

# ONELINK QUARTERLY REPORT ENDING JUNE 2020

## What is One Link?

OneLink is a central intake and assessment service. This means that it assesses all requests for support (accommodation and services) and does not turn eligible people away. It then prioritises people according to their needs, refers immediately where possible or places them on an active waiting list.

On 1 July 2016, OneLink combined the previous homelessness gateway (First Point) and the Child Youth and Family Services Gateway, as well as providing access to a range of mainstream services.

## How does it work?

People can access OneLink through a 1800 number (1800 176 468), in person at Nature Conservation House, at Outreach locations or via the Onelink Website ([www.onelink.org.au/services](http://www.onelink.org.au/services)) through webchat.

OneLink does not provide direct client support – it assesses and records a person's needs, maintains engagement through active holding and connects people to the supports they require.

When a person calls or visits OneLink, an Assessment and Support Officer assesses and prioritises the client's needs, provides information about options and, where appropriate, follows up with clients to connect them to support. The Assessment and Support Officer will stay in touch with clients until they have all the supports, they need.

At the end of the month OneLink reports on the number of people still waiting to be connected to any service, both accommodation and non-accommodation supports. Some people waiting at the end of the month may have had some service needs met while still waiting for connection to others.

Note: not all people waiting for accommodation are sleeping rough. Most are staying with relatives or friends or in other temporary accommodation (e.g. caravan parks, hostels etc.).

## What supports does OneLink connect people with?

### Accommodation

- Short term emergency accommodation
- Transitional accommodation

### Support services

- Housing support
  - Assertive outreach
  - Access to independent housing
  - Support to sustain tenancy
- Youth and family support
  - Youth support

- Family and child support
- Other support
  - Aged care support
  - Counselling services
  - Disability support services
  - Domestic and family violence support services
  - Financial counselling
  - Legal services
  - Mental health services
  - Health/medical services
  - Drug/alcohol support
  - Domestic assistance

### What does this latest report show?

- OneLink supported a similar number of clients per month (693) in this quarter compared to the previous quarter (691).
- Lower number of new clients (on average 117 new clients per month), lower than the previous quarter (143 during January – March 2020). For the first half of the reporting period Canberra community went into isolation in compliance with the ACT Government’s COVID-19 restrictions. This may have attributed to lower client numbers across the service sector including OneLink. New clients represented around 17% of all clients each month.
- Lower number of occasions of one-off assistance (on average 218 occasions of one-off assistance per month in this quarter compared with 339 in the previous quarter), but higher than the 191 in the corresponding quarter in 2019.
- Client waited shorter for support services (30.3 days in this quarter compared with 32.6 days in previous quarter) but waited longer for accommodation (42.8 days in this quarter compared with 39.7 days in previous quarter). During this quarter, to comply with the ACT Health’s requirements regarding social distancing, the services had to make adequate adjustments to their accommodation service delivery models, thus resulting in a longer wait time for clients seeking accommodation. The lower waiting time for support service reflects great efforts of and strong collaboration between OneLink and the sector in continuing to maintain and improve support services to the most vulnerable members of our community during this difficult time.
- Higher number of clients placed into accommodation and higher number of clients provided with support in this quarter. 121 clients were placed into accommodation and 238 provided with support services in this quarter compared with 113 and 230 respectively in the previous quarter. This higher number of clients supported can be attributed to the implementation of the *Client Support Fund* and the *Accommodation Support Fund*.
- Client Support Fund (CSF) and Accommodation Support Fund (ASF). These two new programs commencing on 11 May 2020 are managed and coordinated by OneLink. The implementation of the *Client Support Fund* and *Accommodation Support Fund* has provided additional resources to increase the sector’s capacity to respond to increasing service demand from

individuals/families experiencing or at risk of homelessness due to COVID-19, including those impacted by domestic and family violence.

- The Client Support Fund provides a flexible response to clients, with support packages tailored to the level of client need (Low, medium, or high). All specialist homelessness providers across the ACT can access this funding to support current and new clients experiencing or at risk of homelessness due to COVID-19. During this quarter, as of 30 June 2020, the program spent \$213,336 to provide 31 individuals/families with both accommodation and support or support only services.

