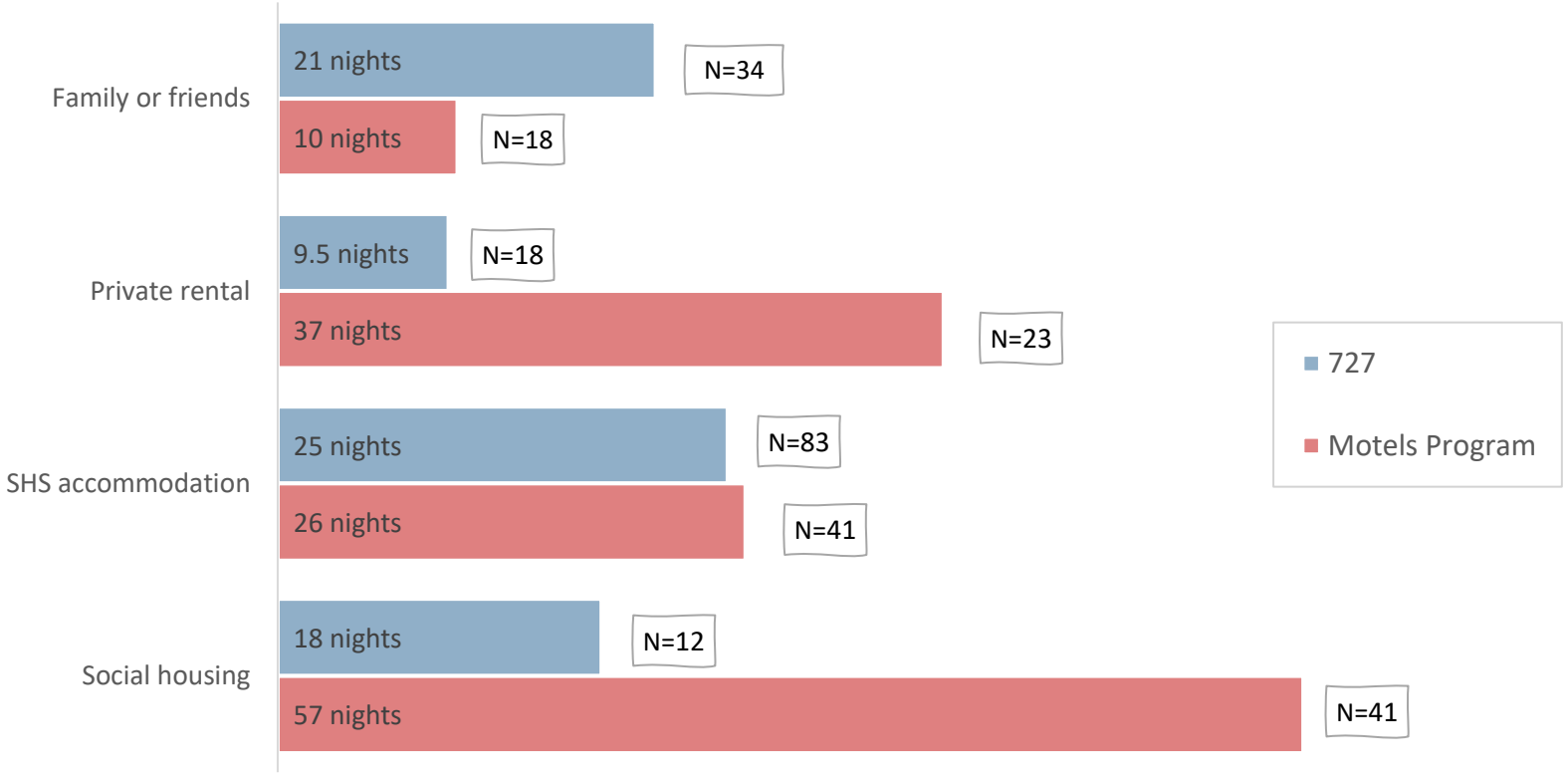
The median length of stay in 727 before attaining next-step accommodation was 22 nights, compared to a median of 34 nights in the Motels Program.

727 re-housed its female cohort most quickly, with a median stay of 15 nights before attaining next step accommodation (compared to a median of 37 nights in the Motels Program).

727 outperformed the Motels Program across all demographic groups. The youth cohort was the only group where findings were less definitive, with comparable median nights to next steps accommodation.

However, 727 had fewer long stays resulting in a smaller mean (28.3 nights compared to 43.9 nights).

Figure 6. Median nights to next step accommodation, by accommodation type



Note: Medians are calculated for support periods resulting in next step accommodation (N=152 for 727 and N=132 for the Motels Program)

727 supported faster transitions into social housing and private rental accommodation compared to the Motels Program.

