

Victorian Community Visitors as Social Change Agents for SRS Residents to access NDIS

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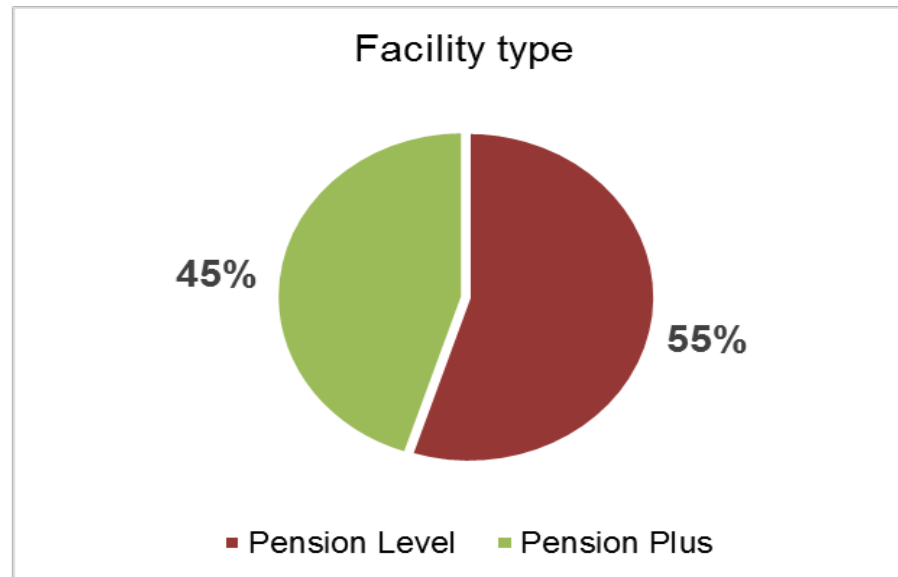
What is a Supported Residential Service



128 SRS run by private proprietors provide accommodation & support to 4275 residents

91% residents have a disability, 59% PL residents have psychiatric disability

Low staff to resident ratio of 1:30 & low staff qualifications





Victorian Community Visitors



- **Independent** Governor-in-Council appointed volunteers
- 3 year term under the relevant Act e.g. Disability, Mental Health or SRS
- Visit residential accommodation services for people with a mental illness and/or disability
- Inquire and report on **human rights** & social inclusion
- Make **unannounced** visits in teams of two
- Prepare a **report** with findings and required action
- Broad powers eg inspect premises, documents, see anyone at facility
- Bound by legislative **secrecy** provisions
- Requested visits via OPA Advice Service



