

Annual Evaluation Report (Year Four FY21)

McAuley Community Services for Women
November 2021

FY21 Overview: McAuley responds to the complex needs of women and children it serves by seeking to provide enduring solutions to homelessness and family violence

HOLISTIC, WOMEN CENTRED CASE MANAGEMENT

McAuley meets some of Victoria's most vulnerable women and children at points of crisis.

In FY21:

432 women and **363** children supported¹

Over the past **four years (FY17-FY20):**

3110 women and children supported²

Women enter McAuley in high states of fear, suffering from family violence and/or homelessness.

The complex needs of each client are met through a holistic service response, **reducing the likelihood of a return to an unsafe living environment.**

Observing client need over time, and identifying where unmet needs exist, McAuley continues to modify its service offering to close these gaps.

AN EVOLVING SERVICE OFFERING



A FOCUS ON ENDURING AND SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES



A women-centred outcomes framework seeks to ensure that any barriers to safety and independence are removed for women – at their own pace – prior to leaving McAuley's services.

AN INTEGRATED SERVICE MODEL

To meet these complex needs, McAuley has developed a **comprehensive integrated service model** – with services available to meet women at any stage on their pathway to independence.



Multiple accommodation options (including Crisis, Refuge, Outreach, and McAuley House)



117³ clients using multiple accommodation options



385 women and children supported in their own homes through McAuley Family Violence Outreach



47 women remaining connected after exiting services, connecting through Women in Community

OPERATING AT THE FRONTIER OF POLICY & SECTOR PRIORITIES

The evolving service model, driven by a growing focus on outcomes, positions McAuley as a **leader in women-centred responses** to family violence and homelessness.

This is most clearly evidenced through:



A focus on minimising impact on **children** experiencing family violence



Safe@Home research and advocacy to the sector



Development of cross-sectoral **partnerships** to support a women-centred approach

¹ Source: SRS Support Period Data FY21. Missing date of birth information for 6 clients. In total, 801 clients were served.

² Source: Annual Evaluation Reports FY17- FY20. 1300 women and children (2018, p.7), 1100 women and children (2019, p.3) and 710 women and children (2020, p.9)

³ Source: SRS Support Period Data FY21. Includes women and children.

Holistic, woman-centred case management, reducing the likelihood of a return to an unsafe living environment

McAuley meets some of Victoria's most vulnerable women and children at points of crisis. In FY21, 432 women and 363 children were supported.

CLIENTS ENTER MCAULEY IN HIGH STATES OF VULNERABILITY

67%¹ of women experience a high level of fear

20%¹ of women are assessed at serious risk

72%² of women report mental health issue(s)

Women reported multiple¹ forms of abuse including:

Physical abuse (89%)

Emotional abuse (97%)

Threats (95%)

Controlling behaviours (94%)

Stalking (78%)



76%³ of children had been physically, verbally or psychologically abused by the perpetrator.

68%³ of children experienced disruption in education due to family violence

86%³ of women had concerns regarding the safety of the child in the perpetrator's care

82%³ of children had witnessed the woman being abused by the perpetrator and 41%³ of children had intervened in the violence

The complex needs of each client are met through a **holistic service response**, which works to ensure quality of service through a safe and trusted single point of contact. The approach systematically identifies and addresses any barriers to safety and independence, reducing the likelihood of a return to an unsafe living environment.

This woman-centred case management is **strengths based**, with women supported to identify the pathway and goals that best suit their context.

Even after achieving these goals, and moving into independence, women can **remain connected** to McAuley through Women in Community, or – in times of crisis – Respite. This minimises the risk to women re-entering cycles of violence or social isolation.

FACTORS UNDERPINNING MCAULEY'S HOLISTIC APPROACH

McAuley's holistic service offerings have been refined over its 13 years of supporting women and children, with an emphasis on being responsive to all stages of vulnerability, inclusive solutions, and supporting the achievement of lasting solutions.

The holistic model has several stated success factors (below).

Providing a consistent and ongoing point of connection, allowing for trusted relationships to develop

A dedicated focus on women and children, allowing for expertise to be established

A point of safety in times of crisis, ensuring women and children can be removed from immediate risk of harm

A focus on continuous improvement, to ensure services evolve with the best evidence

Meeting women where they are, to provide space for healing and growth at a client-directed pace

Finding and removing barriers to independence, reducing the likelihood of women returning to an unsafe living arrangement

¹ N=78. This is reported for women who are presenting for family violence reasons. Source: Family Violence Risk Assessments (intake FY21).

² N=65, SRS Needs Assessment (intake FY21).

³ N=22. This is reported by the woman upon entry. Source: SRS Child Risk Assessment (intake FY21)

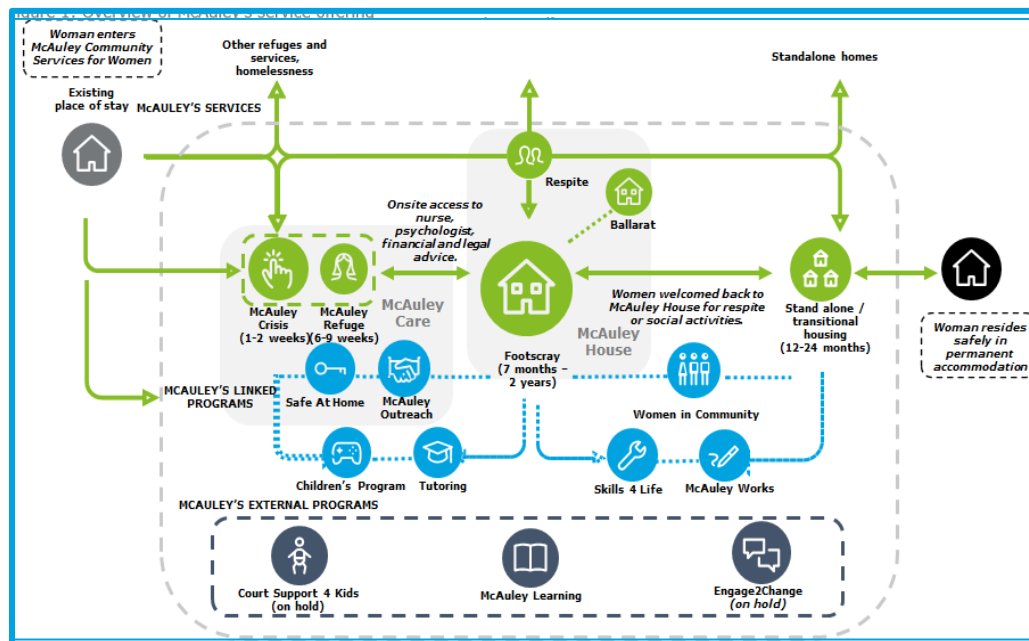
An integrated service model, designed to meet complex need

As active observers of client need (learning through evaluation and experience), and through modifying delivery to respond to identified service gaps, McAuley's offering **has grown over time into a sophisticated array of accommodation offerings, services, partnerships and programs.**

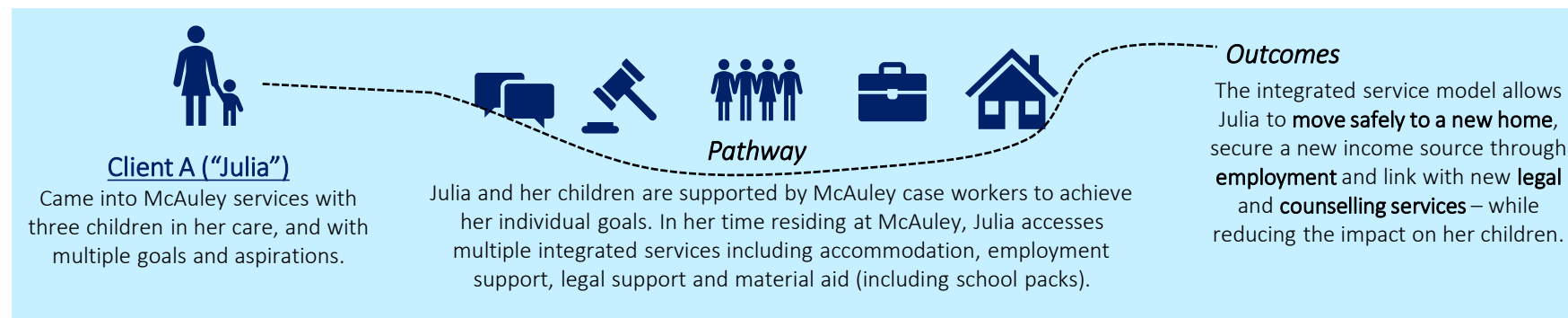
McAuley currently offers multiple accommodation options (from crisis accommodation through to long term supported housing), with supporting health, finance, legal, employment and skills programs.

Ultimately, this model seeks to ensure that **the right services are available** to women and children, **at the right time**, across the breadth of challenges faced in homelessness and family violence.

McAuley's integrated and connected service model also prevents women from needing to navigate complex systems across multiple organisations.



McAULEY'S INTEGRATED SERVICES IN ACTION



Source: deidentified McAuley case plan, 2021

Operating at the frontier of policy and sector priorities, helping to lead system change



Through McAuley's explicit and sustained focus on the needs of women and children experiencing homelessness and/or family violence, the organisation has developed unique insights into:

- how issues manifest at the interface of the support sectors,
- best practice in responding to complex need and,
- gaps in current policy and service delivery.

Committed to improvement, both as an organisation and a key player in the community services sector, McAuley has established **a leading role in advocating for change**. The two case studies here show where McAuley is leading the sector on improving the system for women and children in crisis.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN EXPERIENCING FAMILY VIOLENCE

McAuley Learning is an online tutoring program that meets the current gap in the system for children whose education is disrupted by family violence. It is described by staff as a program where "learning is the end goal, but not the first goal".

The program provides learning support, and holistic wrap-around support for children that utilises trauma-informed practices and focuses on wellbeing.

In FY21, McAuley has delivered on this need through service innovations:

- Transitioning to an entirely online McAuley Learning program, to minimise disruptions to learning
- Creating a safe, secure and private learning space via the online platform
- Training tutors to adopt trauma-informed practices to support children with complex needs
- Providing children with Chromebook devices and materials to support online learning

LEADING THE SECTOR IN 'SAFE@HOME'

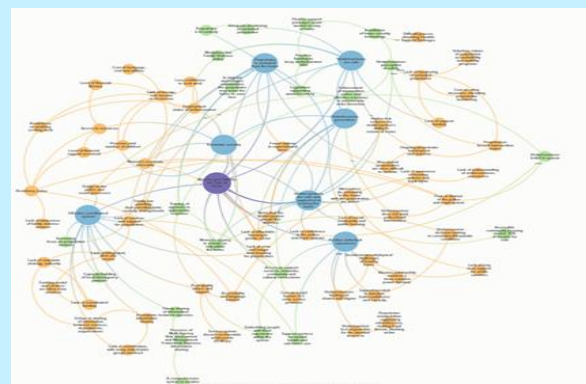
McAuley is a long-time advocate of the 'safe at home' approach, responding to clear evidence on the link between leaving a violent relationship and a drift into homelessness. Safe@Home seeks to address these issues, and give women and children genuine choices to remain home when it is safe to do so.

