IO3 - Pack on Individual Needs and Allocation of Housing

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

a. What is the Housing Allocation System (HAS)

There are a multitude of stakeholders that have an involvement in housing and support - government departments, local government, municipal authorities, state, voluntary and private health care providers, voluntary organisations, front line and managerial staff and, of course, the service users themselves. With the variety of stakeholders as well as divergences in history, culture, policy, etc., systems for allocating housing vary widely across Europe and can even vary within countries.

Existing systems for allocation and assessment of housing and supports can be inflexible and are not equipped to accommodate the range of people applying for housing with supports and their diverse needs

The Housing Allocation System (HAS) is intended to work in partnership with other intellectual outputs from TopHouse and will collate criteria from individual needs and rights assessments, support needs assessments and eligibility assessments. Best practice examples from across Europe will be studied and learning from other contexts will be drawn on to ensure that HAS is a system through which housing and supports will be appropriately allocated to applicants, effectively meeting their needs and done so in a way that is transparent and person-centred.

b. Aim of HAS

The aim of HAS is to put in place a system of housing and support allocation for persons with a disability or in need of additional supports. It is intended that HAS will incorporate person-centred planning and will be underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It is intended that HAS will be used by front line housing staff and will be of use across Europe in all types of organisation, to provide fair and transparent housing allocation decisions. Managerial and organisational awareness and acceptance will also be crucial for HAS to be adopted in a meaningful way.

c. Opportunities and limitations of HAS

The issue of transferability is an aspect of HAS that represents both an opportunity and a potential limitation. The system must be flexible enough to fit into existing housing allocation systems across Europe. If this is successfully done, it will create a fair and equitable system of allocation that is person-centred and underpinned by the UN CRPD and recognised across Europe. The benefits of this will be experienced by service users as the end users of such a system of allocations. It will also be of great benefit to housing allocation officers who may be ill-

equipped to properly and appropriately accommodate people with additional support needs through existing systems.

Keeping in mind the concept of transferability, it is vital that while HAS is flexible, it must also be specific enough to be meaningful. A loose collection of standards or guiding principles will not provide the robust system necessary for HAS to be a useful tool.

It is also necessary for users of HAS at frontline and middle-management level to have a willingness to work differently and, in some ways, take on a slightly different role. The role of the allocations officer in housing can be one where there is only a short amount of time spent with the applicant. A recognition that by working differently in a more collaborative and supportive way with applicants who require housing and support will lead to an effective use of HAS and, hopefully, better allocations and outcomes for all.

2. Background

a. **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD)**
   The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) is a human rights convention written by and for people with disabilities. It is intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with a disability. While it does not provide any new rights, it is an important document in that it recognises and explicitly states that a person with a disability has the same rights, entitlements and expectations as someone who does not have a disability.

   This impacts on areas of life such as:
   - Housing and the ability to choose where and how you want to live
   - Choosing and deciding on your own support services
   - Access to information
   - Employment and education
   - Health services and the right to the highest attainable standard of health
     Full participation in society

b. The UN CRPD has now been signed and ratified by all EU countries and HAS will be created in line with the principles of the Convention.

c. **The UN CRPD and Integrated Housing & Support**
   Across Europe, just under 20% of people live in social housing and a sizeable number of these social housing tenants require and access integrated housing and support. There are thousands more who have applied for such housing in addition to people living in congregated institutional settings who want and require independent housing with supports. Such tenants and applicants have needs around disability (physical, intellectual, sensory, autism spectrum, mental health),

homelessness (with additional needs around disability or addiction) or related to age (reduced mobility, dementia, etc.).

Across Europe, the policy direction in recent years has slowly taken a more person-centred approach when it comes to supported housing, along with a gradual adoption of the "housing first" philosophy for housing for homeless persons. There have been large-scale reviews of disability services moving from institutional settings to support people with disabilities in community-based living, with maximum independence and choice. This reflected the policy shift towards the delivery of care and support to people with disabilities in the community and was another step away from the historical practice of the Department of Health and Health Service Executive funding housing as part of a person's overall care in a large residential congregated setting.

Although Ireland only ratified the UN CRPD in 2018, policy has been moving more towards a person-centred model. In July 2012, the Irish Department of Environment, Community and Local Government published the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016, the first policy document in Ireland to provide clear guidelines specifically on best practice in housing people with a disability. It is part of a wider government policy (legislated for in the Disability Act 2005) for all public services to meet the needs of people with disabilities as an integral part of their function i.e. mainstreaming of services to people with disabilities. The full extent of the role of the UN CRPD in Ireland has not yet been assessed comprehensively and although policy is moving towards a person-centred model, there is likely to be much work to do to ensure full CRPD compliance.

Other European countries have found the same. In Austria, a report by the Austrian Disability Council stated that although the Austrian government assumes that the rights of people with disabilities in eh UN CRPD are already enshrined in the Austrian legal system, he National Action Plan on disability lists 250 measures requiring implementation to meet CRPD compliance.

