



Gender Equality Research Project Harcourt Street Supported Temporary Accommodation

About Dublin Simon Community

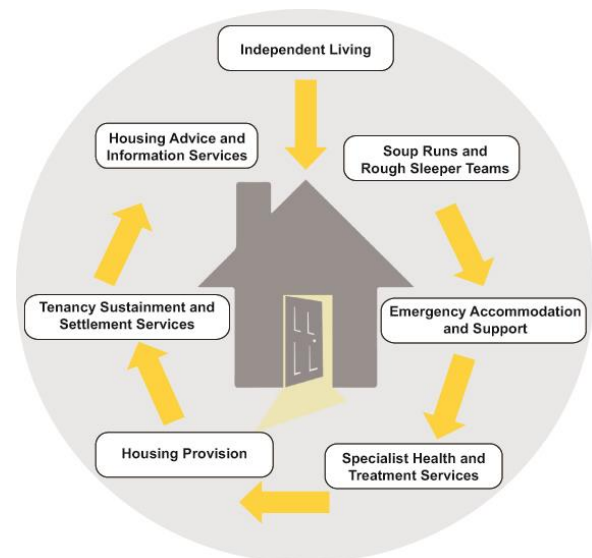
Dublin Simon Community works to prevent and address homelessness in Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow and Meath. We provide services at all stages of homelessness and enable people to move to a place they can call home.

At Simon, we listen to people who turn to us for help and do everything we can to support them to move out of homelessness into independent living.

We provide services at all stages of homeless from outreach, supported housing, recovery and treatment, to prevention, independent living, education and employability services.

Services range from:

- ✓ **Emergency accommodation & support** providing people with a place of welcome, warmth & safety;
- ✓ **Soup runs & rough sleeper teams** who are often the first point of contact for people sleeping rough ;
- ✓ **Housing provision, tenancy sustainment & settlement services, housing advice & information services** helping people to make the move out of homelessness & working with households at risk;
- ✓ **Specialist health & treatment services** addressing some of the issues which may have contributed to homelessness occurring or may be a consequence of homelessness;
- ✓ **Wraparound services** including Health & Wellbeing, Literacy & Personal Development, and Client Involvement to provide meaningful activities to promote wellbeing, education, and self-esteem.



About our Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) at Harcourt Street Dublin 2

Dublin Simon Community has provided emergency accommodation in 27 Harcourt Street for approximately 13 years. We are a low threshold STA for 30 single men, single women, and couples who are homeless. We have the capacity to provide accommodation for between six-nine women. In Harcourt Street women's needs have been increasingly salient over the past few years and increasing numbers of women are now accessing this services, rising from 15% in 2012, 21% in 2014, and 27% in 2015.

Women and Homelessness

It is now widely researched and understood that women's experiences and pathways to homelessness vary from their male counterparts. Research conducted by St. Mungos*, a leading UK homeless charity, found that women in homeless services in the UK were more likely to have experienced domestic violence than men, with half having experienced domestic violence. The same study stated that availability of services to meet the needs of women is extremely limited in the UK, as it is in Ireland. A study carried out by Dr. Paula Mayock of Trinity College Dublin in 2015** found that current service models within STAs are at risk of marginalizing women's experiences and as a result unintentionally creating inequality in access to homeless services for women. Traditionally homeless services have tended to cater for the single male adults as they make up the largest population. However as the homelessness crisis continues to worsen in Ireland single women and women with children are becoming an ever increasing cohort of homeless people. Service provision across the sector must cater for this demographic and their differing and often more complex experiences and needs.

* Hutchinson, S., Page, A., & Sample, E. (2014) *Rebuilding Shattered Lives*, London: St. Mungo's

** Mayock, P., Parker, S., & Sheridan, S. (2015) *Women, Homelessness, and Service Provision*, Dublin Simon Communities of Ireland.

The Research

This research grant will investigate the different ways our services are experienced by women and men, the impact this has on their journey out of homelessness and identify how to implement psychologically informed environments emphasizing gender equality in our services. Uncovering the specific patterns of gender relations in the service will enable us to change unequal patterns and to reinforce the equalizing ones, making the organization more gender responsive.

Key Objectives

1. To briefly identify best practice on gender sensitive homeless services.
2. To assess the degree and nature of gender equality in the service by analyzing the service model, clients and staff experiences, and key performing indicators.
3. To devise recommendations to improve the level of gender sensitivity in the service.
4. To devise a monitoring tool to measure the baseline level of gender equality in the service to enable future monitoring.

Key Outcomes

1. Improved understanding of the status of gender equality in Harcourt Street STA.
2. Harcourt Street staff will be better equipped with knowledge of how to implement a gender sensitive service and how to track and measure gender relevant indicators.
3. Improved environment for female clients.
4. Harcourt Street STA adapts service infrastructure, practices and policies to meet female client's particular needs and promote equality of outcome.
5. Builds organizational ownership for strategic gender equality initiatives and ongoing gender action planning.
6. Other Dublin Simon Community services will improve their own practice of gender sensitive services through knowledge transfer from this project, potentially resulting in improved services for female clients beyond the Harcourt STA service.

Thank You

We are ever grateful for the continued interest and support ensuring that we can continue to provide vital services to people homeless or at risk of homelessness. In these uncertain times, leaving people without a home, sinking further into helplessness and despair – is not good enough! With your help, we will continue to help those who need our help most.

For further information on how you can assist this project please contact:

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