

SAAP NDCA REPORT SERIES 11

Homeless people in SAAP

**SAAP National Data Collection
annual report
2005–06**

Australia

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is Australia's national health and welfare statistics and information agency. The Institute's mission is *better health and wellbeing for Australians through better health and welfare statistics and information.*

Please note that as with all statistical reports there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report over its life. Please refer to the online version at <www.aihw.gov.au>.

SAAP NDCA REPORT SERIES 11

Homeless people in SAAP

**SAAP National Data Collection
annual report
2005–06**

Australia

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Canberra

AIHW cat. no. HOU 156

© Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2007

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced without prior written permission from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Requests and enquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be directed to the Head, Business Promotion and Media Unit, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, GPO Box 570, Canberra ACT 2601.

A complete list of the Institute's publications is available from the Business Promotion and Media Unit, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, GPO Box 570, Canberra ACT 2601, or via the Institute's web site <www.aihw.gov.au>.

ISSN 1445 498X

ISBN 978 1 74024 663 7

Suggested citation

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2007. Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2005–06 Australia. SAAP NDCA report Series 11. Cat. no. HOU 156. Canberra: AIHW.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Board Chair
Hon. Peter Collins, AM, QC

Director
Penny Allbon

Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Manager
SAAP National Data Collection Agency
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
GPO Box 570
Canberra ACT 2601
Phone: 02 6244 1206

Published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Printed by Pirion

Contents

Preface.....	vii
Acknowledgments.....	viii
Abbreviations and symbols.....	ix
Summary	xi
1 Introduction	1
Overview of the report.....	2
2 Funding.....	7
2.1 Tables	9
3 Level of support	13
3.1 Tables	16
4 Age, sex, country of birth and cultural and linguistic diversity.....	21
4.1 Tables	25
5 Client groups and reasons for seeking assistance	33
5.1 Tables	37
6 Support provided.....	41
6.1 Tables	46
7 Meeting the needs of clients and accompanying children	51
7.1 Tables	58
8 Circumstances of clients before and after support.....	67
8.1 Tables	72
9 Support from 1996–97 to 2005–06	81
9.1 Tables	88
Appendix 1 The data	93
A1.1 The National Data Collection.....	93
A1.2 The Client Collection	94
A1.3 Interpretation of tables	97
A1.4 Counting rules and other definitions used in the analysis	102
Appendix 2 Summary of changes.....	109
Appendix 3 SAAP NDCA Client Collection form	117

Glossary.....127
List of tables131
List of figures134
References135

Preface

This is the Series 11 (2005–06) annual report on the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection. The first report, containing 1996–97 data, was published in December 1997. The reports provide information on people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

A productive and cooperative partnership has continued between the SAAP National Data Collection Agency (managed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare), SAAP agencies and the SAAP Information Subcommittee. Valuable support and encouragement have been provided by the SAAP Coordination and Development Committee, which is responsible for the national direction of SAAP.

This partnership has been built on shared goals and mutual trust. The key has been agencies' willingness to collect and provide data to the National Data Collection Agency, knowing that any personal information provided by clients is protected by the extremely strict confidentiality provisions of the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*.

The fact that 93% of agencies in Australia provided data in 2005–06 is testimony to their collective commitment to, and confidence in, the collection. A 93% participation rate was also recorded in 2004–05. The proportion of SAAP clients who consented to the provision of their personal data to the National Data Collection Agency decreased slightly from 89% in 2004–05 to 87% in 2005–06.

This large and complex project has not only a high level of support but also a high level of accuracy. We are confident that we can further improve the quality of the information provided to help policy makers and the community better understand and provide for the needs of people who are homeless or at risk of being so.

Under the Coordination and Development Committee's direction, a SAAP National Research Program has been established to undertake and fund studies on homeless people, often using data from the National Data Collection. Each year, the National Data Collection Agency receives many requests for data used for research purposes.

Penny Allbon

Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare

SAAP Coordination and
Development Committee

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by Felicity Murdoch and Simon Edwards of the SAAP National Data Collection Agency at the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Anne Giovanetti, Justin Griffin, Diane Gibson and the SAAP Information Subcommittee provided helpful comments on the draft report.

Table programming and production were carried out by Andrew Powierski. Data entry was performed by Tom Watson and Katrina Williams. Without the efforts of Neil Angel, John Cologon, Phil Denman, Melita Kunstelj, Stirling Lewis, Michael Navaratnam, Joan Reid, Toni Stepniak, Dianne Oglesby, Kay Grzadka, Frieda Rowland, Sergei Mitnik, Brett Davis and Qasim Shah who ensured that the data were collected and processed, this report would not have been possible. Cecilia Burke and Peter Nolan provided assistance in preparing the report for publication.

Finally, the authors acknowledge the vital role played by data providers. This report draws together a large amount of statistical material and could not have been produced without the efforts and cooperation of SAAP service providers and clients, who provided service and client information, and of the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) and state and territory funding departments, which provided administrative data.

Abbreviations and symbols

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CAP	Crisis Accommodation Program
DV	Domestic violence
FaCSIA	Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
NDC	National Data Collection
NDCA	National Data Collection Agency
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
SMART	SAAP Management and Reporting Tool

Symbols in tables

..	Not applicable
–	Nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)
n.a.	Not available
n.e.s.	Not elsewhere specified

Summary

This report provides an overview of assistance given to clients and their accompanying children by the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) during the financial year 2005–06. This national report is accompanied by state and territory supplements.

It is important to note that a Core Data Set was introduced in 2005–06, including refined definitions and a new statistical linkage key. The changes constitute a break in the series and therefore comparisons between this and previous years are not strictly possible (see Chapter 9 and Appendix 2 for more details).

Funding

In 2005–06, the total recurrent allocation to SAAP was \$348.8m. In real terms, this was 20% more than the total funding provided in 1996–97.

Recurrent funding directly to the 1,300 SAAP agencies was \$333.4m. In real terms, this was 26% more than the funding provided to agencies in 1996–97.

How many people were supported?

It is estimated that 1 in every 126 Australians, or 161,200 people, received substantial SAAP support at some time during 2005–06. Of this, 106,500 were clients and 54,700 were accompanying children. The majority of clients and accompanying children had only one period of support during the year. In general, repeat use was higher for older male clients.

Who was supported?

The majority of people supported by SAAP were female. In particular, young females aged 15–19 years were the most likely group to become a SAAP client (176 per 10,000). Accompanying children aged 0–4 years also reported a high rate of use (175 per 10,000).

Most clients and accompanying children were born in Australia and did not identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were, however, overrepresented when compared with the general Australian population.

How long were clients supported for?

The median length of support was 6 days. The median length of accommodation was 10 days. The majority of support periods did not include a period of accommodation.

Were support needs met?

Overall, SAAP agencies were able to directly meet the needs of clients and accompanying children in the majority of cases. The broad type of service provided most often was basic support services, such as meals and shower facilities. The least likely broad group of services to be provided were specialist services, such as specialist counselling services and health or medical services.

What were their outcomes?

This report covers client outcomes for income, employment, education, type of house or dwelling, type of tenure, and living situation. Generally, the circumstances of clients improved following support, particularly for those supported for longer periods.

The majority of SAAP clients had a case management plan in place before the end of their support. In most cases, at least some of the goals specified in the plans were achieved.