The *Client Support Fund* has been responsive to a wide range of needs, including offering support and transitional accommodation to people already living with complex and competing support needs which were exacerbated by COVID 19. The Client Support Fund has also been implemented with a strong focus on early intervention for individuals and families whose first experience of housing crisis was a result of COVID 19. For these clients, the *Client Support Fund* has been administered with a clear objective to divert people away from social housing through the provision of safe accommodation and support to rebuild their capacity to access other housing options.

- The Accommodation Support Fund provides additional brokerage for temporary motel/hotel accommodation to assist Canberrans who are homeless due to COVID-19, as well as for residents in larger shared homelessness and community housing accommodation settings who need to self-isolate or quarantine. During this quarter, as of 30 June 2020, the program spent \$73,458.50 to provide temporary accommodation at motel/hotel for 52 individuals/families. This additional funding, where appropriate and necessary, administered in tandem with the Client Support Fund.
- Lower number of clients on the waiting list at the end of each month (on average 357 clients in this quarter). This is lower than 374 in previous quarter. This quarter OneLink continued improving its referral process and connecting clients with services in a timely manner. Strong collaboration with other on-going and new COVID-19 initiatives including Client Support Fund, Accommodation Support Fund, Winter Lodge, Mackillop House, and Axial Housing has enabled OneLink to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its referral processes, thus placing more clients into accommodation and support services while closely monitoring and reducing number of clients on the waiting list.
- People experiencing family and domestic violence remain the single largest group seeking support. Family and domestic violence continued to be the biggest contributor in the homelessness sector. OneLink linked multiple individuals and families with specialist DV support and accommodation services, as well as offering additional support and expertise through the Client Support Fund. Onelink received enquiries from interstate clients who were fleeing domestic violence situations.
- The majority of non-accommodation placements (60.2%) were for those clients seeking housing support (i.e. support to sustain their tenancy, access to independent housing); slightly lower than the proportion in the last quarter (61.5%).

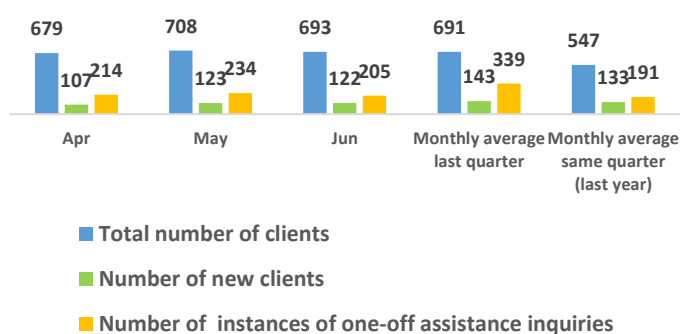
- OneLink Complex: during this quarter, OneLink Complex supported 44 people of whom 20 were male, and 24 were female. OneLink Complex supported 6 people who identified as member of Aboriginal and Torres Islander community, and 5 clients who were born in a country other than Australia. 29 of these clients reported that they were sleeping rough or in non-conventional accommodation in the month before presentation to OneLink Complex. In the last month of data collection for this period, only 7 people reported that they were sleeping rough or in non-conventional accommodation. 25 out of 44 clients has been accommodated longer-term at the end of their support period. 13 of the 44 client supported by OneLink Complex were connected to support through the Client Support Fund for either accommodation and support or support only.
- OneLink and Housing ACT Gateway integration: OneLink and Housing ACT Gateway have continued to foster a strategic integration with a focus on delivering support to Canberrans who need it. This reporting period saw the implementation of more robust procedures and clarity in scope of roles, avenues for escalation and opportunities for the joint responses to clients in crisis. OneLink also worked with Housing ACT Gateway around the development and implementation of processes related to the Client Support Fund. OneLink worked alongside the Connections and Central Access Point team to identify and assess suitable candidates for the program and with the Allocations team regarding the provision of properties. The program has generated a number of valuable learnings on how HACT Gateway and OneLink can best support and work with each other.