In FY21, McAuley has led a cross-agency effort to better understand and address issues pertaining to Safe@Home, through:

- Understanding the data better – conducting research into the key barriers that prevent a safe at home approach
- Talking to women supported by McAuley, and advisory groups – to hear their lived experiences
- Mapping the family violence and homelessness system factors which support or present barriers to women residing or returning 'safe at home'

McAuley's work aims to support conversations with organisations across the sector to assist with action planning, cultural shifts, and an emphasis on the importance of the safe at home approach in practice.

[Example of Safe@Home system mapping](#)



Evolving over time, supported by a learning organisation approach

Through observing client need over time - including during the pandemic - and learning through evaluation, McAuley has continued to modify its service offering.

Services have evolved to meet identified gaps in service delivery, and provide pragmatic offerings to continue to support vulnerable women and children.

Over time, McAuley has sought to expand its influence and reach – through geographic expansion, embedding partnerships and generating efficiencies in service delivery (including through digital solutions).

EXAMPLE: SKILLS 4 LIFE PROGRAM, FY21

“We moved everything to an online platform ... despite challenges, we worked through these and got engagement. This enabled us to run programs remotely and include McAuley House Ballarat women, and Women in Community, despite disruptions to face-to-face engagement”.

ADAPTING TO MEET GAPS, FY21

This year, McAuley’s service offering has:

- adapted to the pandemic by providing online methods of engagement and support
- transitioned to an entirely online McAuley Learning program, to minimise educational disruption for children experiencing family violence
- taken a renewed focus to supporting child safety and wellbeing (through McAuley Learning)
- responded to complex challenges, such as reduced numbers of volunteers and restrictions to standard face-to-face engagement
- responded to fill service gaps in accommodation for cohorts of women who are likely to fall through the gap (e.g. women without permanent residency)
- continued to lead the sector through policy advocacy

OVER THE COURSE OF THIS EVALUTION (2013 – PRESENT), MCAULEY HAS EVOLVED

By embedding **partnerships**
into service delivery



e.g. organisations in the
health, legal, financial sectors

Through **geographical**
expansion



e.g. McAuley House Ballarat,
McAuley House Footscray,
transitional housing partnership

To focus on **children**
experiencing family violence



e.g. Court Support 4 Kids,
McAuley Learning

Growing the **evidence base**
to support policy



e.g. A dedicated annual evaluation,
introduction of information collection
system (SRS), select research and
advocacy projects

Focused on enduring outcomes, to permanently reduce homelessness and family violence



McAuley is giving women the skills, confidence, means and connections to avoid returning to unsafe living arrangements.

McAULEY'S IMPACT: INTERPRETING FINDINGS

There are several key considerations for interpreting how McAuley's client data (RHS) is reflective of impact:

1. McAuley's service provision **directly removes women and children from immediate harm**, preventing the escalation of domestic and family violence. This absence (and associated issues) should be understood to be a positive outcome, even where the observed changes in health and wellbeing are incremental.
2. In these complex cases, **meaningful shifts in outcomes take time**. Feelings of empowerment or control over health, safety and independence may be more powerful indicators of McAuley's direct impact than shifts in the outcomes themselves.
3. The **analysis relies on data sources that are not yet purpose built to capture holistic impact**. That means, taken together, the collective outcomes illustrate a fuller and more representative overview of McAuley's true impact.

McAuley is ensuring **women and children are safe in times of crisis**. McAuley provided safe accommodation for total of 14052¹ bed nights this financial year. Through their stay at McAuley, the proportion of women **experiencing a high level of fear reduced by 21%**² between intake and exit.



McAuley supports women to **actively manage their physical and mental health**. During their time with McAuley, women have access to an onsite nurse and psychologist, and are supported to put in place health plans.



McAuley is increasing **women's financial security**, through access to financial support and employment opportunities. McAuley delivered a total **\$312,116** of financial benefit to clients through the partnership with WEstJustice⁴. **20 women secured job placements** (43% of those participating), **and 12 gained employment** through McAuley Works (26%). Furthermore, the proportion of women reporting **financial issues decreased by 33%** at exit.



McAuley is **building strong connections between women and their community**.

McAuley's service provision led to a increase in women **reporting social and family support (5%)**⁵, **and a reduction in feelings of isolation at exit (9%)**⁵. McAuley supported 47 women through Women in Community, which involves social activities to connect current and past residents.



McAuley is **building life skills**. There were **1,682 interactions** (individual and group) with the **Skills 4 Life** program – including a focus on social inclusion and skills development, independent living skills, and healthy eating.



McAuley is **reducing the intergenerational impacts of family violence**. McAuley provided educational support to children through the McAuley Learning program, and connected women and children to external supports. At exit, **fewer women (20%) reported parenting issues**⁶.



¹ Source: SRS Accommodation List, N=88. Women for whom accommodation data is available (Ballarat = 7, Crisis = 48, Refuge = 7, Footscray = 23 and Respite = 3). (Total bed nights in FY 2020 was 13862)

² Source: SRS Family Violence Risk Assessment data, Pooled sample FY20 and FY21; matched sample of N=91 Crisis clients (women only).

³ Source: SRS McAuley Needs Assessment data, N=26; matched sample of McAuley clients whose exit assessment was at least 3 months after their intake (women only). Pooled Sample (FY20 and FY21).

⁴ Source: McAuley and WEstJustice data. This includes \$252,872 of debt and fine waivers, \$22,040 of compensation, and \$37,204 worth of fines to be worked off under a work and development plan

⁵ Source: SRS Family Violence Risk Assessment data; N=46, matched sample of McAuley clients whose exit assessment was at least 3 months after their intake (women only). Includes clients who transitioned between Crisis, Refuge and Outreach.

⁶ Source: SRS McAuley Needs Assessment data, N=65; matched sample of McAuley clients (women only). Pooled Sample (FY20 and FY21)

Next steps for McAuley and the evaluation

FY21 marks the fourth year of evaluation. While the evidence supporting the strength of McAuley's integrated model continues to grow, there remain challenges in supporting consistent data collection to tell the longitudinal story.

This year, several of the key data sources informing the evaluation – the Family Violence Risk Assessment, the Needs Assessment and the Child Risk Assessment – were replaced with MARAM (the state-wide risk assessment tool).

While the move to MARAM is positive in the sense of increased cross-agency alignment – it has resulted in the longitudinal value of the data collection across the past three years of evaluation (since the introduction of SRS in 2018) being compromised.

In addition to this, the quality of the data collected by McAuley faces continual challenges caused by:

- staff data literacy and turn-over: *several of the risk assessment questions are not consistently understood or entered by staff*
- tools that are not fit-for-purpose: *current tools do not capture the key value of McAuley's integrated services, and are held across multiple sources*

- ownership of data: *MARAM intake surveys are currently held by referring organisations*

There is an opportunity to reframe the way that McAuley, and the evaluation, owns and interacts with its data. Moving beyond the standard risk assessment tools, there is scope to design a purpose-built data collection approach centred in the unique services McAuley provides. This would enable deliberate consideration of the impact measures that best capture the nature of integrated service delivery.

Increased cohesion and standardisation across McAuley's data collection, would also support efficiencies in data entry and create scope for a simplified entry point for McAuley staff to engage with service data. Ideally, an empowering approach to data collection, and increased use of data within day-to-day operations, will support improvements in the quality of data over time, as well as the use of evidence in decision-making.

At this juncture of changing risk assessments, it is timely to revisit the evaluation framework and data collection strategy to ensure data remains robust, responsive - and able to most powerfully tell the story of McAuley's effectiveness, efficiencies, and the outcomes it delivers for its clients.

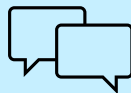
NEXT STEPS FOR McAULEY AND THE EVALUATION

A coherent **data strategy** that measures impact



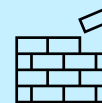
Aligning MARAM, other tools and case notes and plans with an overarching data strategy that focuses on measurement of key impacts

A **consistent and empowering** approach to data collection



Protection against workforce and policy change through embedding the data strategy through organisational development and personnel.

Build out the **longitudinal** story for McAuley



Continue to understand McAuley's impact over time, noting that the baseline of the evaluation has been compromised through change in data collection tools.

Establishing the **effectiveness and efficiencies** of an integrated service model



Reflect on the true nature, preconditions and cost of quality integrated service delivery.

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Overview

McAuley Community Services for Women

An integrated model

McAuley Community Services for Women (McAuley) aims to permanently remove women and children from situations of family violence and/or homelessness. McAuley's services have been carefully designed to meet this overarching objective through (1) creating a safe environment for women and children in times of crisis; (2) enhancing women's wellbeing and social connections through a holistic service model; and (3) building enduring solutions through transitions to permanent, safe housing.

McAuley's organisational vision is:

"that women and children will be safe, supported and empowered to achieve their highest potential: all home safely".

In line with this McAuley offers a breadth of accommodation and services to support women and children through times of crisis, and through their pathway to safe and secure independence. This includes holistic case management to redress vulnerabilities across health, mental health, income, legal, social connection, safety and aspirations.

The wrap-around support offered by McAuley, in partnership with McAuley's ability to offer women long-term accommodation, case management and ongoing connection with services, is unique in Victoria's current family violence and homelessness landscape.

The box on the right provides an overview of the key services offered by McAuley, with a more fulsome service delivery map available [here](#).

McAULEY'S KEY SERVICE OFFERINGS

A variety of **accommodation** offerings:



Short-term crisis
accommodation
(0-2 weeks)



Refuge
(6-9 weeks)



Medium term integrated care
McAuley House Footscray and Ballarat
(including respite bed)

*For women and children responding to
family violence*

*For women with complex needs experiencing
homelessness*

Active **case management** and access to a breadth of services and bespoke McAuley programs:



Onsite access to
psychologist, nurse, legal
support and financial advice



Skills 4 Life



Court Support 4 Kids



McAuley Works



McAuley Learning

*Holistic case management is provided to all McAuley clients – regardless of whether they are
housed with McAuley or not.*

Outreach services for women in their own accommodation:



McAuley Outreach
*for women and children
experiencing family
violence*



Women in Community
*for women that were past
long term residents of
McAuley house or refuge*



Transitional Housing (THM)
*For women who are case
managed by McAuley while
living in transitional housing*

McAuley's offering is unique

Evolution to meet client need has resulted in a leading service offering

Over time, McAuley has [added or modified service offerings](#) to better meet client need or to respond to policy gaps. While the nature and format of services may change overtime, respondent to both policy and funding context, client need, opportunities for partnerships and emerging best practice, McAuley's integrated model is built on the following **key success factors**.

