



Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit

HOUSING BROKERS AND READY TO RENT INITIATIVES

Process Evaluation Report for the Ministry of Social Development

**Charles Waldegrave, Monica Mercury, Adrian Field,
Taimalieutu Kiwi Tamasese, Māmari Stephens
and Tafaoimalo Loudeen Parsons**

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THE FAMILY CENTRE SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH UNIT
71 Woburn Road, Lower Hutt

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Foreword

"Ko te pipi te tuatahi, ko te kaunuku te tuarua".

The pipi and the kaunuku are splitting wedges, the pipi (a small wedge) might be all that is required to get the job done, if not, use a larger wedge. This whakataukī speaks to being strategic, starting small, being careful, and making good early decisions before taking on the larger task. Small and careful early actions can yield disproportionately good results.

This whakataukī was gifted to the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit team for this Housing Brokers and Ready to Rent Initiatives process evaluation. It captures the spirit of the analysis we endeavoured to work with and reflects the hope we have for the future of both projects as secure housing is so fundamental to the lives of all generations.

We wish to thank all those who generously shared their knowledge and experience of the development of the Housing Brokers and Ready to Rent initiatives. Their intent is to reduce the risk of homelessness and need for emergency housing by giving people a better chance of securing tenancies and help more of them gain homes in the private rental market.

We firstly acknowledge the whānau, aiga and families who generously shared their stories and experience of the programmes. We also acknowledge the Housing Brokers and the community organisations that carried out the Ready to Rent courses, the designers of the initiatives from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) - Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development - Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga, and the MSD staff who have overseen and supported the mahi.

We further wish to acknowledge the MSD Research and Evaluation staff for their review of drafts of this evaluation report.

Our thanks to all of you who supported this process evaluation project.

Ngā manaakitanga kia koutou katoa,
Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit

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Executive summary

Overview of the initiatives

This report details findings from a process evaluation of the Ready to Rent and Housing Broker initiatives. Both initiatives are designed to help clients, particularly those in emergency housing, transitional housing, or on the Public Housing Register, secure their own tenancy.

The Housing Broker service was part of a suite of housing support initiatives set up under the Aotearoa/New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan (2020-2023) (the HAP), designed to prevent and mitigate homelessness. The Ready to Rent service was already operational but HAP funding enabled it to expand its service. MSD adopted a 'launch and learn' learning on-the-job approach, to allow the roles to evolve with some room for flexibility.

The Ready to Rent programme aims to help prospective tenants through short courses that equip people with the appropriate skills and confidence to gain and sustain private rental housing. Ready to Rent providers are mainly community groups contracted by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) to deliver seminars in their regions to educate clients and support and familiarise them with the skills and knowledge required to become responsible tenants in the private rental sector.

The Housing Broker service aims to contribute further by building connections with local landlords and property managers, promoting clients as potential tenants, and matching clients with housing opportunities. The housing brokers work closely with stakeholders and clients regarding housing in the private rental market. Housing brokers support clients by providing them with opportunities to build their confidence and skillset to become responsible private rental tenants. The housing brokers were hired because of their direct experience in the rental market sector, including property managers and landlords.

The overall purpose of the process evaluation was to confirm formally that the two initiatives are proving valuable, to understand whether they are being implemented as intended, and how they should be monitored in the future.

Evaluation method

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach comprising a review of the literature, development of intervention logic models; semi-structured interviews, hui, fono, and focus groups, and outcomes framework workshops. Initially, it was intended that the administrative data be assessed for its capacity to monitor the services. It was found, however, that the data related more to the operations side of the service and as such did not provide much useful insight for the evaluation. As Māori and Pacific people make up the majority of those on the Public Housing Register, a Kaupapa Māori research approach was adopted by Māori researchers and a Fa'afaletui Pasefika research approach was used by the Pacific members of the team.

The intervention logic models (ILMs) were developed online and throughout the country with a selection of those who run the services, those who oversee them, and those who helped design them. Each service worked together to define the problem they were addressing, clarify their aims, set out the transformative processes that would accomplish those aims, and then set short-, medium- and long-term outcome goals. The ILMs were mapped into a

one-page format after being checked with participants and MSD staff, and a consensual agreement was reached with each service.

Following the finalisation of the ILMs, a separate set of question lines was developed for each service that inquired further into the processes set out in the logic models. These were designed to gain in-field feedback separately from the providers of services, the clients, and the key stakeholders (e.g., property managers and landlords) to gain three differing perspectives.

In total, seven areas (Northland, Auckland, East Coast, Taranaki, Nelson, Canterbury, Southern) were identified by MSD staff where there were Housing Broker Services and/or Ready to Rent programmes. In these regions, interviews were conducted with 66 participants from June to August 2022. For both services, providers, clients and stakeholders (landlords/property managers) were interviewed. Twenty-eight participants were interviewed about the Ready to Rent service and 38 about the Housing Broker service.

The outcomes frameworks were developed through separate in-house workshops for each of the initiatives with all, or selected members, of the earlier intervention logic workshops and the evaluation team. They were designed to develop a transparent and comprehensive set of performance criteria with clear standards in key outcomes areas for both programmes. The criteria were based on what could be reasonably expected of the services, with potential indicators and data collection approaches.

Evaluation findings for the Ready to Rent initiative

Findings indicate that the Ready to Rent initiative is achieving each of the six service aims. Clients consistently stated they were prepared well for the private rental market with information on landlord/property manager expectations, budgeting and managing rental costs, their legal rights, ensuring homes were warm and dry, their responsibilities as tenants, and where to gain support when they needed it. Most clients felt heard, valued, and appreciated by the high-level culture of care from the Ready to Rent programme facilitators and presenters. Practically all the clients agreed that the Ready to Rent programme facilitators did well to create a warm, open, and caring space where they could learn well and share their experiences freely.

The main challenges to the Ready to Rent programme identified by participants were threefold:

- The cultural capability of those delivering the courses varied regionally and there was a need to improve the cultural capacity of staff across more regions, particularly Māori and Pacific processes.
- The second key challenge was to recognise the digital connectivity difficulties for clients on low incomes and how these prevent some of them from participating adequately in the courses. There is a need for greater care to allow more time and more of an effort to provide paper distribution when people can't or can't afford to get online.
- Thirdly, some stakeholders wanted to propose to MSD the potential for a Ready to Rent Youth initiative as more young people are entering emergency and transitional housing and require a more tailored course for their needs.

Evaluation findings for the Housing Broker initiative

As with the Ready to Rent service, findings indicate that the Housing Broker service is achieving all four aims of the initiative. Many of the clients interviewed in the evaluation had developed trust and confidence in their housing broker to have knowledge of the housing/tenancy sector and the private rental market, and the ability to match them to the right opportunity, the right type of property and the appropriate stakeholders when necessary.

Consistently, clients stated that as a result of the work of the housing brokers, they had developed a positive mindset, gained knowledge about the rental sector, and felt better about themselves and their ability to secure a private rental. The housing brokers' knowledge of, and previous experience of working within, the private rental market, and the respectful and non-judgemental way most of them operated, helped to build trusting relationships.

Many landlords, property managers and investors expressed satisfaction with the service and spoke of the reciprocal value of their relationship with it. They found the service professional and were appreciative of the housing brokers' knowledge, experience, and skills in the private sector. However, it was noted that there are landlords and property managers who are more sceptical of the service.

One of the main challenges for the Housing Broker service is the variation in the levels of cultural responsiveness across the regions. Some were very capable, others made an effort to develop capability with Māori and Pacific tikanga, but others still were aware they needed to make improvements. The cultural capacity in each region was dependent on key personnel within their ranks or whether they had access or connection to the appropriate Māori or Pacific expertise in their area. Housing Broker staff also referred to frustration with internal communication processes within MSD, a lack of understanding of MSD systemic processes, and a need for appropriate professional development training.

Conclusions and recommendations

The overall purpose of the evaluation was to formally confirm that the Ready to Rent and Housing Broker programmes were proving valuable and to understand whether they were being implemented as intended.

Based on the findings of this process evaluation of both initiatives, while improvements can be made, they are proving to be valuable for their clients. Their intent was to give people a better chance of securing tenancies and help more of them gain homes in the private rental market, and there were many reports of clients successfully doing so.

MSD was innovative in hiring housing brokers who were experienced in property management or who were landlords, and in contracting community organisations experienced in working with people in housing stress as Ready to Rent course providers. These providers have been particularly committed to establishing and maintaining good connections with clients and stakeholders.

The findings show both services have performed well, and providers and the Ministry can now take the opportunity to look at ways to improve the services further. There are cultural challenges in both programmes and while some services are deeply responsive to the

cultural needs of their clients, others struggle. Internal processes between MSD and both sets of providers also require attention. As the services have begun to take root, the providers are seeking greater support and improved communication from the Ministry.

Recommendations

The Ready to Rent initiative:

1. The Ministry's Regional Housing Teams and Ready to Rent providers conduct information hui or develop other processes in their regions to improve awareness and understanding of the purpose of the Ready to Rent programme.
2. The Ministry provides opportunities for Ready to Rent providers to meet, within and beyond regions, to share best practices from their respective programmes and further develop their knowledge and practice base.
3. The Ministry provides Ready to Rent providers with resources to share and help develop their cultural competency practices and processes within their programmes across the regions.
4. The Ministry applies the indicators and data collection recommendations developed in the Ready to Rent Outcomes Framework.
5. The Ministry develops processes to mitigate the digital problems that low-income people in housing stress have, ensuring clients can access the necessary materials on time and participate in online sessions to avoid missing learning opportunities.
6. The Ministry initiates ways in which Regional Housing Teams and housing brokers can inform Ready to Rent providers appropriately about the successful or unsuccessful placement of former course participants into private rental housing.
7. The Ministry investigates the potential to provide Ready to Rent youth initiatives.

The Housing Broker initiative

1. The Ministry develops high-quality professional learning and development training for housing brokers. The issues that require addressing include clearer communication pathways between management and staff, greater understanding and explanation of MSD systems, consistent and understood data tracking and monitoring, resource support and time to create opportunities to engage professionally at national and regional levels with other housing brokers to share achievements, challenges, and best practice tools and strategies.
2. The Ministry ensures the development of cultural competency and responsiveness training for Housing Broker service staff, with an emphasis on consistent best practice steps and processes across all regions, particularly for Māori and Pacific clients.
3. The Ministry applies the indicators and data collection recommendations developed in the Housing Broker Outcomes Framework.
4. The Ministry, the Housing Broker service and other groups providing housing support initiatives set up under the HAP work together to develop a plan designed to protect vulnerable people and whānau in housing stress as rental costs continue to increase and threaten the medium- and longer-term goals of the service.

Introduction

The Aotearoa/New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan (2020-2023) (the HAP) (New Zealand Government, 2020) was published in February 2020 to contribute to the delivery of the Government's vision for homelessness to be prevented where possible, or to be rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Key areas of the HAP include prevention, supply, support and system enablers. It was developed with a collaborative cross-government commitment from multiple agencies and partners. The responsible ministries are Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Ministry of Social Development (MSD), Oranga Tamariki, Te Whatu Ora – Health NZ, Ministry of Health (MOH), Kāinga Ora, and the Department of Corrections. Homelessness Sector Services, formed by Te Matapihi He Tirohanga Mō Te Iwi Trust and Community Housing Aotearoa, are partners working with HUD to support the development and delivery of the HAP.

There are a number of housing products designed to assist people who are or may become homeless, some of which come under the HAP umbrella. These include:

- *Transitional housing* while support is put in place to transition into sustainable housing.
- *The Rotorua Contracted Emergency Housing Pilot* which is a new model of emergency housing with community-led support for people in urgent housing need.
- *Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants* which provide last resort assistance when a client cannot access any other accommodation adequate for their needs.
- *Housing Support Products* that aim to address barriers to accessing or retaining housing by meeting needs not covered by other forms of assistance. Examples include the Bond Grant, Moving Assistance, and Rent Arrears Assistance.
- *Flexible Funding Assistance (Flexi-fund)* which is another last resort payment, to assist whānau with dependent children staying in accommodation funded by the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant.
- *Conditional Grant for Housing Assistance* is offered to clients for help with the cost of a bond, letting fees and rent in advance required to move into alternative accommodation.
- *Intensive case managers (ICMs)* who are employed by MSD and work out of Work and Income offices. They assess and approve MSD entitlements, advocate for whānau with other agencies, refer whānau to external services and can access additional funding for whānau through the Flexi-fund.
- *Navigators* who are employed by community organisations, operate in the community and visit whānau at their emergency housing. They support people to navigate through the system and stay connected with their community, health services and other necessary agencies.

MSD has a range of roles in the implementation of the HAP that includes assessing entitlement for various grants, overseeing the ICMs, overseeing the Navigators project, and the two initiatives selected for this evaluation – the Ready to Rent and Housing Broker initiatives. These latter two services are part of a package of support options for individuals, families, and whānau experiencing homelessness or housing stress. While the services were set up as separate initiatives, in practice they tend to complement each other.

The Ready to Rent initiative provides short courses that equip people with the appropriate skills and confidence to gain and sustain private rental housing. The Housing Broker service builds connections with local landlords and property managers, promoting clients as potential tenants, and matching clients with housing opportunities.

The Ready to Rent courses focus on a range of areas, including tenants' rights and responsibilities; managing money and debts; maintaining a warm, dry, and healthy home; available housing products; and landlord and tenant interviews and presentations. They also teach clients how to apply for properties and organise a viewing time. Once the course is completed, clients receive a 'support letter' to use when applying for tenancies.

Clients are then linked with housing brokers, who provide further support for them to succeed in the private rental market. They achieve this through a range of initiatives that include: building connections with local landlords and property managers; promoting clients as potential tenants; and matching clients with housing opportunities.

Their intent was to give people a better chance of securing tenancies and help more of them gain homes in the private rental market, thus reducing the risk of homelessness and the need for emergency housing. MSD adopted a 'launch and learn' learning on-the-job approach (Egan et al., 2004) to allow the roles to evolve with some room for flexibility.

It was predicted there would be regional variations owing to differing levels of emergency housing, the amount of preventive support work in each area, and location-specific challenges and needs.

Prior to this evaluation, MSD had received anecdotal evidence that suggested the Ready to Rent and the Housing Broker initiatives were enabling people to find accommodation in the private rental market. However, to validate this anecdotal evidence, the Ministry commissioned an independent process evaluation of these services. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to formally confirm the extent to which the two initiatives are proving valuable and to understand whether they have been implemented as intended.

The process evaluation findings will contribute to the establishment of a monitoring framework for each initiative and support the improvement of service design or best practice changes made by the MSD Service Delivery team. Overall, they should improve the Ministry's understanding of the value of these housing interventions and increase their understanding of the relationship between housing and other social outcomes.

Key evaluation questions and the evaluators

MSD sought an independent process evaluation team to address the following seven key evaluation questions (KEQs) in relation to the two initiatives:

Question number	Research question
KEQ 1	What is the evidence for initiatives designed to support people to navigate and access stable housing, particularly housing within the private rental market?
KEQ 2	What is the intervention logic underpinning the Ready to Rent initiative and the Housing Broker service initiative, respectively
KEQ 3	How well do the objectives of each initiative align with the intended high-level outcomes of the Homelessness Action Plan (HAP)?
KEQ 4	To what extent are the initiatives designed to achieve their objectives?
KEQ 5	To what extent are the Ready to Rent programmes and Housing Broker service being implemented as intended?
KEQ 6	How might the initiatives be refined to improve outcomes for all client groups?
KEQ 7	What are the outputs and outcomes that are important to measure for each initiative going forward?

Each of the seven KEQs will be responded to in various sections of this report. A box with a KEQ or number of KEQs will appear progressively under the relevant heading in the report.

The Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit (FCSPRU) was commissioned to undertake the process evaluation of both services. The FCSPRU is located within the Family Centre which is a three tikanga (Māori, Pacific and Pākehā/NZ European staff and clientele) community-based organisation in Lower Hutt. Adrian Field of Dovetail Consulting Limited assisted FCSPRU for several components of the evaluation.

The contextual literature

This section presents a summary of relevant media, policy and research information that addresses KEQ 1: What is the evidence for initiatives designed to support people to navigate and access stable housing, particularly housing within the private rental market?

Policy response in Aotearoa

The initial literature provided by MSD as the basis for the establishment of the Ready to Rent and Housing Broker initiatives primarily consisted of government documentation and links to ministerial websites. The HAP (NZ Govt., 2020) was the primary literature referred to. As has been noted, MSD adopted a 'launch and learn' learning on-the-job approach (Egan et al., 2004) to allow the roles to evolve with some room for flexibility. It is the first time a comprehensive central government-led and cross-agency plan has been developed in Aotearoa, with the aim of preventing and reducing homelessness.

The HAP provides an overarching framework for communities, iwi, service providers, the private sector, local authorities, and government agencies to continue to work together to prevent and reduce homelessness. Through it, the Government commits to working with the sector and wider community partners to prevent homelessness from occurring in the first

place. This means working closely with those in insecure housing who may be at risk of experiencing homelessness and those who are already in emergency, or transitional accommodation. The HAP notes that it is widely recognised that access to suitable, stable housing and support services is fundamental to improving wellbeing. However, the government acknowledges that changing its response is not easy. A change of this magnitude is challenging and will require an ongoing, collective effort over many years.

The HAP framework consists of the overarching vision, guiding principles, four action areas, and associated high-level outcomes, with short-term and longer-term action points. The Ready to Rent and Housing Broker services sit within the Support key focus area:

Prevention: Individuals, families, and whānau receive the support they need so that homelessness stops happening in the first place.

Supply: All New Zealanders have a place to call home and the use of motels for emergency housing is reduced.

Support: Individuals, families, and whānau experiencing homelessness move quickly into stable housing and access wider social support to address needs and stay housed.

System enablers: The system supports and enables our vision and together we address homelessness.

Understanding housing need in Aotearoa

A key document alongside the HAP is Te Maihi o te Whare Māori – the Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation Framework for Action (MAIHI) (Mahuta, 2020) and its subsequent development MAIHI Ka Ora: The National Māori Housing Strategy (2021a). The latter is important because Māori are over-represented on the Public Housing Register (51 percent – HUD, 2022b, p. 10) and amongst Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants applicants (63 percent – MSD, 2022).

