



HUD2023-002913

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Tēnā koe Brodie

Thank you for your request of 21 August 2023 the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Could I please have reports relevant to the first four bullet points mentioned for just Housing First and Rapid Rehousing providers at a programme level, if possible for the initial time period requested. If that requires too much collation, then the first quarter and final quarter reports will suffice.

On 20 August 2023, Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (the Ministry) advised that we required additional time to make a decision regarding the document titled *LinkPeople Housing First Quarterly 1 Narrative Report July – September 2022*, to allow for consultation to occur.

I am releasing this document to you with some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the decision to withhold information under section 9 of the Act is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

As part of our ongoing commitment to openness and transparency, the Ministry proactively releases information and documents that may be of interest to the public. As such, this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on our website.

Nāku noa, nā

Julia Minko
Manager Ministerial Services



LinkPeople

*Linking people to
housing and support*

Housing First Quarterly 1 Narrative Report *July – September 2022*

What has your experience been?

What works and what should you do more of? What doesn't work? What improvements could you make or what opportunities have you identified?

What's worked well?

Connecting through karakia and waiata – Waiata Rāapa (Waiata Wednesdays)

The LinkPeople South Auckland team is predominately Māori and Pacific, we have found that coming together as a rōpū (group) for karakia and every Wednesday has been really successful in building team connectedness and leadership. We open with karakia followed by waiata, are generally in te reo Māori or a pacific language. A LinkPeople Waiata book has been created to hold all our waiata. We have had some positive feedback from our staff.

*"This is fun, it brings everyone together once a week."
"OMG this brings back memories of Kapa Haka at school."
"Aww I remember that song from Primary School Good memories."
-- LinkPeople staff on Waiata Wednesdays*

While Team Leaders initiated the sessions, staff with strong kapa haka skills have shown leadership and it is now led by a group team members. This has been awesome to see!

Reconnecting with our post pandemic purpose with in-house training

As our team continues to grow, the team expressed a need for in-house training. The impact of two years of lockdowns, alert levels, traffic light systems and supporting people to be safe and well during a global pandemic, has caused us to somewhat forgot our purpose (our why) and the our role of Housing Case Worker being to support people to access housing, sustain tenancies and ultimately end homelessness. We are now shifting our team back from reactive to proactive from doorstep visits to in home visits.



Team Leaders consulted with staff to identify the key training needs by asking the team three questions designed to form a baseline of where, what and how they would like training to be conducted moving forward.