Providing a consistent and ongoing point of connection for women and children

Through the integrated model, McAuley recognises the value of providing a consistent point of contact – increasing opportunities for holistic case management, increased service connectivity and reducing the risk of trauma being revisited.

Further, McAuley provides women with an opportunity to remain connected and engaged with their community by developing a social network. Connectivity reduces the likelihood of returning to an unsafe environment, even many years in the future.

Finding and removing barriers to independence

McAuley's case management approach is strengths-based and tailored to context, allowing women to self-identify and then work in a supported environment to develop the skills and pre-conditions to safe and independent living.

By developing these skills, there is a reduced likelihood of women returning to unsafe environments through a lack of alternative options.

Meeting women where they are

McAuley differentiates support and services for women and children in accordance with need. The breadth of accommodation options and service offerings provides scope for a tailored support pathway for each woman.

The purpose-built McAuley House Footscray offers a safe space for women to access required services at their own pace, including access to an onsite nurse, psychologist, legal and financial advice.

A dedicated focus on women and children

McAuley is the only all-women's service in Victoria that has an interconnected and individually tailored service delivery model. This supports an inclusive and safe environment for women recovering from trauma. It also allows for the organisation, and workforce, to develop expertise in the intersection of family violence, homelessness and vulnerability for women.

A point of safety in times of crisis

McAuley is currently one of only a small number of 24-hour crisis care providers in Victoria, enabling women to access support at any time of the day. It is also one of the only providers to offer accommodation to males over the age of 12.

Respite is also provided through McAuley House, offering targeted support and accommodation for 1-7 days and reducing the risk of clients re-entering periods of crisis.

A focus on continuous improvement

McAuley is committed to increasing the effectiveness of their services, through the creation of mechanisms to measure and understand the impact of each interaction.

This includes monitoring and evaluation, the introduction of information collection systems, and an active role in the homelessness and family violence policy space.

Policy context

McAuley is leading the way in practice, and advocating for system change

McAuley leads the way in practice

As an integrated service, McAuley connects the dots between policies and sector priorities set out through the significant and ambitious reforms of state and federal governments.

McAuley operates at this intersection of family violence, homelessness, and mental health. This approach is central to all of McAuley's work.

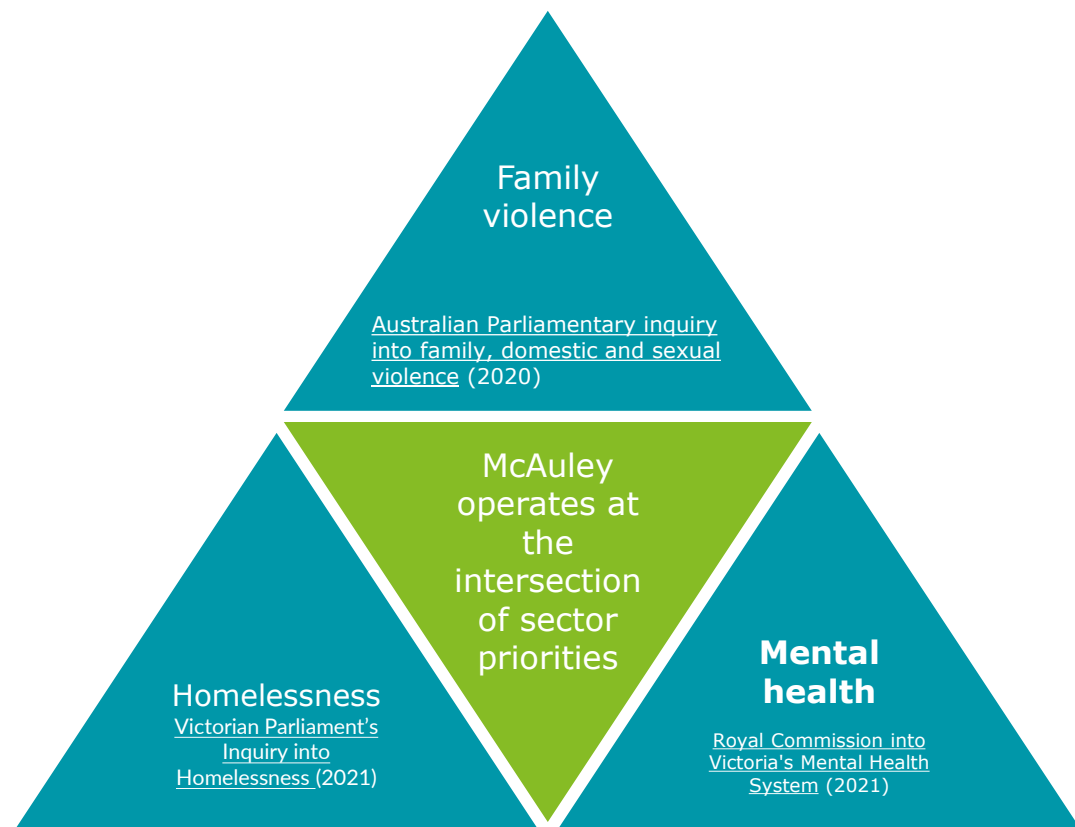
McAuley advocates for system change

McAuley makes frequent submissions to parliamentary inquiries, standing committees, and the Royal Commission in these areas, including the recommendation that this intersectionality is recognised in policy, legislative settings, and in practice.

As Victoria's longest standing provider for women and children experiencing homelessness and family violence, McAuley draws on extensive knowledge, and conducts research to develop a contemporary evidence base of the issues women and children face, their experiences, to highlight gaps in services and systems and the need for change.

Through a sector leading approach that recognises the intersection of family violence, homelessness and mental health, McAuley demonstrates that such an approach leads to better outcomes and solutions for women and children.

Figure 1: Intersection of priorities and relevant policies and reforms



Motivation for investing in evaluation

McAuley is committed to measuring and heightening the impact of their services through evaluation of their outcomes

A comprehensive evaluation framework supports McAuley's future operations and enables the evaluation of McAuley's services. Evaluation is important to maintain a focus on outcomes through measurement and accountability.

McAuley is committed to increasing the effectiveness of their services, through the creation of mechanisms to measure and understand the impact of each interaction.

From an organisational perspective, the embedding of a systematic approach to evaluation and monitoring has four key objectives:

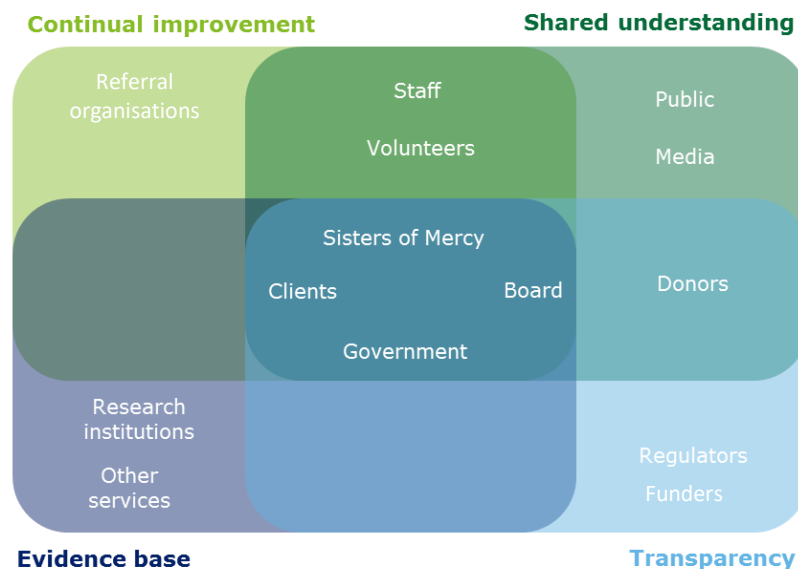
1 Providing a clear articulation of McAuley's core objectives and how each service contributes to the realisation of these objectives, supporting **a shared understanding** across the organisation and stakeholders.

2 Through more granular and targeted data collection across each service offered, and the resultant outcomes for clients, creating increased insights into the effectiveness of certain approaches and support **continual improvement** over time.

3 As a pioneer and leader in social services, in regards to both service delivery and monitoring and evaluation, **contributing to the growing evidence base** regarding best practice approaches to supporting women and children experiencing homelessness and family violence.

4 **Increasing the transparency** of the organisation's operations, enabling an additional level of assurance to key stakeholders.

McAuley understands that the benefits of clearly understanding and articulating the impact of their service offering will hold distinct benefits for various stakeholder groups.



The development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation framework reflects a significant investment and commitment by McAuley to the future effectiveness and efficiency of their service offering.

Overview of report










Content

This document sets out the Year 4 (FY21) evaluation of McAuley Community Services for Women (McAuley).

McAuley was established in 2008 to enhance and expand service provision for women and children experiencing or at risk of experiencing family violence and/or homelessness, a service that had previously been provided by the Sisters of Mercy for over 25 years.

This evaluation builds from a baseline evaluation conducted in 2018, the Year 2 and Year 3 evaluations in 2019 and 2020, and focuses on measuring both the acuteness of the need of McAuley's clientele, as well as the outcomes generated by the services McAuley provides. This report includes detailed client entry and exit data to map shifts in client circumstances over time.

