Multi-Agency Assessment Panels Toolkit: A best practice manual

Panel

Housing department

Mental health team

Outreach team

Drug action team

Probation

Social services

Shelter
Section 1 Introduction to the Toolkit

The Multi-Agency Assessment Panels Toolkit has been written and compiled by Theresa Zlonkiewicz and Jon Davis for Shelter’s Street Homeless Project.

The Toolkit is aimed at individuals or agencies who wish to set up a multi-agency assessment panel in their area. The Toolkit provides a step-by-step guide to setting up a panel, with practical tools (including forms, checklists and publicity materials) which can be used or adapted as appropriate.

The Toolkit can be used alongside:
- the good practice guidelines, which are available to download from www.shelter.org.uk/maapgoodpractice

Acknowledgements
The Street Homeless Project would like to acknowledge the help of:
- Crisis, for participating in the development of the model through Millennium Plus
- Pip Bevan, Multiple Needs Coordinator at Homeless Link, for providing the ‘Definition of Multiple Needs’
- Eleni Skoura, East Kent Cyrenians, for feedback from the Canterbury Multi-Agency Panel
- Susan Blyth, Warrington YMCA, for feedback from Warrington Multi-Agency Panel
- Jeanette Toy, Shelter’s Cornwall Housing Aid Centre, for feedback from the Cornwall Multi-Agency Panel.

We would also like to thank all clients and agencies who have participated in multi-agency panels, and who have contributed to the development of this model.

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Introduction
Shelter’s Street Homeless Project (SHP) helps local authorities establish multi-agency assessment panels to work with street homeless people.

These multi-agency panels use a comprehensive needs assessment as the basis for a resettlement and support package for each client. This model is designed to work with people with multiple or complex needs, many of whom have a long history of being excluded from services provided by various agencies and have experienced homelessness as a result.

Millennium Plus
SHP builds on the work of Millennium Plus, a joint Shelter and Crisis initiative, working with homeless people in nightshelters. Millennium Plus piloted assessment panels in a number of areas, introduced a common approach to assessing clients’ needs, and successfully improved joint-working practices. Panels are running successfully in places as diverse as Cornwall – an area where the homeless population and agencies are scattered across a wide locality – and Canterbury – a city with a large street homeless population. Areas where panels are being developed include Leeds, Warrington, Blackpool, Doncaster, Worcester, and Rotherham.

Policy context
Multi-agency assessment panels reflect several key policy developments:

- **Coming in From the Cold**
  Launched in 1999, the government’s Rough Sleepers’ Unit strategy aimed to reduce the numbers of people sleeping rough nationally by two thirds. Entrenched rough sleepers were particularly targeted. The Rough Sleepers’ Unit partly funded the Millennium Plus model

- **More Than A Roof: A Report into Tackling Homelessness**
  Published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) in 2002, this report promotes a strategic response to homelessness as part of the wider drive to tackle social exclusion

- **Homelessness Act 2002**
  The Act compels local authorities to develop multi-agency working as part of their Homelessness Strategy

- **Supporting People 2003**
  This gives local government and agencies the tools to develop services for vulnerable people, including those with complex housing and support needs.

Panels
The multi-agency panel model operates on two levels:

- **an operations panel** – staff/managers with authority to make decisions about service delivery, meeting monthly
- **a steering group** – senior managers overseeing the operations panel, addressing strategic issues, meeting quarterly.

The panels comprise statutory and voluntary agencies.
Statutory agencies that may be involved:

- housing department
- social services
- mental health teams
- probation service
- drug action teams
- police (possibly as a referral agency only).

Voluntary agencies may include:

- supported housing providers
- nightshelters
- day centres
- drug and alcohol projects
- outreach teams.
Referrals and assessment
Homeless people are referred to the panel by one or more of the participating agencies, often using key workers to support clients. A comprehensive needs assessment is made to identify the range of problems experienced by the client and the agencies that need to be involved in tackling them. A panel meeting involving the client, their key worker and the relevant agencies, will be arranged. At this meeting, an action plan for housing and for ongoing support will be agreed. Panels will probably meet monthly, to consider one or two new clients and review progress on others.

Making it work
Shelter has found the multi-agency panel process works best when:
- more than one agency is driving the idea forward
- senior officers in the local authority (especially housing and social services) are committed to the process
- funding is obtained to finance a part-time worker to coordinate the panel (completing assessment forms with clients, ensuring support plans are adhered to, and monitoring and evaluating the project).

The multi-agency assessment model can contribute to the wider strategic issues of service provision for homeless people. It helps establish procedures for joint-working, identifies gaps and duplications in service provision, and builds user/frontline staff participation into the strategy consultation process.

Working with Shelter
Shelter’s Street Homeless Project can provide practical support, consultancy and training, to statutory and voluntary agencies who wish to set up multi-agency assessment panels. For more information, please contact:

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The report Millennium Plus: A Good Practice Model For Tackling Street Homelessness can be ordered free of charge by calling 0151 236 4856.

The following good practice guidelines are available to download from www.shelter.org.uk/maapgoodpractice:
- Shelter/Crisis Initial Assessment/Monitoring Form (v.4)
- Shelter/Crisis Initial Assessment/Monitoring Form Guidance (v.4)
- Shelter/Crisis Holistic Assessment Form
- Shelter/Crisis Holistic Assessment Form Guidance
- Shelter Multi-Agency Assessment Panel Terms of Reference
- Shelter Client Consent Form
Section 4 Frequently asked questions

1 What are the benefits of this model for agencies?
This model improves joint-working by building relationships between agencies, enabling them to understand each other’s roles.

Agencies develop joint protocols, such as confidentiality policies, referral routes and procedures, which facilitate better working outside the panel process.

The model is a cost-effective method of working constructively with homelessness issues. It identifies gaps in services, and can be used to influence local strategies.

