**Request for Tender for Research Project:**

**Determining the need for and current Availability of Long-Term Supported Accommodation for individuals experiencing homelessness who are not able to live independently, due to complex health problems**

**1. Background information and invitation to tender1.1. National Social Inclusion Office** The National Social Inclusion Office (NSIO) in the HSE holds a remit for promoting health and well-being, improving health outcomes and enabling access to health services for vulnerable groups, including those that experience homelessness or may be at increased risk of homelessness. Homelessness is a growing public health issue in Ireland and is associated with multiple complex and chronic health conditions, decreased life expectancy and increased access to secondary care services.

## **1.2. Background to the tender**

The National Social Inclusion Office invites tender for research on *“Determining the need for and current availability of Long-Term Supported Accommodation for individuals experiencing homelessness who are not able to live independently, due to complex health problems.”* **This research is to focus on two regions in Ireland: Midlands and North-East.** Both regions have a higher number of rural areas, and there have been reports of people experiencing homelessness who are unable to live independently in the community. Currently, there is no long-term accommodation available in these areas.

Homelessness is a complex social issue that affects individuals from various backgrounds, with diverse needs and challenges. Homeless population is much more likely to have complex, multiple occurring disorders that include chronic, somatic conditions coupled with mental health and/or substance use disorders. The longer individuals are entrenched in chronic homelessness, the higher the likelihood one will experience a chronic medical condition (Caton, et.al, 2005). According to the Census 2016, 61.9% of homeless population reported their health to be good or very good while 87% of general population stated the same. At the other end, 18.8 % of homeless persons reported their health as fair, bad or very bad as opposed to 9.6% of the entire population. The most common types of disability within this cohort include difficulty with pain, breathing, chronic illness; psychological or emotional condition; difficulty learning remembering or concentrating and; difficulty with working or attending school/college.

## **1.3. Supported accommodation**

Supported housing is an umbrella term for various accommodation‐ based approaches. When providers describe their approach as supported housing, the intervention will typically combine housing with additional supportive services as an integrated package.

Long-term supported housing is for people who would not be able to live independently, due to problems like addiction or mental illness. They are offered a home for as long as is needed, with support as necessary. Some projects target people with particular care needs. Many approved housing bodies offer long-term supported housing.

Some individuals experiencing homelessness have health and other needs that prevent them from living independently, necessitating higher levels of support. Providing long-term supported accommodation tailored to their needs is crucial for addressing their homelessness and promoting stability and well-being. Equally important is supporting people to live independently in the community whenever possible and continuously developing services to meet the needs of those experiencing homelessness. Therefore, long-term accommodation should be designed solely for those who are unable to live independently in the community. This research aims to assess the need for and current availability of such accommodations to inform policy and service provision efforts.

# **2. Research aim and objectives:**

**Aim:** Determine the need for, and current availability of, long-term supported accommodation for people experiencing homelessness who would not be able to live independently, due to severe health problems like addiction or mental illness.

**Objectives:**

* *Objective 1*: Determine the prevalence and demographic characteristics of individuals experiencing homelessness who are unable to live independently due to complex health needs, including but not limited to addiction or mental illness.
* *Objective 2*: Assess the current availability and distribution of long-term supported accommodation specifically tailored to individuals experiencing homelessness who are not able to live independently, considering factors such as geographic location, capacity, and types of support services offered.
* *Objective 3*: Identify and analyse the existing gaps and challenges in meeting the accommodation and health needs of individuals experiencing homelessness who are not able to live independently, including barriers related to access, affordability, service coordination, service provision and quality of care.

# **3. Methodology:**

This research will employ a mixed-methods approach to gather data on the need for and availability of long-term supported accommodation for individuals experiencing homelessness who are not able to live independently due to complex health needs. The methodology will include:

* Quantitative surveys to assess the prevalence and demographic characteristics of individuals experiencing homelessness who are not able to live independently due to complex health needs
* Qualitative interviews with stakeholders, including service providers and policymakers, to explore perspectives on the current availability and challenges in accessing long-term supported accommodation and health services in the community
* Analysis of existing data sources, including housing data and health information (such as chart reviews), to supplement primary data collection

# **Assessment of complex needs and ability to function independently must be standardized and not based on individual interpretation.** Some individuals and organizations that might respond to the survey may not have adequate background to make such judgments, thus necessitating the use of a standardized assessment tool or findings from occupational therapy assessments.

# **4. Research outputs:**

* An interim presentation to relevant stakeholders regarding the application of the approach to the research topic and any challenges experienced.
* A draft report highlighting key findings.
* A final report on the findings to be submitted to the National Social Inclusion Office.
* A presentation on the final report to the relevant stakeholders.

# **5. Cost and timeline:**

The National Social Inclusion Office is eager that the tenderer will be ready to start by the end of April 2024 and asks that tenderers specify how soon they would be in a position to commence the work. Duration of the tender will be no more than 8 months after the awarding of the tender.

The budget for this study is €25,000 (excluding VAT).

**6. Instructions to Tenderers**

## **6.1. Format of tenders**

Tenderers should complete and submit the application form. Tenders submitted in formats other than the application form will not be considered. **Application form can be found at the end of document: Appendix 1, page 5.**

**6.2. Submission of tenders and closing date for application**  Completed application forms must be sent by email to antonia.bura@hse.ie with subject line “Need for and current availability of long-term supported accomodation”. Completed application forms must be received **no later than April 30th (the ‘tender deadline’).** Application forms received after the tender deadline will NOT be considered.

**6.3. Queries and clarifications**

All queries related to any aspect of this request for tender can be directed to antonia.bura@hse.ie.

## **6.4. Assessment of Bids**

The contract for the study is being awarded by a competitive tendering process. Tender bids will be assessed on related criteria as follows:

* Demonstrated knowledge, experience, skills and competencies to undertake and complete work related to the study as required (25%)
* Appropriateness and effectiveness of the approach and methodology proposed for undertaking and completing the research (35%)
* Track record with respect to undertaking and completing similar contracted work (10%)
* Evidence of capacity to complete all elements of the research within the timeframe (10%)
* Cost - Broken down to show description of costs, justification for proposed costs and best use of resources (20%)

**The proposal will be assessed by a review panel and agreement with the steering committee will be required before commencement.**

**Appendix 1**

**Research Tender Submission**

**Lead Researcher:**

**Institution:**

**Project Title:**

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| **Researchers:**  Please list the name and institution of all researchers involved in the project, their proposed role in the project and the proportion of their time that will be spent on the project. |
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| **Academic background:**  Please outline your experience and expertise relevant to the proposed project including demonstration  of a proven ability to carry out the work in an impartial and objective manner. |
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| **Appropriateness and effectiveness of the approach and methodology**  Details of the proposed approach and methodology to be adopted in carrying out work that is designed to meet the study’s aim and objectives. |
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| **Previous work**  Please outline previous experience of any similar contracted work. |
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| **Timeframe**  Outline the timeframes for commencement and completion of the project. |
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| **Proposed cost and value for money**  Demonstrate appropriate allocation of resources and demonstrated value for money (full description of costs, justification for these costs and a plan to ensure best use of resources). |
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| **Conflict of Interest Declaration**  Outline any conflicts of interest. |
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