This report is structured as follows:

-  **1. Overview:** Overview of the policy context in which McAuley operates, and key factors of its integrated service delivery model.
-  **2. Evaluation approach:** This section outlines McAuley's commitment to evaluation, and changes over the years in both the programs offered and data collected. It presents the methodological approach undertaken to understand McAuley's service delivery and impact.
-  **3. Need:** This section presents McAuley's service offering, as well as details about the clients using these services.
-  **4. Pathways:** This section outlines how women and children move through and experience McAuley's integrated services.
-  **5. Outcomes:** This section includes outcomes analysis, and illustrates how the situation of women and children changed through their interaction with McAuley.
-  **6. Next steps:** This section includes detail on operational considerations for McAuley, and considerations for the next annual evaluation.
-  **Appendix:** Includes reference material, such as methodology taken, McAuley's program logic, and evaluation framework

02



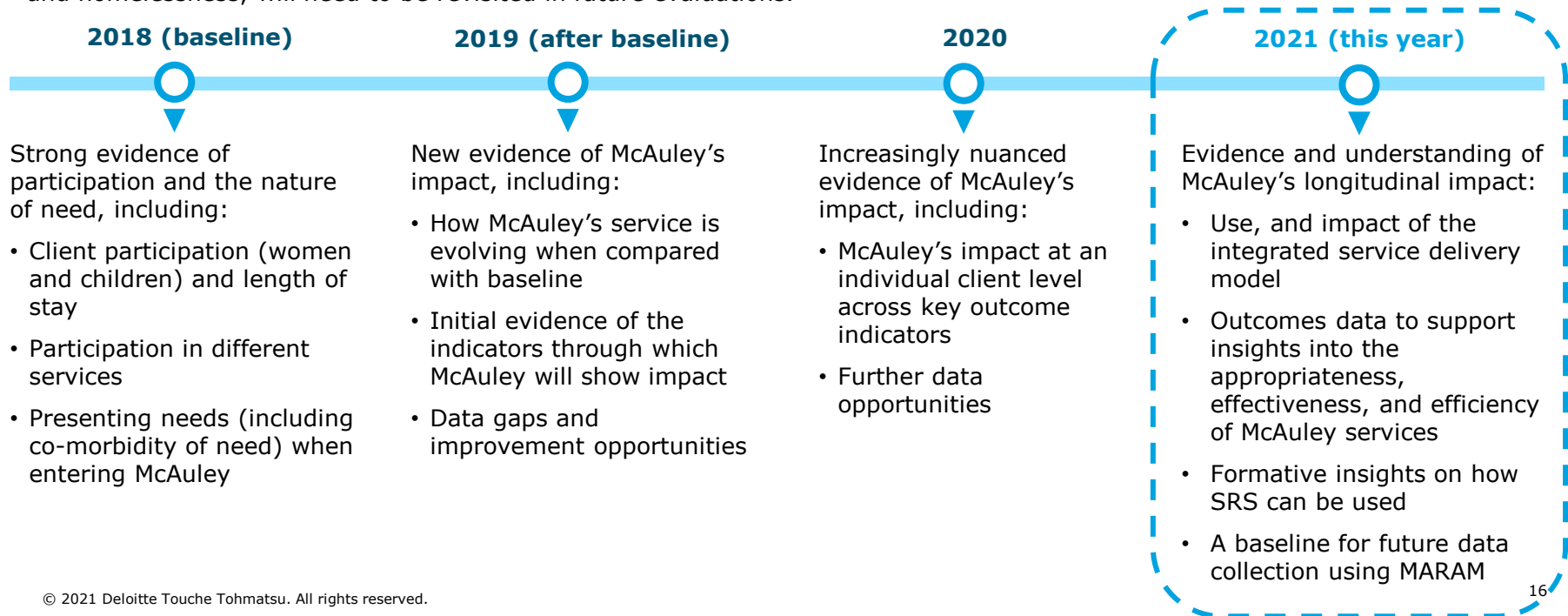
Evaluation approach

McAuley's commitment to evaluation

McAuley is investing in evaluation to understand and strengthen the social impact they generate, for both their clients and our society.

This evaluation is the fourth annual evaluation undertaken by McAuley. Each year, the evaluation aims to build on what has come before and gain increased clarity on the evidence underpinning McAuley's integrated model, and impact on women and children experiencing homelessness and family violence. Additionally, formative insights on how the evidence base can be further strengthened are made – supporting refinements to the data collection for the following year.

In 2018, McAuley implemented a new data platform (Info Exchange SRS), in line with the evaluation framework prepared with McAuley in 2017. This year (FY21), presented an opportunity to explore detailed client level data that is able to be matched for an increased sample of women upon entry and exit. The sample size of matched client records was expected to increase since 2020, and to grow over the coming years. However, the introduction of MARAM risk assessments (replacing the Family Violence Risk Assessment, Needs Assessment and Child Risk Assessment) has disrupted the continuity of measures collected by McAuley. The extent to which this impacts on the longitudinal evidence of McAuley's impact, and on informing decision making within the organisation and contributing to the growing evidence base regarding best practice service delivery in family violence and homelessness, will need to be revisited in future evaluations.



Development of the evaluation

McAuley and Deloitte Access Economics' work thus far

2013: Developing a program logic

In 2013, Deloitte Access Economics collaborated with McAuley to establish a program logic for the organisation. The evaluation framework sought to provide a clear map of how the programs and activities of McAuley translate to the achievement of their ultimate objectives, aligning with community, economic and social priorities.

2017: Developing a monitoring and evaluation framework

In 2017, Deloitte Access Economics worked with McAuley to update the program logic and expanded this work into a robust evaluation framework. This evaluation framework now supports the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of McAuley's provision of services, and overtime will create a defensible estimate of the organisation's value in ensuring their client's safety, and improving their social and economic circumstances.

2018: Undertook a baseline evaluation

In 2018, the evaluation framework was used to evaluate McAuley's current measurable outcomes. As expected when developing the evaluation framework in 2017, comprehensive data collection will take some time, but this early evaluation provided early insights into the acuteness of the 'need', as available through the Specialist Homelessness Information Platform (SHIP).

2019: Year Two evaluation

In 2019, the evaluation framework and baseline evaluation were used as the foundation for a Year 2 evaluation of McAuley's measurable outcomes over FY19. Over the course of FY19 McAuley implemented a new data platform (Info Exchange SRS). At this time, the new instrument data collected through SRS was not comprehensive enough to be systematically reported on. The Year Two evaluation sought the perspective of external stakeholders who work closely with McAuley on the value of McAuley's service offering, and where further investment should be undertaken in order to deepen understanding of impact.

2019: Social Return on Investment (SROI): a case study approach

In 2019, a SROI framework was applied to McAuley's model in order to assess the monetised value of McAuley's services to women (the sum of benefits accrued to women that are attributable to McAuley's actions), relative to the costs incurred through the provision of services. The benefits valued included immediate benefits generated during a woman's stay with McAuley, as well as longer-term benefits associated with McAuley's ability to influence a woman's living situation.

2020: Year Three evaluation

In 2020, the evaluation has leveraged the new data collected through SRS to better estimate the impact of McAuley's work. The evaluation involved consultations with a broader range of external stakeholders such as peak bodies and government organisations, who do not currently have a deep engagement with McAuley. These consultations assisted the development of a robust understanding of McAuley's social impact, for their clients and society, and also helped to raise awareness of McAuley.

2021: Year Four evaluation

This year, the evaluation leveraged an increased sample of data collected through SRS over two years, to understand the impact of McAuley's services. The introduction of MARAM has somewhat compromised the utility of the two year dataset, as risk assessments changed form partway through FY21. The evaluation drew on numerous qualitative data sources, including consultations with program staff and case notes, to understand how McAuley's service delivery has evolved and the holistic outcomes delivered for women.

Evaluation approach

Overview of themes, analysis and reporting

Evaluation themes








As part of the development of the program logic with McAuley in 2013, seven key outcomes were identified as the key objectives of McAuley. The analysis underpinning each annual evaluation has subsequently been anchored to each of these themes.

-  Ensuring that women and children are provided with **safe accommodation in times of crisis**
-  Diminishing **intergenerational costs**
-  Working towards a **healthier population**, both mentally and physically
-  Assisting women with finding **employment opportunities**
-  Giving women the skills to **avoid returning to an unsafe living arrangement**
-  Fostering strong **connections between women and their family, friends and community**
-  Changing **public attitudes and beliefs towards gender inequality** and family violence

Evaluation sources

The evaluation synthesises mixed-methods data sources across McAuley's service offerings to draw out key findings for McAuley as an organisation in FY21.

This year, the following data sources were analysed:

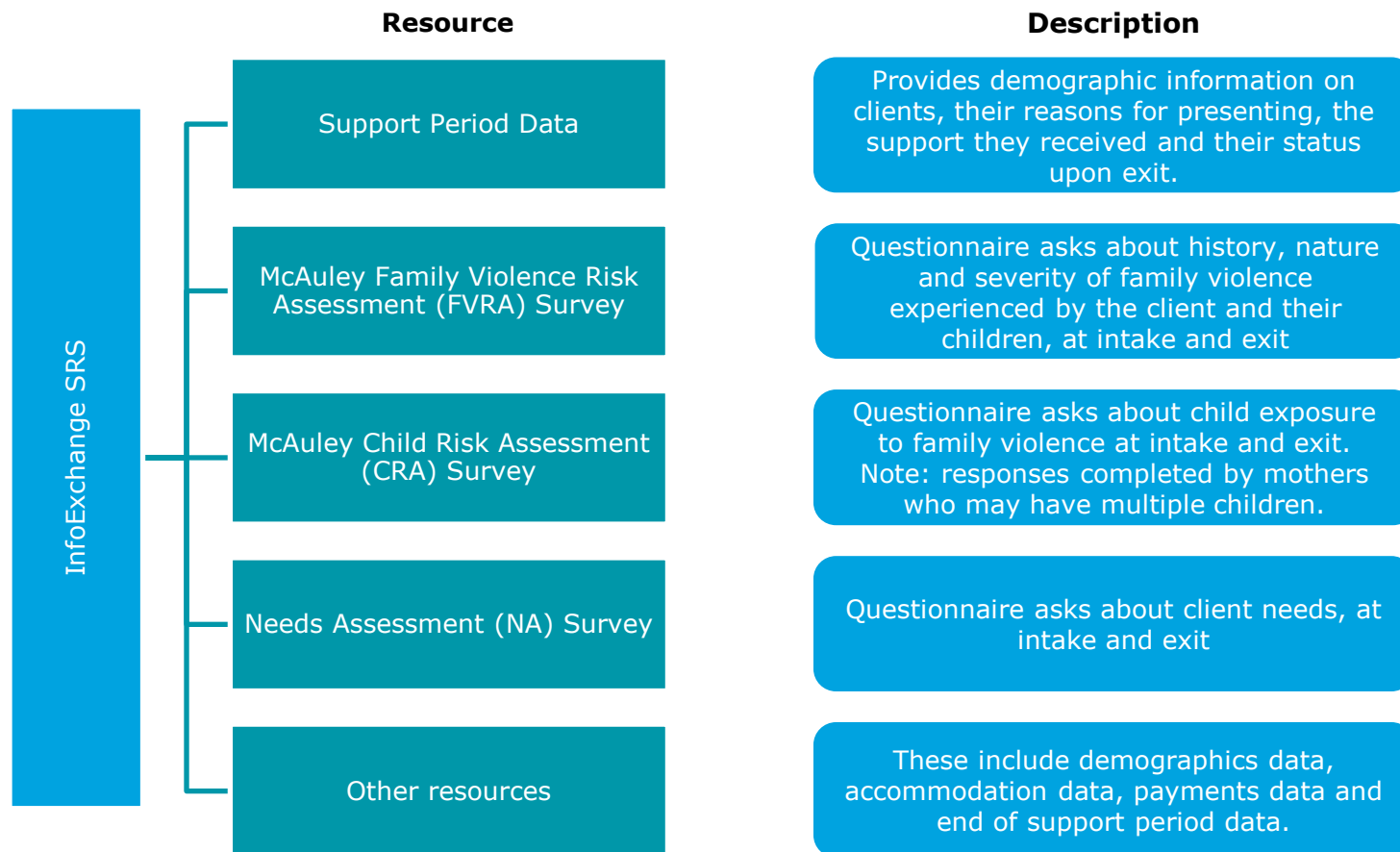
-  SRS and program data for FY21
-  Consultations (n=9) with McAuley staff and external representatives
-  Case plans (n=5) for women for the duration of their support period
-  Client testimonials
-  Qualitative **case studies** of client experience
-  Background briefing documents and research reports developed by McAuley
-  Relevant policy documents relating to family violence, homelessness and mental health

An overview of SRS

Collection of survey data across McAuley's services

McAuley administers several surveys which collect data on the needs of clients and impact of McAuley's services, held collectively in SRS. These surveys are listed and summarised below, with a description provided.