2 What are the benefits of this model for clients? Can you give me a case study as an example?
The model is focused on providing solutions for clients, many of whom may have experienced years of homelessness and unmet needs.

The client-centred nature of the model enables vulnerable individuals to receive a coordinated service from agencies. It prevents the ‘revolving door syndrome’ experienced by some clients who have been homeless for many years.

In Cornwall, Rosie was 22 years old, and had been street homeless for approximately 2 years when she was presented to a multi-agency assessment panel. She was on probation, and in regular contact with a drugs agency. She was also receiving support from a day centre, a soup kitchen, the Salvation Army and the YMCA. While the local authority accepted Rosie as being in priority need of housing, they referred her to a panel meeting to coordinate the appropriate support from all the agencies working with her.

3 Do councils have a statutory responsibility to put this model in place?
Multi-agency working is a requirement of the Homelessness Act 2002, and is promoted by this model.

The model also aims to prevent homelessness, provide accommodation, and promote tenancy sustainment, all of which are important components of the Homelessness Act 2002.

Although there is no statutory requirement for local authorities to implement this model, Shelter recommends it as a model of good practice which they may wish to adopt.

This model can also help in continuing to sustain the reduction in rough sleeping, the importance of which is highlighted by the Homelessness Directorate in its report *More Than A Roof*.

4 Is this a way in which local authority housing departments can discharge their duties under the Homelessness Act?
The model is a way in which agencies can work together to find solutions for people with complex/multiple needs. It should be viewed as part of an ongoing process by which the local authority discharges its duty to clients.

5 How does this model fit into current government policy on homelessness?
Where local authorities have reached the government’s target of reducing the numbers of rough sleepers by two-thirds (as outlined in the *Coming in From the Cold* strategy), the multi-agency assessment model is a way of sustaining that reduction.
The model advocates multi-agency working which is an important objective of the Homelessness Act 2002. It addresses the prevention of homelessness, the securing of accommodation and the sustainment of tenancies, which are also important parts of the Act.

This model also has a role to play in Supporting People policy. It advocates the provision of good quality tenancy sustainment services, including resettlement plans, life skills training, floating support, drugs work, and health care.

6 Will this model solve the problem of street homelessness in our area?
This model aims to provide resettlement and care plans for people with multiple/complex needs. Many of these clients will have been homeless for years, and have experienced street homelessness as part of their disrupted housing history.

In addition, these clients will have been presented to different agencies in the local area that may have been unable to find lasting solutions for them. Working together, agencies can provide housing and tenancy sustainment for this group of people, thereby preventing them from returning to the streets.

The model can also be used to provide interventions for clients who are at risk of becoming street homeless due to their multiple needs.

7 Will this model address the transient lifestyle of street homeless people?
The comprehensive needs assessment which is part of this model will identify the patterns of behaviour that may have led to a transient lifestyle, and will facilitate agencies in addressing the support needs of these clients.

This model will promote tenancy sustainment, especially among clients with a history of transience.

In addition, this model can identify gaps in services for those leading a transient street lifestyle. This information can be used to influence the development of appropriate street homeless strategies and services.

8 Can this model be used for people such as families, couples, or ex-offenders?
Although this model has been piloted with street homeless people, it can be adapted for any group of people who have multiple or complex needs. This model works for any group of people who need more than one agency to provide services to them, where normal joint-working arrangements have proved ineffective.
9 The problem we face as a local authority housing department is a lack of hostel and/or permanent accommodation in our area. Can we set up a panel locally when this problem exists?

It is still possible to set up a panel in your area, even though you have this problem. Council tenancies or hostels are not the only options for clients, and you can invite other housing providers onto the panel. Other registered social landlords and housing associations may provide permanent accommodation but you could consider any scheme that offers good quality temporary accommodation. You can also invite representatives from social services for clients who may need registered care home accommodation or access to detoxification, rehabilitation, or other Community Care services.

Even where there is a shortage of appropriate permanent accommodation, a panel can still assist in providing support to clients with multiple needs. Some panels have devised multi-agency support packages for clients in temporary accommodation while they are awaiting permanent tenancies; these support packages have addressed substance misuse, mental health, life skills, and offending behaviour issues.

Multi-agency assessment panels can effectively monitor and evaluate housing outcomes for clients; for example, the length of time spent in hostel accommodation. This monitoring will provide a broader overview of needs and supply issues, locally.

10 If this model is only used for people with multiple or complex needs, will it exclude other people from services and cause further homelessness?

This model is designed to work with people with multiple or complex needs, many of whom have a long history of being excluded from services provided by various agencies and have experienced homelessness as a result.

The panel coordinator should monitor referrals to the panel, identifying those which are not accepted and the reasons for non-acceptance (see Section 12 Monitoring and Evaluation). The steering group should look at the results of this monitoring; the panel’s remit can be adjusted if they identify a group of people whom the panel are not reaching. They may identify service gaps in the local area, which need to be tackled via different methods.
11 How can this model influence the development of local services or strategies?
Monitoring the work of the panel may identify gaps in local service provision; for example, the need for an outreach service for rough sleepers, or the need for specialist provision for ex-offenders. Any gaps which are identified can be reported to the steering group. The steering group will consist of senior managers from the local area, who will have the authority to feed this information into relevant local strategies that are being developed.

12 This is an expensive model to operate in terms of allocating resources and staff time. Can spending so much money really justify the end result?
The cost of using this model is relatively cheap, especially so when compared to the costs of inappropriate use of temporary accommodation, rent arrears, tenancy abandonment, imprisonment, repeated presentations to agencies, and street homelessness. The model provides support solutions to clients whose lifestyles are often very costly to themselves and their communities.

Agencies may be able to use existing resources in imaginative and cost-effective ways. For example, a service may agree to delegate staff time to coordinate the panel.

13 What sources of funding are available for the setting up and running of a panel?
Sources of funding differ between areas, and may be dependent upon whether a Supporting People or Homelessness Strategy is driving your panel. In Warrington, for example, funding for the panel coordinator role came from the Health Authority, while in Doncaster, agencies pooled resources to provide publicity leaflets for the panel.