Te MAIHI Ka Ora refers to the ‘crisis’ (2021a, p. 1) in Māori housing and the ‘decade of Crown failure’ (p. 5) to describe previous government policy. It describes the dire circumstances currently facing many whānau. The document refers to a ‘whole of system’ approach which will ‘respond, review, and reset’ (p. 7) the total system. Actions should be taken now (‘respond’) but where actions are found to not work (‘review’), there is an obligation to change course (‘reset’). The MAIHI Ka Ora strategy document says that it takes the Framework for Action and ‘elevates it to provide the strategic direction for the whole Māori housing system’ (p. 3).

MAIHI Ka Ora signals that, in order to make a difference in Māori housing and wellbeing, there needs to be a commitment to engage with Te Ao Māori. It clearly states that for the Government’s housing programme to deliver successful housing outcomes for Māori it must:

- partner with Māori
- apply kaupapa Māori approaches
- take the necessary system approach (p. 7).

The latter refers to an expectation of cohesion across government agencies to accelerate Māori housing and wellbeing outcomes.

The document explores aspects of housing across six ‘key priority areas’ (p. 15). These are:

1. Māori Crown Partnerships
2. Māori-led Local Solutions
3. Māori Housing Supply
4. Māori Housing Support
5. Māori Housing System
6. Māori Housing Sustainability.

Each priority area includes 'respond, review and reset' actions with pathways, deliverables and timeframes attached to them.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has not only officially adopted MAIHI Ka Ora, but has made it a central part of the Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development, which sets out the vision and direction for housing and urban development in Aotearoa over the next 30 years. In terms of the overall vision, it commits to partnership with Māori seeking solutions that are 'led by Māori and are delivered locally' (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2021b, p. 5).

Lawson-Te Aho et al.'s (2019) work on developing 'A principles framework for taking action on Māori/Indigenous homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand' is another important background qualitative study. They interviewed 20 Māori 'experts' who had either directly experienced homelessness or who worked with homeless people. They used kaupapa Māori research processes in seeking advice about Māori homelessness, how it should be solved, and which principles should underpin it. A principles framework called 'Whare Ōranga' was developed to synthesise these views. The framework incorporates Rangatiratanga (Māori self-determination), Whānau Ora policy (funding and services for Māori) and the international initiative, Housing First. They noted that: 'Addressing Māori homelessness must be anchored in rights-based and culturally aligned practice empowered by Māori worldviews, principles and processes' (p. 66).

Kate Amore has been leading a group of researchers analysing census data that refers to severe housing deprivation using data from 2001 onwards (Amore, 2016; Amore et al., 2021). In the updated 2021 publication, using 2018 census data, it is noted:

- On census night 2018, 102,123 people were identified as severely housing deprived, nearly 2.2 percent of the population.
- Those severely housing deprived were disproportionately young, with nearly 50 percent aged under 25 years of age.
- Rates of severe housing deprivation are highest among Pacific and Māori people.
- Similar numbers of males and females were severely housing-deprived overall.
- The highest rates of severe housing deprivation were found in Northland, Gisborne, and Auckland, the lowest in Canterbury, Taranaki, and Southland.

This research has made a significant contribution to the understanding and prevalence of homelessness in New Zealand and the data has been used widely by ministries to develop and enact housing policies for change.

The increasing level of youth homelessness

Reports and online articles by media outlets (e.g., Radio NZ, 2021) began surfacing early in 2021 regarding the increasing number of young people finding themselves homeless after being impacted by the COVID-19 lockdowns. Latif (2021) wrote about the community

support agencies who were dealing with many young people aged between 14 and 19 years old entering emergency and transitional housing and seeking housing stability. According to these reports, many of these rangatahi were attempting to escape difficult home situations and it was becoming a growing concern requiring urgent attention. Almeida (2022) quoted a recommendation from a social agency in Auckland urging the government to develop a targeted strategy specifically to support homeless youth.

Several regions interviewed mentioned their involvement with rising numbers of young people in emergency accommodation and one in particular commented on the success of a Ready to Rent programme which had been specifically organised for 16–18-year-olds in their community. There was interest from other areas about the possibility of establishing a Ready to Rent youth programme in their region. One Ready to Rent provider had suggested running it in schools as she felt the more educated the young people were about private renting, the better prepared they would be.

Greater and more accurate data and evidence would need to be gathered to assess and further investigate the social and financial impacts and implications of such an initiative.

International literature

The HAP and the development of the Ready to Rent and Housing Broker services align loosely with international work in the field. Tiderington et al. (2021a) led a quantitative study examining how the housing environment and residential satisfaction changed when individuals moved from Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) to mainstream housing in New York City, through the US Moving on Initiatives (MOIs) programme. They are a recent innovation in homeless services providing time-unlimited, community-based housing as well as intensive supports to those who are experiencing barriers to housing stability (e.g., psychiatric and/or substance use disorders).

To their knowledge, no previous research study exploring this had been carried out. MOI's goal is to encourage and reinforce housing tenant independence and choice with support. Ninety participants were selected for the study and two-thirds of them were successful in moving from PSH. The other third had difficulties.

Subjective assessments of housing and neighbourhood quality and residential satisfaction, as well as objective neighbourhood-level data, were used to examine housing-related change for these New York City MOI recipients. The study found that those who moved generally moved into less-distressed neighbourhoods with lower poverty and crime, and their perceptions of the neighbourhoods and housing quality characteristics improved. The goals of the two programmes being evaluated in this report are congruent with these findings.

In another study, Tiderington and Goodwin (2021b) evaluated the Moving on from Supportive Housing (MOSH) programme across the United States and Canada. MOSH is a programme within the overall Moving on Initiatives. It provides a transitional skill-building curriculum for providers and is a longer-term professional development initiative to train staff who are supporting residents to exit homeless services. It differs from the Ready to Rent programme in Aotearoa where community organisations manage the programme and training themselves. The conclusions of the study saw benefit in:

- Tailoring interventions to their client populations.
- Using experts with practice knowledge during formative intervention development.

- Valuing pilot work for the purpose of ongoing development and refinement of the interventions.

The Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH) drives a global movement to end street homelessness (Hagy, 2021). The IGH vision is a world where everyone has a home that offers security, safety, autonomy, and opportunity. Founded in 2014, IGH is the first organisation to focus on homelessness as a global phenomenon. One of the key initiatives it promotes is Housing First – an international model of homelessness intervention for people experiencing chronic homelessness. As opposed to ‘staircase’ models that generally require programme participants to meet certain requirements before attaining standard housing, the Housing First model is a housing-led intervention that addresses homelessness by first providing secure accommodation to programme participants and then working to address their wider needs through providing case management and access to services and support as needed.

The Housing First model is quite widely used in Aotearoa. The Ending Homelessness in New Zealand: Housing First Research Programme (Ombler et al., 2017) is a five-year research programme collaboration between He Kāinga Oranga at the University of Otago Wellington, the National Institute for Demographic and Economic Analysis at the University of Waikato, and The People’s Project. The primary purpose of the research is to look at the provision of Housing First in New Zealand to see how the model fits into our unique context. The overarching aim of the research is to end homelessness in New Zealand, which will require a comprehensive national housing policy and multi-agency approach to all levels of housing need. This research will continue to provide valuable insight into the development of future interventions to address homelessness.

If we compare the research on the Moving On Initiatives (MOIs) in North America with the Housing Broker service in Aotearoa, there are similarities regarding the provision of a comprehensive service to assist clients out of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), an equivalent to our more temporary Emergency and Transitional system, and into more mainstream forms of affordable housing. There is a similar form of embedded case management that requires recipients to maintain some level of engagement with staff.

Where the initiatives differ is that the Housing Broker service assists clients into the private rental market rather than affordable housing options, and while the MOI is time-unlimited, the Housing Broker service imposes time limits with their clients.

As with the Housing Broker service, many clients do move on from MOIs and can do so successfully when given the opportunity. However, the MOI study also noted that some people required additional assistance and continued support from staff. This outcome is similar to that seen in New Zealand.

Culturally informed practice

Kaupapa Māori principles

In 1999, Smith challenged traditional Western ways of knowing and researching, and called for the ‘decolonisation’ of methodologies and for a new agenda of indigenous research. According to Smith, ‘decolonisation’ is concerned with having ‘a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations and values that inform research practices and therefore kaupapa Māori principles should take precedence’ (Smith, 1999, p. 214). The

significance of decolonising methodologies is that it puts the mana back into the hands of indigenous communities and enables them to determine what happens for themselves by developing their own kaupapa grounded in Te Ao Māori.

In 2019, Lawson-Te Aho et al. (2019) undertook research to specifically apply a more comprehensive kaupapa Māori principles framework to guide action on Māori Indigenous homelessness in Aotearoa. The research incorporated a combination of three identified pathways which could create opportunities to act on Māori homelessness. These pathways include:

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi as the Māori Tino Rangatiratanga self-determination pathway;
- Whānau Ora, the government-sponsored policy for disparity reduction and Māori wellbeing;
- Housing First, a global housing initiative being introduced into New Zealand which aims to house individuals and families in the first instance and then address any other social concerns and issues they may have.

The findings indicated that homelessness is particularly destructive and reasonably common for Māori, who make up half of those on the Public Housing Register. In her article, Lawson-Te Aho referred to the principles of kaupapa Māori research, and more specifically Tino Rangatiratanga, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Kaupapa (collective philosophy), Taonga Tuku Iho (cultural aspiration), Whānau (extended family structure) and Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kāinga (socio-economic mediation), all of which are important when addressing Māori homelessness.

Pihama's principle of growing respectful relationships (2022) identified āta as a transformative approach within social services. Āta relates specifically to the building and nurturing of relationships. She says this acts as a guide to the understanding of relationships and wellbeing when engaging with Māori. It is a relational approach to in-person interaction to ensure that the mana of all the participants is always the priority during the interview process. It is essential to create a space where participants feel safe and comfortable imparting their knowledge, experience, and vulnerability. Many participants in housing services will be Māori and it is important for them to feel tautoko (emotionally supported), aroha (compassion and empathy), and manaaki (to be physically hosted and looked after).

These approaches are congruent with the MAIHI Ka Ora: The National Māori Housing Strategy (2021a) referred to earlier in the literature section. To address Māori housing and wellbeing, services need to engage with Te Ao Māori. This evaluation has operated within that framework. Māori interviewers, experienced in their tikanga, designed the interviews and interviewed all Māori participants in the evaluation and led the analysis of the kaupapa Māori matters as they arose in the research.

Fa'afaletui Pasefika research methodology

The Fa'afaletui fono Pacific research methodology was developed at the Family Centre. The Fa'afaletui methodology has been accepted by the Health Research Council as a research methodology since first published in 'Qualitative Investigation into Samoan Perspectives on Mental Health and Culturally Appropriate Services' (Tamasese et al., 1997, 2005).

Essentially, the Fa'afaletui fono is a Pacific group process where a cohort group works with a Pacific facilitator, through specifically designed questions, to gather and critically validate

their experiences and knowledge. We can engage the additional support of a Fa'afaletui of Elders (a Pasefika community expertise group) if it is deemed necessary. This is the approach with Pacific people that was adopted for this research.

It is a method of choice for research with Pacific peoples for three primary reasons. First, the collective discussion is the natural forum for discourse concerning essential issues like housing, in the Pacific context. This is particularly significant considering the Pacific practice of consensus formation and ideals of solidarity.

Second, Fa'afaletui fono groups allow for discussion at a more in-depth level than most research techniques allow. Data and insights gained are less accessible without the interactions in this method of interviewing.

Third, the Fa'afaletui fono group method facilitates systematic comparisons of an individual's experience with those in their group. The Fa'afaletui fono group context provides opportunities for clarification of responses, probing of opinions, and follow-up questions, all of which enable a whole discussion of the topic and an airing of various points of view. Fa'afaletui fono groups provide a primary space of spirituality as a source of protection and guardianship for Pacific dialogues.

Cultural application in this evaluation

The kaupapa Māori research practice used in this evaluation was underpinned by Whānau Narrative Inquiry. Adapted from the research methodology work of Clandinin (2006), it has been placed in a culturally responsive context by Dr Catherine Love.¹ This method is designed to enable the validation of the voices and experiences of those holding the narratives or stories as they interpret the significance of these for themselves. Whānau Narrative Inquiry is a qualitative research methodology that integrates cultural practices and values into the discussion and processes of the interviews.

The interviewer ensures that tautoko and aroha are prevalent during the interview process so that participants are comfortable knowing that Te Ao Māori is valued and understood. The option to conduct mihi, karakia, inoi, whakamoemiti and waiata are offered as appropriate to participants at the start and the end of the interview. Whakawhanaungatanga, the process of establishing relationships and whakapapa connections in group hui interviews, is common. Authentic oral retelling and narratives are essential components of indigenous cultures that have been passed down from generation to generation, and the interviews with individuals and groups are carried out in that tradition.

The endpoint of Whānau Narrative Inquiry is to hear the stories or narrative that capture the meanings and perspectives generated by the participants rather than the researchers. According to Lee (2009) Pūrākau, a traditional form of Māori narrative, contains

¹ Dr Love has applied this approach in much of her research and evaluation work, including Love, C., Makarini, S., Waldegrave, C., Nguyen, G. and Makarini, W. (2019) *Enhancing Tamariki and Whānau Participation in Decision Making External Evaluation Report for Oranga Tamariki*. Wellington: Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit and Love, C., Makarini, S., Waldegrave, C., Nguyen, G. and Makarini, W. (2019) *Whāngaia Ngā Pā Harakeke Eastern/Tairāwhiti Process Evaluation for the New Zealand Police*. Wellington: Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit

philosophical thought, epistemological constructs, cultural codes, and worldviews that are fundamental to identity as Māori.

There were some regions which had a high rate of Māori participation for this process evaluation. It was in these areas that specific tikanga Māori 'hui' processes (as mentioned above) were followed. The participants were Māori Ready to Rent providers and Māori Ready to Rent and Housing Broker clients. The offer by the interviewer to begin and end each hui in a wairua (spiritual) manner with waiata was always accepted and whakawhanaungatanga was conducted in te reo Māori and/or English. This tikanga set the tone for the hui and allowed open and honest kōrero to take place and ensured that all the participants felt comfortable to share. The participants could choose whether they wanted to share their kōrero in te reo Māori, English or both.

For the Fa'afaletui fono process for Pacific research, it is essential that a warm comfortable atmosphere is developed. Usually, this would involve providing a nourishing, healthy and generous meal for participants, but because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the atmosphere needed to be generated remotely.

The Pacific interviewers take as much time as the participants wish to spend. Hospitality and reciprocation are essential parts of the critical knowledge-gathering process when interviewing. Participants are assisting in the development of improved services and support and this contribution is openly recognised and reciprocated appropriately. The fono groups and the individual interviews are carried out in accordance with Pacific cultural values, using appropriate languages, protocols, and etiquette.

During the interview process, there were two occasions where fono took place online with Pacific groups, (most were Samoan participants). The Samoan interviewer offered to conduct a 'lotu' (prayer) both times and this was accepted by everyone in the groups. Some of the Samoan participants did not speak English well and it was beneficial to have someone who could speak the same language so they could understand the questions properly. The interviewer endeavoured to provide a comfortable environment for the participants to share openly. Most were very candid about their experiences of the initiatives.

Methodological overview

This section presents intervention logic models developed and agreed collaboratively with MSD that answer KEQ 2: What is the intervention logic underpinning the Ready to Rent initiative and the Housing Broker service initiative, respectively?

The logic models are also cognisant of the Homelessness Action Plan objectives noted in the introduction, and thus also respond to KEQ 3: How well do the objectives of each initiative align with the intended high-level outcomes of the Homelessness Action Plan (HAP)?

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods research approach, comprising:

- a literature review
- the development of intervention logic models
- semi-structured interviews, hui, fono, and focus groups
- the development of an outcomes framework.

The first critical deliverable for the evaluation research was to develop a comprehensive evaluation plan in association with MSD staff. During the same period, we sought review and approval from the MSD Ethics Panel for the evaluation approach, and particularly for the proposed approach for qualitative interviews with housing clients.

The first key 'hands-on' task was to set up and lead two intervention logic model workshops – one with the Ready to Rent service and the other with the Housing Broker service. The workshops were carried out online with participants from across the country, including a selection of those who ran the services, those who oversaw them, and those who helped design them. Both workshops were set up to explore and map the way in which the inputs (staffing and resources), support activities and outputs (deliverables), flow through into the intended outcomes for the programme.

We were interested in understanding how well the objectives of each initiative aligned with the intended high-level outcomes of the HAP. We were also keen to explore the mechanisms through which the activities helped create outcomes (for example suitably designed programme infrastructure, well-targeted service delivery, and culturally responsive practice). The intervention logic workshops were designed to provide a basis for testing whether the processes were fit for purpose to contribute to the intended outcomes. Together, we could check if any limitations or improvements, to either the intervention logic, or the programme itself, may be required as the programme is developed further.

The intervention logic models (see pages 18 and 19) were mapped and reviewed by workshop participants and MSD staff until a consensual agreement was reached.

Next, we developed a separate set of question lines for each service that inquired into the processes set out in the intervention logic model (see Appendix A). These were designed to gain in-field feedback separately from the providers of services, the clients, and the key stakeholders (e.g., property managers and landlords). The questions were fully informed by the intervention logic model, the literature review, and the evaluation research questions noted earlier. They were also agreed with MSD. They were crafted to draw out participants' knowledge and experience of working with the initiative as it had been implemented in their region, through individual interviews or focus, hui or fono groups. The participant responses provided on-the-job feedback that tested the match of fieldwork practice with the intervention logic and enabled a refining of the logic with the benefit of experience and hindsight. This refinement occurred later in the outcome frameworks workshops where the groups met again.

The theme analysis and coding of the collected interview data focused on testing the processes in relation to the intervention logic model in order to understand if they were fit for purpose. This was assessed by checking how the processes contributed to the intended outcomes and what unintended outcomes had or had not occurred. The analysis revealed strengths as well as limitations or improvements that were able to be discussed fully in the outcomes frameworks workshops. Thus, information gathered through the interviews with providers, users, and stakeholders, was used in the development of an outcomes framework.