In Finland, the Advisory Board for the Rights of People with a Disability, VANE, published an action plan to strengthen the UN CRPD in Finland. Although ratified, this report highlights the lack of tools to implement UN CRPD in Finland or to assess its effects.

d. Person Centred Approaches for Housing

Recent policy in Ireland and across Europe has taken a person-centred approach with people living in congregated settings moving to more dispersed housing in the wider community. Such housing has been delivered by housing associations, local authorities, private care providers, municipal authorities and others. In housing people with a disability, their community housing will give them access to mainsteam community services such as doctors, public health nurses as well as wider social, cultural and sporting services that enable people with a disability to lead more independent lives as fully active members of society in the way that they wish.

In social housing, Person Centred Plans (PCPs) are completed by the individual with support from a service provider as required. PCPs support and enable a person to make informed choices about how they want to live their life, now and in the future. They support the person to identify their dreams, wishes and goals and what is required to make these possible. The PCP process requires that the supports available are responsive to the person and focus on the outcomes they want to achieve. An individual's PCP deals with all aspects of their future transition. The plans include the housing needs and choices of the individual, and are developed before a person presents to the local authority for assessment of need. The PCPs will help to inform this process.

PCPs should be reviewed on a continual basis by service providers to ensure that they reflect the current needs, will and preference of the individual. It is important that if there are substantial changes to the person's support needs, that may affect the nature and/or sustainability of the tenancy that these are incorporated into the PCP. Following agreement with the individual and their advocate, if appropriate, such information shoudl be shared between housing and service providers to ensure that the individual's changing needs are appropriately met.

e. Role of the housing applicant and co-production in housing allocation

The European Network on Independent Living (ENIL) defines co-production as "inclusive working practices between Experts by Experience and organisations…every person involved in the process of co-production is valued, respected and listened to, with everyone involved in designing, developing and delivering ".

Co-production in housing is arguably carried out to some extent through the person centred approach to housing and the creation of Person Centred Plans (PCPs). Where this is likely to fall down and co-production be lost is in the housing allocations process where front-line staff working within an inflexible system that is ill-equipped to meet the needs of people with additional support needs.

HAS will be developed with the principles of co-production in mind and try to incorporate these in a meaningful way.

It is also intended that the training delivered as part of TopHouse will incorporate an element of co-production, providing opportunities for service users to provide input and give their lived experience of the housing allocation and assessment systems.

3. Housing Allocations

a. Organisations involved in housing allocation and their role

As mentioned in section 1a, there are a multitude of organisations with an involvement in housing allocation. Below is an overview of some of their functions in relation to housing and support. Please note this list is not exhaustive and there are areas where organisations and their roles

overlap:

Organisation	Role
Central government	Creating national housing policy Steering policy to create and communicate a vision for housing in country Allocating national budgets for housing and supports
Local / regional / municipal / government	Assessing numbers of people in housing need Assessing types of housing need Allocating funding for housing projects Providing housing management services Allocating housing
Health / support / care services	Providing health, care and support services Advocating on behalf of the tenant / client
Voluntary organisations	Developing housing projects Providing housing management services Advocating on behalf of the tenant / client

IO5 of TopHouse focuses on setting up cross-sectoral co-operation. This is an essential element of successful housing allocation and tenancy sustainment. All agencies using HAS should incorporate cross-sectoral co-operation, ensuring that individuals seeking integrated housing and support are fully supported by all agencies throughout the process, the allocations and support process is streamlined and each organisation is fully aware of their area of responsibility and implements it.

The transferability of TopHouse resources is paramount to its success and long-term usability. Where cross-sectoral or inter-agency co-operation is not possible at an official level, clients should be encouraged to build networks where they can through community-orientated work. This is elaborated on in IO5.

