

Supported accommodation assistance

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) provides support to people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless ([SAAP clients](#)). Services provided by SAAP agencies include transitional [supported accommodation](#) and [other support services](#), designed to help clients achieve a high level of self-reliance and independence. Agencies funded through SAAP provide a range of both accommodation and non-accommodation support services. For further details regarding the scope and coverage of the SAAP Client Collection, see the [data source section](#).

The SAAP National Data Collection includes data on the use of SAAP services by clients with psychiatric or other mental health problems. These clients are defined as having [mental health-related closed support periods](#). This section presents information provided by SAAP agencies on mental health-related closed support periods for 2010–11.

Key points

- In 2010–11, there were over 25,500 mental health-related closed support periods recorded for around 18,500 clients.
- More than one-third (36.5%) of mental health-related closed support periods were for unaccompanied males aged 25 and over.
- More than one-third (39.7%) of clients with mental health-related closed support periods self-referred to SAAP services.
- Almost one-quarter (24.3%) of mental health-related closed support periods lasted between 4 and 13 weeks in duration and more than one in five (21.3%) were for less than 1 day.

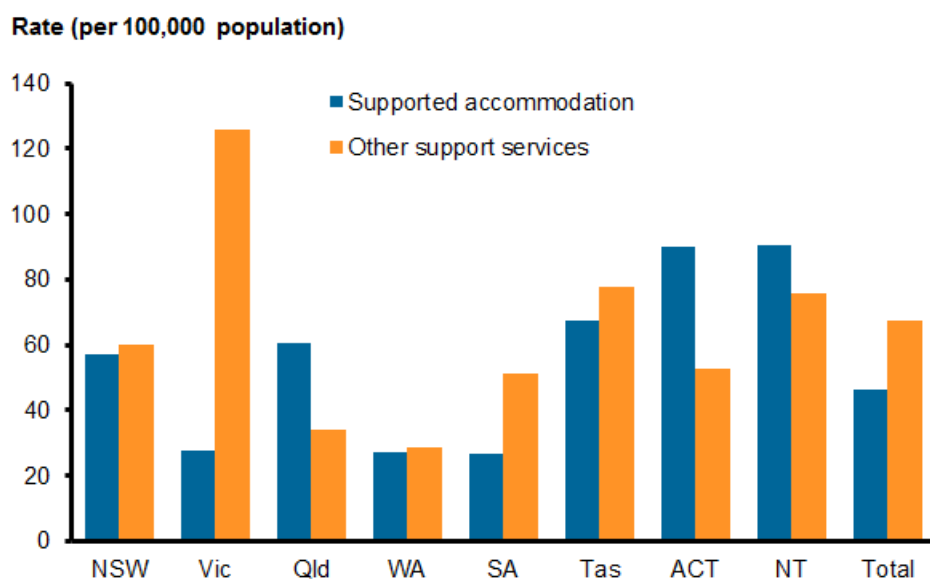
The new Specialist Homelessness Services Collection (SHSC) which began on 1 July 2011 replaces the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection (NDC) which collected data from homelessness agencies from 1996 to June 2011. The SHSC describes all clients who receive services from specialist homelessness agencies and the assistance they receive.

Mental health-related support

There were more than 180,000 closed SAAP support periods reported in 2010–11 (AIHW 2011). Of these, about one in seven (25,561) was a mental health-related closed support period, provided to 18,509 SAAP clients.

Nationally, mental health-related closed support periods involving supported accommodation services were provided at an average rate of 46.1 per 100,000 population in 2010–11 (Figure 9.1). Rates ranged from 90.5 per 100,000 for the Northern Territory to 26.8 for South Australia.

For other types of support services provided (not including accommodation) the national average rate of services provided during the support period was 67.6 per 100,000 population. Rates ranged from 125.7 per 100,000 for Victoria to 28.4 for Western Australia.



Source: Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Client Collection.