The outcomes frameworks were developed through separate in-house workshops for each of the initiatives with all, or selected members, of the earlier intervention logic workshops and the research team. These workshops refined and tested the criteria emerging in the intervention logic process that had become apparent through the interviews. The outcomes frameworks provided transparent and comprehensive sets of performance criteria with clear standards in key outcomes areas. The criteria were based on what could be reasonably expected of the services, with clear markers ranging from the bare minimum to excellent levels of performance.

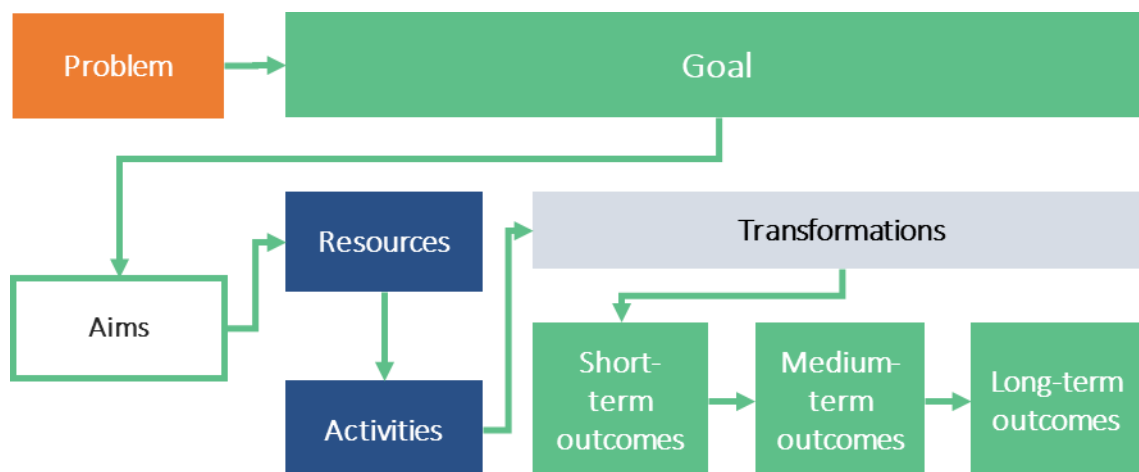
A more detailed description of the development of the intervention logic workshops, the interviews and interviewing process, and the outcomes frameworks workshops follows.

Intervention logic models

Intervention logic models (ILMs) set out the expected chain of causes and effects leading to outcomes of interest, and in so doing, how they achieve each programme’s goals, aims and objectives. The intervention logic takes a layered approach to detailing how each of the following progressively unfolds (as indicated in the diagram below):

- **Goal** of each programme
- **Problem** that each programme is seeking to overcome, which sets the context for the programme design and delivery
- **Aims** of each programme
- **Resources** or inputs that underpin each programme
- **Activities** delivered through each programme
- **Transformations** through the interactions with programme participants that enable the activities to create outcomes
- Intended **outcomes** of each initiative.

Figure 1: Key elements of intervention logic models used in this evaluation



The approach adopted in these models drew on Realist Evaluation approaches (Pawson and Tilley, 1999) that distinguish between:

- **Context:** The conditions in which a programme is developed to deliver on intended outcomes, and which affects how outcomes are achieved.
- **Mechanisms:** The processes, capacities, or qualities through which outcomes are generated; it is the mechanisms of activities (described as transformations in the logic models) that enable outcomes to be achieved.
- **Outcomes:** The changes or results created by the interrelationships of contexts and mechanisms.

In these logic models, we sought to explain not just the activities and the outcomes they created, but the ‘transformations’ – the particular qualities of the Ready to Rent and Housing Broker programmes that enabled these outcomes.

It is worth noting that the initial short-term outcomes generated are generally attributable to each of the programmes. However, with medium- and long-term outcomes (such as health and social wellbeing), the relationship becomes more contributory, as the effects of other programmes and initiatives, and the broader context of issues affecting housing access, come into play.

The ILMs for the Ready to Rent and Housing Broker initiatives were designed and tested with MSD staff over April-May 2022.

Ready to Rent intervention logic model

Building from the problem definition that there are many barriers to securing a rental property in the private market, including unfamiliarity with the processes required to secure a rental, the logic model expresses the programme goal as ‘**Gaining the required skills and confidence for the housing market.**’ The ILM then sets out the resources, activities and transformations that create the short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes for the service, through the perspectives of clients, the private rental sector, community agencies, and case managers/Ready to Rent providers (see Figure 2: Ready to Rent intervention logic model).

Housing Broker intervention logic model

Building from the problem definition that many people do not have the connections or opportunities for viewings that are required to secure rental properties in the private market, the logic model defines the programme goal of ‘**Successfully connecting people with the private rental housing market.**’ The ILM then sets out the resources, activities and transformations that create the short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes for the service, through the perspectives of clients, the private rental sector, and case managers/housing brokers (see Figure 3: Housing Broker intervention logic model).

Figure 2: Ready to Rent intervention logic model

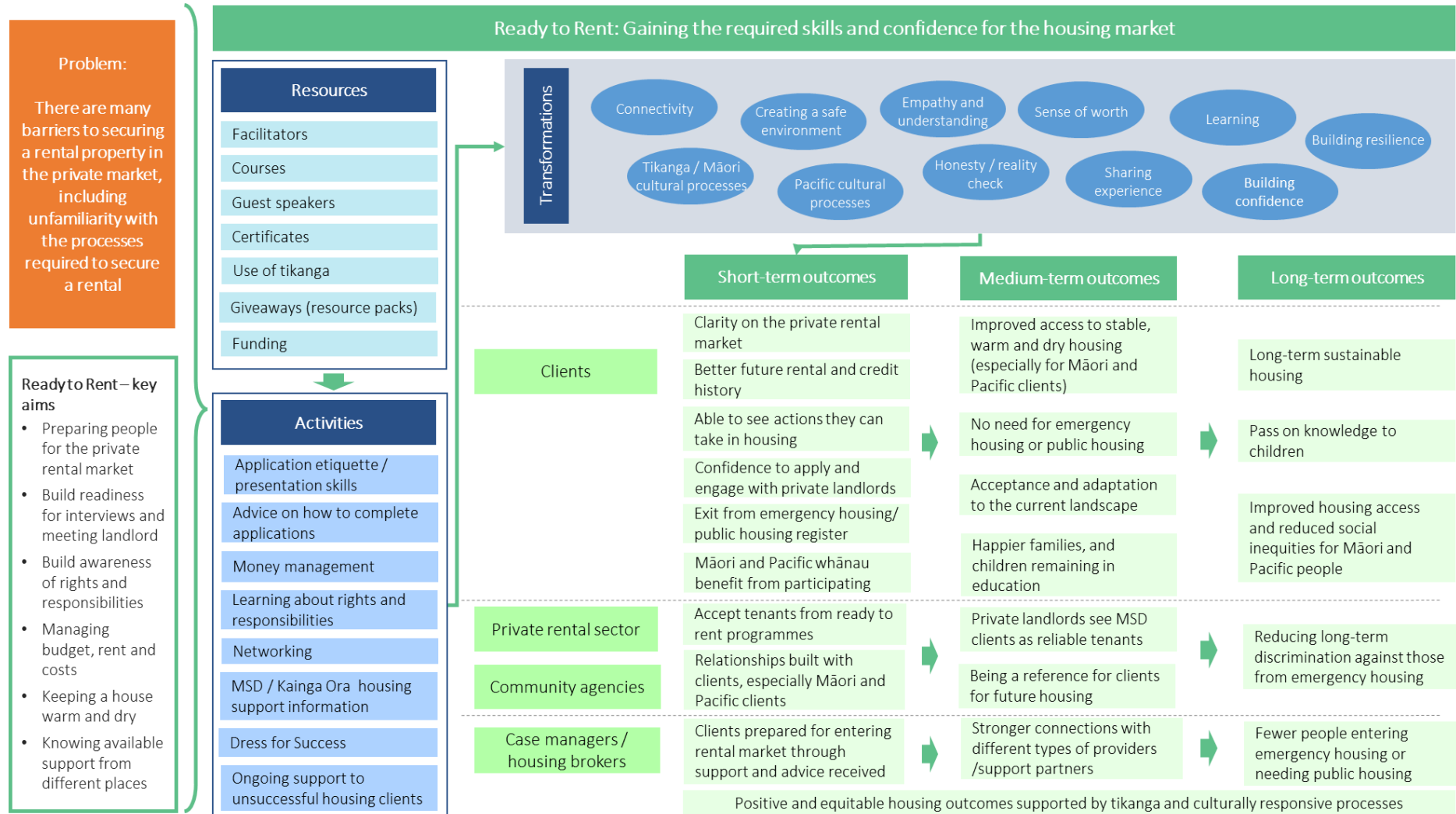
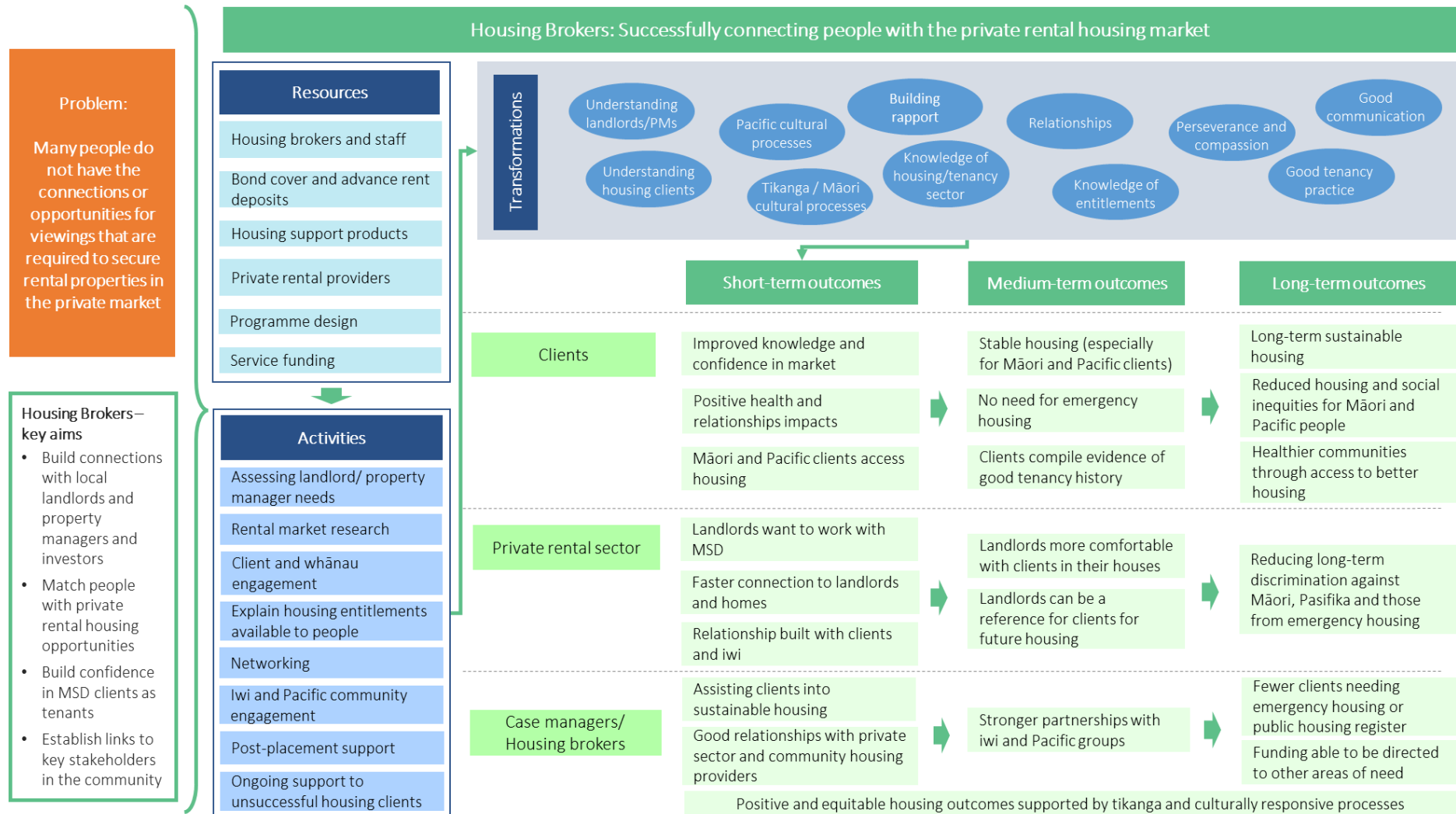


Figure 3: Housing Broker intervention logic model



Interviewee characteristics and interview process

MSD established a schedule for interviews with the following participants:

- Regional Housing Teams and Housing Broker service providers, clients, and stakeholders (property owners, property managers and private rental companies) who were being supported by the Housing Broker service
- Ready to Rent providers, clients, and stakeholders (those who presented at Ready to Rent programmes e.g., budget advisors, real estate agents, etc.) who attended the seminars.

MSD collaborated with the Regional Housing Teams to contact the participants in their areas and gain consent from them to be interviewed. In total, seven areas were identified where there were Housing Broker services or Ready to Rent programmes or some regions that had both. These MSD regions were Northland, Auckland, East Coast, Taranaki, Nelson, Canterbury, and Southern. The final number of participants was 66 and their characteristics are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Ready to Rent programme and Housing Broker service interviewee characteristics

Ready to Rent participants	Total	Housing Broker participants	Total	All participants
Providers	8	Providers	13	21
Stakeholders	8	Stakeholders	15	23
Clients	12	Clients	10	22
Total	28	Total	38	66
Ethnic identity		Ethnic identity		
Māori	18	Māori	14	32
Pacific	3	Pacific	4	7
NZ European / Pākehā	6	NZ European / Pākehā	16	22
Asian	1	Asian	3	4
		Other	1	1
Gender mix		Gender mix		
Females	23	Females	26	49
Males	5	Males	12	17

The interviews and hui/fono/focus groups with participants occurred between 30 June and 4 August 2022. The semi-structured interview question lines are set out in Appendix A. Most of the interviews were recorded in groups online over Zoom. Due to the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person interviews were not possible. Five hui Māori, two fono and seven focus groups (with Pākehā and other ethnicities) involved 42 individuals. 24 individual interviews took place by phone and were recorded online with consent. Some clients were only able to engage by phone because they did not have suitable or reliable internet access to online platforms such as Zoom.

Information sheets about the research and a consent form were provided for all participants (see Appendix B). A request to record all interviews was sought in writing to ensure accuracy in the analytic stage of the evaluation.

All interviewers observed the appropriate protocols for each culture. For Māori and Pacific participants, this approach facilitated the gathering and validation of necessary knowledge within their cultures from people indigenous to the culture and with direct knowledge and experience of it.

Slightly different question lines were prepared for each of the two services to take account of their varying experiences of the service and gain a broad picture of their overall reactions. The questions prepared for the question lines were deliberately designed to initiate discussion of the key focus areas in a semi-structured discussion format. They were open-ended to allow discussion and even debate to occur. These were followed by probes from the interviewer to gain more specific information on the topics discussed. Probing questions that arose from the discussion invited respondents to further clarify their perspectives, check their recall with others, and fine-tune their views with the perspectives of collective hindsight and recall. This led to a more reflective and considered response than the closed questions used in most questionnaires.

On completion of the interview process, a thematic analysis was undertaken. The thematic analysis process converted all the recordings to transcripts which were analysed for similarities and differences, and then themed. Every comment from every participant was grouped to ensure all data was accorded to a particular theme. These were then analysed in relation to the aims for each service as set out in the intervention logic models. Māori evaluators analysed the Māori transcripts to ensure their knowledge pieces were fully understood as they related to the aims of each initiative. Pacific evaluators carried out this process in relation to their cultures with the Pacific transcripts.

Limitations

The report is limited to being a process evaluation. Although, some clients refer to moving into a private rental and some providers and stakeholders refer to having helped households move into rental accommodation, the impact factors are not measured. The interviews were designed to evaluate the processes that had been crafted to achieve the outcome goals of both initiatives. As such the interviews tested the relationship between the intervention logic model and the actual experience of Ready to Rent course providers and housing brokers, clients and stakeholders of both programmes. These results were then discussed fully in the outcomes frameworks workshops to further develop and refine the model and set out the outcome goals for both services and how they could best be measured. This report does not seek to evaluate the outcome impacts of either service.

A further limitation of the evaluation is that the experiences reported are those of the participants in the study. Care was taken to interview clients separately from both service providers and stakeholder landlords and property managers. This was done to test the congruence between provider and stakeholder assessments of the quality of the processes alongside the lived experience of the clients. Most clients had been recruited by regional service providers and many found the services helpful. There may be others who did not find the services as helpful and were not recruited by the service for interviewing.

Interview findings: Ready to Rent initiative

Interview findings address those KEQs designed to learn more about programme implementation and effectiveness from the perspectives of key stakeholder groups.

KEQ 4: To what extent are the initiatives designed to achieve their objectives?

KEQ 5: To what extent are the Ready to Rent programmes and Housing Broker service being implemented as intended?

KEQ 6: How might the initiatives be refined to improve outcomes for all client groups?

Presenting responses to the question “What is working well” using the six aims of the Ready to Rent programme aligns with the HAP objectives of Prevention and Support, and therefore provides additional context for KEQ 3: How well do the objectives of each initiative align with the intended high-level outcomes of the Homelessness Action Plan (HAP)?

The findings have been prepared to show the responses from the three different perspectives, those of course providers, clients and stakeholders (i.e., property managers, landlords, and investors). This is to show the consistency or otherwise of responses in a manner that minimises bias. For example, a course provider may feel happy with the service s/he is providing, but a client on the receiving end may be quite dissatisfied.

The interview findings are set out as follows:

- What is working well?
- What are the obstacles or barriers to positive outcomes?
- Course provider perspectives in summary
- Client perspectives in summary
- Stakeholder perspectives in summary.