b. Legal basis for allocation of housing

The registration of housing need and allocation of housing is carried out in different ways across Europe. HAS should be used as a tool within each country's legislative framework and operating principles.
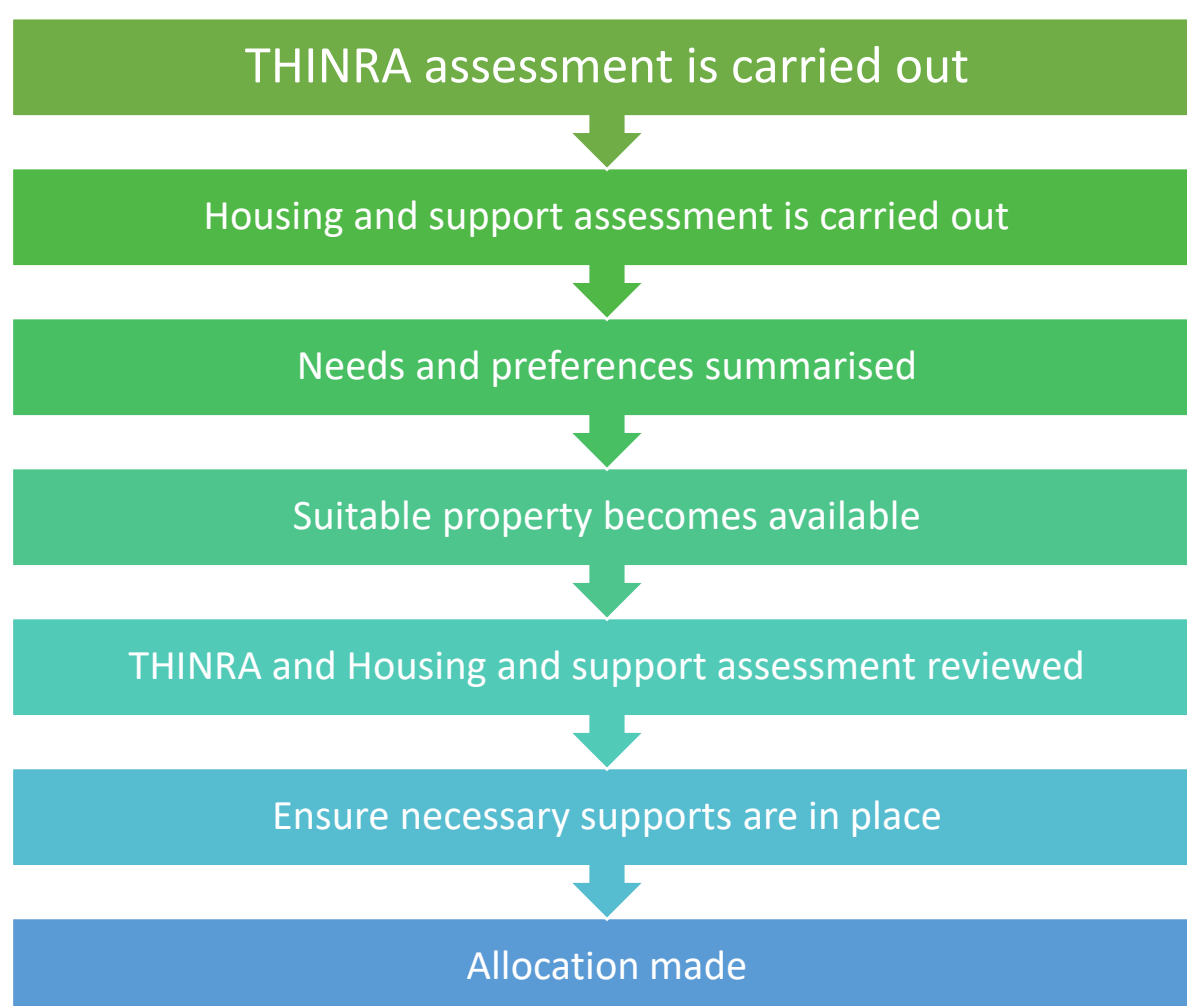
c. Rights of housing applicants

The legal rights of housing applicants may differ across jurisdictions. It is intended that the tools in TopHouse and the Housing Allocations System (HAS) would work within the existing legal and allocations framework.

4. Housing Allocations System (HAS)

Housing Allocations System or HAS outlines in a step-by-step process, how to allocate housing with integrated supports to an applicant with additional support needs.

In all aspects of the assessment and allocation process, where permission for co-correspondence has been provided, an applicant's advocate should be copied on correspondence. The sensitive and personal nature of many aspects of the assessment should be kept in mind and used and stored strictly in accordance with GDPR.

It can be summarised in the following chart:

THINRA assessment is carried out

Housing and support assessment is carried out

Needs and preferences summarised

Suitable property becomes available

THINRA and Housing and support assessment reviewed

Ensure necessary supports are in place

Allocation made

The following text outlines how to carry out each one of these steps in more detail.

Step 1: THINRA

Please refer to previous chapter for a full overview of THINRA, TopHouse Individual Needs and Rights Assessment.The results of THINRA will illustrate clearly an individual's needs and rights. It

may refer to the supports they require to live in their allocated housing, but it is important to note that the next step, the housing assessment can be carried out whether or not these supports are currently in place.

Step 2: Housing Assessment Survey

The assessment of an applicant's housing needs preferences is central to them being allocated an appropriate unit. In submitting an application for social housing support, it is essential that a detailed description of the applicant's disability and support needs is provided so that an assessment of suitability and allocation can be made.

For applicants with physical disabilities or other disabilities that would require housing units to be specially adapted, it is important that these needs are clarified early in the process. This may be in the form of a letter from a doctor, occupational therapist (OT) report, service provider or consultant / specialist. The letter must document the nature and extent of the disability. If specific adaptations or features are required, then an OT report should also accompany the application.

In addition to this, for applicants with all additional support needs, the following survey tool is to be used by frontline housing staff and allocations officers to ensure all applicants are given the opportunity to fully express their wishes in relation to their future housing. This tool should be used in conjunction with existing housing application forms in your country / region. It should also be used in conjunction with THINRA, the TopHouse Individual Needs and Rights Assessment. Through these three frameworks, it is proposed that a clear full picture will be created of an individual's needs, supports, housing needs and preferences; that they can be allocated a suitable property within the existing allocations procedures and that cross-sectoral co-operation will be in place to ensure relevant agencies all work together to provide appropriate supports.