## ONE LINK QUARTERLY REPORT ENDING JUNE 2020

### Number of clients

- OneLink supported an average 693 clients each month during this quarter (April, May and June 2020). This is higher than the 547 average for the same quarter in 2019.
- OneLink supported a total of 352 new clients during the April to June 2020 period, lower than 398 in the same period in 2019.
- OneLink provided an average of 218 one-off assistance each month in this quarter, higher than 191 in the same quarter in 2019.

**Number of clients, new clients, and one-off assistance (Apr - Jun 2020)**

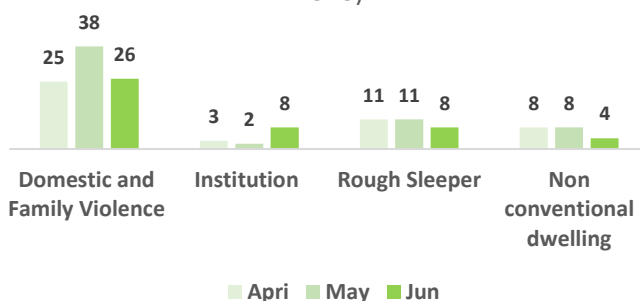


### New clients by priority groups

- Of all **new** clients the largest single priority group was those experiencing family and domestic violence (on average 25.3% of new clients).

*Note this graph is reflective of the top four priority groups and does not capture all new clients.*

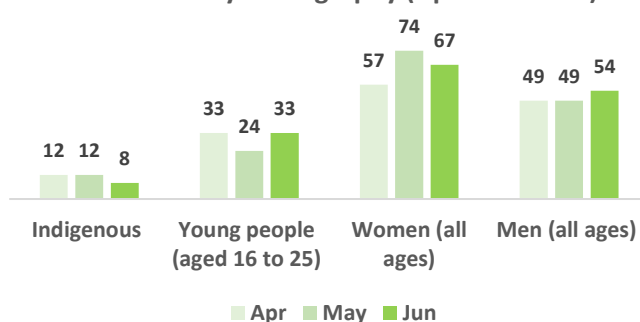
**New clients by priority groups (Apr-Jun 2020)**



### New clients by demography

- There were more new female clients (on average 56.3%) than new male clients (43.2%).
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accounted for 9.1% of new clients.
- Young people accounted for 25.6% of all new clients.

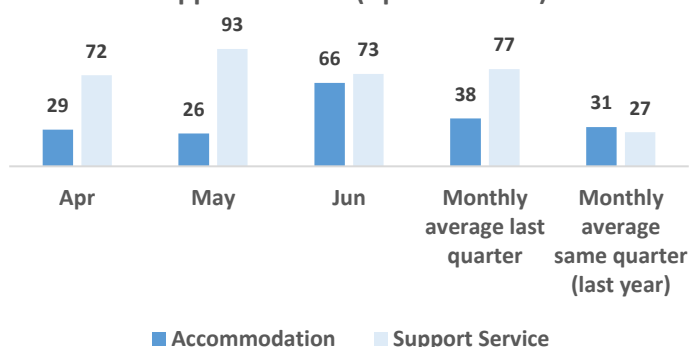
**New clients by demography (Apr - Jun 2020)**



### Number of clients placed into accommodation and support services

- A total of 121 clients were placed into accommodation with an average of 40 clients placed each month.
- A total of 238 clients were placed into support services with an average of 79 clients placed each month.