In the first section, *What is working well?*, the findings are presented in relation to each of the six aims drawn from the intervention logic model to provide a comprehensive understanding of the breadth and consistency of responses.

The six aims for the Ready to Rent programme are:

1. Preparing people for the private rental market
2. Build readiness for interviews and meeting property owners
3. Build awareness of rights and responsibilities
4. Managing budget, rent and costs
5. Keeping a house warm and dry
6. Knowing available support from different places.

Quotations from participants provide the raw data of the findings. Many quotations are used to demonstrate the most common themes as authentically as possible.

Aim 1: Preparing people for the private rental market

Ready to Rent Service: What is working well?

The course providers

Most Ready to Rent providers were community groups contracted by the MSD to provide the Ready to Rent programmes across the regions of Aotearoa to those in insecure housing situations. Most providers work to build strong professional relationships with their clients and support their continued connection to community agency representatives (e.g., MSD intensive case managers, housing brokers, and stakeholders).

The Ready to Rent providers were committed to catering to the holistic wellbeing of their clients. One community organisation had made the important connection between access to stable housing and health and wellbeing and worked to ensure their clients had the appropriate opportunities to become better educated, informed and increasingly confident in their abilities to rent in the private market.

For us, it was about giving our whānau the tools that they needed to enable them to feel more confident to move into a private rental. Most of the whānau that come in really don't have that and they really didn't have a lot of knowledge. It was about empowering them, and providing them with the tools required to increase their confidence. Talking about real stuff like the maintenance of a property, and how to build those good relationships with landlords and property managers.

Most providers knew Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and were making efforts to be more culturally aware and responsible with their processes and practices. Many providers were committed to ensuring that clients felt comfortable coming to a Ready to Rent programme to learn about the private rental market and to be able to share their experiences in an open and caring space. Some providers in some regions are particularly strong with their tikanga Māori cultural processes and implement Whakawhanaungatanga (introducing yourself to the group in your language of choice) consistently.

Our organisation is a Māori organisation, so tikanga Māori is important to us, but other cultures are as well. So welcoming people into your 'home' is important because you are welcoming them into your space, your environment and that gives them the confidence to relax and feel welcomed and contribute to the programme to build that rapport at the beginning so that whānau can open. We allow whānau to share what they may not be able to share with MSD. That is what we love about our programme, is giving our participants the opportunity to feel a sense of belonging.

Cultural capacity building is becoming more popular. Some providers in some regions wanted to improve their capability with tikanga Māori and Pacific cultural processes. They had begun conducting Whakawhanaungatanga.

Our highlight would be our whakawhanaungatanga at the beginning and that is where we build our relationships from the get-go and how we build our rapport with the whānau and just give them confidence that they are in a safe space to be able to contribute to our programme openly. We have a kaumātua on site for our wairua side and he does our karakia, our whakawhanaungatanga, and our waiata.

Most providers present participants with a Ready to Rent certificate/letter of completion which can be helpful for obtaining a private rental property. It is presented as proof that they participated in the Ready to Rent programme. A client noted:

I had heard that the Ready to Rent programme provided a special certificate which could help get you into a house. It was a motivation for me to go along.

The clients

Most clients had a positive and professional relationship with the community agencies and appreciated the ongoing support they received from them to get into the private rental market.

Most clients felt heard, valued and appreciated by the high-level culture of care from the Ready to Rent programme facilitators and presenters (non-judgement, empathy, understanding and kindness). Most clients agreed that the Ready to Rent programme facilitators did well to create a warm, open, and caring space where they could learn well and share their experiences freely.

We did do karakia before and after. We went around and introduced ourselves, that was cool. Yes they made us feel very welcome, they made us feel calm and relaxed. It was very warm and very welcoming.

Many clients felt they were prepared very well or Ready to Rent improved their preparation for the private rental market. Most agreed that the Ready to Rent facilitators understood their situations and were committed to supporting them to maintain a positive mindset to deal with any obstacles or adversity regarding housing.

I learned more about landlords and what they look for in tenants. The presentation of yourself and even your car is important, the kinds of people skills you need when you are talking to like property managers and landlords and the kinds of questions you ask, and I got the house!

Many clients found the support (people and material), resources, and activities helpful or beneficial to increase their knowledge and understanding of the private rental market. Most clients agreed that they had greater opportunities to clearly understand what is required to become a successful renter in a private rental through the Ready to Rent programme.

Yep, just that real estate agents got up to speak to us and tell us a little bit about themselves and a little bit about what they look for in a tenant and what they prefer in tenants. They gave me some booklets and pamphlets about renting and I read them all. My case manager was there too. When I walked in it was quite inviting. I liked the budgeting advice team, and they had people talking about Healthy Homes, which was good.

The stakeholders

Stakeholders consisted of a range of groups, including budget advisors, personal grooming organisations, property owners and trusts. Most stakeholders agreed that the communication pathways with the Ready to Rent programme were valued and contact was respectful and consistent. Most stakeholders felt that their connectivity with the Ready to Rent programme was dependable.

One of the Kaumātua from a local marae was a key member of a trust which owned several units they rented out to people in their community. He was often asked to speak at the Ready to Rent programme from a property owner perspective. He felt the experience and information he provided was helpful to Ready to Rent participants to support them with securing a private rental property.

I was invited to speak at a couple of their meetings, just to advise potential tenants of what would be expected of them as a tenant and fill them in from a landlord's perspective. Knowing your rights, responsibilities and obligations is key. As a landlord myself, I have to know my rights and responsibilities. It must go both ways and if I can help someone become a good tenant, then ka pai.

The potential for a Ready to Rent youth programme is a topic for further discussion. Some stakeholders were interested in developing a Ready to Rent for youth (mid-to-late teens, early twenties).

We got hold of the provider and I put that to them – is the Ready to Rent available to young people? At that stage, it was not, but they decided to see if it would be beneficial. So that is how we got involved with them. They ran it on a Monday and Wednesday, and it was brilliant.

Aim 2: Build readiness for interviews and meeting landlords

Ready to Rent Service: What is working well?

The course providers

Most Ready to Rent providers prepared important helpful activities for the delivery of the programme across the regions, specifically designed to build confidence and knowledge when interacting with participants/clients.

Dress for Success is a global initiative that provides professional clothing for interview participants. It was initially designed for women, but now includes everyone. Some regional Ready to Rent providers had Dress for Success which supplied corporate clothing to potential renters for viewings and interviews with property owners and property managers. It was successful with building the confidence of clients.

With our programme, we discuss with clients what to wear, how to present yourself, and the approach that you have. We talk about living in a judgemental world, so you must put your best foot forward in terms of what you look like when you go to viewings. We find the confidence of clients goes up 100%.

The clients

Most clients felt better prepared for viewing sessions, meetings, and interviews with landlords than before doing the Ready to Rent programme. Some clients felt more confident talking about themselves as suitable housing clients to prospective property owners or managers.

In one of the regions, Client J and her partner had been living in a motorhome for quite some time, but due to ill health they realised they would need to find more stable accommodation. They tried numerous times to secure a private rental on their own, but were refused time and time again. She wondered where she was going wrong.

As an older renter, I did not realise how much I had to 'sell myself.' I just assumed that because I am who I am, they would just accept me. That was not the case. I had to learn to be more forward and confident to show who I am. I learnt a lot about how to do that at the Ready to Rent programme.

Many participants/clients in the Ready to Rent programmes already knew the realities of renting, and the processes that are required to be a successful tenant, but the programme also exposed the realities to some who were not fully aware.

I had been a renter for a long time, and I knew a lot already. I did pick up new things too though that were helpful to me.

I did not know much when I came into the programme. There were so many interesting things that I learnt especially from landlords. I had never heard one speak before. That opened my eyes to their expectations of a tenant.

Most clients in most regions felt that the resources and activities provided to them within the Ready to Rent programme were relevant and appropriate to their needs. Many clients felt confident that they could take more initiative when dealing with housing issues or concerns as they arose.

I got booklets, pamphlets and the presentations were great. We even got our own notepad and pen to write important things down. It was impressive.

The stakeholders

Many stakeholders understood the importance of being at their best and wanted to contribute towards building client readiness for viewings, interviews and meetings with landlords and property managers. Most stakeholders felt that the Ready to Rent course prepared clients well for the private rental market. Most of them in most regions saw it as their duty to provide the appropriate resources and activities within the Ready to Rent programme, which could help clients become competent with applications and engagement with property owners and managers.

The understanding of legal aspects of tenancy is often seen as complex and tenants may not necessarily comprehend how these systems work. One lawyer felt it was an important obligation to ensure that clients fully understood what was in front of them legally.

I was invited to speak at a couple of their meetings, just to advise potential tenants of what would be expected of them as a tenant from a legal perspective. I think personally that the Ready to Rent here does a good job just because they bring in people like myself just to let them know what the expectations are when they move into a rental property.

Aim 3: Build awareness of rights and responsibilities

Ready to Rent Service: What is working well?

The course providers

An array of service providers are often invited to present at Ready to Rent seminars – tenancy services, lawyers, property owners, real estate agents, and property managers to talk about what they look for in potential tenants, the rights, responsibilities, obligations, and entitlements for both the property owners and the tenants.

One of the landlords realised how important it was to ensure that, as well as letting future tenants know what they should be doing in order to gain access to one of his properties, it was more crucial to know his obligations and responsibilities to be a good landlord.

I used to think that all the tenants needed to know is what I expected them to do, but it was good speaking at a Ready to Rent course because I know what I am obligated to do better and this creates a more harmonious and professional partnership with who lives in my houses. We are all better off for it.

The clients

Most of the clients developed a greater awareness of not just their rights and responsibilities, entitlements, and obligations, but also the rights, responsibilities, entitlements, and obligations of property owners. Most clients felt more confident speaking with landlords and property managers about property issues after attending a Ready to Rent programme.

A Ready to Rent participant had learnt a lot more as they had gotten older with renting. They felt they became even wiser after attending the Ready to Rent programme and wished that they had been given this opportunity and information when they first started renting.

It did improve my understanding. It was very informative about my rights as a tenant I reckon and it made me more confident to ring Tenancy Services if I should ever obtain a Tenancy agreement under my name. When I was a younger renter, it was harder, you didn't complain, you didn't say anything. You just lived in the house. But now, given the 14-day notice, you can pass that on to your whānau. I did like that. There was a law person that came in and talked about the tenancy – Civil Law. It was awesome.

Most clients were happy to be presented with a certificate/letter from the Ready to Rent programme as evidence of their participation.

I got this letter after doing the Ready to Rent programme to say that I could do certain things and I could show it to landlords. It was great be able to do that. I felt good knowing that I had that type of support from the programme.

The stakeholders

Most stakeholders agreed that the Ready to Rent programme helps clients to know their rights, responsibilities, entitlements, and obligations with renting and those of property owners. Most stakeholders wanted the clients to be successful in securing a rental property and were interested in whether clients secured a rental property after the Ready to Rent programme and whether their input had been of value.

A representative from Tenancy Services felt it was their obligation to educate tenants about their rights, responsibilities, and obligations, but also to let them know about the support systems that the service could also provide.

I come in from the Tenancy Service side and many participants do not often get to understand this sort of information. My role is to ensure that they know exactly what they are getting into when they rent privately.

Aim 4: Managing budget, rent, and costs

Ready to Rent Service: What is working well?

The course providers

Budgeting is offered at the Ready to Rent programmes. The Budget Advisory Services were at the seminars to provide support and advice on how to resolve any financial concerns for those participants who may have a poor credit history or debt issues.

One of the regional Ready to Rent course providers offered a Budget Advisory Service at every single one of their seminars. They felt a responsibility to their participants to teach them to be fiscally responsible.

One of the main activities that we have is more on the budgeting side because budgeting is quite important, along with the tenancy because if they do not get the budgeting right, they will not be able to sustain a private rental.

Most of the providers discovered that there was often large uptake of interest in budgeting and many participants seeking advice from the Budget Advisory Services wanted to make formal appointments straight after their presentations. These services provided practical plans and steps to resolve monetary management issues and improve the client's potential to secure a private rental. One stakeholder was surprised by the demand.

The other great thing about our programme is that after the Budgeting Advice session, we saw a 95% uptake of interest in their service. The clients are contacting them about sorting out their debt following the Ready to Rent programme.

The clients

Many clients found the budgeting advice helpful and engaged with them well during the seminars. They engaged with Budget Advisory Services at Ready to Rent programmes across most regions to address debt or credit history concerns. Most clients felt the service could provide practical plans and steps to resolve their financial management issues and improve their potential to secure a private rental and wanted to make further appointments after the seminars were over.

Client C had consistent debt and financial issues for most of her renting life. She had found it hard to hold down a steady job to make ends meet and therefore it was difficult to find stable housing. Her situation was common amongst most clients who engaged with the Ready to Rent programme.

Learning about budgeting was the best part for me. It helped me and now I have a plan.

The stakeholders

Most stakeholders have a personal stake in ensuring that clients can manage their finances appropriately and understand the costs involved with renting. Most budgeting stakeholders engaged with the participants in the Ready to Rent programmes across most regions to address any client debt or credit history concerns. They believed their service was valued and worked with clients to develop and maintain practical plans and steps to resolve their financial management issues and improve their potential to secure a private rental.

The Budget Advisory Services across the regions were committed to making sure participants were well educated about their financial situation and they made concerted efforts to provide activities that were interactive, educational, and fun.

As the Ready to Rent programme really helps people, especially with the financial side, we worked hard to make sure that they understood about living within their means and being always financially responsible.

Aim 5: Keeping a house warm and dry

Ready to Rent Service: What is working well?

The course providers

Most Ready to Rent providers invited those involved with Healthy Homes initiatives to give a presentation at their seminars. Participants who were interviewed found these talks interesting, informative and insightful. Most providers can see the benefits of providing expert information to housing clients.

Many of the providers stated that the Healthy Homes presentation was a great example of an insightful initiative that had relevance for all renters and was run across most regions. The Healthy Homes presenters consistently provided powerful, impactful, interesting, informative, and memorable session about how heat, cold, mould and damp can impact homes, and the health of themselves and their whānau.

The Healthy Homes presentation is always popular and the way they do it is so practical and interesting. It is interactive, and the participants learnt so much about damp and mould and how to manage it.

The clients

In the past, the insulation of a home was often overlooked. Nowadays, with increased awareness of the connection to ill health, there is more awareness of the obligations of property owners to ensure that a home is suitably insulated and heated to prevent illness. Most Ready to Rent clients learned a great deal from the Healthy Homes organisations and found their presentations helpful, insightful, and interesting.

Yes absolutely, they talked about all the policies and even the new Healthy Homes standards, which were covered and what my responsibility was and what the landlord's responsibility was. I had no idea about what all that Healthy Homes stuff meant, and I sure did not know about my responsibilities.

The stakeholders

Most stakeholders could see the benefits of providing presentations and information from such organisations as the Healthy Homes initiative.

I really enjoyed the opportunity to deliver the Healthy Homes programme face-to-face, that works better for me because I like the interaction and the practical elements of the presentation. It does not come across well on Zoom at all. People need to see the experiments up close. I like to know that people are on board with what I am saying and vice versa. It is absolutely a great programme and well worth the time and energy.

Aim 6: Knowing available support from different places

Ready to Rent Service: What is working well?

The course providers

Having the right information for clients is crucial to the success of the programme. Most Ready to Rent providers have the relevant information, resources, and activities available for participants, so they know who to turn to for advice regarding anything to do with private rentals.

From inviting tradesmen to talk about how to do house repairs if something is damaged to the NZ Fire Service providing advice on how to avoid a fire in a home. One provider has adapted their programme to the needs of their participants. Pre- and post-evaluation data has been useful for the provider to decide where to go and what is needed for the next Ready to Rent seminar.

We really want our clients to know that there are people out there that can help them if they need it. They are not alone. It is sad to think that some whānau cannot access the information they need. We can help.

The clients

Having an increased knowledge of who can help in different situations is important for clients, especially when they are not used to seeking support. Most clients felt well-supported by their Ready to Rent facilitators and knew they could seek further advice or ask questions from those present. They were aware of other support agencies available from the information provided and were willing to connect independently.

I know so many more people to contact now if there are problems. I used to be scared to say anything, especially to the property owner, but I feel more confident to speak up more often and ask for help if needed.

The stakeholders

Many stakeholders can connect with clients and provide information and support from several sources and networks.

It is a great programme, and my job is to make sure that the participants are fully informed about all the different services that can help them and how to get in touch.

Ready to Rent Service: What are the obstacles or barriers to positive outcomes?

The course providers

Follow-up after courses: The Ready to Rent providers feel they have a personal stake in their participants and wanted to see them do well with finding a house after the course was over. Most providers did not know if their Ready to Rent programme clients had secured a private rental or not after they left the seminar and would like to have been informed.

We never know what happens to clients after they leave us. It would be good to know if they got a where if possible and if our programme really helped them. Are we allowed to know that information?

Connecting with other regions: Most providers were unaware of what is being run, or how Ready to Rent is being conducted in other regions and expressed an interest in coming together as a collective to share ideas to improve the success of the programme.

It would be great to find out what is happening elsewhere with other providers. A one-day meet and greet? A conference? That would be impressive. I would love to know what is working well for other people in other regions.

Digital accessibility: One of the barriers to success with the programme was around accessibility to course materials. Some providers discovered that some clients could not get the relevant Ready to Rent information and materials for courses because they did not have consistent access to digital technology to view Zoom sessions, photocopied material, and/or digital presentations.

Because we used Zoom to host Ready to Rent last year, the limitation is that we could only send the learning material via email before the programme starts and then if the client would like to have a printed copy, we send it out after that. If possible, before the programme starts. We send the hard copy to all the clients beforehand. Many are using mobile phones, so they could not see our PowerPoints, they were not able to read the material as carefully. We also must print out examples of different forms, tenancy agreements and other material from Tenancy Services and so if we can provide more hard copies of materials for clients to read before the programme, which would be great. It can be a barrier if they do not have a proper computer or laptop or digital device, or if they do not have stable internet – they only have 4G.