2017-18 Community Visitors' work



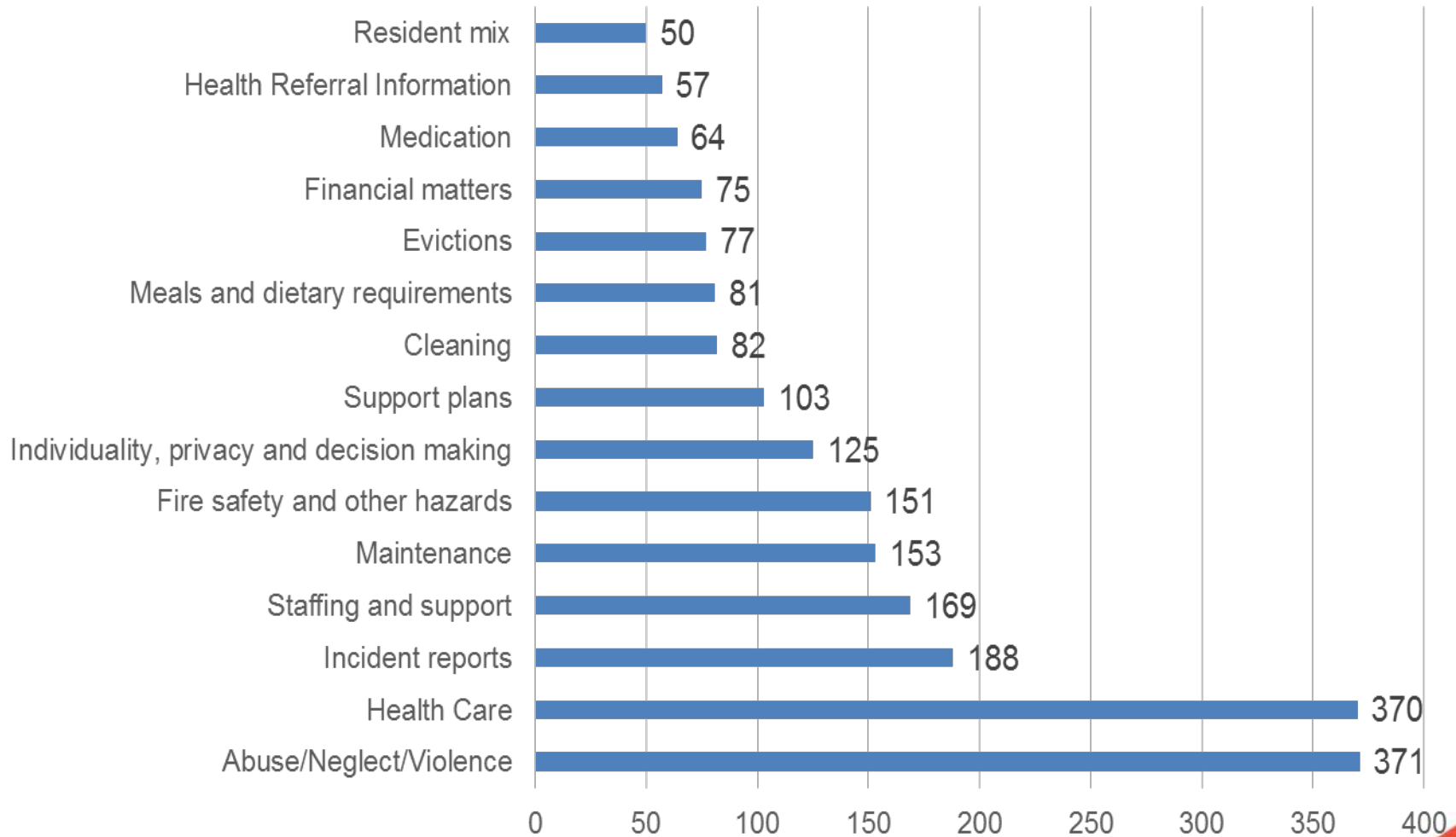
- **409** CVs did **5261** visits
- 76 SRS CVs did 764 visits
- SRS CVs identified **652** issues, **22%** serious physical or sexual assault
- Three CV Boards: Public Advocate & 2 elected CVs
- CV Annual Report to State Parliament
- Board recommendations for sector improvements
- SRS Board made **11** recommendations to government
- SRS Board project on NDIS



CV Advocacy Issues in SRS



CVs reported 2,752 issues in Residential Services over 4 years



The NDIS-SRS Project 2018



- Gathered information about NDIS rollout in Victorian SRS
- 51% SRS participated (50/128)
- 19.9% (327) residents have approved NDIS plans.
- 12.2% (200) residents have NDIS plans in progress.
- 18 residents were declined NDIS
- Reasons for decline: over 65, good family supports, inadequate paperwork, unknown



- Delays in processing applications evident in East and North Divisions
- Preparations underway to inform residents about NDIS in South and West Divisions
- Where SRS Managers/staff support residents, higher rate of NDIS participation
- A few SRS Proprietors registered as NDIS providers
- Potential for a conflict of interest with SRS proprietors becoming NDIS providers

CVs as advocates for change

- Understanding of NDIS by SRS residents

CVs talked to resident S who seemed confused about his NDIS package. He has mental health issues and is not interested in NDIS package because of his lack of understanding.

12 residents on NDIS don't understand the program.

11 residents did not want NDIS plan.

- Delays

NDIS staff have given proprietor a 3-5 month waiting period to get a commode and walking frame for resident J who has mobility problems and finds it difficult to walk from his bedroom to the shower every day.

Seven residents have completed the NDIS registration process with manager's help and are waiting (six weeks to date) for the registration number - when they get this, they can begin the planning.

CVs as advocates for change



- Inter-agency communication

Proprietor reports that NDIS is resistant to SRS staff being present and contributing to planning discussion for residents even when residents request this. This can have negative results for residents since some are not aware or able to articulate needs e.g. no request for continence aids

There appears to be no requirement or strategy to ensure on-going communication between NDIS Support Worker and NDIS funded care provider. These are often different agencies. This can result in non-adherence to agreed NDIS plan and thereby poor outcomes for residents

CVs as advocates for change

- Funding shortage

NDIS gaps remain an issue, particularly with re-assessing packages in a timely manner and with the taxi funding running out. This a real hardship for the residents as taxi is their main transport.

- Understanding of disabilities

Proprietor has supported residents through the NDIS process. He thought the NDIS staff had little understanding of how to deal with clients with an ABI. This lead to much confusion and extra work for SRS staff.

- Complex needs

Resident V is a middle aged schizophrenic and alcoholic. Lived in the SRS for 10 years but refuses to participate in activities and goes begging. Resident pension and medicare cards kept in SRS office for safekeeping except for V & his cards now lost. Refusing NDIS and all services.