It is important at this stage that the applicant is made aware of the limitations of the allocations system and the length of time it would be typical to wait for allocation of a unit. They may express a preference as part of the survey that cannot be met by the allocating body and / or they may be waiting months or years for a suitable allocation. It is important to manage expectations.

At the point at which an individual with additional support needs is applying for housing, this questionnaire should be completed by them, with a support service provider and allocations officer in attendance also to clarify questions or to provide assistance if required.

The following survey draws extensively on 2012 work by Cowman J., Gough P. and Cunningham R. and we would like to acknowledge their assistance with this.

FIRST I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR PRESENT LIVING SITUATION

1. WHERE ARE YOU LIVING RIGHT NOW? (Check one answer. If the answer is not clear, ask the participant to choose one).

a. _____ in a general hospital

b. _____ on a psychiatric ward in a hospital

c. _____ in a rehabilitation unit run by a support service

d. _____ in a high support hostel or house run by a support service

e. _____ in a group home run by a support service

f. _____ in other accommodation run by a support service

g. _____ in a homeless hostel

h. _____ in a homeless B+B

i. _____ in other accommodation run by the homeless services

j. _____ in transitional accommodation

k. _____ in prison or other custodial institution

l. _____ sleeping rough/on the street

m. _____ temporarily with friend or relative

n. _____ in the family home

o. _____ local authority housing

p. _____ supported / voluntary housing

q. _____ private rented housing

r. _____ housing association

2. DO YOU LIVE ALONE OR WITH OTHER PEOPLE?

a. _____ alone

b. _____ with other people

3. HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED THERE?

_____ _____

Years   Months

(If less than a year, ask # 3a and # 3b; if more than a year, skip to # 4)

3a. IN THE PAST YEAR HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU MOVED?

# of times _____

3b. IN THE PAST YEAR, HAVE YOU EVER BEEN HOMELESS?

  a. _____ yes b. _____ no

4. DURING THE PAST YEAR, WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR MONEY FROM?
(Check all that apply)

  a. _____ employment

  b. _____ social welfare (name of payment _____)

  c. _____ support from family

  d. _____ other (specify) _____

  e. _____ I have no income (skip to 6e)

4a. HOW MUCH A WEEK WAS THIS? (Record the answer here:)

_____

4b. HOW MUCH A WEEK DO YOU PAY IN RENT? (if not paying rent skip to # 6).
(record answer here:) _____

4c. DOES THIS AMOUNT INCLUDE HOUSING RELATED UTILITIES? (electricity,
rubbish, heating etc)

  a_____ yes

  b_____ no

4d. ABOUT HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU SPEND A WEEK ON UTILITIES?
(record answer here:) _____

4e. DO YOU GET HELP WITH YOUR RENT? E.g. rent supplement / housing
benefit?

  a. _____ yes

  b. _____ no (if no skip to # 5)

4f. WHO HELPS YOU WITH YOUR RENT?

a. _____ support service provider

b. _____ community welfare officer

c. _____ family, spouse

d. _____ Other (specify :) _____

5. I'D LIKE TO KNOW HOW SATISFIED YOU ARE WITH WHERE YOU ARE LIVING RIGHT NOW. WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOU ARE: (Read these out loud and check the one that applies).

a. _____ VERY SATISFIED

b. _____ SOMEWHAT SATISFIED

c. _____ NEITHER SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED

d. _____ SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED

e. _____ VERY DISSATISFIED

6. WHAT IS THE ONE THING YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT YOUR PRESENT LIVING SITUATION? (Record the answer here:) _____

_____

_____

7. WHAT IS THE ONE THING YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT YOUR PRESENT LIVING SITUATION? (Record the answer here:) _____

_____

_____

8   . THE LIST BELOW (A TO K) CONTAINS 11 OF THE THINGS THAT PEOPLE SAY THEY LIKE OR DISLIKE ABOUT THEIR LIVING SITUATION. TELL ME HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT EACH OF THESE THINGS IN YOUR PRESENT LIVING SITUATION. DO YOU:

LIKE IT A LOT (5)

LIKE IT SOMEWHAT (4)

NOT CARE ABOUT IT (3)

DISLIKE IT (2)

DISLIKE IT A LOT (1)

IT DOES NOT APPLY (0)

(Read the list out loud and circle the number which applies).

a. AMOUNT OF ROOM / SPACE	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
b. THE REPAIR AND CONDITION	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
c. IT'S LOCATION	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
d. THE PEOPLE YOU LIVE WITH	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
e. THE NEIGHBOURS	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
f. LIVING ALONE	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
g. THE LANDLORD	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
h. SUPPORT STAFF VISITING	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
i. THE AMOUNT OF PRIVACY	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
j. THE PRICE OR COST	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
k. ANY OTHER THING	(0) (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

(Specify). _____

9. ARE PETS ALLOWED WHERE YOU CURRENTLY LIVE?

    a. _____ yes

    b. _____ no

10. DO SUPPORT STAFF COME INTO YOUR HOME TO PROVIDE SERVICES ON A REGULAR BASIS?

    a. _____ no (if no, skip to # 12)

    b. _____ yes (continue)