Some Ready to Rent providers did not have enough time to send out material to participants via post. They did eventually email documents and advised clients to go to the local MSD office to print them out but were then told that MSD were unable to print out the files for them. As a result, people did not engage properly before the sessions because they did not have the appropriate documents.

It was so frustrating when our clients came unprepared, and we tried so hard to help them too. We must find a better way to do things from now on to help people.

The connectivity problems were spelt out by some providers noting that clients did not always have consistent access to phone credit, digital devices, and Wi-Fi internet connectivity.

Better quality connectivity processes would be incredibly helpful to our clients. I am not sure how we can resolve this, but we do our best to support them as much as possible with what we currently have.

More Ready to Rent programmes: Some providers felt there were not enough Ready to Rent programmes running across the country and wanted them to be organised and implemented in regions more often during the year if possible.

It needs to continue. We 100% see the benefits of it. As more people find out about it and it grows, and more people get homes because of their participation.

Improving cultural capability: Some providers in some regions are not able to provide consistent cultural processes or do not adhere to tikanga Māori due to a local lack of capability. Some providers agreed they had to do better to adhere to tikanga Māori cultural processes during seminars and were mindful that they also had to cater more to Pacific peoples' cultural ways of doing things in the future. Practical cultural responsiveness training in some regions would be recommended.

I know for us; we need to do things better with our cultural processes here. We can be more responsive than what we are right now.

Data collection issues: Data collection and monitoring vary from region to region. Most of the providers are not aware of what is required nationally.

Well, we do not get any data. We have our own data, but nationally, I would not know what is happening with anyone else's Ready to Rent programme, so I would say no, it needs to be better.

COVID-19 difficulties: COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 had an impact on some Ready to Rent providers' ability to engage in person with clients. One provider found it difficult to conduct the Ready to Rent programme over Zoom,

...it was difficult to get engagement and there were too many distractions in the background, even the internet connections were not of good quality and as mentioned, you did not always know if they were there or not. But you get better engagement when it is face-to-face.

The clients

Digital access issues: There was a strong contention that new ways of ensuring clients have better access to the materials for Ready to Rent courses must be developed. Some clients had problems accessing the necessary documents required for upcoming courses as clients did not always have reliable resources for phone credit, digital devices, and Wi-Fi internet connectivity to engage fully with Ready to Rent programme activities online. Some clients interviewed for this evaluation could only be reached by mobile phone if they had sufficient credit.

Yes, if I do not have enough credit, it can be a real hassle communicating. It was a bit hard during COVID-19 to engage with the Ready to Rent Zooms properly.

Specific services for young people: There is a rise in the number of young people in emergency and transitional housing accommodation. Some younger renters in their teens or early twenties did not fully understand the content of the Ready to Rent programme they

attended. Some felt they needed much more specific support, advice, and guidance – e.g., a one-page handout of the living costs in total before they go into a property.

Looking back, it would have been more helpful to have like a breakdown of full costs for everything on top of the rent, power, Wi-Fi which is so important, water and other stuff like that. I should have paid more attention to the budget advisor but having a list of other costs before getting into the property would have helped me more. Once I got into a house, I suddenly panicked about paying all the bills.

Some do not find a rental property: Months on, some clients in some regions are still in e or transitional housing despite attending a Ready to Rent programme due to a severe shortage of suitable private or public rental housing in their area.

Yeah, I was hopeful I could get a house out of attending the course. But I am still in transitional [housing]. It is quite disappointing because I know it is transitional and I know I must move soon. So, I would like to get a house. It is stressful. I am still getting some support from a trust, and I am staying at the trust papakāinga now, which I appreciate.

Cultural needs not understood: Some clients in some regions felt that their cultural ways of doing and being were not acknowledged, respected, or understood as the providers did not have the capability to provide appropriate tikanga.

So, if I am in a hui with other Māori, we introduce ourselves. Because without that there is no sense of engaging as a group in this. We were at the end of the day individuals engaged in this group. It was critical because I did not get to know the couple across the way from me or the other couple down the end from me or the girl next to me. It was incredibly disappointing for me as a kuia Māori.

The stakeholders

Developing a youth Ready to Rent programme: Currently, there is no Ready to Rent Youth programme. Some stakeholders would like to see one developed as there are increasing numbers of young people coming into emergency and transitional housing situations.

I am not actually sure if the young people are connected to the housing brokers after the Ready to Rent programme. I must find out more about the process. There does not seem to be any follow-up with our young ones, that I know of since. There are a lot of things that WINZ clients can tap into that our young clients just cannot.

Cultural processes: Some stakeholders were unaware if the tikanga Māori or Pacific cultural processes were being followed at all. Some stakeholders were unsure if the Ready to Rent programme had cultural capacity and capability that was appropriate for the clientele in the regions.

I can only speak from my experience. There was a Māori man and there was an absolute disconnect there between what he needed to what he was getting. I am not bagging anyone, we have a crisis, a catastrophe in our housing situation. I look at the systems and the availability at the providers' end. I think the programme itself has a culture of looking after people, but if you are talking about cultural responsiveness, which requires a certain type of capability.

Ready to Rent service course provider perspectives in summary

Ready to Rent providers agreed that a key outcome of their courses was to build trusting and caring relationships with clients, particularly Māori and Pacific clients (who made up most of the clientele at courses). They did this by working to consistently create a safe environment for them. They understood their clients will have setbacks in a difficult market, but they encouraged them to persist.

The providers were confident they supplied clients with a much greater awareness of their rights, responsibilities, and entitlements in renting. They endeavoured to provide an honest picture of the private rental market and expose clients to its realities. Across most regions, this was done by inviting tenancy services, lawyers, property owners and managers, and real estate agents to their gatherings. Providers wanted to ensure that presentations were practical, interesting, insightful and could be a consistent part of future seminars.

The provision of appropriate cultural processes was dependent on the regional providers' capacity to do so. In some regions it was strong but in other regions they considered they needed to further develop their capacity.

Some providers wanted to work more closely with intensive case managers to improve understanding of what they do. They particularly wanted to know what happens to clients' housing circumstances after courses finished. They were also concerned about the problems some clients had with limited digital connectivity who were unable to access course resources, especially during online courses in the COVID-19 lockdown periods. They would like the Ministry to support them to find solutions.

Ready to Rent service client perspectives in summary

Ready to Rent clients were usually referred to the programme through MSD/WINZ via case managers or housing brokers. Many clients felt valued and enjoyed the culture of care from the course providers. Most of the Māori and Pacific clients felt understood and respected, and that their cultural ways of being and doing were acknowledged - this in turn gave them confidence and an increased feeling of self-respect and worth.

Most of the clients felt well-prepared for the private rental market. The resources and information provided were up-to-date and the activities were practical, interesting, and informative. This enabled them to develop a greater awareness of their own rights, responsibilities, entitlements, and obligations and those of the property owners, which they found insightful. They particularly appreciated the opportunity to gain a Ready to Rent letter or certificate to present to prospective property owners as evidence of their attendance and reliability.

There were two main areas that some clients thought could be improved. Firstly, despite the positive comments above, some referred to lifting the capability of staff to improve cultural processes across more regions. Secondly, they suggested ways of addressing clients' digital connectivity problems and resource material distribution for courses needed to be considered.

Ready to Rent Service stakeholder perspectives in summary

The stakeholders agreed that the partnerships with course providers have focused on creating a safe, learning environment that was warm, comfortable, and educational. It was also a place where participants could ask questions and express themselves freely. They were aware of the need to provide an honest and realistic account of what they considered clients should know in the private rental market, including successes as well as the pitfalls of renting. They thought the courses provided clients with clarity so they could make better-informed, common-sense decisions for themselves and their whānau.

Some stakeholders contributed towards readiness for interviews and meeting property owners, while others were able to increase client awareness of their rights, responsibilities, and entitlements. Stakeholders saw how the Budget Advisors contributed a significant ingredient to the courses because managing finances is so important with current housing costs. Some of them wanted to propose to MSD the potential for a Ready to Rent Youth initiative as more young people are entering emergency and transitional housing.

Several were unsure whether the Ready to Rent programme had the cultural process capability to cater appropriately for the client base in their regions. They raised the question about receiving greater support to develop the cultural capacity within the service.

Interview findings: Housing Broker initiative

Interview findings address those KEQs designed to learn more about programme implementation and effectiveness from the perspectives of key stakeholder groups.

KEQ 4: To what extent are the initiatives designed to achieve their objectives?

KEQ 5: To what extent are the Ready to Rent programmes and Housing Broker service being implemented as intended?

KEQ 6: How might the initiatives be refined to improve outcomes for all client groups?

Presenting responses to the question “What is working well” using the four aims of the Housing Broker service aligns with the HAP objectives of Support and System Enablers, and therefore provides additional context for KEQ 3: How well do the objectives of each initiative align with the intended high-level outcomes of the Homelessness Action Plan (HAP)?

As with the Ready to Rent initiative, the findings have been prepared to show the responses from three different perspectives, those of course providers, clients and stakeholders (property managers, landlords, and investors).

The interview findings are set out as follows:

- What is working well?
- What are the obstacles or barriers to positive outcomes?
- Housing broker perspectives in summary
- Client perspectives in summary
- Stakeholder perspectives in summary

In the first section, *What is working well?* the findings are presented in relation to each of the four aims drawn from the intervention logic model, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the breadth and consistency of responses.

The four aims of the Housing Broker programme are:

1. Build connections with local property owners, property managers and investors
2. Match people with private rental housing opportunities
3. Build confidence in MSD clients as tenants
4. Establish links to key stakeholders in the community

Quotations from participants provide the raw data of the findings. Many quotations are used to demonstrate the most common themes as authentically as possible.

Aim 1: Build connections with local property owners, property managers and investors

Housing Broker service: What is working well?

The housing brokers

Confidence, knowledge and experience with people and the private rental market were the key characteristics required of a housing broker. The majority of housing brokers were confident they had the knowledge and experience to assist prospective tenants in the private housing rental market. Many were former real estate agents, property managers, or property

owners themselves. Most were confident of their capability to connect landlords, property managers, and investors with suitable tenants.

As professionals, most of the housing brokers agreed that the building and maintenance of solid and dependable relationships with their peers, stakeholders, providers, and clients was the primary focus of their role. They made concerted efforts to maintain these strong relationships. According to one housing broker, the development and maintenance of these key private rental housing networks in their regions could lead to MSD being seen as a primary provider of tenants for private properties. This is because the housing brokers provided a much faster, dependable, and informed connection between MSD clients, property owners and property managers.

Housing broker 4 was proud to be in their role and to work cooperatively and collaboratively as part of a supportive team. It was a challenging, evolving, and flexible role, but they also relished the opportunity to work out how to tackle the challenges and get the best outcomes for every person they were involved with in housing.

When we get repeat business from our intensive case managers, property owners, property managers, or clients, that gives us immense confidence in what we have done and achieved.

In the past two years, we have built a massive network all over our region, and through the networks, we have helped about 1000 families in just two years. The reason we can help those families is that we not only help them to secure the property but also to help them to sustain their tenancies.

Another housing broker had a vote of confidence from a landlord that he was doing well and has since had repeat business from him to find tenants for his properties.

I think the private landlords' confidence in our Housing Broker service has increased in our role. I found a landlord through Trade Me and in the beginning, he would never actually think of placing any of our clients in his properties because he had a negative image of our clientele. I have since placed a few clients with him and he has changed his thinking about them.

The clients

Client A says her housing broker is knowledgeable, helpful, and bridged the gap between her and the landlord. She had full trust in the housing broker to connect her to the right people, to understand her family situation and their needs, and requirements. He found her a suitable property and she felt that they would not have been able to get into a private rental without the support of the housing broker.

I called for help when we first moved up here, different people did nothing, and we were waiting for a long time. Finally, I got the housing broker, and he helped us a lot and we got a good place. Everything we asked of him, he tried his best. We appreciate all his hard work.

The ability of the Housing Broker service to connect clients with property owners and managers is an important skill. Most of the clients were appreciative of the unconditional support provided to them by the Housing Broker service. They felt looked after and

supported. They felt they could contact them at any time and trusted the housing broker to persist with any unresolved issues to get things done.

A physically disabled client found the housing brokers kind, empathetic, and took initiatives to support her predicament as a disabled person. Nothing was too much trouble. Many clients agreed that the housing brokers developed and maintained a high trust relationship with them, and they were appreciative of the unconditional support.

It has been a journey being wheelchair bound, but last Friday, I moved into a townhouse and the biggest thing for me, with E and R helping me, the best thing is having a flush toilet and having hot and cold running water too was just incredible. All my Christmases came at once.

The stakeholders

Strong connections are key in the private rental sector. Most stakeholders agreed that the housing brokers are very professional in the way in which they build connections with those in the private rental market. Many stakeholders felt that they were knowledgeable and experienced in the private rental sector and able to connect landlords, property managers, and investors with suitable tenants.

One of the property managers had been in the property area for nearly 10 years and for most of those years would not consider accepting WINZ clients into her properties. She later met a housing broker who worked for WINZ and developed a professional relationship of trust that led her to become comfortable accepting some of his clients. Within the last two years she has been increasing the number of WINZ clients she accepts for the private rentals in her area.

As a Property Manager, I have a couple of properties that I hold aside for the Housing Broker or WINZ programme. Previously, I had built a relationship with the housing brokers, and I often call them, and I let them know that I have got a house coming up. I say, who have you got? They give me much stronger applicants now.

Most stakeholders agreed that the housing brokers have worked hard to develop and maintain key private housing networks in their regions and that property owners and managers now wanted to work with MSD as the main provider of tenants into their properties because they provide a faster, dependable, and informed connection between MSD clients and themselves. Some of the stakeholders felt that the Housing Broker service is establishing a sustainable 'brand' linking the MSD clients with the private sector.

One of the things that helps them is that I can say that these housing brokers value their relationship with me. I place a lot of their clients and they know that there is a certain expectation that they are not going to send me people that are not ready to rent a place. That is part of it, I have built a rapport with the housing broker so that they do not send me people that are not suitable or ready for the challenges. Putting the right people in the right houses at the right time.

Aim 2: Match people with private rental housing opportunities

Housing Broker service: What is working well?

The housing brokers

The housing brokers worked diligently with many parties to find properties for the clients and good tenants for the property owners, based on the specified criteria or requirements. The housing brokers were able to do this effectively with the help of the client housing profiles and with consistent engagement and support. They got to know their clients well and this was key to the potential for successful private housing placement.

One of the housing brokers did a lot of work in his region to connect, network and build up the reputation of the Housing Broker service and the placement of MSD clients locally.

Landlords now come to us and say, 'do you have a client to match?' We are proud to be able to say 'yes' because we know our clients well and the landlords trust our judgement and integrity with this process. That was not there for MSD clients before we came along.

Establishing a strong culture of care in any organisation is not always an easy task. However, most of the housing brokers stated that they respected their clients and understood them well. Developing a positive and professional connection with clients was crucial and many of them across the regions felt they were adept at doing this appropriately.

I think the traits of empathy, kindness, respect, understanding are harvested in MSD. They are highly desirable when MSD are choosing people for these roles. We show these to our clients. To me, it is more of an organisational culture and as housing brokers we respect people's cultural preferences and cater to them.

Most housing brokers worked with Māori and Pacific clients in their regions and stated they felt they provided them with better housing market education and access to private housing opportunities than prior to the Housing Broker service being established. Some housing brokers in some regions had developed relationships between clients and iwi which have been beneficial to both groups.

We are dealing with Māori and Pasifika families currently, but we are open to other groups as well. In the Ready to Rent programmes there are more NZ Māori families.

A housing broker was confident that they could educate or remind property owners and clients about their rights, responsibilities, and entitlements. They viewed this as a crucial component of their functional role.

I know that the clients are becoming increasingly aware of the Residential Tenancy Acts (RTAs), the updates with the Healthy Home Standards, their rights, and obligations. Keeping the property clean and tidy, paying the rent on time, not getting complaints from the neighbours and how to make a complaint about the landlord if some situation arises and if it gets out of hand, how to deal with it effectively in the best interests of all stakeholders.

Culturally, we can connect more with where we have come from and be able to understand that whānau comes first in our core values.

The clients

Many of the clients felt the housing brokers had established positive and professional connections with them. They usually knew their clients well. Most clients felt understood, valued, and listened to by them and their needs were taken into consideration. The development of the client's housing profile through engagement, interaction, and ongoing long-term support were key to their potential for successful private housing placement.

Client L was struggling with several issues. The house they were in was too small, they were not earning a great deal of money in their job and did not speak English well. When the housing broker made contact with them, they were relieved to know that they were not going to be alone and would have the consistent support to find a place to live for them and their family.

Yes. I learned a lot from the housing broker. She told me many things and gave me information and advice. I learned what to do and say. I learned about entitlements, rights, and responsibilities and how to prepare myself. What I can and cannot do and what the landlord can and cannot do. I met with many landlords and each time I gained more confidence.

The stakeholders

Housing brokers were seen to have put in a significant amount of work. Many of the stakeholders acknowledged the effort that the service put in with all parties to ensure clients were well-supported, the property owner was happy, and the rental was well-suited to the requirements of both sides.

A regional landlord was initially sceptical about the Housing Broker service, and it was not until a consistent, professional, and beneficial collaboration took place, that the landlord began to see the results of working with the service and its potential as a private market rental partner in their region.

I have had quite a lot of people come through the Housing Broker service and it is now my first port of call. I meet the potential tenant with the MSD Housing Team or the housing broker to make sure they are okay and, I do not muck around, the first decent person that they introduce me to that is good and we all like each other – they get the flat.

Aim 3: Build confidence in MSD clients as tenants

Housing Broker service: What is working well?

The housing brokers

Forming strong, professional, and supportive relationships with clients had a positive impact on their overall health and wellbeing and many of the housing brokers made efforts to educate clients as needed.

The clients

Most of the clients agreed that the culture of care from housing brokers towards them was beneficial to building their confidence and knowledge of their rights, responsibilities, and entitlements, but also those of the property owners.

I know more about my rights and what I need to do with a house now. I also know more about what a landlord expects from me as a tenant. The combination of what the housing broker taught me and the Ready to Rent seminar. Bringing in the real estate agents and property managers and sitting down and everyone talking about it and going through everything. That helped a lot.