14 What barriers might agencies come across when setting up this model?
The following barriers may need to be overcome:
- frontline staff being unclear as to the purpose of the meeting and their reasons for having to attend it
- a lack of trust between agencies due to competition for funding, personality clashes, previous bad experiences
- agencies being willing to participate but lacking the time to attend meetings
- confusion regarding confidentiality and information sharing between agencies
- a lack of clarity regarding the panel’s referral procedures
- misunderstandings about the role of each agency in the panel process and at the panel meetings
- difficulty in recording and monitoring outputs required by agencies in each individual case.
Section 5 Identifying stakeholders and lobbying for a panel

1 Identifying the Client Group
This model is designed to work with people with multiple or complex needs, many of whom have a long history of being excluded from services provided by various agencies and have experienced homelessness as a result. It is particularly effective for clients who you may feel are ‘chaotic’, ‘difficult’, or ‘challenging’.

Although this model has been piloted with street homeless people, it can be adapted for any group of people who have multiple or complex needs. It works for any group of people who need more than one agency to provide services to them, where normal joint-working arrangements have proved ineffective.

An awareness of client needs, either through current monitoring data or case studies from particular agencies, could help demonstrate a need to establish this good practice model locally.

2 Identifying the Stakeholders
It is helpful to compile a comprehensive list of agencies that work with the identified client group in your area. However, initially you may want to contact a core group, comprising the housing authority and social services, alongside homelessness, drug and alcohol, and mental health agencies. (You may wish to involve a larger number of agencies, but it will be easier to recruit new members once the panel is up and running.)

You can use statistical and anecdotal evidence to demonstrate the need for a panel in your area. This evidence can also ensure that the case for the involvement of specific agencies is clearly argued. You can present the best case by using statistics and case studies that highlight the multiple needs of your clients and the problems they have in accessing services.

Understanding what drives other organisations allows you to demonstrate that your proposals can help them to be more successful in their work. You can refer to Section 4 of this Toolkit to present the benefits of the panel for organisations and their clients.

3 Lobbying to Set Up a Panel
It is helpful to find a powerful ally, perhaps an agency that is respected and commands attention in the local area, or a senior manager within a statutory authority. You may find that a relevant local forum (for example, a group of homelessness agencies or a Supporting People forum) may be keen to explore setting up a panel.

You can use this Toolkit, alongside evidence from your area, to draft a proposal for a local panel. You might want to prepare a briefing pack, which contains your evidence of need, background to the model, the theory of how the model operates, and examples of panels that have worked in other areas. Shelter’s Street Homeless Project will be happy to advise you.

It is helpful to have a written proposal when attending meetings, so agencies have something they can refer to and take back to their organisations for further discussion. Shelter’s Street Homeless Project can attend meetings to give presentations on assessment panels.

Be realistic. It may take several months to persuade agencies that this proposal is something with which they wish to engage.
The need for a confidentiality policy
A range of agencies will need to share sensitive information about clients. It is important that clients and agencies are clear about:
- who has access to information
- what kind of information can and cannot be stored
- what rights clients have regarding the sharing of information about them
- what kind of redress is available to clients or agencies should anything go wrong.

Participating agencies will all have their own confidentiality or information sharing policies. Therefore it is important to have one policy that works in practice for the panel and which these agencies can subscribe to, and it is vital that there are clear protocols for sharing information on risk.

Legal requirements
Confidentiality and information sharing protocols are also necessary due to the legal requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

What does a confidentiality or information sharing policy need to address?
A confidentiality or information sharing protocol needs to address the following:
- responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998
- obtaining the client’s consent to share information
- whether there are any times when lack of consent can be overridden
- protocols for sharing information about risk of violence to staff, service users or self.

Shelter Good Practice Guidelines for writing a confidentiality policy
Shelter’s Street Homeless Project has produced the following guidelines to assist agencies who wish to set up panels:

- information sharing protocol
  This is contained within the terms of reference document and outlines how agency staff should request or offer information about clients or potential clients

- confidentiality policy
  This details how information about clients will be shared at panel meetings

- client consent form
  This is a form that clients sign, giving their permission for personal information to be shared among agencies. The form is compliant with data protection legislation

- data protection protocol
  This sets out the data protection principles that participating agencies must comply with.

These guidelines may be used by agencies in their current format or may be adapted to take into account local requirements. The guidelines have been checked by the Shelter Quality Standards Team and Data Protection Officer.

These guidelines are available for downloading from www.shelter.org.uk/maapgoodpractice
5 Implementing a confidentiality policy

The senior managers, who form the steering group, are responsible for ensuring that the managers of their teams are aware that this new procedure has come into place. Each individual agency’s team managers are responsible for ensuring their frontline staff are aware of this new policy and are able to implement it.

The panel coordinator is responsible for monitoring any problems that arise with the implementation of this policy. They are responsible for notifying the steering group of any problems that arise, and whether they have been successfully resolved or whether further action needs to be taken at a senior management level.

The steering group have overall responsibility for ensuring that the confidentiality policy is enforced and that it is compliant with data protection legislation.
Section 7 Terms of reference

1. The purpose of the terms of reference
   The ‘terms of reference’ is the document that defines how a multi-agency assessment panel will operate in practice. The document is created by agencies participating in the panel. The agencies sign the document, agreeing to abide by its terms.

2. Who should compile the terms of reference?
   The terms of reference should be compiled by the agencies participating in the multi-agency assessment panel. The steering group should agree that either:
   ■ one agency will take the lead in writing the document, or
   ■ that a small sub-group may work on the document.

   Before the document is written, the steering group need to agree many of the policies and procedures that it will contain. The lead agency or sub-group should therefore liaise with the steering group when writing the document.

   While the terms of reference need to include a certain minimum of details, other policies may be included at a later date once the core document has been approved by the steering group.