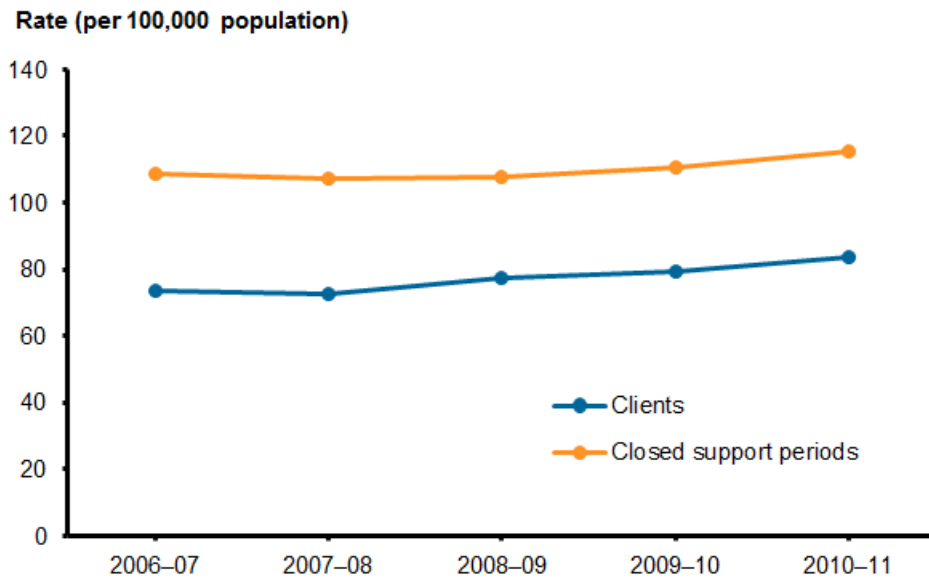
Figure 9.1: Mental health-related closed support periods, by service type, states and territories, 2010–11

Reference

AIHW 2011. Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2010-11: Australia. SAAP National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) annual report. Cat. no. HOU 250. Canberra: AIHW.

Mental health-related support over time

The rate of mental health-related closed support periods (per 100,000 population) increased by an annual average of 1.5% between 2006–07 and 2010–11 (Figure 9.2). For the same period, the average annual increase in the rate of clients who received these support periods was 3.4%.



Source: Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Client Collection.

Figure 9.2: Mental health-related closed support periods, 2006–07 to 2010–11

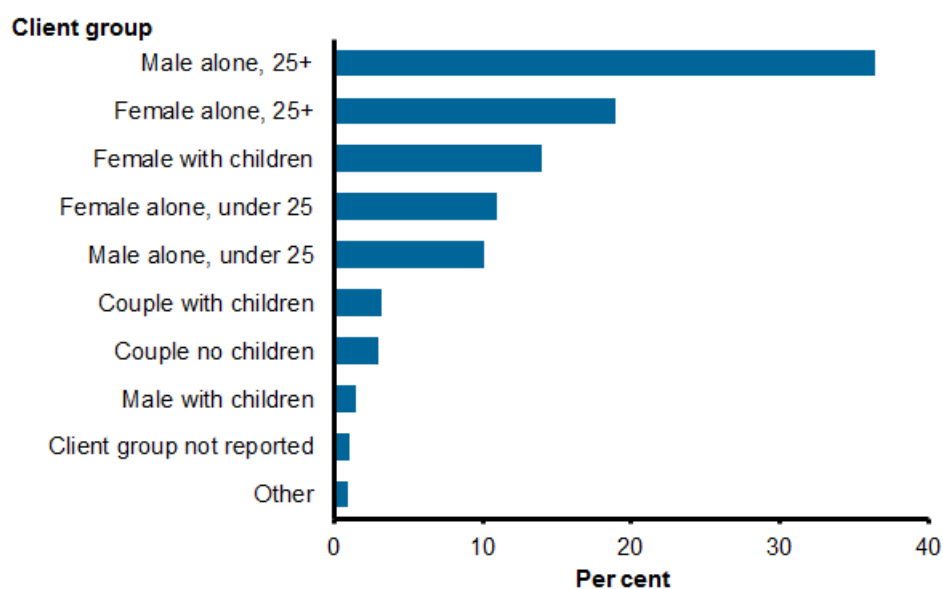
SAAP clients

Clients aged 18–19 years had the highest rate of mental health-related closed support periods (206.2 per 100,000 population) followed by 25–44 year olds (201.9) for 2010–11. Rates of mental health-related closed support periods were higher for males than females (119.0 and 111.9 per 100,000 respectively).

The rate of mental health-related closed support periods for Indigenous Australians was more than 5 times that for non-Indigenous Australians (501.5 and 98.5 per 100,000 respectively).

Nearly 8,400 mental health-related closed support periods were reported with accompanying children in 2010–11 and three-quarters of these children (76.0%) were aged up to 12 years.