Most of the clients felt that the housing brokers knew them well enough to work in their best interests. Many of the clients felt their cultural ways of doing things were acknowledged as Māori and Pacific people and they were looked after well by them.

He is very understanding. When I am stressed out, he tells me to calm down and understands my situation. He is a good guy. He is Pacific and looks after the Pacific people. This is important to me as a Samoan.

The stakeholders

Demonstrating confidence, competence and reliability develops trust with stakeholders like property managers and property owners and that has been a key goal for the Housing Broker service. Most stakeholders agreed that the housing brokers know their clients well and that was why they trusted their judgment with most recommended clients. Most stakeholders said housing brokers developed and maintained high-trust relationships with clients and stakeholders.

One of the property managers had not engaged with the Housing Broker service before and did not know much about what they offered. She was contacted by them to meet about a possible collaboration. The interaction turned out to be mutually beneficial.

I have been in the property area for 8-9 years and we always had people coming to us saying do you accept WINZ clients? I ended up working with a housing broker that worked for WINZ and we developed a relationship of trust and became comfortable accepting some of his clients. In the last two years working with the Housing Broker service has made it easy and we are increasing the amount of WINZ clients we place into our rentals. That tells the good side of it.

Increasing the knowledge base of the clients reassured many of the stakeholders who felt that the housing brokers advised, educated, and supported both them and their clients well. Most stakeholders trusted the Housing Broker service because clients came to them knowing more about their rights, responsibilities, and entitlements and that of property owners too. Most stakeholders felt they worked collaboratively with them to assist clients into sustainable housing.

I am not choosing between 20 people. I have a Trade Me app, but I don't use it, I prefer the Housing Broker service as they make it easy. There are lots of people struggling out there, I have to say, but I only take Housing Broker service clients now. It is a win-win for all of us.

Aim 4: Establish links to key stakeholders in the community

Housing Broker service: What is working well?

The housing brokers

Networking is an important criterion for the housing broker role. Many housing brokers continued to establish and maintain strong links with community stakeholders as well as landlords and property managers. Most of them felt they had made strong, consistent efforts to assist clients into sustainable housing because of their networks and links. They considered they had established and maintained good relationships with some community housing providers, but a particular effort had been put in with the private sector over the last two, almost three years.

We had valuable and impressive feedback from our clients and stakeholders which has gone into housing case studies, and which were published. That motivates us further to achieve more substantial goals in the future, in collaboration with our housing team.

The clients

Most of the clients viewed housing brokers as professional, with the ability to engage with important stakeholders in the private housing sector to get them housed.

Client J and her children had been sleeping in a relative's lounge for a month before she was able to secure a stable place to live. Prior to that she had been living in her car and had a brief stint in emergency housing. She was eventually contacted by a housing broker.

I met B and we just engaged, even though it took four weeks to get to me because of the housing crisis up here. She did find me a place, but I could not initially take it because I had some limitations. But she worked hard to make sure she contacted the real estate agents up here and found a house. She gets you in and meets with you. So, it is amazing. She is on the ball, she is lovely. She does not go on and say oh, not another one that's in emergency housing, I cannot help you. She gives a hoot about people and works her butt off to try and get something that is suitable. And if it is not suitable and you tell her, she does not hold it against you. Just wonderful.

The stakeholders

Successful and consistent communication encourages confidence and trust. Many stakeholders agreed that the Housing Broker service was very efficient with the process by which they engaged with potential stakeholders to build their networks over the last several years. Most stakeholders found it very dependable and easy to communicate with via email, phone, or in person when possible.

A private sector property manager said that the housing brokers had established and maintained a good relationship with him over the last two, almost three years, and he trusted them completely. He had been impressed by their initial contact meeting and had seen them grow steadily. He was more than happy to receive clients from MSD and through the housing brokers because everything was in place and he could trust them implicitly.

If the tenant says I was referred to you by one of the housing brokers, it is a brand. They are creating their own brand, like a trusted brand. So yes, in my opinion, it increases the chances of their clients getting a house.

Housing Broker service: What are the obstacles or barriers to positive outcomes?

The housing brokers

Internal MSD processes: Excellent communication skills are necessary for success in any role. Most of the housing brokers agreed that there were areas of communication that were lacking between themselves, Housing Team management, and intensive case managers (ICMs). In some regions, the housing brokers felt that the MSD Housing Team managers did not always communicate well with one another, which often led to conflicting, confusing mixed messages and poor instructions being conveyed to housing brokers.

I get told one thing from my manager, but then we have another manager in the works too and then I get told something different. So, I am torn like this way and that way.

They considered that after the first two to three years, an overhaul of the internal processes and procedures would both improve and enhance their work performance. Some housing brokers in some regions said they had limited exposure to training or had no introduction to MSD systems. Most of them had experienced obstacles/barriers around internal MSD processes, rather than external concerns or issues. They referred to a lack of understanding regarding the referral, communication, and financial processes between them and the intensive case managers (ICMs).

I agree with my colleague, and we have achieved a lot of the outcome externals, but the internal processes have not been achieved and a lot of the ICMs do not know what we do. The processes are something we still need to work on more effectively, along with internal communications.

Clear processes are crucial for efficiency in any organisation. Some housing brokers required urgency with payment processing (e.g., moving costs, running arrears). They said

that they do not have autonomy in this area, and this can put a strain on their relationship with property managers and landlords as the financial aspects were often unable to be resolved in a timely manner. One housing broker stated:

Because we are not ICMs, we can't process the payments ourselves and we can't assess the clients' eligibility and entitlements and we can't claim any money from our systems, so we have to fully rely on the case managers, but the case managers also have their own jobs every day, so it's really hard for us to find someone to help us process the payments or claim any monies for us and all our requests. For example, the moving costs payments or running arrears, they are all needed urgently, so that external part is really hard for us.

The majority of them were conscious of the need to continue to discuss these matters more with their peers (Housing Team managers and intensive case managers), their clients, and stakeholders to improve understanding of their role. Some felt that some MSD managers and ICMs did not always value or appreciate what they do in their role. Some of them in some regions felt tired or burnt out by the stressful housing situation and felt unsupported by the Ministry, and some managers.

MSD makes promises but is yet to fulfil them. As an example, we attended an MSD hui and were asked what would help us to improve our roles, and then nothing happened.

Resourcing: Being properly resourced to perform your job well can make all the difference. Some of the housing brokers felt that the limited supply of resources like work transportation, and digital devices influenced or impeded the level of their work performance.

Booking the only car for our region is bedlam. So, if a client has a viewing at 1.00 pm and they ask me to go and support them, half of the time, I will have to say no. But I would also have to take my own car sometimes and we have no budget for things like petrol, etc...at all. If I am meeting a landlord at a cafe, I will buy them a coffee out of my own money. When I first started, as part of the role, I was supposed to have my own new laptop and cell phone, I got a second-hand iPhone and I still do not have a new laptop – I have an old-style one.

Cultural capability: Some of the housing brokers did not have the capability to cater for cultural ways of doing things, e.g., Te Ao Māori or Pacific cultural processes were limited and dependent on their interest or ability to source the appropriate personnel to fulfil those sorts of roles. There were some regions where Māori and Pacific cultural processes were enacted respectfully, sensitively, and consistently, however, there were also some areas where this was not the case. Despite high Māori populations in their area and iwi accessible to them, some regions had not yet taken steps to connect their clients with local iwi/Mana Whenua.

We are doing our best to cater to the cultural needs of our clients and we are immensely proud of that. However, I am not sure that we have the consistent Māori or Pacific cultural expertise to cater fully to this just yet.

A lot depends on who we can connect with in this space. It is something we need to address further and work on.

Financial stress: A housing broker in one region stated:

The external market was more volatile, interest rates increased mortgages, rental prices had increased and made things more difficult and therefore we are experiencing severe limitations with private housing stock to get clients into houses that are suitable or affordable. It is out of our control.

Many housing brokers understood and were empathetic to the personal, social, and financial struggles of their clientele and were able to support a majority, but not everyone. It was sometimes dependent on the client's ability to be open to changing behaviour and demonstrating improved habits over time. However, increasing housing costs were a huge strain on many clients. Some housing brokers stated that unsuccessful clients who were turned down for private rental often had to remain in emergency housing or transitional situations, which were tenuous.

The clients

Discrimination: Discrimination can be a barrier. Some of the clients felt discriminated against in the MSD/WINZ environment when seeking housing. There was a disabled client who had difficulty securing a private rental.

The problem with WINZ is the housing demand. They do not understand what accessible means. There is no such thing as emergency housing if you are in a wheelchair, it does not exist. I have just had barrier after barrier and obstacle after obstacle with WINZ/HNZ. They are most unhelpful for paraplegics.

Housing brokers and autonomy: Some clients felt that the housing brokers did not have enough autonomy to undertake their role more efficiently.

If they are capable, dependable, and responsible, they should be given more opportunities to be more helpful. They do a great job, just let them do it.

Unaffordability: Despite being in a current rental and appreciating the opportunity, some of the Māori and Pacific clients had reservations about being able to sustain the current private rental in the future because of the high rents.

When you think about it \$650 for three bedrooms with one person working. No money for my kids. Last \$20 every week for the water. So, we pay \$670 a week. Nowadays, nothing is cheap. They can help us a lot. I know that they are trying to force people to work, but on the other side, who is going to look after our kids? We have a one-year-old and would need more money to pay for childcare. We cannot do it. If we go out to work, a child is sick and then we must come home. Our husbands are already working so hard for rent, water, Wi-Fi, and cars. We have other landlords to pay too. And then we struggle the next week when we receive our pay, and it is not enough. The truth is my husband pays the whole rent, all the \$670, then he has \$150 left for everything else.

The stakeholders

Some landlords are still concerned about WINZ clients: Some landlords or property managers may still have some concerns with MSD clients despite the reassurance and background work of the Housing Broker service. Some stakeholders felt the housing brokers were trying their best, but it was not their job or the job of property managers to teach clients

absolutely everything about renting in the private market. They said other interventions were required beforehand; for example, the processes before they get to the housing broker and the possibility of more consistent Ready to Rent seminars across the region throughout the year.

The landlord has more confidence if the property manager shows them that we are confident with the clients. However, I do know some landlords who still have concerns about WINZ clients even with housing broker support. There is some discrimination there.

Cultural matters: Most stakeholders acknowledged that the housing brokers had a strong culture of care. However, when Māori and Pacific cultures were discussed with stakeholders, they were unaware if they had a place in the Housing Broker service. These matters had not been discussed with them and they didn't show an interest to become involved.

The housing brokers know more about their clients' backgrounds and how to support them with changes in their lives. They have enough cultural support from the housing brokers. For example, if they are dealing with Māori families, the housing brokers should at least understand the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and be guided by these when they help the clients out. We must consider these things.

COVID-19 issues: Some stakeholders commented that they had experienced disruption with clients due to both COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021. Communication was not greatly affected, but some access to data and other information was an issue.

It had an impact on me because we were not allowed in our building, and I had some information on my digital devices, and I could not get access to my laptop or phone at home and that was inconvenient and annoying from a business perspective. It just delayed things quite a bit.

Housing Broker service provider perspectives in summary

The ability of the Housing Broker service to build the confidence of their clients as tenants was clear in the interviews. They stated that their professional relationship with the clients was positive and had an impact as an immediate outcome. The ways they had educated clients (in conjunction with Ready to Rent programmes if provided in their region) supported the clients to become more knowledgeable about their rights, responsibilities, and entitlements in private renting.

The service has been frequently successful in connecting with people in housing stress and helping place many of them into private rentals. Most of the housing brokers are or have been property owners with tenants, property managers or investors personally, and understand the needs of both the property owners and the clients in the private rental market. Their ability to connect with clients and a network of sector relationships of landlords and property managers has been a key factor in successfully placing many of those experiencing insecure housing in rental units.

Most of the housing brokers respected tikanga Māori and Pacific cultural processes. However, the levels of cultural responsiveness varied across the regions depending on the capability the Housing Broker service had within their ranks or whether they had access or

connection to the appropriate Māori or Pacific expertise in their area. In some areas, they were very strong. Most of them made some effort to learn cultural processes, but others were aware they needed to make improvements to these processes in the future.

Key modification or change areas identified by staff were focussed on internal communication processes, the understanding of MSD systemic processes, and the need for appropriate professional development training. They also wanted to explore a monitoring and evaluation process that would inform their work more effectively.

Housing Broker client perspectives in summary

Many clients spoke of the trust and confidence they had in their housing broker's knowledge of the housing/tenancy sector, the private rental market, their ability to match them to the right opportunity, the right type of property and the appropriate stakeholders when necessary.

The Housing Broker service has persevered in successfully linking clients with property managers and landlords despite the pressures in the housing market. The clients have experienced compassion, empathy and understanding from the Housing Brokers regarding their backgrounds and difficult socio-economic situations. The clients agreed that because of the respect and understanding the housing brokers had towards them, they have become more confident, competent, and knowledgeable about the private rental sector. Clients had a positive mindset and felt better about themselves and their ability to secure a private rental because of the service provided.

Māori and Pacific clients spoke of the unconditional support and the efforts made to provide them with better access to housing than they may have had in the past.

Concern was expressed by some clients however, that they will not have the ability to sustain high rent costs for the medium and long term or be able to troubleshoot typical property problems without ongoing support from the Housing Broker service.

Housing Broker stakeholder perspectives in summary

One of the strengths of the Housing Broker service has been its ability to fulfil its key role in connecting with stakeholders well. Evidence gathered from the landlords, property managers and investors showed that most are happy with the service and saw the reciprocal value in the relationship with them. They found it professional and were appreciative of housing brokers' knowledge, experience, and skills in the private sector.

One of the key outcomes achieved was that stakeholders had confidence and respect for the service, and now want to take on MSD clients because of the relationships that have developed and the preparation and support of tenants. As a result, some stakeholders described the Housing Broker service as a 'brand'. This means that the service has developed reliable and responsible practices and processes, forming a high-trust model for both stakeholders and clients.

However, it was revealed by some stakeholders that there was still some scepticism among some of the private landlords about accepting MSD clients, despite the successful work of the service.

Outcomes frameworks

This section particularly focuses on KEQ 7: What are the outputs and outcomes that are important to measure for each initiative going forward?

The interview analysis above was applied to test the relationship between the intervention logic model and the actual experience of Ready to Rent course providers and housing brokers, and clients and stakeholders of both programmes. The interview questions had been carefully prepared to check how the processes set out in the model contributed to the intended outcomes and what unintended outcomes had or had not occurred. The analysis of both programmes showed that the services were generally working as intended but there were improvements that could be made. These results were then discussed fully in the outcomes frameworks workshops to further develop and refine the model and set out the outcome goals for both services.

As noted earlier in this report, the outcomes frameworks workshops were designed to develop a transparent and comprehensive set of performance expectations, based on what could be reasonably expected of the services when they are working well.

Outcomes frameworks build on logic models, by setting out in a more detailed way the outcomes intended and how they will be achieved and measured for a service or initiative. The shape and form of outcomes frameworks vary significantly; a common approach in the Aotearoa New Zealand public sector is for each of the following areas to be explored and defined:

- The outcomes sought for the services
- How the outcomes will be achieved
- Indicators to help keep the service on track (often framed as how we will know we are making a difference)
- Approaches for data collection.²

The outcomes frameworks commissioned for this evaluation are intentionally 'high-level'; they draw on the intervention logic models and the findings from the process evaluation, but do not have the level of specificity that would be informed by a full outcomes evaluation. The expectation is that these are a starting point for reflection and can be refined further as the programmes develop.

Outcomes frameworks can differ from intervention logic models by focusing on the attributable outcomes from a particular service, rather than on the more distal or long-term outcomes that can be influenced by a wider range of factors. For the outcomes frameworks used in this report, we focus on the key housing-related outcomes of Ready to Rent and Housing Broker services, and less on factors such as health and education. The logic models nevertheless acknowledge the role that warm, safe and healthy housing can play in supporting broader wellbeing outcomes such as these.

² See for example MSD www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2019-2020/operating-context/outcomes-framework.html) and Oranga Tamariki Outcomes Frameworks www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/how-we-work/outcomes-framework/

The outcomes frameworks in this report suggest potential indicators and data collection approaches. Initially, it was intended that the administrative data be assessed for its capacity to monitor the services. It was found, however, that it related more to the operations side of the service and as such did not provide much useful insight for the evaluation. It provides referral numbers and outcomes, such as households moving into a private rental, on a quarterly basis. It has limited value, not only because reporting by the service providers is not consistent, but also because the data, when collected, does not produce adequate information for assessing the value of the programmes. However, sufficient data shows that a considerable proportion of families move into private rentals, which confirms the findings in the interview section of this evaluation.

In the outcomes framework section of this evaluation, a fit-for-purpose monitoring programme has been set out. It focuses on initiating a system that adequately assesses the development of the quality of relations with property owners and property managers, success in placing households in rental housing on a sustainable basis, and improved client knowledge and confidence in the housing market. The reporting systems include case data on participation, length of time, sustainability of outcomes, landlord/property managers feedback surveys, client surveys, and analysis of outcomes for Māori and Pacific clients.

The outcomes frameworks for Housing Broker and Ready to Rent services were designed and tested with MSD staff over September-October 2022, following data gathering and analysis in the process evaluations of the services.

Ready to Rent Outcomes Framework

A high-level Ready to Rent outcomes framework is detailed below. The outcomes framework shows seven specific housing-related outcomes, each supported by how they will be achieved, indicators, and suggested data collection approaches. The seven outcomes are as follows:

- People are prepared for the private rental market
- People can confidently navigate interviews and meeting landlords
- People are aware of their rights and responsibilities
- People can manage budget, rent and costs
- People know what they can do to keep a house warm and dry
- Families successfully seeking private and community housing
- Families exiting emergency housing following Ready to Rent participation.