3. Items to be included in the terms of reference
   The terms of reference should, as a minimum, state the following:
   ■ membership of steering group and operations panel (outline the roles of panel and group)
   ■ criteria for the target group of clients
   ■ confidentiality and how clients can give permission for the release of personal information to others
   ■ how decisions will be made in panel meetings
   ■ risks that the process faces and how these will be managed
   ■ the system for monitoring and reviewing the work.

   In addition, it can contain:
   ■ details of the coordination of the operations panel
   ■ outline of the referral criteria and procedure
   ■ requirements for attendance at panel meetings
   ■ a commitment to user participation
   ■ a complaints procedure
   ■ details of any review meetings.

Shelter have written a terms of reference document which may be used in its present format or adapted to the needs of local areas. This document is available for downloading at www.shelter.org.uk/maapgoodpractice

4. Implementing the terms of reference
   The panel coordinator and the operations panel are responsible for feeding back any problems or issues that arise from the working of the panel to the steering group. It is the responsibility of the steering group to ensure that participating agencies comply with the policies and procedures in the terms of reference.

5. Reviewing the terms of reference
   It is important to ensure that the terms of reference are kept up to date. They should be regularly monitored and reviewed by the steering group.
1 The role of the panel coordinator

This role may vary from panel to panel but generally consists of the following duties:
■ client/panel work
■ policy/development work
■ administration.

Most areas have found that the job of a panel coordinator needs to be made either a full- or part-time post, rather than added to someone's existing responsibilities.

Panel coordinators accept referrals from participating agencies and screen them to ensure they are suitable for the panel process. They check that the referral agency has undertaken a comprehensive needs assessment of the client; the coordinator will sometimes complete this assessment themselves with the client, if no agency is able to do this. They coordinate further assessments if necessary.

The coordinators convene the relevant agencies for a panel meeting, and prepare the client for the meeting. They are responsible for overseeing the coordination of any support plan which arises from the panel process.

Policy and development work involves publicising the panel among local agencies (for example, sending out information and attending team meetings), and developing appropriate policies and procedures to help the panels run smoothly and efficiently. The coordinator also needs to attend steering group meetings to report back on the work of the panel, and keep relevant monitoring and evaluation reports.

The administrative work involves preparing and circulating case summaries to be used as the basis of panel discussions. The coordinator should send out agendas for meetings and set the dates of panel and review meetings. They should also ensure that all agencies receive copies of relevant minutes.

Client/Panel Work

- Accepting referrals
- Undertaking comprehensive needs assessments if necessary
- Coordinating further assessments if necessary
- Meeting users before the meeting and preparing them for the panel discussion e.g. informing them which agencies will be present
- Coordinating care plans
Policy/Development Work

Publicising the panel among local agencies e.g. sending out information, attending team meetings

Policy/development work e.g. developing policies and procedures

Administrative Work

- Coordinating which clients will be discussed and inviting appropriate agencies to attend relevant meetings
- Preparing case summaries to be used for discussion, and circulating them prior to meetings
- Setting dates of panel review meetings
- Setting the agenda for meetings
- Sending out minutes of meetings
- Setting dates for panel meetings
- Keeping monitoring and evaluation reports
- Attending steering group meetings to report back on the work of the panel
- Publicising the panel among local agencies e.g. sending out information, attending team meetings
- Setting dates for panel meetings
- Keeping monitoring and evaluation reports
- Attending steering group meetings to report back on the work of the panel
Who are we?
(Insert name of town/city/area) Multi-Agency Assessment Panel comprises a group of local organisations that work with people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and have multiple needs.

What do we mean by ‘multiple needs’?
We define people with multiple needs as those who are not in effective contact with services and who have three or more problems, such as:
- mental health problems
- substance or alcohol misuse
- offending behaviour
- physical health problems or disabilities
- vulnerability due to their age
- challenging behaviour.
(definition supplied by Pip Bevan, Homeless Link 2002)

How can we help?
If your client fits our criteria, we can assist in undertaking a comprehensive needs assessment with the client.

Once the client has identified the areas in which they need support, we will:
- arrange any specialist assessments the client may need (for example, mental health, substance misuse)
- convene a meeting of the agencies that need to be involved in the resettlement and support plan
- ask the client to attend this meeting as well (s/he can bring a friend or a key worker if appropriate)
- devise a housing and care plan for the client, agreed by the agencies and the client at the meeting
- and, the panel will monitor any agreed housing and care plans on a long-term basis to ensure they are being implemented.

How can we refer our client?
Referrals are open to all agencies in (insert name of town/city/area). If you have a client you wish to refer, or if you would like to discuss this further, please call (insert name), the Panel Coordinator on (insert phone number and e-mail address).

Membership of the multi-agency assessment panel
Agencies currently part of the panel include:
- (insert name) Housing Department
- (insert name) Social Services Department
- (insert name) Probation Service
- (insert name) Housing Association(s)
- (insert name) Voluntary Organisation(s)
- (insert name) Youth Offending Team
- (insert name) Community Mental Health Team
- (insert name) Primary Care Homeless Team
- (insert name) Drugs Team
- (insert name) Alcohol Team
- (insert name) Job Centre Plus
### 3 Checklist for first panel meeting