11. IF YOU RECEIVE SUPPORT SERVICES WHERE YOU LIVE ON A REGULAR BASIS COULD YOU DESCRIBE WHAT THEY ARE AND HOW OFTEN YOU GET THEM? (Record the answer here:)

_____

_____

_____

12. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THIS SITUATION? (Read out loud and check the one that applies).

    a. _____ VERY SATISFIED

    b. _____ SOMEWHAT SATISFIED

    c. _____ NEITHER SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED

    d. _____ SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED

    e. _____ VERY DISSATISFIED

13. CAN YOU CONTINUE LIVING WHERE YOU ARE AS LONG AS YOU WANT TO OR WILL YOU HAVE TO MOVE?

    a. _____ yes, I can stay as long as I want to (if yes, skip to # 14)

    b. _____ no, I will have to move (continue)

13a. WHY WILL YOU HAVE TO MOVE? (Record the answer here:)

_____

_____

_____

14. WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTINUE TO LIVE WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW OR WOULD YOU LIKE TO MOVE SOMEWHERE ELSE?

    a. _____ stay (skip to # 15)

    b. _____ move elsewhere (continue)

14a. WHY WOULD YOU LIKE TO MOVE? (Record the answer here:)

_____

_____

_____

15 IS THERE ANY OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE TO MENTION ABOUT YOUR CURRENT LIVING SITUATION THAT WOULD HELP YOU TO EXPLAIN YOUR HOUSING NEED?

_____

_____

_____

_____

==
GO TO SUMMARY 1 TO SUMMARISE THE HOUSING NEEDS

==

16. IDEALLY, WHAT KIND OF PLACE WOULD YOU LIKE TO LIVE IN?

(Check one answer. If the answer is not clear, ask the participant to choose one).

       a. _____ in a group home run by a support service

       b. _____ in a nursing home

       c. _____ in a homeless hostel

       d. _____ in a homeless B+B

       e. _____ in other accommodation run by the homeless services

       f. _____ in transitional accommodation

       g. _____ on the streets/sleeping rough

       h. _____ independently in an apartment

       i. _____ independently in a house

       j. _____ in my family's home

       k. _____ with a friend or relative,

       l. _____ other (specify) _____

17. WHAT IS IT ABOUT THAT PLACE THAT WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

(Record the answer here:) _____

_____

_____

18. WOULD YOU LIKE TO LIVE:(Read out loud and tick the one that applies).

a. _____ WITHIN THE AREA YOU CURRENTLY LIVE

b. _____ OUT OF THIS AREA BUT STILL IN [name of city]

c. _____ OUT OF [name of city]

d. _____ IT DOESN'T MATTER

19. WHAT IS IT ABOUT THAT LOCATION THAT WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

(Record the answer here:)_____

_____

_____

20. IF YOU HAD TO LIVE WITH SOMEONE, WOULD YOU PREFER TO LIVE WITH OTHER SUPPORT SERVICE USERS OR NOT? (Read the 3 choices out aloud and ask person to choose the one that suits most)

a. _____ yes, I would prefer to live with other support service users

b. _____ no, I would rather not

c. _____ it doesn't matter

20a. WHY DO YOU FEEL THIS WAY?

(Record the answer here:) _____

_____

_____

21. IF YOU HAD THE CHOICE, WOULD YOU RATHER LIVE ALONE OR WITH OTHER PEOPLE?

a. _____ I would rather live alone (skip to # 23)

b. _____ I would rather live with others (continue)

22. WHO WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO LIVE WITH? (Check one answer. If the answer is not clear, ask the participant to choose one).

a. _____ my relatives

b. _____ my friends

c. _____ my spouse

d. _____ support staff

e. _____ homeless staff

f. _____ any other person? (Specify) _____

23. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD ABOUT YOUR CHOICE OF HOUSING AND WHO YOU WOULD LIKE TO LIVE WITH?

_____

_____

_____

===

GO TO SUMMARY 2 TO SUMMARISE PREFERRED HOUSING

===

NOW THAT WE'VE TALKED ABOUT WHERE YOU WOULD LIKE TO LIVE, I'D LIKE TO ASK ABOUT WHAT KINDS OF SUPPORTS OR SERVICES YOU FEEL YOU WOULD NEED IN ORDER TO LIVE THERE

24. WHAT KINDS OF SUPPORTS OR SERVICES DO YOU THINK YOU MIGHT NEED IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO LIVE WHERE YOU WANT TO?

(Record the answer here:) _____

_____

_____

25. DO YOU HAVE ANY PARTICULAR DIFFICULTY OR NEED WHICH INFLUENCES YOUR CURRENT CHOICE OF HOUSING? (Circle)

A. MEDICAL (heart, breathing, etc) yes / no

B. PHYSICAL (difficulty with stairs etc) yes / no

C. LEARNING (mild learning difficulty etc) yes / no

D. SENSORY (hearing, sight difficulties) yes / no

E. FINANCIAL (cannot pay rent, bills etc) yes / no

F. LEGAL (separation, barring order, will etc) yes / no

G. Other yes / no If 'other' specify _____

25a. IF 'YES' TO ANY PARTICULAR DIFFICULTY, DO YOU WANT TO TELL ME MORE?