Clients are allocated to a client group based on their sex, age group and mode of presentation to the SAAP agency. In 2010–11 *unaccompanied males aged 25 years and over* had the highest proportion of mental health-related closed support periods (36.5%), followed by *unaccompanied females aged 25 years and over* (18.9%) (Figure 9.3).



Source: Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Client Collection.

Figure 9.3: Mental health-related closed support periods, by client group type, 2010–11

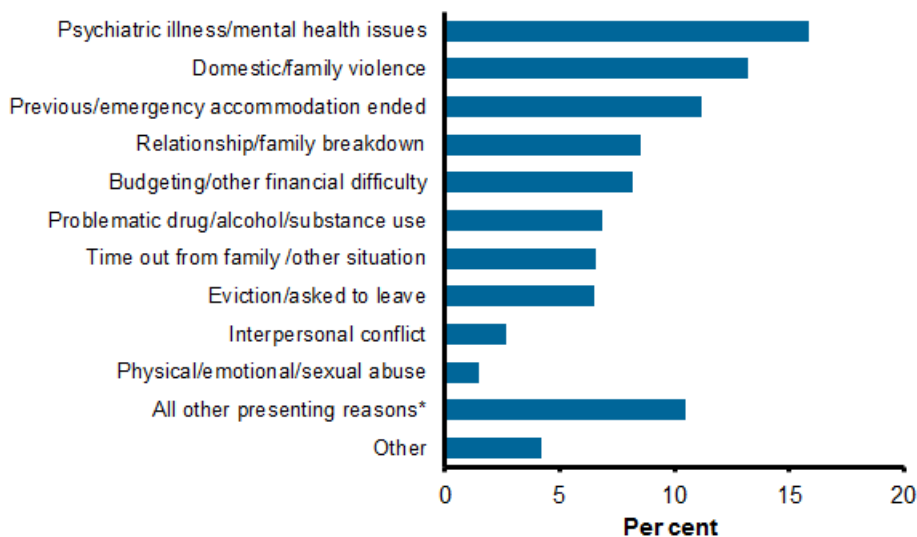
Self-referral was the most frequently recorded source of referral to SAAP agencies (39.7%) for mental health-related closed support periods during 2010–11. The next most frequently recorded sources were referrals from other SAAP agencies or workers (8.6%) and referrals from other non-government organisations (8.2%).

Service use

Main reason for seeking SAAP assistance

About one in seven (15.8%) mental health-related closed support periods for 2010–11 had *Mental health issues* or *Psychiatric illness* recorded as the main reason for seeking assistance (Figure 9.4). *Domestic/family violence* and *Previous accommodation ended* or *Emergency accommodation ended* were the next most frequently recorded main reasons for seeking assistance (13.2% and 11.2% respectively).

Main reason for seeking assistance



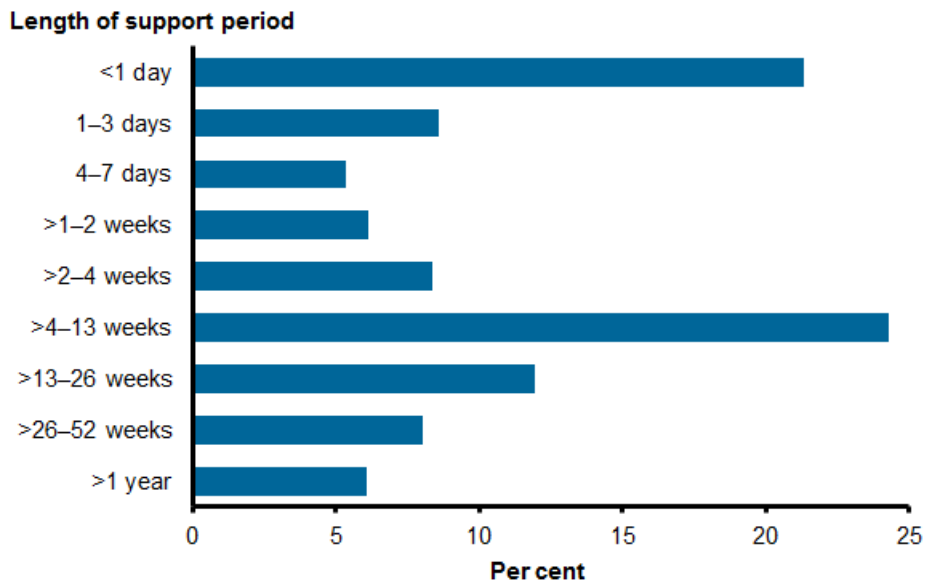
* All other presenting reasons includes the categories *gambling*, *gay/lesbian/transgender issues*, *itinerant*, *other health issues*, *overcrowding issues*, *recent arrival to area with no means of support*, *recently left institution* and *rent too high*.