This lists all the actions that need to be completed before the first panel meeting at which clients are discussed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Completed?</th>
<th>What needs to happen?</th>
<th>Agreed date for action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A panel coordinator needs to be identified by participating agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>The role of the panel coordinator needs to be agreed by all participating agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documents signed and returned to panel coordinator by senior managers at participating agencies:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terms of reference</td>
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<td>Confidentiality policy</td>
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<td>Data protection protocol</td>
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<td>Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>All participating agencies have copies of:</td>
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<td>Terms of reference</td>
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<td>Confidentiality policy</td>
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<td>Data protection protocol</td>
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<td>Client consent form</td>
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<td>Referral criteria and guidelines</td>
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<td>Comprehensive needs assessment form and guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guidelines about decision making processes and responsibilities of agencies in undertaking housing and care plans with clients.*</td>
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*These may be in the terms of reference
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<th>Action</th>
<th>Completed?</th>
<th>What needs to happen?</th>
<th>Agreed date for action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All participating agencies have agreed:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date, time and venue for the first panel meeting</td>
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<td>Chair and minute taker for first 3 panel meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>A standard agenda for panel meetings</td>
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<td>Whether clients will attend panel meetings</td>
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<td>How many clients will be discussed at the first meeting</td>
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<td>Whether referral agency will pay travel expenses for clients attending panel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Which agency will provide interpreters, child care services, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Completed?</td>
<td>What needs to happen?</td>
<td>Agreed date for action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates set in advance for:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first six panels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An operations panel review meeting so participating agencies can discuss and implement any necessary changes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel publicised among relevant agencies in order to stimulate referrals for the first panel meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating agencies have agreed to send appropriate staff members to panel meetings who can make decisions about providing services to clients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff attending panels should be clear that the decision making process at panel meetings involves agencies negotiating to find solutions for clients. More complicated cases may need to be discussed at more than one panel meeting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 9 Comprehensive needs assessments

1  Identifying users with complex needs
   ■ The client makes contact with a referral agency.
   ■ The client’s multiple/complex needs are identified by staff members, as is any history of previous interventions.
   ■ Staff can use an initial assessment monitoring form to identify multiple/complex needs (copies of this form are available from www.shelter.org.uk/maapgoodpractice).

2  Before the comprehensive needs assessment
   ■ Ensure the client fits the panel criteria.
   ■ Obtain a private interview space.
   ■ Explain the assessment process, referral procedure and purpose of the panel meeting to the client.
   ■ Ensure the client has realistic expectations. They should be aware that the panel may not accept the referral. Even if referred, a solution may take time to organise.
   ■ Explain confidentiality and data protection policies.
   ■ Obtain the client’s agreement to be referred to the panel.
   ■ Obtain the client’s consent to share information with agencies – the client should sign the client consent form (copies available from www.shelter.org.uk/maapgoodpractice).
   ■ Give the client a copy of the consent form which they have signed.
   ■ Allocate an appropriate length of time for the interview. Realistically, you may need more than one interview to complete the assessment.

3  Undertaking the comprehensive needs assessment
   ■ Use the comprehensive needs assessment form as an assessment tool.
   ■ Go at the client’s pace, taking breaks where necessary.
   ■ Explain the questions to the client, using open-ended questions and prompts where necessary.
   ■ The client may find this a difficult process and therefore you will need to be supportive, non-judgemental and empathetic.
   ■ Assist the client to identify their own support needs.
   ■ Assist the client to identify services needed to provide resettlement and care.

4  Recording the assessment
   ■ The information recorded should be legible.
   ■ The information recorded should be factual, accurate and relevant.
   ■ The completed form should be checked with the client to ensure s/he is aware of what has been recorded and is happy with the information recorded.
   ■ The client and the worker should sign the completed form.
   ■ The client should be given a copy of the completed form.

5  After the assessment
   ■ If relevant, contact other agencies, such as mental health, substance misuse, primary care or social services, to arrange further specialist assessments or to obtain further relevant information.
   ■ You will need to draw up an agreed summary of needs and aspirations with your client, which the panel should then address.
   ■ Inform the client of the next stages in the process.
   ■ Ensure you have the client’s contact details, and arrange when you will next see or speak to the client to update them on the progress of their case.
   ■ Contact the relevant agencies to arrange attendance at a panel meeting.
1 **Context of user empowerment**

This model is designed to work with people with multiple or complex needs, many of whom have a long history of being excluded from services provided by various agencies and have experienced homelessness as a result.

The panels empower users by allowing them to articulate their experiences through the comprehensive needs assessment and possible attendance at a panel meeting.

Panels have been used by many different clients, and part of the empowerment process involves sensitivity to clients’ particular circumstances. Examples of clients include:

- a 22 year old street homeless woman, using drugs, on probation, benefit problems, chaotic lifestyle, seeking drug treatment and accommodation
- a 63 year old man with a 20 year history of sleeping rough, a history of police involvement, self-harming, alcohol problems, seeking support and accommodation
- a 19 year old man facing eviction from private rented accommodation, care-leaver, alcohol-dependent, well supported by referral agency.

Promoting user empowerment involves considering the practical and emotional issues that might affect how each client interacts with the panel process. It also involves panel members reflecting on their own assumptions about what is appropriate for the client.

Practical issues include:
- mobility (will they be able to access the venue?)
- child care
- travel expenses (which agency will pay these?)
- sign-language
- interpreters
- addictions (if they are alcohol- or drug-dependent, is there a time of day when they will not be experiencing withdrawal symptoms or intoxicated?)
- medication (if they are on anti-psychotic medication, is there a time of day which is preferable?).

Emotional issues to be considered:
- clients, themselves, may not always be clear about what they want from the process
- chaotic lives can mean rapidly changing priorities
- clients may feel they have to say what agencies want to hear
- clients may not engage well with a full resettlement plan, and may wish for a crisis intervention to provide medium-term stability.
2 **Before the panel meeting**
It is important that any client referred to the panel has one member of staff allocated to them. This key worker needs to build up a trusting relationship with the client.

The client should be clear that they may attend the panel meeting with this key worker, or with an advocate or friend.

The panel coordinator should meet the client (and their key worker) to ensure they understand how the meeting will work (i.e. which agencies will be present, how the client can contribute to the meeting), and raise any other relevant issues.

The coordinator should discuss with the client any special needs which may have to be met in order for the client to attend the meeting. They should ensure the client will receive any necessary travel fares, and should arrange for them to be accompanied if necessary.