Challenges to consider in the light of evaluation feedback

During evaluation data gathering and in feedback from MSD staff on the outcome frameworks, some challenges to reaching these outcomes were noted:

- Lack of awareness of the extent to which clients had secured a private rental; the programme appears to be run on a standalone basis, without the ability to follow-up on the outcomes for participants following course completion.
- Ensuring clients can get necessary materials over Zoom sessions; some clients did not have access to printers for the material they received and missed out on some learning or participation opportunities. There were also variations in reliable access to digital devices and Wi-Fi.

- Adherence to tikanga Māori and Pacific cultural processes is inconsistent (e.g., the opportunity for whakawhanaungatanga and/or karakia); whilst some services embraced such practices as a core part of their functioning, others were less consistent in doing so.
- Lack of awareness among some intensive case managers of Ready to Rent's aims.
- Some stakeholders, in feeding back on the outcomes framework, queried the extent to which Ready to Rent supports younger people into boarding or flatting, and the referral processes into Ready to Rent for taiohi/rangatahi under 18 years old.

Monitoring system

Table 2 shows the monitoring system we recommend for the Ready to Rent initiative as a result of the total process evaluation. The outcome framework workshop fine-tuned the expected outcomes of the service and enabled us to recommend a monitoring system with clear indicators and data collection processes. These will improve the future service by providing fit-for-purpose transparent feedback of the accomplishments or otherwise of the initiative.

The first five outcomes require a participant survey that collects information on the knowledge, confidence and skills participants consider they have acquired as a result of their involvement in the courses. The participant surveys will capture client assessments on each of the five key outcomes alongside the cultural appropriateness of the service.

The latter two outcomes require objective reporting of the post-course success or otherwise of applying for and gaining a rental tenancy and/or exiting emergency housing to move to private or community housing. The interviews showed this follow up is not currently consistent and many course providers were not informed about the outcomes of their courses. The data collection will require greater cooperation between the two initiatives, stakeholders, and MSD. As with the subjective indicators, the data will capture the rates for Māori and Pacific peoples to ensure the service works well for them and helps overcome the current ethnic bias in housing outcomes (see Table 2: Ready to Rent Outcomes Framework, page 53).

Housing Broker Outcomes Framework

A high-level Housing Broker outcomes framework is detailed below. The outcomes framework sets out six specific housing-related outcomes, each supported by how they will be achieved, indicators, and suggested data collection approaches. The six outcomes are as follows:

- Build connections with local property owners property managers and investors
- Growth in private landlords taking on MSD clients
- Placing people in sustained private rental housing
- Links established with key stakeholders in the community
- Improved client knowledge and confidence in the housing market
- Reduced inequity in housing outcomes.

Challenges to consider in the light of evaluation feedback

In the course of evaluation interview data gathering and in feedback from MSD staff on the outcomes frameworks, some challenges to reaching these outcomes emerged, including:

- Cultural challenges. While some services embraced Māori and Pacific cultural practices as a core part of their functioning, others were less consistent in doing so.
- Some internal challenges were noted, including MSD processes, systems, data tracking and monitoring, communication, professional support and the understanding of the housing broker role by managers.
- Some noted the potential for an enhanced autonomy of the housing broker role to better meet the needs of clients.
- Affordability and ability to sustain rents remains a key barrier to accessing housing.
- Stigma of MSD clients is still an issue that many are confronting, and that housing brokers are trying to overcome.
- The extent to which the service can achieve better housing equity outcomes for groups such as youth and disabled people should also be considered.

Monitoring system

Table 3 shows the monitoring system we recommend for the Housing Brokers initiative. In contrast to the Ready to Rent monitoring system, we recommend an objective reporting system for five of the outcomes and a client survey for assessing client knowledge and confidence. The first outcome about connection with local property owners, landlords and property investors requires a landlord feedback survey alongside the objective reporting to monitor the relationship with landlords etc. who take on MSD clients.

The data collection that is recommended focusses on key outcome areas in terms of achieving a tenancy, time length, ongoing sustainable renting, and outcomes for Māori and Pacific clients. The data will capture current and ongoing success or otherwise of the agreed outcomes of the initiative (see Table 3: Housing Broker Outcomes Framework, page 55).

Table 2: Ready to Rent Outcomes Framework

Outcomes	How we will achieve this		Indicators	Data collection
People are prepared for the private rental market	Upskilling families to gain the required knowledge and skills in the rental market Use of plain English/other language resources to support gaining accommodation	Approaches underpinned by tikanga and cultural-responsiveness, empathy, respect, and creating a safe environment	Growth in number of families successfully completing Ready to Rent courses Clients reporting they feel more confident to apply for housing following programme completion, and that they have been treated with empathy and understanding in the R2R programme	Participant survey: Feedback on changes in knowledge, confidence and readiness Feedback on extent to which participants felt their situation, culture, and needs were acknowledged through programme Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients
People can confidently navigate interviews and meeting landlords	Upskilling families to know how to apply for a house and to be part of meetings/interviews		Clients reporting they feel more confident to meet and communicate with landlords/be interviewed following programme completion	Participant survey: Feedback on changes in confidence/preparedness when meeting landlords and being interviewed Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients
People are aware of their rights and responsibilities	Upskilling families to have stronger awareness of both their rights and responsibilities as tenants, and support options available		Clients reporting they are more aware of their rights and responsibilities, and support options available	Participant survey: Feedback on changes in knowledge of rights and responsibilities when meeting landlords and being interviewed Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients
People can manage budget, rent and costs	Upskilling families on budgeting, and managing rent payments and other costs		Clients reporting they are more confident/knowledgeable in managing housing costs	Participant survey: Feedback on changes in budget management skills Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients
People know what they can do to keep a house warm and dry	Upskilling families on how they can help keep a house warm and dry, as well as landlord responsibilities		Clients reporting that they understand how to keep their home warm and dry, and landlord responsibilities	Participant survey: Feedback on changes in budget management skills Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients

Families successfully seeking private and community housing	Upskilling families to gain the required skills and confidence in the rental market		Growth in number of individuals and families applying for and gaining private and community housing tenancies, boarding and flatting	<p>Reporting systems: Number of R2R individuals and families applying for and gaining private and community housing tenancies</p> <p>Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients</p>
Families exiting emergency housing following Ready to Rent participation	Upskilling families to gain the required skills and confidence in the rental market		Growth in number of families successfully completing Ready to Rent courses exiting emergency housing for private or community housing	<p>Reporting systems: Number of R2R families from emergency housing applying for and gaining private and community housing tenancies</p> <p>Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients</p>

Table 3: Housing Broker Outcomes Framework

Outcomes	How we will achieve this		Indicators	Data collection
Build connections with local property owners, property managers and investors	Building knowledge and connection with the private tenancy sector, with good communication and rapport with sector partners	Approaches underpinned by tikanga and cultural responsiveness, empathy, respect, perseverance and compassion	Growth in number of landlords active in programme Sustained involvement of landlords in programme with MSD clients Positive ratings of landlords' relationship with housing brokers	Reporting systems: Length of time of continuous and intermittent engagement with housing brokers and periods of tenancies for MSD clients Landlord feedback survey: Relationship with brokers, willingness to take on MSD clients
Growth in private landlords taking on MSD clients	Building positive and constructive relationships with private landlords, property managers and investors, and connecting them with clients		Growth in number of landlords taking on MSD clients through housing brokers Reduction in average length of time between registration and housing placement	Reporting systems: Number of landlords taking on MSD clients through housing brokers Average length of time from becoming a housing broker client and placement Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients
Placing people in sustained private rental housing	Matching MSD clients with private sector housing opportunities Working with tenants and landlords to ensure tenancies are successful		Growth in number of clients in tenancies found through housing brokers that are sustained for 12+ months Clients shifted from emergency housing to private tenancies	Reporting systems: Length of tenancy for housing broker clients; clients successfully exiting from support due to stable housing situation Emergency housing placements/wait lists numbers Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients
Links established with key stakeholders in the community	Building good relationships with other sectors, such as iwi, community housing providers		Range of stakeholders engaged outside of private sector landlords Partnerships established with stakeholder groups to accelerate housing placements	Reporting systems: Involvement of sector partners in housing placements

Improved client knowledge and confidence in the housing market	Successfully connecting people with the private rental housing market Advice and support to clients in the tenancy process		Growth in number of MSD clients willing to take on a private tenancy Growth in number of MSD clients who can afford a private tenancy	Client survey: Gaining knowledge, confidence from programme participation; willingness to seek private sector tenancy; knowledge of entitlements and good tenancy practice; personal impact of programme participation Analysis of total, Māori and Pacific clients
Reduced inequity in housing outcomes	Supporting Māori, Pacific and other disadvantaged groups (e.g., youth, disabled people) into sustained housing		Growth in number of Māori and Pacific clients in stable private sector housing Growth in number of Māori and Pacific housing brokers	Reporting systems: Number of Māori and Pacific housing broker clients in sustained tenancies Number of Māori and Pacific housing brokers

Conclusions

The overall purpose of the evaluation was to formally confirm that the Housing Broker service and the Ready to Rent programmes were proving valuable and to understand whether they were being implemented as intended.

Based on the information gathered from this process evaluation, it is clear that while improvements can be made, both initiatives are proving to be valuable for their clients. Their intent was to give people a better chance of securing tenancies and help more of them gain homes in the private rental market, thus reducing the risk of homelessness and the need for emergency housing. Although this was a process evaluation, there were many reports of clients gaining homes in the private rental market.

The evidence outlined in this report shows that housing brokers, Ready to Rent course providers, and the clients and stakeholders of both programmes had a strong sense of the value of the two programmes and that the processes were generally working as intended. That said, there is room for improvement and fine-tuning.

MSD was innovative in hiring housing brokers who were experienced in property management or who were landlords, and in contracting community organisations experienced in working with people in housing stress as Ready to Rent course providers. The programmes helpfully permitted some flexibility about how the provider roles could be implemented. They have been able to evolve and have been particularly committed to establishing and maintaining good connections with clients and stakeholders.

The information gathered in this report shows the two initiatives have performed well and they and the Ministry can now take the opportunity to look at ways to improve the services further. There are cultural challenges in both programmes, with the majority of clients being Māori or Pacific. Some services are deeply responsive to the cultural needs of their clients, while others struggle. Internal processes between MSD and both sets of providers also require attention. As the services have begun to take root, the providers are seeking greater support from the Ministry and improved communication.

The intervention logic workshops and the interviews with service providers, clients and stakeholders provided the basis for separate outcomes frameworks to be developed for both services. They set out six specific housing-related outcomes for the Housing Broker service and seven for the Ready to Rent programme. Each outcome has been transparently developed with the services and the Ministry and each is supported by descriptions of how they will be achieved, what indicators are appropriate, and suggested data collection approaches. These frameworks can provide the basis for a later impact evaluation of both services.

Recommendations

Based on the information gathered from the intervention logic model workshops, the interview process, the thematic analysis, and the outcomes framework workshops, areas of both services were identified that could benefit from further attention.

Recommendations for the Ready to Rent initiative

1. The Ministry's Regional Housing Teams and Ready to Rent providers conduct information hui or develop other processes in their regions to improve awareness and understanding of the purpose of the Ready to Rent programme.
2. The Ministry provides opportunities for Ready to Rent providers to meet, within and beyond regions, to share best practices from their respective programmes and further develop their knowledge and practice base.
3. The Ministry provides Ready to Rent providers with resources to share and help develop their cultural competency practices and processes within their programmes across the regions.
4. The Ministry applies the indicators and data collection recommendations developed in the Ready to Rent Outcomes Framework.
5. The Ministry develops processes to mitigate the digital problems that low-income people in housing stress have, ensuring clients can access the necessary materials on time and participate in online sessions to avoid missing learning opportunities.
6. The Ministry initiates ways in which Regional Housing Teams and housing brokers can inform Ready to Rent providers appropriately about the successful or unsuccessful placement of former course participants into private rental housing.
7. The Ministry investigates the potential to provide Ready to Rent youth initiatives.

Recommendations for the Housing Broker initiative

1. The Ministry develops high-quality professional learning and development training for housing brokers. The issues that require addressing include clearer communication pathways between management and staff, greater understanding and explanation of MSD systems, consistent and understood data tracking and monitoring processes, adequate resource support (e.g., for transport, digital devices, etc.), and time to create opportunities to engage professionally at national and regional levels with other housing brokers to share achievements, challenges, and best practice tools and strategies.
2. The Ministry ensures the development of cultural competency and responsiveness training for Housing Broker service staff, with an emphasis on consistent best practice steps and processes across all regions, that enhance communication, particularly with Māori and Pacific clients.
3. The Ministry applies the indicators and data collection recommendations developed in the Housing Broker Outcomes Framework
4. The Ministry, the Housing Broker service and other groups providing housing support initiatives set up under the HAP work together to develop a plan designed to protect vulnerable people and whānau in housing stress as rental costs continue to increase and threaten the medium- and longer-term goals of the service.

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Appendix A: Question lines for both initiatives

Please note, these are question lines for semi-structured interviews and hui, fono and focus groups. They do not constitute a questionnaire. The questions are topic conversation openers which are followed up by the interviewer with probes to elicit more detail and information around the responses. They indicate a broad and unbiased invitation to discuss the subject area in an open manner. The questions indicate the areas that need to be covered but may be asked with different wording, in different order, and in different languages, depending on the context.

Separate questions lines were prepared for each service and for each role e.g., client, worker or service provider, and stakeholder e.g. property manager, landlord, or property investor. The six question lines are set out below.

Ready to Rent Programme Evaluation

NB: Because this question line is for clients and there are specific questions about cultural responsiveness, the interviewer needs to identify the cultural affiliation of the individual or groups being interviewed (Māori, Pasefika, Pākehā/NZ European or other cultural group).

Name of cultural group.....

Question line for CLIENTS

Tēnā koe, e whakaāe nei ki te whaiwahi i tēnei kaupapa rangahau e aromatawa i nei i te āhua o ngā whakaratonga tautoko o te Ready to Rent programme

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important research and share your kōrero and thoughts with us. We are interested to learn your views about the Ready to Rent programme.

Engagement Processes

1. Can you tell me a bit about how you became involved with the Ready to Rent programme.
2. What were your hopes when you engaged with the Ready to Rent programme?

Were those hopes achieved? (Please explain what has been achieved so far)

Were any of them not achieved? (Please explain what has not been achieved so far)

3. Could you explain which activities you have been involved in with the Ready to Rent Service?

Service Provision

4. Do you consider the Ready to Rent programme prepared you well or not so well for your interviews with local landlords and property managers? Could you explain what has worked for you and what hasn't?
5. Do you consider you are more knowledgeable about the rental market and the costs and responsibilities involved in renting as a result of the Ready to Rent programme? Could you explain why or why not?
6. Has the Ready to Rent programme increased or not increased your understanding and awareness of tenant's rights and responsibilities to become a successful tenant? Could you explain what has worked for you and what hasn't?
7. In terms of being ready to rent in the private rental market, did you feel that the Ready to Rent programme provided you with the relevant and appropriate support, resources and activities to become a successful tenant? What were the most helpful aspects and what were not so helpful?
8. Do you feel the people providing the R2R service understood or did not understand your difficulties and needs in gaining a rental property? Please explain.
9. Overall, do you consider the Ready to Rent course actually did prepare you well and get you ready to rent (please tick one box)?

Prepared me very well	Improved my preparation	Mixed	Didn't do much to prepare me	Did not prepare me at all

Tikanga Māori, Pasefika and Other Cultural Groups

Comment for interviewer: When interviewing a Pakeha/NZ European, simply refer to 'your ways of doing things' rather than 'your cultural ways'.

10. Did you feel that your cultural ways of doing things were acknowledged, respected and understood throughout your involvement with the Ready to Rent service?

Could you explain what was respected and understood?

Could you explain what was not respected and understood?

11. Overall, did you feel(please tick one box)?

Fully respected and understood	Some respect and understanding	Mixed	Not well respected or understood much	Not respected or understood at all

12. What would improve the services in terms of good cultural processes?

COVID-19

13. Did the COVID-19 pandemic affect your engagement and progress with the Ready to Rent programme? If yes, could you explain what was affected and how it was affected?

14. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became more difficult to meet face to face and contact often had to be carried out online or by telephone. Did you find not meeting face to face less helpful or more helpful with the Service. Could you explain why?

Final thoughts

15. Is there anything else you would like to say about the the Ready to Rent programme?

Ready to Rent Programme Evaluation

Question line for KAIMAHI/WORKERS/FACILITATORS

Tēnā koe, e whakaāe nei ki te whaiwahi i tēnei kaupapa rangahau e aromatawa i nei i te āhua o ngā whakaratonga tautoko o te Ready to Rent programme

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important research and share your kōrero and thoughts with us. We are interested to learn your views about the Ready to Rent programme.

Engagement Processes

1. Can you describe your role and involvement with the Ready to Rent programme?
2. What were your hopes when you engaged in your role with the Ready to Rent programme.

Were those hopes achieved? (Please explain what has been achieved so far

Were any of them not achieved? (Please explain what has not been achieved so far)

3. Can you describe the activities you carry out with clients? Which of these do you think clients find most beneficial and which are less helpful?

Service Provision

4. In your view, do you think that the Ready to Rent programme prepares clients well or not so well for their interviews with local landlords and property managers?

Could you explain what you think worked for them and what didn't?

To what extent do you think landlords and property managers are or are not receptive to the Ready to Rent programme? Please explain.

5. In what ways do you think the Ready to Rent programme helps or doesn't help clients increase their knowledge about the rental market and the costs and responsibilities involved in renting? Could you explain what worked and what did not?
6. Do you consider the Ready to Rent programme increased or did not increase client understanding and awareness of tenant's rights and responsibilities to become successful tenants? Could you explain what has worked for you and what hasn't?
7. In terms of being ready to rent in the private rental market, do you feel that the Ready to Rent programme provides clients with the relevant and appropriate support, resources and activities to become successful tenants? What were the most helpful aspects and what were not so helpful?
8. Is there any gap in the Ready to Rent service that you think needs to be addressed? Please explain.
9. Overall, do you consider the Ready to Rent course actually prepares clients well and gets them ready to rent (please tick one box)?

Prepares them very well	Improves their preparation	Mixed	Didn't do much to prepare them	Did not prepare them at all

Data Tracking and Monitoring

10. Do you think the data that is currently being collected in the Service is fit for purpose or could it be improved? Please explain what is useful and what could be improved.
11. Could you tell us what types of data you think should be collected more consistently for the Ready to Rent service?

