



INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCREENING TOOL FOR LICENSED RESIDENTIAL CENTRES

Note: All new entrants to licensed residential centres must be screened to avoid inappropriate entry. There are no exceptions.

Each screening conducted by Home Care Referral and Assessment Centre (RAC) using this tool is valid for a period of up to two months. This means that if assessed as eligible a resident can enter a licensed residential centre two months from the date of screening. A person is able to move between licensed residential centres without having to be re-screened. However, if the resident is absent from an LRC for two months, and the resident wants to return to the facility they left or move to another one, a further screening will be required. Other circumstances where a further screening is required are discussed later in this document.

Background

Licensed Residential Centres (LRCs) are regulated by the *Youth and Community Services Act (YACS) 1973* and provide supported accommodation for people with a disability with low to medium needs. Often referred to as 'Licensed Boarding Houses' they are operated privately for profit.

The Screening Tool for Entry to LRCs has been developed as part of the Reform Strategy for licensed residential centres announced by the Government in October 1998. This is a short information sheet to explain its purpose and application and to give a brief outline of its development.

A key element of the Reform Strategy is to offer alternative community based accommodation to a number of residents with very high support needs living in residential centres licensed under the *YACS Act*.

To prevent inappropriate placement of high need residents in licensed residential centres, the Government introduced a "gate-keeping" process, the Screening Tool, in 1999. This has assisted and will continue to assist with a related Government objective which is to change the profile of the population in these premises to one of lower dependency, i.e. of people whose accommodation and support needs are able to be satisfied through this kind of accommodation.

The Screening Tool was introduced in 1999 and was reviewed in 2009. The review confirmed the Tool has been successful in preventing inappropriate admission of people with high complex needs into licensed residential centres.

This information is primarily intended for the main referrers of potential residents of LRCs, such as social workers or discharge planners from psychiatric and general health facilities. However, it will also benefit others especially managers of licensed residential centres and community workers.

How the Tool works

The Screening Tool asks a series of straightforward questions about whether a person with a disability could manage in an LRC or not. The screenings are being conducted by Home Care Referral and Assessment Centre (RAC). These questions lead to a decision:

- Yes the resident is sufficiently independent that referral to a licensed facility is appropriate, or;
- No the person's needs are such that they are inappropriate for residing in an LRC and a referral or transfer to other more suitable accommodation is required. People deemed unsuccessful for LRCs will receive a letter with information and contact details of other NSW Human Services Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) referral and intake services.

The Role of Home Care Referral and Assessment Centre (RAC)

For consistency, efficiency and simplicity, it is useful to have a single "gate keeping" agency. Since 1 April 2010 all screenings have been conducted by Home Care RAC.

Home Care RAC are not expected to fill vacancies in LRCs or to take on the responsibility of finding accommodation for a person who has been screened and found not suitable for entry. Their role is to screen people and then make appropriate recommendations.

Do current residents of licensed residential centres need to be screened?

The Screening Tool is used to screen potential entrants to LRCs. However, existing residents will need to be screened when:

- a resident's physical health or psychiatric condition significantly deteriorates. (Any of the following people may observe the deterioration and request a further screening: the Licensee or Licensed Manager of the LRC; a service provider such as a caseworker, or other service provider funded under the Boarding House Reform Program; the person's doctor; and/or the person's "person responsible" or Guardian appointed under the Guardianship Act);
- an admission to hospital occurs, where the admission is as a result of deterioration in physical health or psychiatric condition, or where the admission is for a period of two months or more. Where the admission is less than two months and the resident is likely to respond to treatment, and would return to the same level of independence as before the admission, a further screening is not required;
- a resident is absent from the licensed residential centre, for any reason, for two months or more.

The rationale behind these provisions is to ensure that a resident is screened if his/her condition has significantly deteriorated such that his/her dependency has increased. In this situation the LRC would have to provide additional support, perhaps beyond its

capabilities. Admission to a hospital or other health facility is one indication that the resident's dependency level needs to be checked.

Do all new intending entrants to licensed residential centres need to be screened?

Yes, there are no exceptions.

Enforcement

ADHC will enforce the use of the Screening Tool through the Regulation pertaining to the YACS Act. Operators of LRCs are not permitted to admit new clients without a screening confirming that the person is eligible. Operators may be asked to show a copy of the screening tool assessment to Licensing Officers to ensure compliance with the YACS Act.

Review of Decisions

If you would like further information or have any concerns regarding the outcome of an assessment please call **9841 9125** and ask to speak with a Team Leader or the Referral and Assessment Centre Manager.

Arrangements to have a Screening Assessment can be arranged by ringing 1300 934 925. You can also contact RAC by email on LicensedRCScreening@dadhc.nsw.gov.au