3 **If the client does not wish to attend the panel meeting**
The panel coordinator should discuss the reasons for non-attendance with the client or referring agency. If the client has any particular concerns about attending, try to find ways these can be addressed or overcome.

If the client will not be attending, ensure you discuss with them what kind of resettlement and support they feel they need, in order that you can represent their views at the meeting.

4 **During the panel meeting**
It is the responsibility of the panel chair to ensure that the client is able to fully contribute to the panel meeting. In particular, they should be able to discuss their past experiences and state what kind of resettlement and care plan they feel is necessary.

They should be given the opportunity to articulate their feelings about the resettlement and care plan being offered.

5 **At the end of the process**
Discuss with the client how the meeting went. Ask whether they felt able to participate, and how they felt about the outcome. If they are unhappy in any way, you can consider whether there is any action you need to take to rectify this.

Inform the client of what happens next. Ensure you have the client’s contact details in order to keep them regularly updated on the progress of the resettlement and care plan. You can inform them about issues such as when they are going to be moved into accommodation and when they will start receiving support services.
Section 11 Troubleshooting

This section suggests solutions to common problems that may arise with panels.

1. Referrals to the panel have been very slow and it is unclear whether agencies in the area know the panel exists.
   Make publicity a priority for the first few months of the panel. It is easy to underestimate the amount of publicity a new service needs in order to ensure that local agencies are aware of its existence and purpose.
   Check that agencies in the local area are aware that the panel exists, are clear about which client group it caters for, and understand the referral process.
   Produce a publicity leaflet for distribution to local agencies (a sample leaflet is available in Section 8 Panel coordinator resources).
   Ensure all referral agencies undertaking comprehensive needs assessments have a copy of this form and the initial assessment monitoring forms.
   Visit team meetings of relevant agencies, to inform them of the existence of the panel and how they can refer to the panels.
   Visit local relevant forums (e.g. Single Homeless Forum, Rough Sleeping Forum, Supporting People Forum), to inform them of the existence of the panel and how their services can be involved.

2. We are finding that some of the participating agencies are not turning up for panel meetings.
   The panel coordinator needs to continually monitor which agencies do not attend and when, whether or not apologies are sent, and any reasons given for not attending meetings.
   Initially when an agency does not attend, the panel coordinator should contact the relevant staff member to discuss the reason for non-attendance. The panel coordinator needs to make sure that the staff member is clear about the purpose of the panel and why their presence is needed at the meeting. It is important to build a good working relationship with the staff who will actually be attending the panel meetings.

Have a named contact person at each agency. Phone them regularly to remind them, or their agency, to send in referrals.

Ensure the steering group are aware of this issue, as senior managers may need to ensure staff teams are aware of the panel and the referral process.

Once the panel has been set up and working for a few months, it is common for there to be fewer referrals as agencies have developed better working relationships and can find solutions for clients without coming to a meeting. Meetings are usually then reserved for the most complex cases.
If the problem continues, the panel coordinator should contact the manager of the agency. Although it is preferable to contact them by phone, it may also be relevant to write a letter outlining the purpose of the panel and why it is important to have a representative from this particular agency. In addition, it may be necessary to meet the agency manager to discuss these points with them and to clarify the reasons for non-attendance; such a meeting can be used to jointly discuss ways of resolving the situation.

Finally the panel coordinator should notify the steering group that this issue has arisen. The steering group will then be able to discuss this issue with the senior manager of the non-attending agency, and stress the importance of that agency being represented at panel meetings.

3 Our agency works with many clients that fit the panel criteria but quite a few of the clients are unwilling to engage with the process. How can we convince them this is a good idea?
It is important that the client has one member of staff allocated to them. This key worker needs to build up a relationship of trust with the client before referring them to a panel. They should explain the benefits of the process without overselling it, talk through the client’s past experiences, and explain that the panel process will allow the client to remain in control of what will be agreed.

Clients may have had bad experiences with agencies in the past or may not be ready to engage with the process at this stage of their lives. If a good relationship is built with a client over time, it will be possible to provide them with the service once they feel ready to access it.

4 Many of our staff feel that it takes a long time to undertake the comprehensive needs assessment.
The comprehensive needs assessment allows a client’s multiple and complex needs to be fully identified at an early stage. This enables the provision of the most appropriate housing and support plans. Comprehensively addressing all the client’s needs ensures more successful outcomes for the future. The needs assessment does not need to be completed in one interview. It is realistic for clients to be seen at least twice in order for an effective assessment to be carried out.

The assessment form can also be used as a checklist of problems and issues that need to be covered, rather than a list of questions that must all be rigorously answered. Not every section of the form will be relevant to every client.
5 Some of the agencies are not providing their part of the resettlement and support plan. How can we challenge this?
On some panels, it is the role of the panel coordinator to ensure that agencies are carrying out their part of the resettlement and care plans. This part of the role is specifically written into the terms of reference for the panel, which all agencies agree and sign up to. Agencies should therefore be aware that the panel coordinator will highlight their inaction if necessary.

Should this issue arise in a panel, the panel coordinator should initially contact the agency involved and speak to the staff member responsible for carrying out the plan, discuss the issue with them, and attempt to resolve it.

If this action does not result in a positive conclusion, then the panel coordinator should speak to the staff member’s manager. It may be relevant to write to the manager on behalf of the panel, expressing the importance of providing the required service and to ask for a meeting with the manager in order to resolve the issues.

At all stages of this process, it is important for the panel coordinator to record and monitor the problem as well as all the steps taken to resolve it.

Finally, the panel coordinator should notify the steering group of this problem and ask for their support, since this may be a problem that needs to be resolved at steering group level.

6 One of the problems of multi-agency working is the unwillingness of agencies to share information about clients due to confidentiality concerns. How can we resolve this problem?
Shelter’s Street Homeless Project (SHP) has produced a confidentiality policy, data protection protocol, a client consent form and information sharing protocol. These can be downloaded from Shelter’s website (go to www.shelter.org.uk/maapgoodpractice) and adapted to meet the requirements of agencies in their locality. SHP can also work with agencies to assist them with formulating joint protocols.