As discussed in Section 5.3 (p.16), direct transitions from 727 to social housing were less common than the Motels Program.

However, for those that moved directly into social housing, 727 supported transitions with significantly less time in TA.

The median length of stay in 727 before attaining social housing was 18 nights, compared to a median of 57 nights in the Motels Program. This provides further evidence of 727's effectiveness as a transitional service, supporting timely allocations to social housing when it is available and appropriate.

727 also significantly outperformed the Motels Program in terms of median nights leading to a private rental outcome.

Median nights to SHS accommodation were similar across the two programs; however, 727 delivered double the support periods leading to this outcome.

5.5 727 supported more repeat clients into next step accommodation

Table 2. Clients with repeat instances of TA who attained next step accommodation

	Number of repeat clients who attained next steps accommodation	% all repeat clients	% of all clients
727	33	51%	13%
Motels Program	25	22%	6%

Table 3. Clients with repeat instances of TA, by number of support periods

No. of support periods	**727**		**Motels Program**	
	No. of clients	% of all clients	No. of clients	% of all clients
2	51	19.7	74	16.9
3	13	5.0	21	4.8
4	1	0.4	10	2.3
5	0	0	8	1.8
6	0	0	1	0.2
Total	65	25.1	114	26.1

727 supported one-in-two repeat clients into next step accommodation, compared to one-in-five for the Motels Program.

727 had fewer support periods per repeat client than the Motels Program. This result is statistically significant (p=0.011; Mann-Whitney U Test).

Table 3 shows how many times repeat clients used TA. Approximately 5 *per cent* of 727 clients used TA more than twice (N=14), compared to 9 *per cent* in the Motels Program (N=40).

Overall, 727 had fewer clients with repeat instances of TA (N=65) than the Motels Program (N=114). However, differences were marginal as a percentage of all clients (25% and 26%, respectively) and were not statistically significant (p=0.77, Chi-Square Test).

Results around repeat clients should be interpreted with a degree of caution. The data available only identify repeat instances for 727 and the Motels Program separately. Repeat instances across TA services are not identifiable (see A1, p. 23 for further information).

5.6 727 can potentially deliver cost savings of $3,360 per client, per stay

Table 4. Median costs per client who was supported to next step accommodation, by client type and outcome type

	727	Motels Program	Cost savings, per client, per stay
Client type			
Repeat client	$5,880	$10,360	$4,480
Youth (<25)	$6,720	$6,440	-$280
Adults (25-54)	$6,160	$9,380	$3,220
Over 55s	$6,160	$10,360	$4,200
Female	$4,200	$10,360	$6,160
Male	$6,440	$9,240	$2,800
Outcome type			
Family or friends	$5,880	$2,800	-$3,080
Private rental	$2,660	$10,360	$7,700
SHS accommodation	$7,000	$7,280	$280
Social housing	$5,040	$15,960	$10,920

Note: Negative cost savings equal potential losses under the 727 model and are highlighted in red. Positive cost savings equal potential monetary gains under the 727 model, with the largest three amounts highlighted in green. Per client, per stay costs have been calculated using the median length of stay before attaining next step accommodation for each cohort and outcome type, multiplied by $280. Consultation with Bridge Housing indicated that this is the standard per client, per night fixed rate to provide TA services at the 727 facility and was previously the standard motel rate when they used commercial providers for TA accommodation.

727 can potentially deliver cost savings of $3,360 per client, per stay relative to standard TA services (based on median length of stay).

This potential cost saving rises to $4,480 for repeat clients and $6,160 for female clients. Conversely, there is little difference in costs for youth under the 727 model and standard TA services (based on median length of stay).

In terms of housing outcomes, 727 supported clients into social housing and private rental accommodation with shorter median stays in TA than the Motels Program (Fig. 6). This equates to a potential cost saving of $10,920 and $7,700, per client, per stay, respectively.

Section 6. Conclusion and recommendations

6.1 The evaluation finds strong evidence in support of the 727 model

Compared to the Motels Program, 727 supported:

- more clients into next step accommodation (Section 5.3)
- faster transitions from TA into next step accommodation (Section 5.4)
- more repeat clients into next step accommodation (Section 5.5)
- fewer repeat instances of TA amongst repeat clients (Section 5.5).

These benefits have the potential to deliver cost savings of $3,360 per client, per stay relative to standard TA services (based on median length of stay), with additional savings for repeat and female clients (Section 5.6).

The evaluation has two main limitations. First, available data provided limited information about the factors contributing to stronger client outcomes under the 727 model. Additional analysis and data are needed to identify which attributes of the 727 model are most beneficial to clients and to control for differences between the composition of the two cohorts (e.g., homelessness histories).

