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## Help with hoarding

March 2017

We recently supported a woman whose hoarding affliction was threatening her ability to continue living in a rental property; she had received an eviction notice.

At the end of 2016 the Department of Health and Humans Services (DHHS) called RHN to assist this woman, we'll call Andrea, who lived in a community housing property.

Andrea has several chronic medical conditions and is also the primary carer for her adult child who is on the autism spectrum.

With Christmas fast approaching an All Agencies case conference was convened by the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP) at RHN. The DHHS Complex Client Unit, the Rights Information & Advocacy Centre (RIAC), the Personal Helpers and Mentoring Scheme, a hoarding support group called Crowded House, the community housing provider and the Andrea, all attended the meeting.

A stay was negotiated on the eviction notice so that a case support plan and a clean-up plan could be developed and implemented. DHHS-CCU funded rubbish skips and an industrial clean.

Early in January the SHASP Case Manager, the RIAC Advocate and the Crowded House worker spent two days working to rehabilitate the property to an acceptable standard.

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*"With Christmas fast approaching an All Agencies case conference was convened by the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP) at RHN to work with Andrea to develop plans to support her."*

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Despite these efforts, the community housing landlord evicted Andrea and her child.

RHN immediately registered Andrea for long term housing with both DHHS and RHN. As a priority client on the Transitional Housing register we were able to offer Andrea a transitional property in the same town.

SHASP organised a local removalist and RIAC organised funding through State Trustees for the removal costs.

On the day of eviction the SHASP Case Manager worked with the removalist to recover as many of Andrea's possessions as possible and transferred them to a storage unit and to the new home.

Andrea was referred to and linked with Wellways, who are supporting her. With comfortable, stable housing, Andrea's stress levels have been reduced and she has support to help her address her hoarding.