It is important to ensure that panels have a steering group of senior managers from participating agencies, who are committed to the panel process. They will be responsible for ensuring policies such as confidentiality are agreed, and can negotiate with each other where there are any difficulties.

In reality, if agencies are committed to working together then confidentiality does not need to be an obstacle. For example, Doncaster’s housing and social services have agreed to work within the panel’s confidentiality policy while their own corporate data protection policy is being developed.
7 *None of the agencies in our area have the staff available to take on the role of panel coordinator. How can we fund the panel coordinator role?*

The panel coordinator attends all meetings of the panel. The role is necessary for the effective coordination of the panel, therefore it is important for agencies to see if they can pool resources for a trial period while they look into possible funding.

By monitoring the panel and its effectiveness, and also by monitoring the workload of the panel coordinator, agencies may be able to make a case for future funding of the role. For example, they could argue that the role is necessary as it contributes to the reduction of homelessness in the local area.

8 *How do we decide which agency takes on the panel coordination role?*

This is one of the issues which needs to be discussed at an initial steering group meeting. Agencies may wish to share the coordination role for six months or a year at a time. The scope of the role may also depend upon which agency is able to allocate staff time to it.

9 *One of the agencies in our area is difficult to work with, and their attendance at meetings is unreliable. How do we overcome this problem?*

It is important to try and tackle this issue from the outset. When setting up the panel, try to involve someone at a senior level in the organisation who will sit on the steering group, and delegate attendance at the operations panel to a specific person.

Try to identify which particular team from an organisation needs to be represented on the panel. Who do you actually need to approach?

Try to encourage the organisation's involvement by promoting the benefits of the panel for them and their clients. Is the panel a more cost-effective way for them to work with some clients? Will panel working improve their standing with local agencies?

Try to ensure you have a named contact, both at steering group and operations panel level, and also the name of the manager of the person who attends operations panel meetings.

Try to get the organisation as involved as possible – for example, ask if they would like to chair the steering group, hold some of the meetings at their offices, or undertake any other task.
10 Which agencies should be involved in the panel?
This will depend on which client group your panel is working with. There should be as wide as possible a range of agencies to reflect the needs of the client group. It should be stressed that not all of the agencies will attend the panel meeting – the agencies attending will only be those most important to providing care and resettlement to the particular client.

It may also be more appropriate for some agencies (for example, the police) to be purely referral agents, if they are not providers of resettlement or support services.

11 Shelter recommends having clients present at panel meetings. Will clients be intimidated by having so many agencies present in the room?
Panel attendance can be a difficult experience for clients. However, the panels in Warrington and Canterbury have found it worthwhile having clients present. It ensures that agencies see the client as a human being and are in a better position to understand the client’s problems, since the client can explain them for him/herself. Clients’ self-esteem can be raised by seeing so many agencies present to discuss their case. Clients are more likely to fully participate in any support plan if they are part of the decision-making process.

Although there may be as many as 13 or more agencies who are members of the panel, the only ones present at the meeting are those who will be part of the client’s resettlement and care package. The referring agency may also be part of the meeting because they can summarise the client’s history to date.

In order for the client to feel comfortable they may bring a friend or key worker with them who can advocate on their behalf. It is important to ensure that the client can contribute to the meeting. Any special needs should be provided for.

The client may have met some of the agencies already, since they may have had assessments or services from them before attending the panel, and this may make the process less intimidating.

In some localities the panel coordinator meets with the client before the panel meeting to explain who will be present and what is going to happen, in order to make the client feel more comfortable and aware of what will occur.
1 Introduction to monitoring and evaluation

1 The purpose of monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is essential to ensure that a panel meets its aims and objectives.

On one level, the process should ensure a panel is working with the correct client group, and monitor the progress of multi-agency working with it. In order to enable clients to receive an effective service from the panel, it is important to monitor:

■ the numbers of clients housed through the panel system
■ the level of support and accommodation clients receive from the panel; and
■ any other outcomes for clients which the panel may achieve: for example, numbers of comprehensive needs assessments undertaken or amount/type of specialist support received by clients.

On another level, monitoring should help to gauge the effect of the panel on multi-agency working in the local area. It can identify relevant trends in the local area (e.g. large numbers of young people becoming homeless) and identify gaps in services (e.g. need for outreach services in the local area). The information collected can be used to influence local strategies.

Finally, monitoring can help improve the panel’s service to clients by identifying staff training needs.

2 How to monitor

The panel coordinator can monitor panels in many ways. It is important to keep minutes of panel and steering group meetings, and to ensure that clients’ case notes are kept up to date.

The template monitoring form (pages 29–35) can be used to collect statistical information about the referrals to, and outcomes of panels.

There are other ways of monitoring panels. Coordinators can undertake one-to-one interviews with clients who have used the panel, or conduct a questionnaire survey. Surveys can also be undertaken with frontline staff who participate in panel meetings or in making referrals to panels.

It is also useful to log complaints from clients, and from participating and non-participating agencies. Likewise, it is important to log examples of any successful joint-working that takes place.

Review meetings and away-days can be used for operations panels and steering groups to reflect on the outcomes of monitoring.

3 Monitoring long-term outcomes

The panel coordinator may wish to record long-term outcomes from the panel process. It is useful to monitor, perhaps annually, the following outcomes:

■ number of clients sustaining tenancies with support
■ number of clients sustaining tenancies without support
■ number of clients receiving support only
■ number of clients who have abandoned tenancies.
2 Template for a multi-agency assessment panel monitoring form

1 The aim of the multi-agency assessment panel monitoring form
   The multi-agency assessment panel monitoring form aims to be a method of collecting statistical information about the outcomes of panels.