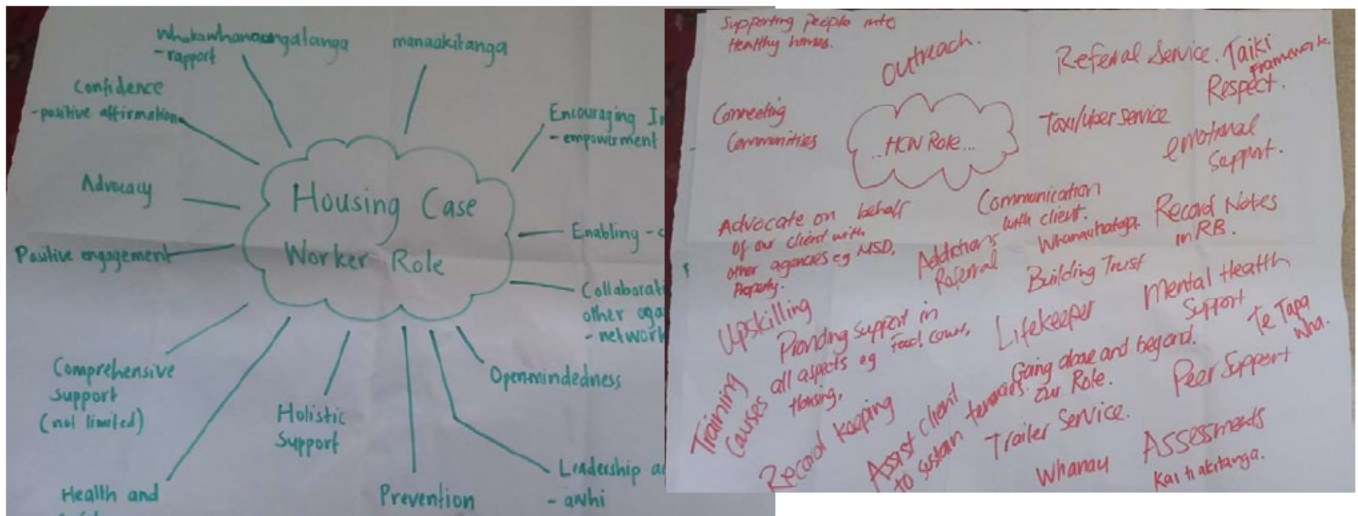
Questions

- What is working?
- What could be better?
- What is the future of Housing First?

Key words from the workshop

Staff Coaching **Teamwork**
Communication **Resources**
Better Induction Programme
Processes **Accountability**
Team Meeting **Kotahitanga**

These are some of the key words and themes that came out of training. Early September we held our second internal staff training and focused on our LinkPeople PPO (Purpose and Philosophy) and the Role of a Housing Case Worker. The training sessions have had excellent levels of staff engagement and attendance.



Partnering for positive outcomes

Building and maintaining relationships with providers and services in the community has resulted in positive outcomes for our people. After deciding to discontinue offering emergency housing in motels, our staff have built connections and relationships with **s 9(2)(a)** who have provided immediate accommodation for some of our rough sleepers.



Connecting with our local MP

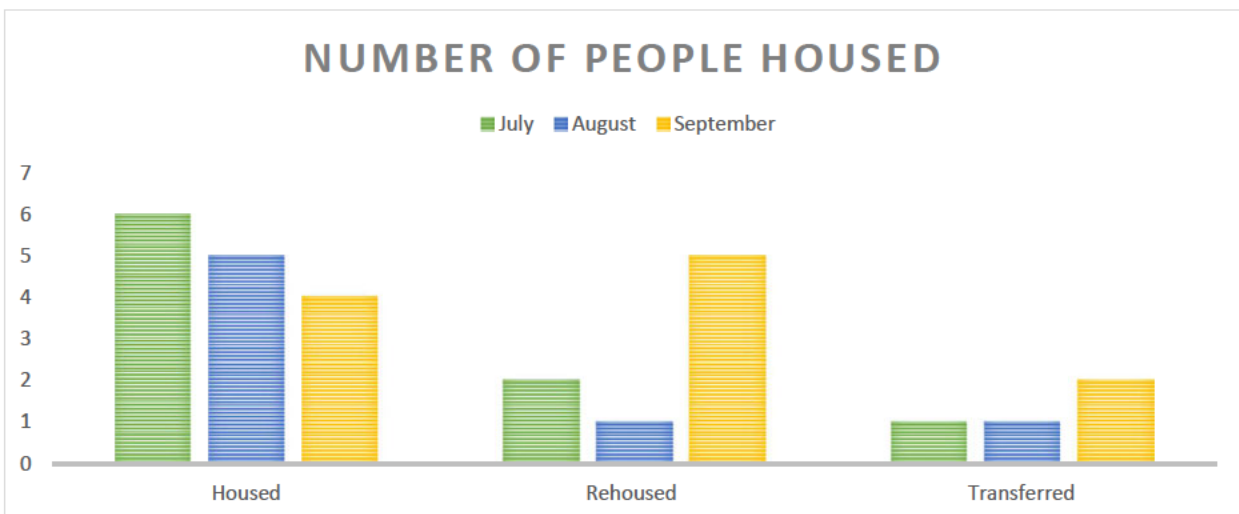
An opportunity arose to meet with Manurewa MP Arena Williams after LinkPeople Regional Manager spoke about homelessness at a panel event as part of the Auckland Reader's Festival. It was great to connect with her office to give her a picture of the service we offer and the issues that are impacting the people we support.