In addition, there may be a small number of clients who received services from 727 and the Motels Program, preventing a strict intervention-control comparison (see A1, p. 23). This issue is difficult to control given the transient nature of TA and the limited system-level data available.

Second, financial data were not available for a cost-benefit analysis. Hence, cost savings are estimates based on median lengths of stay and average per client, per night costs reported by Bridge Housing.

Despite this, the evaluation finds strong evidence in support of 727 and recommends expansion of the model (Recommendation 1, p. 22). Recommendations 2-4 are designed to address the limitations of this evaluation and to allow for ongoing monitoring and refinement of the service.



727 opening
Source: Bridge Housing

6.1 The evaluation recommends expansion of the 727 model with resources for ongoing monitoring and refinement

Recommendation 1: Project partners should expand the 727 model, with potential adjustments for different cohorts

Compared to standard TA services, the 727 model is more effective at transitioning people experiencing homelessness into next step accommodation. There is scope to expand the model, given the NSW Government's intention to move away from purchased TA (Section 2.3). Currently, the model is only available to singles and couples but could be expanded to families with children with the acquisition of different housing types and adjustments to the service model.

Recommendation 2: Project partners should investigate avenues for system-level data capture

Appropriate emergency support can decrease persistent homelessness and the repeated use of TA by supporting more sustainable housing pathways. However, it is not possible to assess this with data from individual organisations (e.g. tracking movements between TA providers or the longevity of post-TA housing). Avenues for system-wide data capture might involve data sharing between Northern Sydney providers or the use of linked datasets (e.g., DCJ's Human Services Dataset).

Recommendation 3: Project partners should evaluate the financial sustainability of the 727 model, relative to standard TA services

A financial evaluation can provide compelling evidence in favour of supported TA over purchased TA models. Given 727's strong housing outcomes and fast transitions to next step accommodation, the model holds potential for cost savings greater than operating costs (e.g. costs of support services, maintenance, interest repayments).

Recommendation 4: Project partners should evaluate how 727 was established and client experiences with service delivery

Bridge Housing coordinated multiple stakeholders across three levels of government to address planning and funding challenges, including Housing Australia, Homes NSW, the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, Northern Beaches Council and local members of parliament. An evaluation of this process could provide a valuable resource for other organisations and support more streamlined supported accommodation projects in the future. A qualitative evaluation of service delivery and client experiences would also help identify which attributes of the 727 model are critical to sustainable housing outcomes.

A1. Research design and limitations

The evaluation assesses the 'next step' housing outcomes of clients who received 727 services relative to those who received standard TA services in Northern Sydney. 727 offers purpose-built accommodation and on-site support services. In contrast, standard TA services generally place clients in commercial hotels or motels without on-site support. The evaluation provides insights into the effectiveness of 727's support model but has two main limitations:

1. A small number of clients may have received services from 727 and the Motels Program

First, there may be a small number of clients who received services from 727 and the Motels Program. Program data were provided by two separate TA providers with de-identified client records, meaning it was not possible to track whether clients received both services. Bridge Housing indicated that 31 clients (12%) from the 727 cohort had been referred by the Motels Program provider. However, it is not clear whether any of these 31 clients accessed TA through the Motels Program.

To address potential issues with crossover, the evaluation focuses on the last service a client received before attaining next step accommodation. This assumes that the most recent TA service a client received was the most influential on housing outcomes.

The data has some limitations with respect to repeat instances of TA, assessed in Section 5.5. Repeat instances across TA services are not identifiable. For example, this means that a client who received one support period in the Motels Program and one support period in 727 would not be classified as a 'repeat client' in the study. Bridge Housing has advised that this situation is uncommon and numbers are likely to be negligible.

2. Available data provides limited information about the factors contributing to client outcomes

Program data provided basic demographic information, days in TA (continuous data), and clients' housing outcomes (categorical data).

A Mann-Whitney U test was used to assess differences in length of stay before attaining next step accommodation and the number of support periods associated with repeat clients. This non-parametric test was selected because data were continuous and non-normally distributed.

A Chi-Square Test of Independence was used to assess differences in the number of support periods ending in next step accommodation and the number of repeat clients in each cohort. This test was selected because both the independent variable (service type) and the dependent variable (outcome) are nominal/categorical.

While tests used showed a statistically significant difference in client outcomes between the two services, they provide limited information about why these differences occurred. Multivariate analysis and additional data are needed to control for potential confounders, such as differences in the composition of the two cohorts (e.g., homelessness histories).

In addition, qualitative analysis would provide further insight into the most beneficial attributes of the 727 service model relative to the Motels Program.

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