Figure 2: Summary of survey data on McAuley's InfoExchange SRS platform

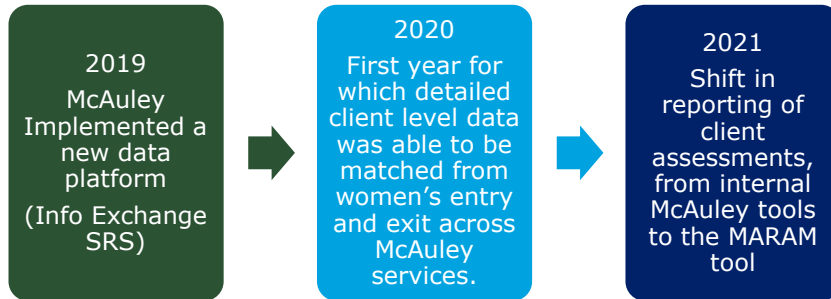


Data that is not captured in the InfoExchange SRS platform was provided separately by McAuley.

Key changes to SRS inputs

The move to MARAM

Chart 1: Evolution of McAuley's Data Platform



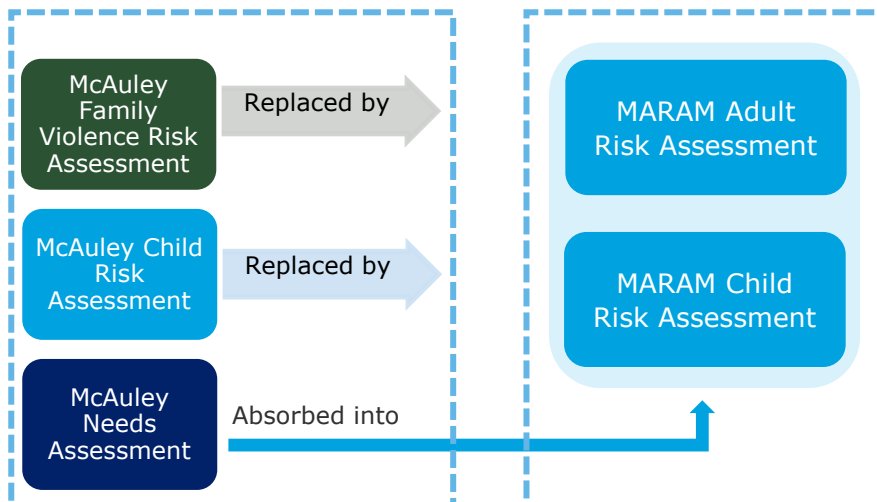
The evolution of SRS

In 2018, McAuley implemented a new data platform (Info Exchange SRS), collecting data in line with the evaluation framework prepared with McAuley in 2017.

Last year (FY20), provided the first year for which detailed client level data was able to be matched from women's entry and exit across McAuley services.

Midway through FY21, assessments for family violence services shifted from internal McAuley tools to MARAM assessments (the standard Victorian Government multi-agency risk assessment).

Chart 2: Changes to the data platform from FY2021



How does the shift to MARAM affect McAuley's data?

The introduction of MARAM to McAuley's processes has resulted in a structural shift in how data is input into Info Exchange SRS.

Currently, within SRS there is currently no mechanism to link a MARAM assessment to an individual client. As such, MARAM risk assessments have been excluded from being considered in this year's evaluation.

While there is the potential to use MARAM for future evaluation, there are several issues that will need to be resolved first, including:

- Client IDs are not currently registering in SRS for MARAM entries
- MARAM intake surveys are held by the referring organisation, not McAuley
- MARAM does not include all variables of interest that McAuley has found useful in the past ([see Appendix](#)).

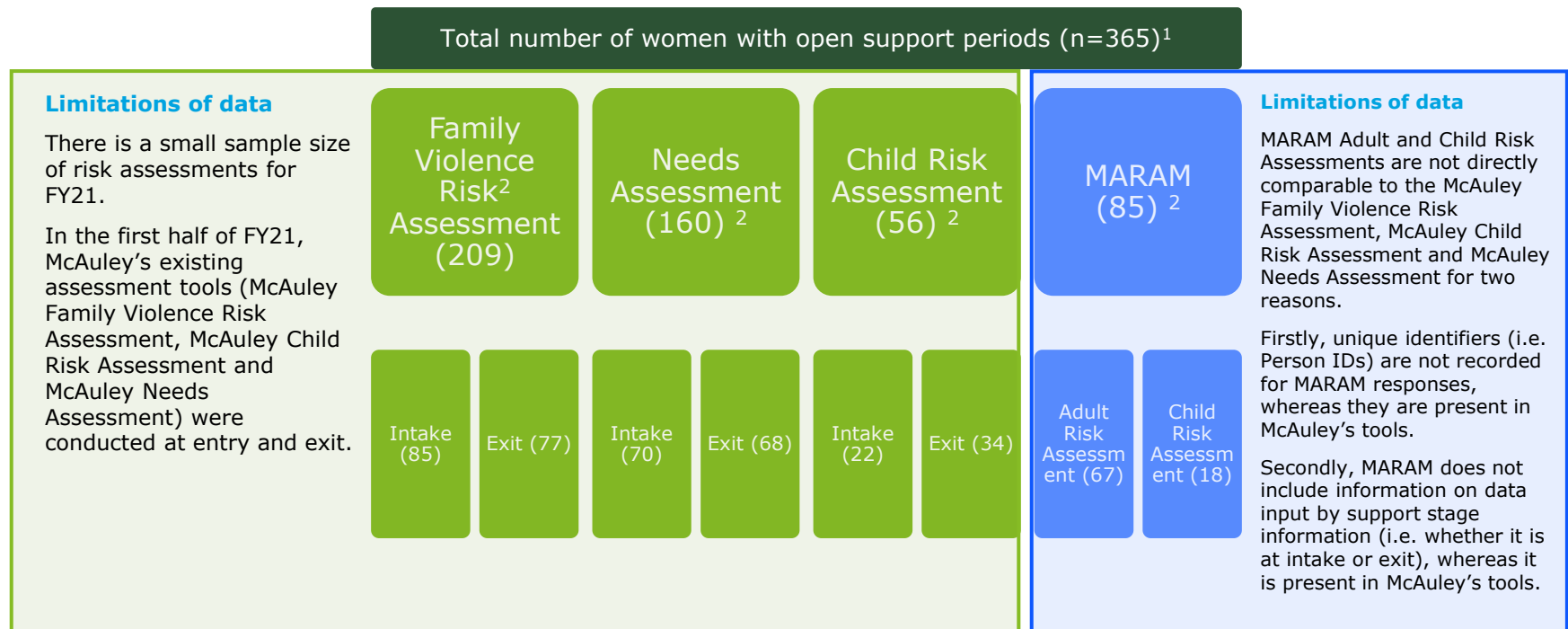
Impacts for the evaluation

Sample size of risk assessments in FY21

The total number of women for whom support periods were open in FY21 was 365 (this consists of women from programs for whom intake and exit information was available: Crisis, Footscray, Outreach, Refuge and Ballarat). Of these women, risk assessments were conducted using existing McAuley tools (Family Violence Risk Assessment, Needs Assessment and Child Risk Assessment) until late 2020.

In early 2021 these tools were replaced by MARAM Risk Assessments (Adult Risk Assessment and Child Risk Assessment). As MARAM risk assessments could not be used this year, the FY21 analysis draws on a sample only, and does not present a comprehensive overview of the risk assessments conducted by McAuley over FY21.

Chart 3: Count of risk assessments conducted with each survey, FY21



Source: SRS Support Period Data (Crisis, Footscray, Outreach, Refuge and Ballarat)

¹ May contain duplicates.

² Sources SRS Family Violence Risk Assessment, Needs Assessment and Child Risk Assessment. Child Risk Assessment includes responses of mothers at any intake level FY2021.

³ MARAM commenced in early 2021

Data analysis

Approach for the FY21 evaluation

What has remained the same?

The support period data available in SRS, which includes the number of clients, length of stays and general demographic information, is unaffected by the shift to MARAM. As such, the service level information is complete and reported for all women who accessed McAuley services in FY21.

Approach to conducting outcomes analysis

The shift from McAuley Family Violence Risk Assessment, McAuley Child Risk Assessments and McAuley Needs Assessment to MARAM Adult and Child Risk Assessments has resulted in a smaller sample size for these surveys, as these were not administered over the entire financial year (see Chart 2).

Conducting outcomes analysis (Chapter 5) requires both an entry and exit risk assessment for a single client, that uses a consistent risk assessment tool. This sample size in FY21 was very small as a result of the shift to MARAM (Table 1).

Given the smaller sample size, a decision was made to expand the outcomes analysis to include data from the past two financial years (generating a 'pooled' sample). The use of the pooled sample allows for a larger sample size, leading to more robust analysis of McAuley's impact over time.

It also provides the opportunity to analyse the current data systems before the shift to MARAM is complete, serving as a baseline for future analysis.

Table 1: Sample sizes at intake and exit for the Family Violence Risk Assessment survey: FY21 and pooled (FY20 and FY21) sample.

Support period	Support stage		Matched sample
	Intake	Exit	
FY21	85	77	45
Pooled	353	230	182

Source: SRS McAuley Family Violence Risk Assessment (N=365 for FY21 and 696 for a pooled sample). The pooled sample includes combined observations from FY20 and FY21 to allow for a larger sample size.