(Record answer here) _____

_____

_____

26. IN GENERAL, HOW URGENT DO YOU THINK YOUR HOUSING AND SUPPORT NEEDS ARE?

     High _____

     Medium _____

     Low _____

27. DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE AT RISK OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING; (circle - no, high, med, or low risk)

a. Homelessness	no	High	Medium	Low
b. Abuse	no	High	Medium	Low

(If yes circle whether: emotional, physical, sexual, neglect or financial)

c. Deteriorating Mental Health	no	High	Medium	Low
d. Deteriorating Physical Health	no	High	Medium	Low
e. A Risk to Self	no	High	Medium	Low
f. A Risk to Others	no	High	Medium	Low
g. Any other risk	no	High	Medium	Low

If 'other' specify _____

28. ARE THERE ANY OTHER ISSUES YOU WOULD LIKE TO MENTION IN RELATION TO YOUR HOUSING AND SUPPORT NEEDS?

_____

_____

29. WHAT KINDS OF SUPPORTS OR SERVICES DO YOU THINK YOU MIGHT NEED IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO LIVE WHERE YOU WANT TO?

(Record the answer here:) _____

_____

_____

30. I'M GOING TO READ YOU A LIST OF SUPPORTS THAT PEOPLE OFTEN
MENTION. PLEASE SAY WHICH OF THESE ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS YOU
THINK YOU MIGHT NEED IN ORDER TO LIVE WHERE YOU WANT TO LIVE.
(Read the list aloud and check yes or no for each item).

	Yes	No	
a.	___	___	Would you like to be able to reach staff by telephone any time of the day or night?
b.	___	___	Would you like to be able to ask staff to come to your home any time of day or night?
c.	___	___	Would you like to have staff come to your home regularly during the day?
d.	___	___	Would you like to have staff live with you?
e.	___	___	Would you need more income/ benefits/rent allowance?
f.	___	___	Would you need money for the deposit?
g.	___	___	Furniture? (like chairs, bed etc)
h.	___	___	Would you need household supplies? (like pots / pans)
i.	___	___	Would you need roommates or housemates?
k.	___	___	Would you need help in finding a place to live?
l.	___	___	Would you need help in finding roommates or housemates?
n.	___	___	Would you need help getting benefits?
o.	___	___	Would you need anything else?

(If yes specify) _____

31. I'M GOING TO READ YOU ANOTHER LIST. PLEASE TELL ME IF THERE IS
ANYTHING ON THIS LIST THAT YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY DOING AND WOULD
LIKE HELP WITH. ALSO TELL ME HOW MUCH HELP YOU FEEL YOU NEED
WITH EACH OF THESE THINGS: NO HELP, SOME HELP OR A LOT OF HELP.
(Read the list out loud and circle the amount of help).

WOULD YOU LIKE HELP WITH;

a. Budgeting money   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

b. Shopping   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

c. Keeping the house clean   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

d. Cooking   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

e. Laundry   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

f. Making friends   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

g. Getting along with people   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

h. Mobility or transport   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help

i. Managing medications   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

j. Anything else   (no help) (some help) (a lot of help)

(specify) _____

_____

32. IN YOUR OPINION, HAVE YOU BEEN DENIED HOUSING BECAUSE OF YOUR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS OR BECAUSE OF A PARTICULAR DIAGNOSIS?

      a. _____ no (skip to # 34)

      b. _____ yes

      c. _____ does not apply (skip to # 34)

32a IF YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DENIED HOUSING FOR THESE REASONS WOULD YOU TELL ME ABOUT IT?

(Record the answer here:) _____

_____

_____

WE'RE DONE. DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ASK ME, OR ANY COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THAT WOULD PLAN HOUSING AND SUPPORT OPTIONS IN THIS AREA? (If so record below)

_____

_____

_____

_____

==

GO TO SUMMARY 3 TO SUMMARISE SUPPORT NEEDS

==

Step 3: Summary of housing and support needs and preferences

The survey that has been conducted with the applicant is lengthy so the next step involves summarising their housing and support needs and preferences. The following summary sheets allow for the key elements of the applicant's needs and preferences to be clearly communicated. It's important to remember that the allocations officer who was present when the survey was carried out may not be involved in making the allocation so it is vitally important that the applicant's needs and preferences are clearly understood.

SUMMARY 1: CURRENT HOUSING

You are living in _____ for the past _____ months/years.

You live with _____.

You are (very / somewhat dis / satisfied) living there because _____

_____

_____.

However / consequently you (want to / have to) move because _____

_____

_____.

Other things you like about where you are living are _____

_____

_____ _____.

And things you dislike about where you are living are _____

_____

_____.

You recieve your money from _____(name of employment/benefit etc). Your weekly income is _____, and you currently spend _____ per week on rent and _____ per week on utilities.

Summary 2: Preferred Housing

You would prefer to live in (type of housing)_____ as that place would offer you _____.
Your preferred location is _____ because _____.

You would prefer to live (alone or with others) because _____ _____. If you had to live with others your preference is / is not to live with other service users because _____ _____.
The person / people you would most like to live with is / are _____, because _____.