Source: Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Client Collection.

Figure 9.4: Mental health-related closed support periods, by main presenting reason for seeking assistance, 2010–11

Length of support period

Almost one-quarter (24.3%) of mental health-related closed support periods lasted between 4–13 weeks. About one-fifth (21.3%) of the support periods were closed in less than a day and more than one in 20 (6.1%) lasted over 1 year (Figure 9.5).



Source: Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Client Collection.

Figure 9.5: Mental health-related closed support periods, by length of support, 2010–11

Data source

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program National Data Collection

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection (NDC) includes all agencies funded through the national SAAP agreement and/or state and territory SAAP funds. In 2010–11, 1,547 non-government, community and local government agencies were funded under the program nationally, and of these, nearly 90% participated in the collection.

Data collected include basic socio-demographic information and information on the services needed by, and provided to, each client. Information about each client's situation before and after receiving SAAP services is also collected.

While data reported from the SAAP Client Collection are generally weighted to take non-participation of agencies and non-consent of clients into account, unweighted data are presented in this report. Based on unweighted responses, there was a total of 181,901 closed support periods reported in the SAAP Client Collection for 2010–11. For the same period, the number of closed support periods using weighted data was estimated to be 203,094.

For further information on the SAAP collection, refer to the AIHW publication *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2010–11: Australia* (AIHW 2011).

Caveats

The number of mental health-related closed support periods reported is an underestimate of the actual number of such support periods for the following reasons:

- Data presented in this section are unweighted, meaning that there has been no adjustment for the undercounting of support periods that result from the non-participation of some agencies and the non-consent of some SAAP clients to the provision of their data. The data, therefore, are not comparable with other data published from the SAAP Client Collection.
- Information on presenting reasons for seeking assistance is only collected from clients who give their consent. In addition, consenting clients with mental disorders may not always report 'psychiatric illness' as a presenting reason.
- Information is collected by workers in SAAP agencies; these workers may not be trained to assess a client's need for psychiatric or psychological services.

It is important to note that some clients who were identified as having had mental health-related closed support periods may have had other closed support periods for which no mental health-related information was reported. These latter support periods are not included in the data presented.

Reference

AIHW 2011. *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2010–11: Australia*. SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2010–11. Cat. no. HOU 250. Canberra: AIHW.

Key concepts

Mental health-related Supported Accommodation Assistance Program services

Key Concept	Description
Accommodation period	An accommodation period is the period in which the client was in SAAP-supported accommodation. A client may have no accommodation periods or one or more accommodation periods within a support period.
Accompanying child	An accompanying child is less than 18 years of age and has a parent or guardian who is a SAAP client. This means that the child accompanies a parent or guardian at any time during the parent's or guardian's support period or receives SAAP assistance directly as a consequence of a parent's or guardian's support period.
Closed support period	A closed support period is a support period that had finished on or before 30 June of the reporting year.
Mental health-related closed support periods for SAAP clients	<p>Mental health-related closed support periods for SAAP clients are closed support periods for which at least one of the following were reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the source of referral to the SAAP agency was a dedicated psychiatric unit• the main, or other, presenting reason for seeking assistance was the client's psychiatric illness or mental health issue• the client reported an accommodation type of psychiatric institution either before or after SAAP support• the type of support needed, provided or referred was psychological services or psychiatric services. <p>Note that this may not capture all SAAP clients who may have a mental health-related problem.</p>
Other support services	Other support services refer to the assistance, other than supported accommodation, provided as part of an ongoing support relationship between a SAAP agency and the client.
SAAP client	A SAAP client is a person aged 18 years or older or an unaccompanied child (aged under 18 years) who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• receives support or assistance from a SAAP agency which entails generally 1 hour or more of a worker's time on a given day; or• is accommodated by a SAAP agency, or enters into an ongoing support relationship with a SAAP agency.
Supported accommodation	Supported accommodation is accommodation paid for or provided directly by a SAAP agency. This includes crisis or short-term accommodation, medium- to long-term accommodation or other SAAP-funded arrangements such as accommodation in hostels, motels, hotels and caravans, or community placements. This category also includes other types of support, such as meals and/or showers, in addition to accommodation.