In summary, the data analysis in this report uses:

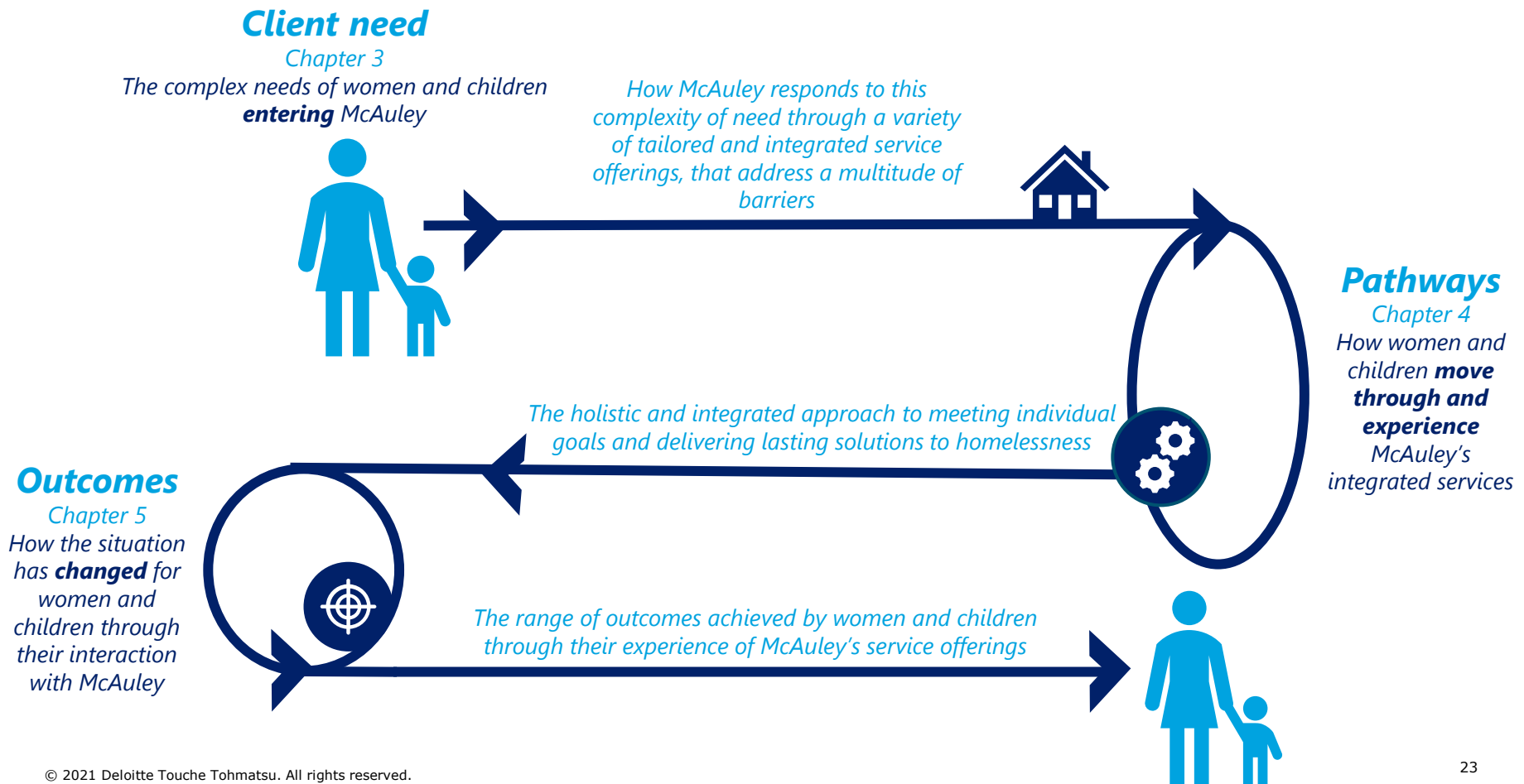
- FY21 FVRA, NA and CRA data for client need analysis (Chapter 3) – *noting this does not reflect the full cohort of McAuley's client base for FY21*
- FY21 data for all service delivery and client demographic analysis (Chapter 4)
- Pooled FY20 and FY21 data for outcomes analysis (Chapter 5)

Report structure

This report

This year's evaluation synthesises the range of data sources, to present the pathways of women and children within McAuley with as much supporting evidence as possible.

It shares stories and highlights complexity of cohorts and service provision through the following human-centred approach: highlighting the *need* of women and children upon entry, *pathways* through McAuley's service offerings, and the *outcomes* achieved for women and children.



03



Client need

McAuley is continuing to operate at capacity

Total client numbers have not changed significantly in FY21

Clients supported by McAuley

- McAuley's total number of clients in FY21 was largely consistent with FY20
- There was a modest decrease in clients in Footscray, Respite and THM
- There were 46 fewer clients in Crisis and 16 fewer clients in Refuge
- Relative to FY20, McAuley supported 42 additional women and children in Family Violence Outreach, 8 additional women in Women in Community, and 12 additional women in McAuley House Ballarat.

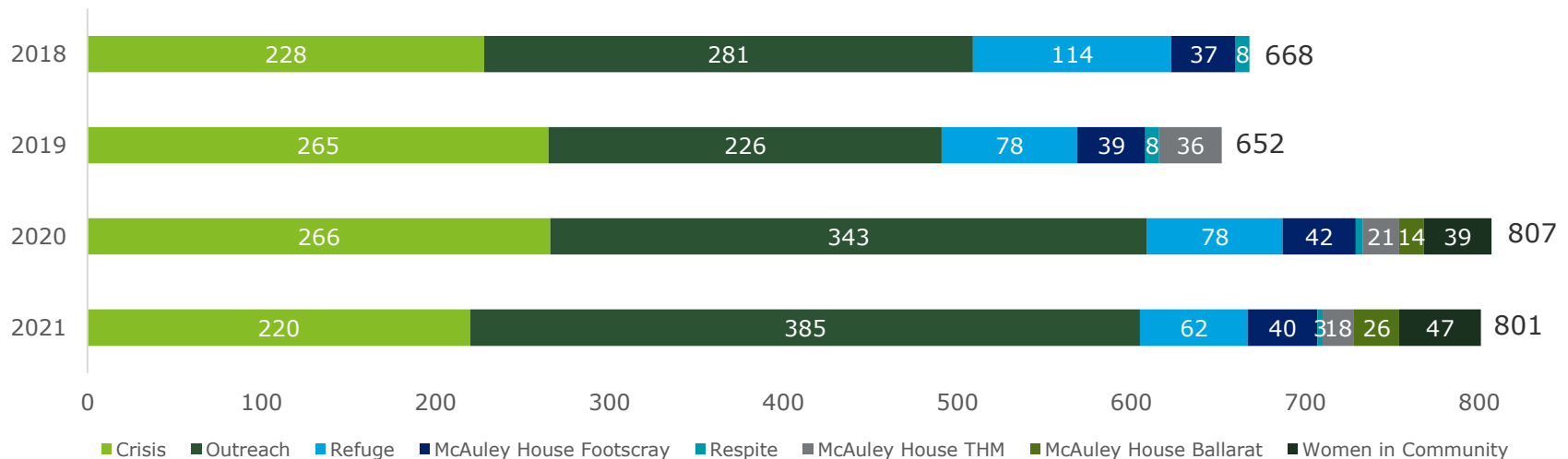
Evidence suggests that McAuley is operating at capacity.

Length of stay has increased ([Slide 27](#)), explaining the decrease in clients across its accommodation services.

Furthermore, the intensity and complexity of needs of women and children presenting has increased in FY21 (explored subsequently in the report).

Increases in clients in programs such as Women in Community reflect that women are returning to McAuley for support and social connections.

Chart 4: Total McAuley clients (including duplicates across programs) 2018-2021



Source: SRS Support period data 2021.

Note: Includes duplicate persons across programs but not within programs. The split between McAuley House Footscray, Women in Community, THM and Respite was not available in previous years. Clients include women and children.

¹ Source: SRS Support Period Data FY 2021. Includes women and children. Clients may have entered in one service period and exited in the current one. May include duplicates across programs.

Client demographics: FY21



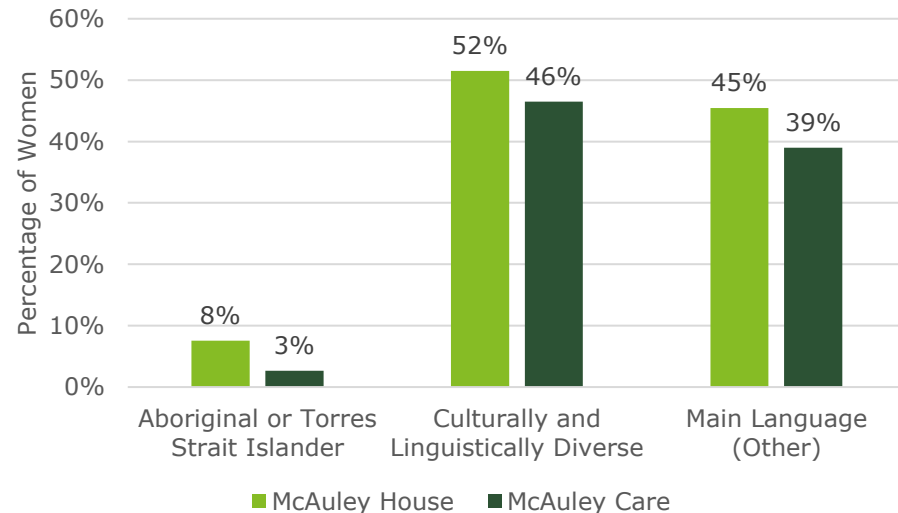
McAuley is continuing to support a diverse cohort of women

McAuley continues to support a diverse cohort of women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. McAuley House supports a slightly higher proportion of culturally diverse clients than McAuley Care.

The average age of women presenting is 41 years at McAuley House and 37 years at McAuley Care. While the majority of women are between the ages of 18 to 49 years McAuley House and 18 to 42 at McAuley Care.

McAuley Care serves slightly younger clientele, while there is greater variation in age of clients at McAuley House.

Chart 5: Cultural background of women supported by McAuley



Source: SRS Support Period Data. N=66 for McAuley House and N=299 for McAuley Care (women only), FY21

Supporting women without permanent residency

In FY21, McAuley has received an increase in referrals, and provided housing to an increased number for women without permanent residency. Approximately one in 10 women served by McAuley reported issues with migration (according to Needs Assessment data).

These women experience service gaps relating to accommodation support, and are at a higher risk due to no income and waiting periods for government support payments. McAuley has supported these women with no additional funding, which can cause additional strain on service capacity.

What's changed in FY21?