Summary 3: Support Needs

The first person/place you contact for help is _____.
When you need to, you also make contact with _____ _____. In general you are (very / somewhat dis/satisfied) with the help you receive. You receive _____ support(s) from _____ services in your home and you are (very / somewhat dis/satisfied) with this.

You (do / do not) think that the money you receive is enough to live on. Your particular difficulties are; medical, physical etc. _____ _____. You have (High / Medium / Low) urgency in relation to your housing and support needs. You consider yourself to be particularly at risk of homelessness/poverty/abuse/deteriorating mental and /or physical health/harm to self/others.

You think the most important support(s) and service(s) that you would need to help you to live in your preferred housing is / are _____

_____. In addition, you

think you would also need help with _____

_____.

Your preferred supports from the _____ service are _____

_____.

Step 4: Matching an applicant to a suitable property

IHS applicants should be matched with potential units according to the organisation's existing IT system and based on the basic features of the unit – number of bedrooms and location primarily. While a unit may meet all the preferences of an applicant, it should not be considered if basic features of the unit do not match an applicant's needs or preferences, for example, if it is in a different area to where they have expressed a wish to live or if it is the wrong size for their household.

Existing allocations systems should all be capable of categorising applicants according to size of property required and preferred location.

When an HIS applicant is relatively close to the top of the allocations list - through a points system, a system of time spent on the list or another waiting list system – their summarised needs and preferences should be reviewed and allocations officers reminded of them so they can be kept in mind for upcoming vacancies.

If the allocations system was to wait until an IHS applicant was at the very top of the waiting list, there may be undue delays caused to the applicant. The nature of their support needs and preferences may make many properties unsuitable for them. There needs to be some level of flexibility and adaptability to ensure best outcomes for all applicants.

In such cases, the use of an 'Offer Zone' can be helpful. The housing authority shall contact the individual in writing when they enter the 'Offer Zone' stating that it is likely that the individual will be offered a property within the next 6 months and that they should apply/ensure that the supports that they require to live independently will be in place at that time. Confirmation of the availability of these supports to allow the individual to take up the housing opportunity will be required prior to the offer being made and this requirement will be clearly communicated to the individual and their advocate, as appropriate.

If no supports are available within the 'Offer Zone' timeframe then the client returns to the housing authority when the supports are in place, their place on the Waiting List will not be affected.

In matching an applicant to a property, the following scoring matrix is available to determine suitability:

	Yes	No	Comments / Points (5 points for yes, 0 for no)
Location of property matches applicant preference			
Size of property matches applicant eligibility			

	Yes	No	Comments / Points (5 points if both answers match, 0 if they do not)
Is wheelchair accessibility required?			
Is the property wheelchair accessible?			

	Yes	No	Comments / Points (5 points if both answers match, 0 if they do not)
Are support services required?			
Are supports available to the applicant and in this location?			

	Yes	No	Comments / Points (3 points if both answers match, 1 if they do not)
Does the applicant wish to live with others?			
Is this possible in this property?			

	Yes	No	Comments / Points (3 points if both answers match, 1 if they do not)
Is the property furnished?			

	Yes	No	Comments / Points
Does the applicant want a furnished property?			

	Yes	No	Comments / Points (3 points if both answers match, 1 if they do not)
Are pets allowed in the property?			
Does the applicant want or have a pet?			

14 points or fewer: Property is not suitable for this applicant.

15-20 points: This property may be suitable for this applicant. Requires further discussion with applicant and support service.

21-29 points: This property is a likely match for this applicant. An offer or allocation can be made.

Step 5: Review of needs and preferences

When a suitable property is available and an allocation is about to be made, the applicant should be contacted and a support worker and allocations officer should meet again with the applicant to review the needs and preferences expressed in the previous survey as they may have changed.

Changes may be extensive to the point that the allocation would no longer be suitable or they may be relatively minor. It is important that the applicants is fully briefed on the nature of the proposed allocation and for them to decide whether or not it is a suitable nomination and sufficiently meets their needs and preferences.

Step 6: Ensure supports are in place

As stated previously, it is recognised that although an individual may have support needs, these supports do not need to be in place at the point when a person is making a social housing application or during the assessment process. However, these supports must be in place at the time of the allocation of the property to ensure the individual can move into the property in a timely manner.

Before a final allocation is made, the allocations officer should receive confirmation that all required supports are in place for the applicant. If this does not happen, the allocation can be deferred until such a time as the supports are in place.

Step 7: Make allocation

The applicant is allocated their property and they become a tenant of the housing provider with all necessary supports in place.

5. Key success factors to put HAS into practice

a. Dispute resolution and transparency

HAS relies on existing allocations procedures and protocols across jurisdictions and it is expected that the survey on housing and supports needs and preferences will work in addition to the existing information gathering and waiting list system maintained by each allocating authority.

As a result, it is expected that disputes over allocated properties will be dealt with according to each allocating authority's dispute resolution process.

The main factor that determines an applicant's readiness for an allocation will be their place on the waiting list. Secondary to that will be their preferences and support needs expressed through the survey.