2 Responsibility for completing the monitoring form
   The monitoring form should be filled in by the panel coordinator. This is because the coordinator is the person who has an overview of the project, accepts referrals, and attends all panel meetings.

3 Completing the monitoring form – frequency
   It is the role of the steering group to decide how often they wish to see monitoring reports. Ideally, the form should be completed every three months.

4 Completing the form
   In order to complete the form, the panel coordinator will need to go through each comprehensive needs assessment form received. They may also need to use minutes of panel meetings, and contact agencies providing resettlement and support packages, in order to obtain up to date information about clients.

5 Once the form has been completed
   The completed form should be:
   ■ sent to the steering group for discussion at their next meeting
   ■ sent to participating agencies to give an update on panel outcomes.

   With the agreement of the steering group the information may also be:
   ■ used externally to publicise the panel
   ■ used externally to influence local strategies.
3 Multi-agency assessment panel monitoring form for (town/city/area)

Contact name: 
Organisation: 
Address: 

Telephone number: Fax: 
Email: 
Period covered by the form: From To 

dd mm yy dd mm yy 

Referrals

1 Total number of client cases referred to panel for discussion 

2 Number of referrals accepted 

3 Number of referrals rejected (please give reasons for rejection below) 

___________________________________________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________________________________ 
___________________________________________________________________________ 

www.shelter.org.uk
4 **Number of clients referred by** *(Please insert agency names)*

- local authority housing department
- social services department
- probation services
- housing association or other housing provider
- drug and alcohol agency
- voluntary organisation(s) working with homeless people
- Community Mental Health Team or other mental health services
- Primary Health Care Team or other health services
- other relevant agency

5 **How many times has the panel convened during the period?**

5a **Number of initial meetings**

5b **Number of clients seen at initial meetings**

5c **Number of viewing meetings**

5d **Number of clients seen in review meetings**

6 **For initial meetings, please describe**

6a **Gender.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of male clients</th>
<th>Number of female clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of transgender clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### 6b Age. Please state numbers of clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Under 18</th>
<th>18–25</th>
<th>26–40</th>
<th>41–60</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18–25</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26–40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41–60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6c Ethnicity. Please enter the number of clients from each ethnic group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>White – English</th>
<th>Asian – British</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White – Welsh</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White – Scottish</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White – Northern Irish</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White – Irish</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Mixed – White and Black British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black – British</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Mixed – White and Black African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black – African</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Mixed – White and Black Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black – Caribbean</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Mixed – White and Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Did not wish to give an answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6d Sexuality. Please state numbers of clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexuality</th>
<th>Heterosexual</th>
<th>Lesbian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gay</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Bisexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not wish to answer</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**6e Local connection. Please state number of clients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In local area under 6 months</th>
<th>In local area 6 months to 1 year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In local area 1–3 years</td>
<td>Born in local area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6f Accommodation at time of panel meeting. Please state numbers of clients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sleeping rough</th>
<th>Housing association tenancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local authority tenancy</td>
<td>Registered care home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct access hostel</td>
<td>Supported housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightshelter</td>
<td>Squat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home owner</td>
<td>Prison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**7 Length of time street homeless (if applicable) at time of panel meeting. Please state numbers of street homeless clients**

When estimating the time spent ‘on the streets’, please record the total period of time that the client has spent ‘on the streets’, even if this period has been interspersed with time spent in temporary accommodation/in hostels/on friends’ floors/in prison/ in hospital. Where there has been a substantial period of time spent in permanent accommodation between periods of being ‘on the streets’, only the most recent period of street homelessness should be calculated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roofless/street homeless for up to one week</th>
<th>Roofless/street homeless 1 week–3 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roofless/street homeless 3–6 months</td>
<td>Roofless/street homeless 6 months plus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8 Number of clients who are, at the time of their initial panel meeting

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8a Not in receipt of DSS benefits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b With alcohol misuse problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With alcohol misuse problems and not receiving support from alcohol services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8c With substance misuse problems (other than alcohol)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With substance misuse problems and not receiving support substance misuse services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8d With mental health problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With mental health problems and not receiving support from mental health services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8e With physical health problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With physical health problems and not registered with a GP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8f With a history of care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With a history of care and not in contact with leaving care services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9 For initial panel meetings, number of clients for whom the following applied

9a Accommodation plus support package provided

9b Accommodation only provided (please give reasons in each case)

9c Support package only provided, without accommodation (please give reasons in each case)

9d No solution reached (please give reasons in each case)
Shelter’s Street Homeless Project

Shelter’s Street Homeless Project has a remit to research, develop and promote multi-agency approaches to street homelessness. A key objective of the Street Homeless Project is to take forward the Millennium Plus Initiative, by promoting and developing multi-agency assessment panels in local authority areas.

The Street Homeless Project works closely with local authorities and partner agencies to deliver effective, strategic and operational responses to street homelessness. The Project offers a consultancy service on street homelessness and multi-agency working for agencies and authorities, and provides seminars and training programmes to promote multi-agency approaches to street homelessness issues.

How the Street Homeless Project can help you

The Street Homeless Project can work with agencies and local authorities on a consultancy basis to provide:

- support in establishing the comprehensive needs assessments process
- support in forming multi-agency assessment panels
- the dissemination of good practice through the provision of information materials, training and seminars
- the facilitation of links between housing aid centres and local agencies working with street homeless people
- promotion of client empowerment, by working with agencies to encourage clients to attend panels and have input into the solutions to their housing problems
- guidance to agencies on monitoring the outcomes from the panels and addressing any issues that arise
- advice to ensure that good practice is fed into local authorities’ homelessness strategies.

For more information on Street Homeless Project’s services, please contact:

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Bad housing wrecks lives

We are the fourth richest country in the world, and yet millions of people in Britain wake up every day in housing that is run-down, overcrowded or dangerous. Many others have lost their home altogether. Bad housing robs us of security, health, and a fair chance in life.

Shelter believes everyone should have a home.

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