**Clients placed into accommodation and support services (Apr - Jun 2020)**



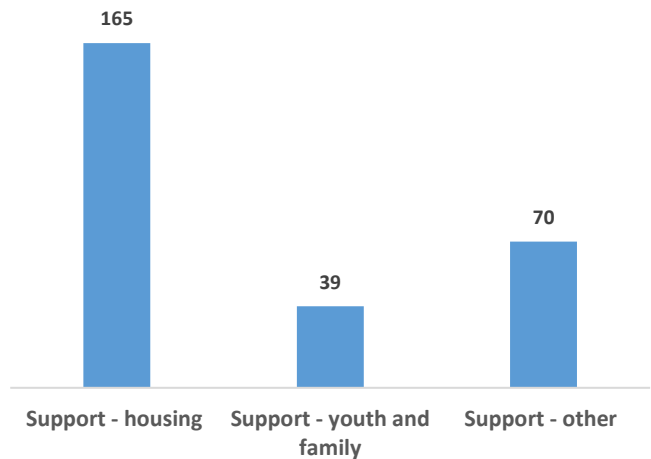
### Placement by Support Service

During this quarter, there were a total of 274 placements into support services:

- 60.2% (165) provided by housing support services, which provide tenancy support, assertive outreach, access to independent housing.
- 14.2% (39) provided by youth and family support services.
- 25.5% (70) provided by other support services including legal, mental health, family and domestic violence, financial assistance, disability support, and counselling services, drug, alcohol service.

*Note: number of clients and number placements are different; some clients are provided with more than one placement to meet their different needs.*

Number of placement by type of support service (Apr - Jun 2020)

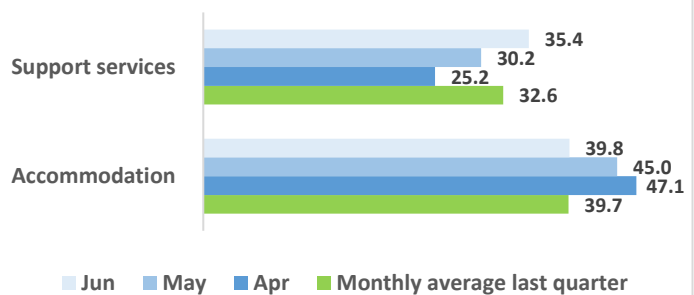


### Waiting time for accommodation and support services

During this quarter, clients waited on average 30.3 days for support services (32.6 days in the last quarter), and 42.8 days for placement into accommodation (39.7 days in the last quarter).

*Note that 'waiting for accommodation' does not necessarily equate to rough sleeping. Many people are staying with friends or relatives or other temporary accommodation.*

Waiting time (days) for accommodation and support services (Apr - Jun 2020)

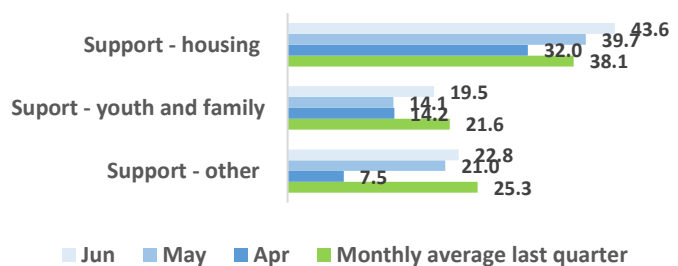


### Waiting time by type of support service

During this quarter, clients waited on average:

- 38.4 days for placement into housing support (38.1 days in the last quarter).
- 15.2 days for youth and family support (21.6 days in the last quarter).
- 19.5 days for other support (25.3 days in the last quarter).

Waiting time (days) by type of support services (Apr - Jun 2020)

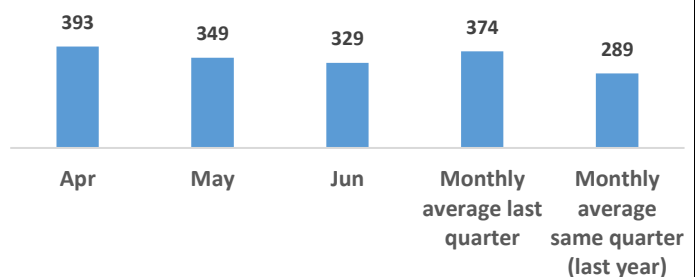


### Waiting list

- At the end of June 329 clients were waiting for accommodation and/or support services.
- This is lower than the average of over the 3-month period.