Tikanga Māori, Pasefika and Other Cultural Groups

N.B.: The Ready to Rent programme aims to meet the cultural needs of its clients. For this reason, could you please identify your cultural affiliation by ticking the appropriate box or boxes below?

Māori	Pasefika e.g. Samoan, Tongan, Cook Island, etc.	Pakeha/NZ European	Other cultural group

If you answered 'Other cultural group' above please name your cultural group(s).....

12. How well or not so well do you think the Service is designed to cater for the cultural needs of clients e.g., tikanga Māori and Pasifika peoples?
13. Could you explain the ways the Service is or is not tailored to meet the cultural needs of clients?
14. What would improve the services in terms of good cultural services?
15. Overall, do you consider clients felt their cultural ways of doing things were (please tick one box)?

Fully respected and understood	Somewhat respected and understood	Mixed	Not well respected or understood much	Were not respected or understood at all

COVID-19 Impact

16. Did the COVID-19 pandemic affect your engagement and progress with clients? If yes, could you explain what was affected and how it was affected?
17. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became more difficult to meet face to face and contact often had to be carried out online or by telephone. Did

you find not meeting face to face less helpful or more helpful with the Service.
Could you explain why?

Final thoughts

18. Is there anything else you would like to say about the the Ready to Rent programme?

Ready to Rent Programme Evaluation

Question line for STAKEHOLDERS

Tēnā koe, e whakaāe nei ki te whaiwahi i tēnei kaupapa rangahau e aromatawa i nei i te āhua o ngā whakaratonga tautoko o te Ready to Rent programme

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important research and share your kōrero and thoughts with us. We are interested to learn your views about the Ready to Rent programme.

Engagement Processes

1. Can you explain your involvement with the Ready to Rent service including whether or not you have rented a property(ies) to a tenant(s) who had an R2R certificate?
2. Can you outline the process of how the Ready to Rent Service engages with you and your organisation?
3. Would you or would you not feel more inclined to rent a property to someone with an R2R certificate?
4. Do you think the programme makes a difference in your mind and the minds of landlords/property managers? Please explain.

Service Provision

5. In your view, do you think that the Ready to Rent programme prepares clients well or not so well for their interviews with local landlords and property managers? Could you explain with examples?
6. Do you think the Ready to Rent programme helps clients increase their knowledge about the rental market and the costs and responsibilities involved in renting? Could you explain with examples?
7. Do you consider think the Ready to Rent programme increases client understanding and awareness of tenant's rights and responsibilities to become successful tenants? Could you explain with examples?

8. In terms of being ready to rent in the private rental market, do you feel that the Ready to Rent programme provides clients with the relevant and appropriate support, resources and activities to become successful tenants? Could you explain with examples?
9. Could you identify which particular activities you reckon the R2R programme improves tenants capacity as renters for e.g., money management, presentation, property responsibilities, etc.
10. Is there any gap in the R2R service that you think needs to be addressed?
Please explain
11. Overall, how helpful do you think the Ready to Rent programme has been for participants/clients? (please tick one box)

Very helpful	Quite helpful	Mixed	Not very helpful	Not helpful at all

Can you please explain why you gave the rating for above?

Final thoughts

12. Is there anything else you would like to say about your involvement with the Ready to Rent programme?

Housing Broker Service Evaluation

NB: Because this question line is for clients and there are specific questions about cultural responsiveness, the interviewer needs to identify the cultural affiliation of the individual or groups being interviewed (Māori, Pasefika, Pākehā/NZ European or other cultural group).

Name of cultural group.....

Question line for CLIENTS

Tēnā koe, e whakaāe nei ki te whaiwahi i tēnei kaupapa rangahau e aromatawa i nei i te āhua o ngā whakarātonga tautoko o Housing Broker service

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important research and share your kōrero and thoughts with us. We are interested to learn your views about the Housing Broker service.

Engagement Processes

1. Can you tell me a bit about how you became involved with the Housing Broker service?
2. What were your hopes when you engaged with the Housing Broker service?

Were those hopes achieved? (Please explain what has been achieved so far)

Were any of them not achieved? (Please explain what has not been achieved so far)
3. Could you explain which activities the Housing Broker service has involved you in?

Service Provision

4. Do you consider the Service provided by the Housing Broker(s) has prepared you well or not so well to connect with local landlords and property managers? Could you explain what has worked for you and what hasn't?
5. Has the Housing Brokers service been able to increase or not increase your feelings of confidence about becoming a successful tenant? Could you explain what has worked for you and what hasn't?
6. Has the Service been able to link you with local landlords and property managers? If they have, did you feel you were well matched (whether or not you succeeded in gaining a tenancy) with them and supported by the Housing Broker? Could you explain what has worked for you and what hasn't?

7. Do you consider you are more knowledgeable about the rental market and tenants' rights and entitlements as a result of the Service? Could you explain why or why not?
8. Do you feel the housing broker(s) understood or did not understand your difficulties and needs in gaining a rental property? Please explain.
9. Overall, do you consider the Housing Broker service gave you *(please tick one box)*..... of gaining rental accommodation?

Many more opportunities	Some opportunities	Not many opportunities	Hardly any opportunities	No opportunities

Tikanga Māori, Pasefika, Other Cultural Groups and Pākehā/NZ European

Comment for interviewer: When interviewing a Pakeha/NZ European, simply refer to 'your ways of doing things' rather than 'your cultural ways'.

10. Did you feel that your cultural ways of doing things were acknowledged, respected and understood throughout your involvement with the Housing Broker service?

Could you explain what was respected and understood?

Could you explain what was not respected and understood?

11. Overall, did you feel *(please tick one box)*?

Fully respected and understood	Some respect and understanding	Mixed	Not respected or understood much	Not respected or understood at all

12. What would improve the services in terms of good cultural processes?

COVID-19

13. Did the COVID-19 pandemic affect your engagement and progress with the Housing Broker service? If yes, could you explain what was affected and how it affected you and the service?
14. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became more difficult to meet face to face and contact often had to be carried out online or by telephone. Did you find not meeting face to face less helpful or more helpful with the Service. Could you explain why?

Final thoughts

15. Is there anything else you would like to say about the Housing Broker service?

Housing Broker Service Evaluation

Question line for KAIMAHI/WORKERS/FACILITATORS

Tēnā koe, e whakaāe nei ki te whaiwahi i tēnei kaupapa rangahau e aromatawa i nei i te āhua o ngā whakaratonga tautoko o Housing Broker service

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important research and share your kōrero and thoughts with us. We are interested to learn your views about the Housing Broker service.

Engagement Processes

1. Can you describe your role and involvement with the Housing Broker service?
2. What were your hopes when you engaged with your role in the Housing Broker service.

Were those hopes achieved? (Please explain what has been achieved so far)

Were any of them not achieved? (Please explain what has not been achieved so far)

3. Can you describe the activities you carry out with clients? Which of these do you think clients find most beneficial and which are less helpful?

Service Provision

4. Considering the Service aims to prepare clients to connect well with landlords and property managers? Could you explain with examples
 - a) what works well,
 - b) what could be improved, and
 - c) what barriers (if any) make it difficult?
5. Do you think the Housing Brokers service has been able to increase or not increase clients' feelings of confidence about becoming successful tenants? Could you explain what has worked and what hasn't?
6. Do you consider the Housing Broker service has increased or not increased the confidence of local landlords to choose MSD clients? Can you explain what has worked and what has not?

7. Do you consider clients are gaining more useful knowledgeable about the rental market and tenants' rights and entitlements as a result of the Service? Could you explain what they are learning and any gaps in the Service that could be improved?
8. Do housing brokers work with anyone on the housing waiting list, emergency, or in insecure housing, or are clients only selected after they have met particular criteria? Could you please explain what criteria or standards in your Service have to be met to receive help from the Service?
9. Is there any gap in the Housing Broker service that you think needs to be addressed? Please explain.
10. Overall, do you consider the Housing Broker service is providing *(please tick one box)*..... for clients to gain rental accommodation?

Many more opportunities	Some opportunities	Not many opportunities	Hardly any opportunities	No opportunities

Data Tracking and Monitoring

11. Do you think the data that is currently being collected in the Service is fit for purpose or could it be improved? Please explain what is useful and what could be improved?
12. Could you tell us what types of data you think should be collected more consistently for the Housing Broker service?

Tikanga Māori, Pasefika and Other Cultural Groups

N.B., The Ready to Rent programme aims to meet the cultural needs of its clients. For this reason, could you please identify your cultural affiliation by ticking the appropriate box or boxes below?

Māori	Pasefika e.g. Samoan, Tongan, Cook Island, etc.	Pakeha/NZ European	Other cultural group

If you answered 'Other cultural group' above please name your cultural group(s).....

13. How well or not so well do you think the Service is designed to cater for the cultural needs of clients e.g., tikanga Māori and Pasifika peoples?

14. Could you explain the ways the Service is or is not tailored to meet the cultural needs of clients?

15. What would improve the Service in terms of good cultural processes?

16. Overall, do you feel clients cultural processes and ways of doing things are (please tick one box)?

Fully respected and understood	Some respect and understanding	Mixed	Not well respected or understood much	Were not respected and had no understanding

COVID-19 Impact

17. Did the COVID-19 pandemic affect your engagement and progress with participants/clients? If yes, could you explain what was affected and how it was affected?

18. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became more difficult to meet face to face and contact often had to be carried out online or by telephone. Do you find not meeting face to face less helpful or more helpful with the Service. Could you explain why?

Final thoughts

19. Is there anything else you would like to say about the Housing Broker service?

Housing Broker Service Evaluation

Question line for STAKEHOLDERS

Tēnā koe, e whakaāe nei ki te whaiwahi i tēnei kaupapa rangahau e aromatawa i nei i te āhua o ngā whakaratonga tautoko o Housing Broker service

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this important research and share your kōrero and thoughts with us. We are interested to learn your views about the Housing Broker service.

Engagement Processes

1. Can you explain your involvement with the Housing Broker service including whether or not you have rented properties to tenants referred by housing brokers?
2. Can you outline the process of how the Housing Broker service engages with you and your organisation?
3. Is this sort of Service something you are, or are not, comfortable to work with and are receptive to in the future?

Service Provision

4. Do you think the Service prepares clients to connect well with landlords and property managers? Could you explain with examples?
5. Do you think the Housing Broker service increases or decreases clients' feelings of confidence about becoming successful tenants? Could you explain with examples?
6. Do you consider the Housing Broker service has increased or not increased the confidence of local landlords to choose MSD clients? Can you explain what has worked and what has not?
7. Do you consider clients are gaining more useful knowledge about the rental market and tenants' rights and entitlements as a result of the Service? Could you explain with examples?
8. Do you think there are any gaps in the Housing Brokers service that need to be addressed? Please explain.
9. Overall, do you consider the Housing Broker service is providing (please tick one box)..... for clients to gain rental accommodation?

Many more opportunities	Some opportunities	Not many opportunities	Hardly any opportunities	No opportunities

Final thoughts

10. Is there anything else you would like to say about your involvement with the Housing Broker service

Appendix B: Information sheets and consent forms



The Process Evaluation of the Ready to Rent Programme Information Sheet

The invitation and purpose of the study

You are invited to participate in a study of the Ready to Rent programme developed by the Ministry of Social Development. Whether or not you take part is your choice. If you don't want to take part, you don't have to give a reason. If you do want to take part now, but change your mind later, you can pull out of the study at any time.

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to ensure the Ready to Rent programme is proving to be valuable for people in need of rental housing and to further understand whether the initiative is being implemented as intended. The evaluation findings will also help develop ways of monitoring the quality of the service and contribute towards any improvements that may be required.

You have been invited because your experience of this service is important and your contribution towards the evaluation is valued. We are seeking to better understand the performance of these services: what has worked well and what improvements could provide future benefit. We want the research to strongly reflect the views and opinions of people directly involved.

Interviews and hui/fono/focus groups will probably be carried out remotely online or by phone. However, depending on where the Ministry of Health Protection Framework traffic light levels are, there may be opportunity to conduct face-to-face interviews with individuals and focus groups.

Māori and Pacific interviewers will interview participants from their cultures respectively.

Clients of the service will receive a koha, meaalofa gifting voucher worth \$50 to cover costs of participating.

The privacy of participants will be protected by ensuring that no names or contact details will be used in reporting.

Interviews will be recorded and transcribed and kept on password-protected secure servers and hard copies will be housed in locked storage areas. Only the researcher team will have access to the data, and it will be disposed of six months after the final report has been accepted by the Ministry of Social Development.

Who are the research leaders of the project?

This project is carried out by the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit (FCSPRU) under the leadership of the Principal Investigator: Charles Waldegrave.

Charles is supported by an experienced team of research colleagues, Tamalieutu Kiwi Tamasese, Tafaoimalo Loudeen Parsons, Māmari Stephens (Te Rarawa, Ngāti Moetonga, Te Rokekā), Adrian Field, Giang Nguyen and Monica Mercury (Te Iwi Morehu, Ngāti Kahungunu).

Participating in the study

Your participation in this study is confidential and no material, which could identify you personally, will be used in any reports.

The main benefits of you for taking part in this study is the knowledge that you are making an important contribution to helping improve the future work of the Ready to Rent programme.

Taking part in this study is completely up to you. You are free to refuse to take part and you can withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or disadvantage to you.

Participants will be offered a copy of a summary of final national survey report, if they would like to have one.

Who do I contact for more information or if I have concerns?

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the study at any stage, you can contact:

Charles Waldegrave, 021671673, waldegrave.c@fc.org.nz

Monica Mercury, 0272757452, monicamercury68@gmail.com



THE FAMILY CENTRE

SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH UNIT

The Process Evaluation of the Ready to Rent Programme Consent Form

Please tick to indicate you consent to the following

I have read, and I understand the Participant Invitation and Information Sheet.

I understand that I am invited to participate in this study. Whether or not I take part is my choice. If I don't want to take part, I don't have to give a reason. If I do want to take part now, but change my mind later, I can pull out of the study at any time.

I give permission for the researchers to record the interview (in audio, video or written form) so they can accurately record my views.

I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material, which could identify me personally, will be used in any reports on this study.

I know who to contact if I have any questions about the study in general.

I wish to receive a summary of the results from the study. Yes No

If you wish to receive a summary of the results, please provide contact details

Declaration by participant:

I hereby consent to take part in this study.

Participant's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Verbal Consent: Declaration by member of research team:

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project to the participant, and have answered the participant's questions about it.

I believe that the participant understands the study and has given informed consent to participate.

Researcher's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



THE FAMILY CENTRE

SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH UNIT

The Process Evaluation of the Housing Broker Service Information Sheet

The invitation and purpose of the study

You are invited to participate in a study of the Housing Broker Service developed by the Ministry of Social Development. Whether or not you take part is your choice. If you don't want to take part, you don't have to give a reason. If you do want to take part now, but change your mind later, you can pull out of the study at any time.

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to ensure the Housing Broker Service is proving to be valuable for people in need of rental housing and to further understand whether the initiative is being implemented as intended. The evaluation findings will also help develop ways of monitoring the quality of the service and contribute towards any improvements that may be required.

You have been invited because your experience of this service is important and your contribution towards the evaluation is valued. We are seeking to better understand the performance of these services: what has worked well and what improvements could provide future benefit. We want the research to strongly reflect the views and opinions of people directly involved.

Interviews and hui/fono/focus groups will probably be carried out remotely online or by phone. However, depending on where the Ministry of Health Protection Framework traffic light levels are, there may be opportunity to conduct face-to-face interviews with individuals and focus groups.

Māori and Pacific interviewers will interview participants from their cultures respectively.

Clients of the service will receive a koha, meaalofa gifting voucher worth \$50 to cover costs of participating.

The privacy of participants will be protected by ensuring that no names or contact details will be used in reporting.

Interviews will be recorded and transcribed and kept on password-protected secure servers and hard copies will be housed in locked storage areas. Only the researcher team will have access to the data, and it will be disposed of six months after the final report has been accepted by the Ministry of Social Development.

Who are the research leaders of the project?

This project is carried out by the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit (FCSPRU) under the leadership of the Principal Investigator: Charles Waldegrave.

Charles is supported by an experienced team of research colleagues, Tamalieutu Kiwi Tamasese, Tafaoimalo Loudeen Parsons, Māmari Stephens (Te Rarawa, Ngāti Moetonga,

Te Rokekā), Adrian Field, Giang Nguyen and Monica Mercury (Te Iwi Morehu, Ngāti Kahungunu).

Participating in the study

Your participation in this study is confidential and no material, which could identify you personally, will be used in any reports.

The main benefits of you for taking part in this study is the knowledge that you are making an important contribution to helping improve the future work of the Housing Broker Service.

Taking part in this study is completely up to you. You are free to refuse to take part and you can withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or disadvantage to you.

Participants will be offered a copy of a summary of final national survey report, if they would like to have one.

Who do I contact for more information or if I have concerns?

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the study at any stage, you can contact:

Charles Waldegrave, 021671673, waldegrave.c@fc.org.nz

Monica Mercury, 0272757452, monicamercury68@gmail.com



THE FAMILY CENTRE

SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH UNIT

The Process Evaluation of the Housing Broker Service Consent Form

Please tick to indicate you consent to the following

I have read, and I understand the Participant Invitation and Information Sheet.

I understand that I am invited to participate in this study. Whether or not I take part is my choice. If I don't want to take part, I don't have to give a reason. If I do want to take part now, but change my mind later, I can pull out of the study at any time.

I give permission for the researchers to record the interview (in audio, video or written form) so they can accurately record my views.

I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material, which could identify me personally, will be used in any reports on this study.

I know who to contact if I have any questions about the study in general.

I wish to receive a summary of the results from the study. Yes No

If you wish to receive a summary of the results, please provide contact details

Declaration by participant:

I hereby consent to take part in this study.

Participant's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Verbal Consent: Declaration by member of research team:

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project to the participant, and have answered the participant's questions about it.

I believe that the participant understands the study and has given informed consent to participate.

Researcher's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____