McAuley continues to operate at capacity

McAuley House



40 women
resided in
McAuley House
Footscray



26 women
resided at
McAuley House
Ballarat

McAuley Care (Crisis, Refuge and Outreach)



104 women
116 children
resided at
McAuley
Crisis



25 women and
37 children
resided at
McAuley
Refuge



172 women and
207 children
were supported
through
FV Outreach¹

¹ Missing age information for six individuals

Length of stay

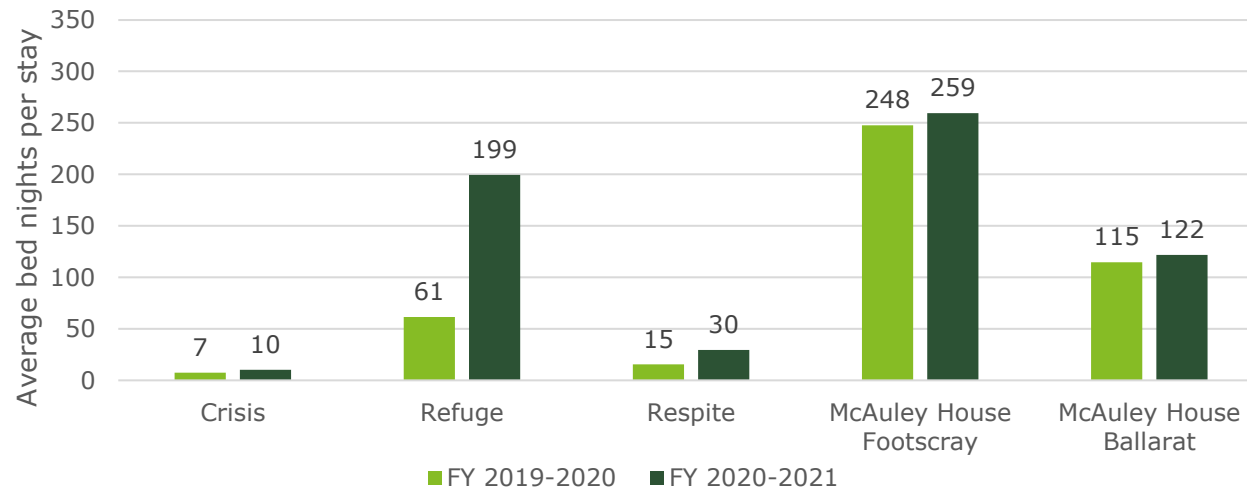
In FY21, **average bed nights (per stay) increased across all services** compared to FY20. Clients are staying for the longest periods at McAuley House Footscray (**259** nights), and at Refuge (**199** nights).

In particular, average bed nights per stay at Refuge has increased threefold in 2021. This is likely due to McAuley providing housing support for an increased number of women without permanent residency (and who are likely to fall through gaps in accommodation services), resulting in longer stays.

Longer stays means less overall capacity to support women in need, which is reflected by lower client numbers. This also has potential flow-on effects and impacts on McAuley's ability to support new clients or returning ones.

These figures suggests that, despite fewer overall client numbers in FY2021, **McAuley is operating at capacity** in Crisis, Refuge, and McAuley House.

Chart 6: Average bed nights per stay, comparison of financial years (FY19 and FY20)²



■ FY 2019-2020 ■ FY 2020-2021

¹ Source: SRS Support Period Data FY 2021. Missing age information for 6 clients in Outreach.

² Source: SRS Accommodation List, N=30. Women for whom accommodation data is available (Ballarat N=7, Footscray N=23). Some clients recorded two values for 'beds per night' within the same support period. Where this occurred, the higher value was retained for analysis.

Client needs upon presenting: FY21

Family violence is the key presenting issue for women

Upon entry, clients are asked to identify their main reason for presenting at McAuley (Chart 7).

Family violence was universally identified as the main reason for presenting by women in McAuley Care. Presenting due to housing crisis is less common.

However, although housing crisis is identified less frequently, it is acknowledged that by nature of presenting to McAuley for crisis or accommodation support, women do not have a safe space to be. As such, housing crisis is understood to be underreported in the data.

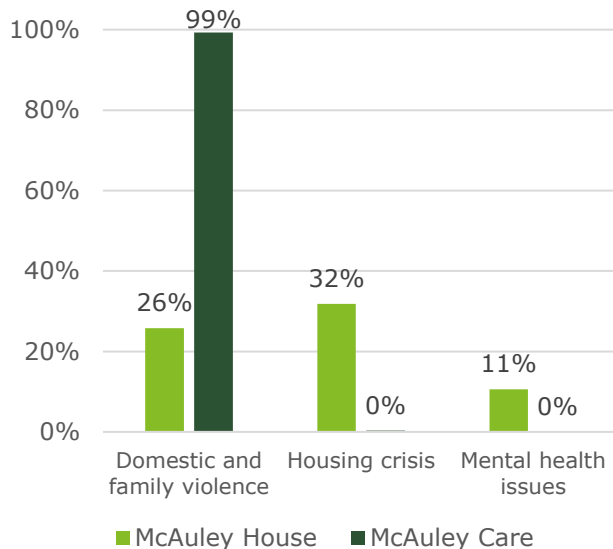
Experiences of family violence

Questionnaire responses by women presenting due to family violence (Chart 8, below) is similar to clients from FY20 (represented in bracketed figures).

Almost all women experience emotional abuse or threats of harm and violence, controlling behaviours, and physical harm.

One catalyst for presenting appears to be linked with risk for children. **18%** of women presenting at McAuley were either pregnant, or had given new birth².

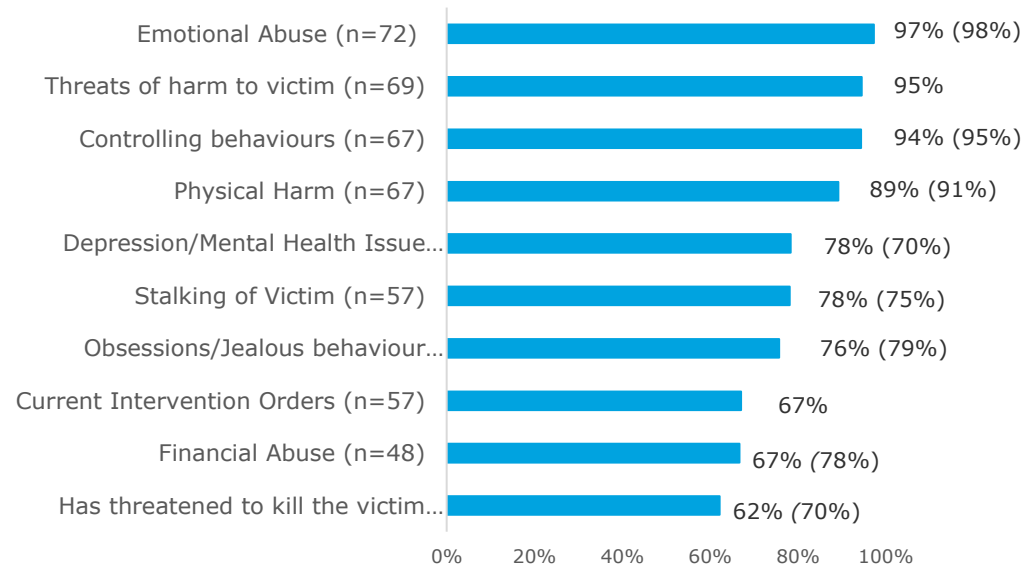
Chart 7: Support period data: questionnaire responses relating to the main reason for presenting (top three reasons shown), FY21 ¹



¹ 66% (n=44) of women at McAuley House specify domestic and family violence as a reason for presenting (this differs to the 'main' reason for presenting). Source: SRS support period data, FY21.

² Source Family Violence Risk Assessment FY 2021 (Intake) N=84

Chart 8: Family violence risk assessment: questionnaire responses relating to the perpetrator or their behaviour. Top 10 reasons by %, across all programs, FY21 (FY20)³



³ Source Family Violence Risk Assessment FY 2021 (Intake) N=84. Respondents can choose more than one option.

Client needs upon presenting: FY21

Women often enter McAuley in financial distress

Women are presenting with complex issues, where domestic violence, housing crisis and financial difficulties often overlap.

Given the importance of employment and financial independence in the ability of women to leave violent relationships, it is significant that McAuley is supporting women experiencing financial difficulties.

Charts 9 and 10 (to the right) represent the financial difficulties that women experience upon entry.

Source of income

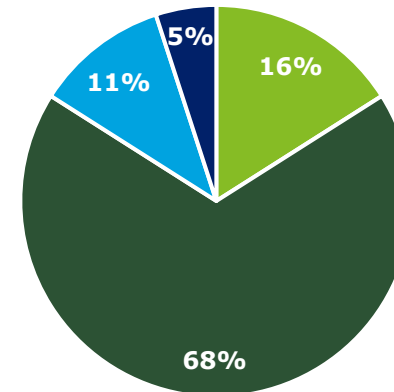
Women who present at McAuley are highly likely to either be reliant on government support (68%) or have no income (16%). Only a small percentage of women (11%) were earning employee income.

Employment and labour force status

The majority of women entering McAuley are either unemployed (51%) or not in the labour force (27%) when presenting.

Only 7% of women were employed at entry.

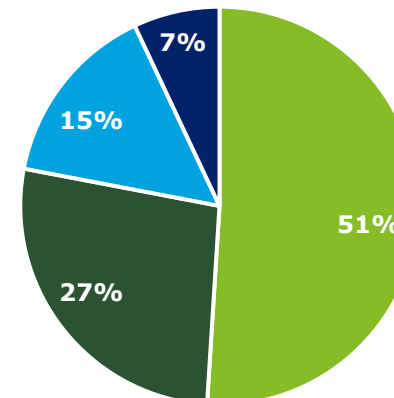
Chart 9: Source of income of McAuley clients upon entry, FY21



■ Nil income ■ Government income ■ Employee income ■ Don't know

Source: SRS Support Period Data (Women Only) FY 2021 (All programs) N=432. Government payment includes disability support pension (Centrelink), Parenting payment, Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance, Other Government pensions and allowances, Age Pension and Austudy/ABSTUDY.

Chart 10: Employment and labour force status of McAuley clients upon entry, FY21



■ Unemployed ■ Not in the labour force ■ Employed ■ Don't know/NA

Source: SRS Support Period Data (Women Only) FY 2021 (All programs) N=432.

Client needs upon presenting: FY21

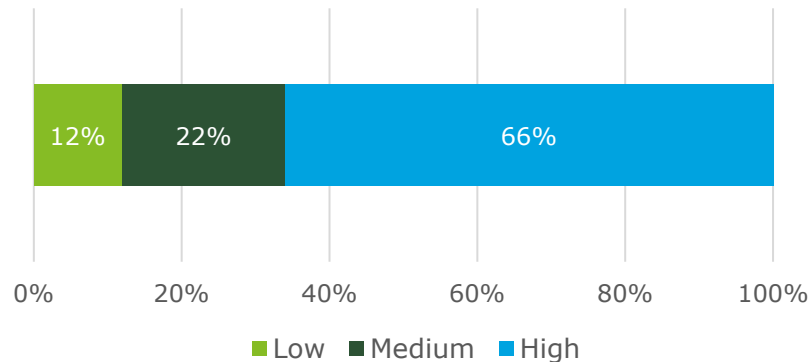


Women present with high level of fear and risk

Women are assessed for their level of fear and level of risk at intake, through the Family Violence Risk Assessment (completed for clients who are presenting for family violence reasons).