Key discussion topics included:

- Background on Housing First and LinkPeople and the impact the Housing First service has had in reducing rough sleeping in Manurewa
- The importance of Sustaining Tenancies in homelessness prevention
- Our relationship with mental health services and the challenges and barriers we can face accessing appropriate services for the people we support
- The need for whānau to have the support services in place for as long as they need them (not tied to contract outcomes)
- The complexity of the challenges faced by the people in our programmes
- The connection between colonisation and intergenerational trauma and the challenges we see with people in our services – we can have up to five generations needing support
- The importance of outreach in ensuring that homelessness is rare and brief
- Addiction - the continued harm of synthetics and meth on our community
- Need for better access to Kāinga Ora properties
- Increase in gang presence and membership in our community.

We look forward to continuing to connect and collaborate with Arena Williams and her office in the future.

People who have been supported into housing



Quarter 1

- Housed 15 whānau into homes, from motel emergency housing, off the streets and family couches.



- Rehoused 8 whānau who were evicted from previous properties and whom self-discharged from the programme and found their way back to LinkPeople.
- Transferred four whānau between properties for various reasons.
 - Couple expecting second baby needed a two-bedroom whāre
 - Owner recalled property and for health reasons
 - Whāre no longer suitable due to whanau on-going health issues.

What improvements have we made and identified?

New Practice Lead Appointed

As part of the growth of LinkPeople across the country, our Senior Leadership Team have appointed a New Practice Lead, Leonie Kaipo, who has been with LinkPeople since the very beginning. Leonie brings wealth of experience and knowledge to her new role as Practice Lead. Leonie started as part of a team of five as a Housing Case Worker became a Team Lead and is the organisation's national Practice Lead.

Training / Study

Managing and de-escalating challenging situations at work - staff trained as team to help de-escalate any situation that they might face.

Level 4 Mental Health Certificate

Staff are continuing on this learning journey our staff have a great relationship with their Assessor who is very supportive and easy to communicate with.

MSD Social Housing Assessment Team

Our relationship with the MSD Social Housing Assessment Team continues to be great. They continue to make the assessment process smooth and easy for our client. The feedback from staff and clients has been positive. The relationship has made placing our people into our properties fast and easy.

Connecting with Prison(s) (Mt Eden and Wiri)

We have identified the need to build relationships with our prisons when our men or women are in police custody and awaiting sentencing or bail address approvals. We have found this quarter that while our people are awaiting sentencing their benefits are cut and rent arrears accumulate.

One of our Team Lead's has reached out to her contact the Regional Manager Maori Partnerships Northern Department of Correction for support in getting in contact with our people while in custody, and access to meeting with them in person. This relationship is important to have and maintain, so that our men and women know that there is still support waiting for them when they are released.

What does not work well?

Relationship with WINZ

We continue to struggle with WINZ despite been allocated a dedicated contact person. Communication at times has been one sided. Our staff continue to need to strongly advocate at WINZ Office for the people we support, who continue to be judged when seeking support from WINZ for their mental health, addictions and criminal backgrounds. We have been reallocated a new contact person at WINZ that we hope will support our team to support people and break down the barriers at WINZ that prevent people from moving forward.



Rehousing and Transfers

This quarter we've had an increase of rehoused whanau due to various reasons.

- Eviction
- Client returning after being discharged from the programme.
- Gang takeovers
- Whānau / friends takeover

Rehousing people is very difficult at times, it not just matching them to the house, but also matching them to community that they feel comfortable calling home.

Tenant transfers have also increased for the following reasons:

- Owner/Landlord not extending lease or tenancy with LinkPeople
- House/unit no longer suitable for tenant
- Tenant Health condition and issues
- Surrounding community or environment is creating challenges for people.

We have not been able to rehouse everyone due to delays in property suitability or availability.

Despite this the request for transfers continues to grow for many reasons.