*Note: clients at end of month may be connected to some services but are waiting connection to others.*

Number of clients waiting



## Key terms explained

Client	A client refers to any person who directly receives a service. For example, if a mother and three children require accommodation, and OneLink only has contact with the mother, then the mother will be the only client for OneLink, with other family members not directly assisted. If referred to a service that then accommodates the family, then that service provides direct service for the mother and the children and that service will count each member of the family as clients.
One-off assistance  <i>*people receiving one-off assistance are not counted as client</i>	Provision of immediate support, including providing information and clarification, where there is no need for continued assistance at the time of the enquiry.
Rough sleeper	A person who is living on the streets, sleeping in parks
Non-conventional dwelling	A person who is a squatter or who is living in an improvised dwelling (tent, car etc.)
Assistance to access independent housing	Provision of support to clients to obtain an independent tenancy, including private, community and public housing. Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive Tenancy Service – housing options</li> <li>• ASSIST (Catholic Care)</li> <li>• Youth Housing Support Service (Catholic Care)</li> <li>• St Vincent de Paul’s (SVDP) Family Service and Young Parents Program</li> <li>• Everyman Australia</li> <li>• YWCA Canberra.</li> <li>• Karinya</li> <li>• Northside Community Service</li> <li>• Ted Noffs Take Hold</li> </ul>
Tenancy support	Provision of support to clients to maintain an existing tenancy (e.g. Supportive Tenancy Service – tenancy support)
Short term or emergency accommodation	Short term accommodation with support to help address any issues leading to homelessness and seek an independent tenancy. Services are targeted to particular population groups or needs, including single men (e.g. Samaritan House, CatholicCare Minosa), young people (Youth Emergency Accommodation Network (YEAN)), women and families (Toora) and women leaving domestic violence (e.g. Beryl, Doris)
Transitional accommodation	Medium term accommodation with limited support focussed on finding long-term accommodation, for people who have the capacity to maintain a tenancy. Funded transitional accommodation includes SDVP’s Family Service, YWCA Canberra’s Housing Support Unit, Banardo’s Our Place and Friendly Landlord programs, Everyman, Northside Community Service and Karinya.

Assertive outreach for rough sleepers	Outreach services to assist people who are sleeping rough or in non-conventional dwellings, to assist in connection to services as needed (e.g. SVDP's Street to Home program)
Financial assistance/material aid	Emergency relief, such as food, clothing or assistance with expenses (e.g. SVDP, Salvation Army and Uniting Care Kippax)
Domestic/family violence support	Support specifically around responding to the experience of domestic or family violence e.g. Domestic Violence Crisis Services; note other services (including Beryl, Doris, YWCA Canberra and Toora Women) provide domestic and family violence support as part of emergency accommodation
Youth Support	Support for young people, up to 25 years of age e.g. Youth Engagement Teams and YouthCARE Canberra
Family/child support	Support for families and/or children, including family case management services
Disability support (including NDIS)	Support for people living with a physical or intellectual disability, including services under NDIS or CASP other than domestic assistance – excludes psychosocial disability.
Domestic assistance/CASP	Support for domestic assistance or through CASP, which provides assistance to people who do not qualify for or have not yet obtained NDIS support (domestic assistance is often provided through CASP)
Aged care support	Support for older people (generally 65 years or older), including through My Aged Care
Health/ medical services	Medical support e.g. Through General Practitioners, Winnunga
Mental health services	Support for people living with a psychosocial disability, including through NDIS, as well as other specific mental health services
Counselling services	Professional assistance to promote mental health and wellbeing, enhance self-understanding, and resolve identified concerns (e.g. Relationships Australia)
Drug/alcohol support	Support for people dealing with addiction to alcohol or other drugs (e.g. Directions ACT, Karralika)
Legal issues/court support	Legal advice or assistance through legal processes (e.g. Canberra Community Law, Tenants Union, Street Law, Legal Aid)
Financial counselling	Information, support, and advocacy to assist people in financial difficulty (e.g. Care Financial)
Other	Support not covered in other categories, including general support for specific population groups (e.g. MARSS)