While TopHouse aims to improve the experiences of applicants in need of IHS, the project also must be realistic in acknowledging that not all allocations will be made to IHS applicants and the project must work within existing systems.

Where an applicant was the next IHS applicant on the list and was made an appropriate allocation, there is less likely to be a dispute from another applicant. Where an applicant requiring HIS was next on the list but someone further down the list than them received an allocation, there is perhaps more likely to be a dispute over this. The allocation scoring system is an objective way of measuring suitability of a property for an applicant and this can be used to demonstrate how the needs and preferences of the applicant higher up the list would not have been sufficiently met by the property in question.

b. Transferability

The transferability of HAS as an assessment tool will be vital for its success. It needs to strike a balance of being prescriptive enough so that it is understood by front line staff and can be put into effect, while also being flexible enough so that local differences can be incorporated.

It will allow for the applicant to clearly communicate their needs and will define clear procedures for frontline allocations staff, hopefully allowing for better outcomes for both. However a key element of HAS is that it will work alongside existing assessment and allocations procedures. HAS does not propose entirely new allocations systems and it is a tool that can be easily adapted to different circumstances and amended as necessary.

c. Understanding the benefits of HAS at individual frontline, individual managerial and organisational level

As stated at the outset, the aim of HAS is to establish an agreed system of housing allocation that is fair and transparent and built on principles of person-centred planning, allowing the housing applicant as much input as possible into their housing allocation in a safe and supported environment in which they are encouraged and empowered to express their housing preferences.

Housing policy across Europe supports the move away from congregated housing for people in need of housing and support, towards a more person-centred, collaborative and, at times, co-produced form of housing delivery and allocations. From an organisational and strategic level therefore, a tool such as HAS that allows for the implementation of already agreed policies is likely to be accepted.

From a middle management and individual frontline level, the benefits are that HAS provides a clear set of steps and an easily-understood structure to deliver allocations in a more person-centred way. The role of the allocations officer in an individual's journey towards independent person-centred living is often quite a fleeting one. While an individual may build strong, long-lasting relationships with support workers, housing officers and allocations officers may have very few meetings with such an applicant and may be lacking in skills and knowledge as to how to best incorporate best practice principles around person-centred planning and co-production into an allocations process.

HAS can assist frontline workers by providing the structure in which an applicant can express their housing preferences and an allocations officer can meaningfully use these preferences when making an allocation.

Through this process, it is hoped that more appropriate housing allocations are made, ultimately leading to fewer tenancy breakdowns and greater tenant satisfaction.

6. References

- Carroll, S and Cotter, N. 2010. *Review of the Housing and Support Options for People with Mental Health Related Housing Needs.* Dublin: Housing Agency

- Coates, Dermot and Feely, Naomi (2007) *Good Practice in Housing Management: Guidelines for Local Authorities.* Dublin: Centre for Housing Research.

- Cowman, J. 2012. *The housing preference and assessment survey: an instrument to describe the subjective housing and support needs of mental health service users.* Dublin

- Cowman J., Gough P. and Cunningham R. 2012. *To Assist Mental Health Services to Address the Housing Needs of Service Users. Co-operative Learning Course: Service Improvement Leadership for Mental Health Service Users, Carers and Service Providers.* Dublin City University.

- Cullen, Kevin, Delaney, Sarah and Dolphin, Ciaran (2007). *The Role and Future Development of Supportive Housing for Older People in Ireland.* Dublin: National Council on Ageing and Older People

- Department of Health and Children. 2006. *A Vision for Change - Report of the Expert Group on Mental Health Policy.* Dublin: Department of Health and Children

- Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. 2011. *National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability.* Dublin: Government Publications Office

- Doras and Slán Abhaile. 2017. *A Home of My Own: Experiences of Moving from Mental Health Congregated Settings*. Dublin

- European Coalition for Community Living. 2006. *Focus on the Right of Children with Disabilities to Live in the Communit.* Hungary: ECCL

- European Network on Independent Living. 2017. *The Right to Live Independently and be Included in the Community: Addressing Barriers to Independent Living across the Globe*. ENIL.

- European Network on Independent Living. 2017. *Comparing the Cost of Independent Living and Residential Care A Survey by the European Network on Independent Living*. ENIL

- Health Service Executive. 2011. *Time to Move on from Congregated Settings: A Strategy for Community Inclusion*. Dublin: HSE.

- Kenna, Padraic (2006). *Housing Law and Policy in Ireland*. Dublin: Clarus Press Ltd.

- Kenna, Padraic (2005) *Housing Rights and Human Rights*. Brussels: FEANTSA

- Mansell, J and Beadle-Brown, J. 2009 *Dispersed or clustered housing for adults with intellectual disability: A systematic review*, Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disability (34:4).

- National Disability Authority. 2012. *Building for Everyone*. Dublin: NDA

- O'Reilly, A; Whelan, E and Dillon, I. 2016. *Design for Mental Health*. Dublin: HSE and Housing Agency.

- Scanlon, K; Fernández Arrigoitia, M and Whitehead, C. 2015 *Social housing in Europe*. European Policy Analysis (17).