- New Kainga Ora housing developments are creating challenges for some people.
- The neighbours/neighbourhood is not safe for whānau and mokos (grandchildren) when they visit.
- House no longer suitable or doesn't cater to the needs for their family.
- Do not get along with their neighbours.
- Mental Health.

Direct support and facilitated access you provided to address people's identified needs:

We are interested in understanding the support and services that people are either being provided with directly or assisted to access while on the programme.

Connecting to Community Services

As we continue to report every quarter, our people continue to need support to access services, providers and organisations for food parcels, electricity and emergency housing, accommodation, and wellbeing. The ongoing need for these supports is due to many things; lack of budgeting, high debt, no more entitlements with WINZ, increase cost of living and addictions. Despite these issues, our team continue to support and navigate our people to food banks and providers.

- South Auckland Christian Food Bank
- Wednesday Night Community Dinners 6pm – 7:15pm (not cost, just turn up)
- Manukau Salvation Army
- St Vincent Food Bank
- Manukau Urban Māori Authority
- Ngā Whare Waatea

Unfortunately, due to inflation, and the cost of living the choice of pay for rent and utilities is sometimes hard for our people to make when they have a habit or addiction to feed.

Fast Connect (fastconnect.co.nz 0800 88 55 99)



When our whanau sign their tenancy, we connect with Fast Connect Power Service that will find them the best power deal that will suit their situation and their budget. By connecting our people with this service cuts down the time of them having to call several numbers to find the right power company that will work for them.

Successes (big and small) that show how far a person/household has come and Housing First interventions or activities linked to these:

We appreciate that the measure of success and wellbeing is individual and what may seem insignificant to one is an incredible feat for someone else. We also appreciate hearing about the on-going journeys for clients reported in any previous quarters.

Small changes are huge

s 9(2)(a) single Māori male, in his fifties, has a long history of health issues. Being homeless for many years before LinkPeople housed him. s 9(2)(a) needs a lot of home help and support to his health appointments and shopping. s 9(2)(a) can be difficult at times and verbal when he doesn't get his way. s 9(2)(a) has had a change of Housing Case Workers, and since the change the team have seen and noticed small changes with s 9(2)(a) in his behaviour and his hygiene, he cleans up after himself, for our staff this is big, as s 9(2)(a) is known to be stubborn, however, they have seen him try to do things for himself as they continue to encourage him to do things for himself.

Mana motuhake (Independence)

s 9(2)(a) Has recently moved into her private rental with her s 9(2)(a) bubba,.

We have supported s 9(2)(a) for two and a half years in our service. In the past five months, I've seen big changes in s 9(2)(a) and her relationship with her partner and their s 9(2)(a). When I first met s 9(2)(a) she believed everyone was out to get her. I told s 9(2)(a) what my role was, and what my role will be if she wanted a working partnership with me. I wasn't there to tell her what to do and how to live and made sure she was aware that at any time she could tell me to leave s 9(2)(a) liked the fact that I was honest with her, if we are honest with each other, we won't have problems.

s 9(2)(a) and her partner have a blended family and loves being a mum to her s 9(2)(a) and step-mum to her s 9(2)(a). Throughout s 9(2)(a) pregnancy Oranga Tamariki have been involved due to s 9(2)(a) history with her previous relationships and children. s 9(2)(a) has proved everyone wrong who told her she would fail and have bubba taken by OT. s 9(2)(a) and her partner were determined to prove them wrong. We set goals.

- Get a job.
- Move into a bigger house (find it myself).
- OT to close my file.

s 9(2)(a) is now working and has moved into a private rental with her s 9(2)(a) and hopefully have her partner and s 9(2)(a) move in with her. While s 9(2)(a) works during the day her partner cares for their s 9(2)(a) "I'm so happy, everything is falling in place for us" I told s 9(2)(a) that I had one more goal for her and I to compete together and that was to get her case / file closed with Oranga Tamariki. Which we hope to have closed very soon.

**Names changed to protect privacy.*

