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We are pleased to share with you an evidence review we commissioned from the University of Sydney.

The title of the paper is 'Home and Living Options for People with Disabilities: A systematic review and environmental scan of strategies to support transition from group homes and congregate care, and those which prevent movement to congregate settings'.

This evidence review looks at what might help people with disability to move from institutional care, group homes or congregate care to more individualised living arrangements.

It explores the challenges people may face and identifies the approach needed to help people transition and improve outcomes.

The University of Sydney was awarded the tender in September 2020 after an open tender process.

The evidence review included research from 2000-2020 across 10 academic databases and 55 websites.

Over 100 research papers and reports were identified and included in this review.

What the evidence tells us

Most research focussed on moving from institutional settings to community living, supported accommodation or group homes (n=48/109). Some of the research addressed transitioning to independent or personalised living.

There is evidence across the literature that when transition is done well, it can lead to improvements in a person’s wellbeing, independence and choice and control.

The review found that there are a number of enablers and barriers to successful housing transition which exist across the housing system.

These can be at multiple levels within the system. Some of these sit outside the scope of what the NDIS can fund.

Enablers (things that might help)

The review identified a number of strategies to help people with disability move to living more independently. They included:

- person-centred planning (putting the person at the centre of the decision);
- programs that help build a person's skills to be able to live more independently;
- access to appropriate and specialised supports including assistive technology;
- programs designed to help people feel connected to their community and make friends; and
- informal support networks and supports.

There is also some emerging evidence that flexible funding models may support people to choose living arrangements that meet their individual needs.

The review told us that a number of different strategies are often needed to support people with disability to have choice and control over where they live and who they live with.

Barriers (things that might not help)

There were also a number of barriers to living more independently including:

- not having enough affordable, well designed and accessible housing;
- not having access to supports early to help prepare for the move;
- community culture and preparedness and
- a lack of formal and informal supports that support relationship building and community connection.

Gaps in the evidence

The impacts of many of the strategies have not been well tested. More work is needed to understand what works best for whom.

Most of the studies identified in the review used different tools to measure impacts so it was difficult to compare studies.

More research will help us to understand how strategies work together to support people to live in more individualised living arrangements if they want to.

What we will do with the evidence

The research findings will inform our work to improve home and living including:

- co-designing a new approach to Home and Living
- updating our home and living operational guidelines
- developing participant decision guides and other resources for NDIA staff and partners.

We need to continue to work with people with disability, providers, government and other stakeholders to coordinate and progress further research in home and living options for people with disability.

The research findings also link to our:

- SDA Environmental scan research
- SDA Innovation Plan work
- research project with Scope 'capacity building supports to help make individualised living a reality'.