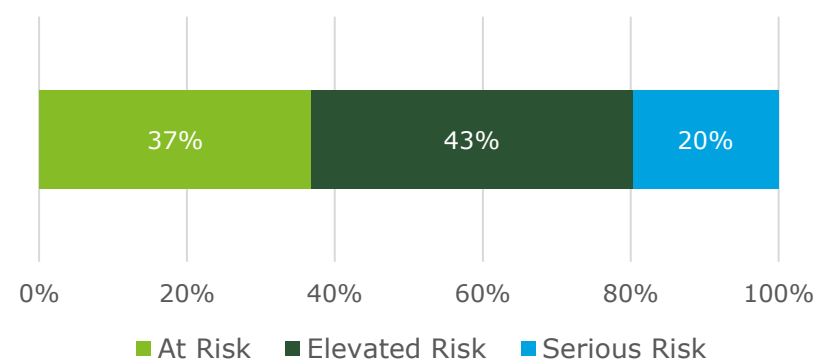
Overall, women accessing McAuley's services present with high levels of fear, and are commonly assessed as being at elevated or serious risk. **66%**, or 52 women had a high level of fear (Chart 11), and **63%** of women were assessed at being elevated (n=22) or serious risk (n=20), as shown in Chart 12.

Chart 11: Level of fear at intake (n=78), Family Violence Risk Assessment questionnaire responses, FY21



Source Family Violence Risk Assessment FY 2021 (Intake). N=78.

Chart 12: Assessed level of risk at intake (n=76), Family Violence Risk Assessment questionnaire responses, FY21



Source Family Violence Risk Assessment FY 2021 (Intake). N=76.

Family Violence Risk Assessment Intake, FY21: A snapshot

78% of clients experienced imminent risk such as stalking or threats (N=57)

18% of women presenting at McAuley were either pregnant or had given new birth

25% of women were assaulted while pregnant or after new birth¹

¹ It is assumed that women who reported they had been historically assaulted while pregnant or after new birth were not pregnant or had a new birth when answering the question.

Client needs upon presenting: FY21

Women present with complex health and wellbeing, and support needs

Women enter McAuley with a wide range of complex health and wellbeing needs – where these issues often overlap. Several examples are illustrated [here](#).

Across McAuley House and Outreach*:

41% of women rated their health as fair (29%), poor (9%), or very poor (3%).

25% of women have a physical disability or mental condition

72% of women self-reported mental health issue(s)

15% of women report misusing drugs or alcohol

Additionally, women enter McAuley experiencing a variety of issues preventing them from living safely and independently, that McAuley works to address.

Across McAuley House and Outreach*:

58% of women are entering with financial issues

45% of women have legal issues

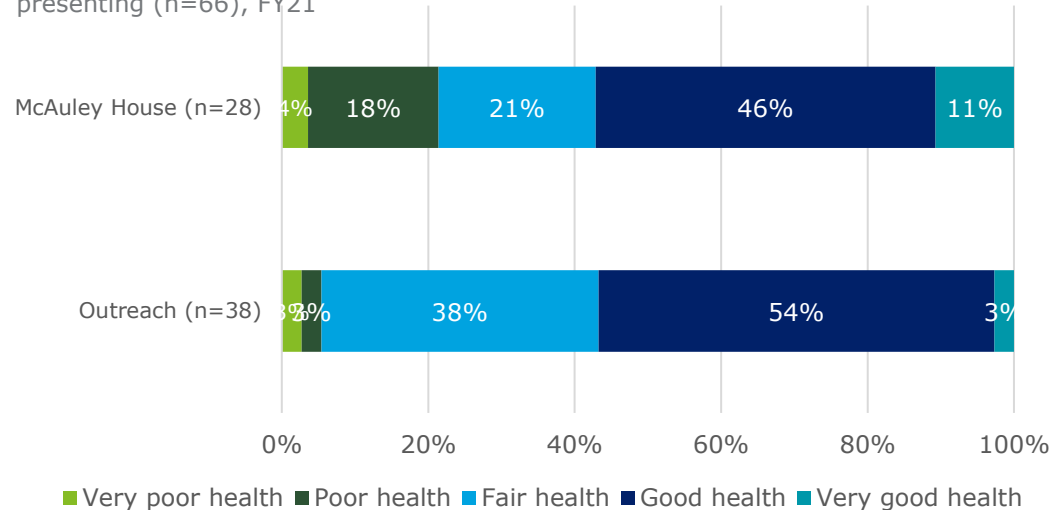
45% of women are experiencing social connection issues

44% of women require general support

24% of women face family relationship issues

11% of women report migration issues

Chart 13: McAuley Needs Assessment, self-reported health among women upon presenting (n=66), FY21



* Source: SRS McAuley Needs Assessment data. Intakes FY 2021. N=69.

Consultations with McAuley House (Footscray and Ballarat) and Women in Community staff underscore that clients are presenting with complex and varied needs.

Particularly in FY21, the intensity and severity of needs has increased. For example, mental health has declined for many women supported by McAuley, due to COVID-19 restrictions, and this has been further exacerbated due to limited access to support systems such as family, friends and community.

*Due to the small numbers of Needs Assessment completion at intake for Refuge, Crisis and Respite, these were excluded from the analysis.

Client needs upon presenting: FY21



Women and children present with complex and multi-faceted needs

The following client profiles are developed based on de-identified case notes provided by McAuley. These are used throughout the report to illustrate how McAuley identifies varied client needs, responds and acts to achieve solutions for individual goals.

Client A, "Julia"

- Housing
- Counselling support for mother and child
- School supplies and NDIS referral for children
- Legal support
- Wellbeing

Client B, "Beth"

- Safety plans for the mother and child
- Education supports, and items to support engagement with child
- Health and wellbeing
- Car and house safety

Client E, "Rachel"

- Health, wellbeing
- Centrelink support
- Immigration and legal support

Client D, "Yaren"

- Employment
- Accommodation
- Financial means to support visits from mother (based overseas)
- Improve English language skills
- Obtain driver's license

Client C, "Leila"

- Apply for NDIS
- Disability Support Pension
- Source stable, long-term housing
- Improve fitness and health

Upon entry, McAuley case workers identify the unique needs and aspirations of women, and work in close collaboration to achieve outcomes and lasting solutions to individual goals

Client needs upon presenting: FY21

Children accompanying mothers also present complex issues

The Child Risk Assessment questionnaire – undertaken for women entering and exiting **McAuley Crisis, Refuge and Family Violence Outreach** – demonstrates the risk factors that the children at McAuley face, the children's experience with the family violence perpetrator, and outcomes which may relate to McAuley's services. The assessment is completed by the mother, and therefore may not be truly reflective of the child's experiences and perceptions. The proportion of women reporting on their child(ren)'s needs are presented below, with statistics from the previous financial year in brackets.

Children's experience of family violence

76% (64%) of women reported that the perpetrator has physically, verbally or psychologically abused the child
82% (87%) of women reported that the perpetrator has abused the woman in front of the child
41% (52%) of women reported that the child has intervened in the violence
48% (66%) of respondents indicated adverse emotional/physical impacts on child
45% (38%) women reported that the child was isolated from adults¹

Child needs and parenting issues

8% (7%) of women have children with health needs
29% (43%) of women self-report parenting issues

An analysis of de-identified McAuley case plans also suggests women enter with specific goals for their child(ren).

These include *education goals* (for example, support with school supplies or learning support), or *tools for building engagement* with the child.

Education needs of children experiencing family violence

68% (72%) of women reported that the family violence led to disruption in the child's education (100% in Refuge, 92% in Crisis and 67% in Outreach)
55% (54%) of women reported that the child was absent from school
77% (62%) of women reported that the child's school has been informed of the family situation

Counselling and support

41% (21%) of women reported that the child has received counselling in the past

88% (88%) of women reported that the child has had positive social connections at school or other services or with another adult/relative

Family violence, risk and children

100% of women reported that the child resides with the mother
59% of women reported that the perpetrator was the father, and **32%** was another relationship
86% of women expressed concerns regarding the safety of the child in the perpetrator's care
59% of women reported that the perpetrator has threatened to take/remove the child from them

¹Of concern was 3 counts of children with suicide ideation at exit.
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McAuley's service offering: FY21

McAuley's services draw on evaluation findings and deliver on client needs

McAuley is continually evolving its service offering to meet the changing landscape and needs of clients, and in response to evaluation findings.

Transforming services in direct response to COVID-19

Key stakeholders who participated in evaluation consultations in FY20 suggested that, in the context of COVID-19, McAuley should more broadly reconsider their service role as things move online. This has been implemented through various services, including the adapted McAuley Learning tutoring program, being transformed in direct response to the impacts on traditional face-to-face engagement, and reduced volunteer numbers. Throughout this period, the program continues to provide educational learning opportunities for children who are displaced by family violence.

Implementing virtual methods of engagement and targeted support

With clients experiencing impacts on social connections, and ability to connect in group settings, McAuley Care and Skills 4 Life are reported to have provided hours of intensive, targeted, and one-on-one support to women via **telephone or online engagement**.

Focus on child safety

In response to findings from the FY20 evaluation relating to the severity of risk children were facing, McAuley undertook practices to ensure an increased focus on appropriately supporting children. Volunteering roles for McAuley Learning were changed, the online program focused on ensuring the safety of children, and tutors were trained to utilise trauma-informed practices.

Addressing gaps in accommodation support

Stakeholder consultations conducted in the previous evaluation highlighted particular areas of service gaps relating to accommodation support for women, in particular women without permanent residency.

This year has seen McAuley respond to this, and fill the gap by providing accommodation support for an increased number of women without permanent residency.

This is reflected by a three-fold increase in the average number of bed nights per stay in Refuge, with women being supported and staying for longer periods.

This presents numerous implications for McAuley, including capacity issues, and the cost of providing accommodation services to women who McAuley does not receive funding to support.

Continuing involvement in advocacy work and leading the way in system reform

With its 'Safe at Home' project, McAuley has continued its strong involvement in **advocacy work** and partnerships to continue its expansion of services and **lead the way in system reform**. Notably, this aligns with a key theme arising from stakeholder consultations in 2020, with recommendations that McAuley continues its focus in this space to gain the attention of donors and government ministers.

04



Pathways

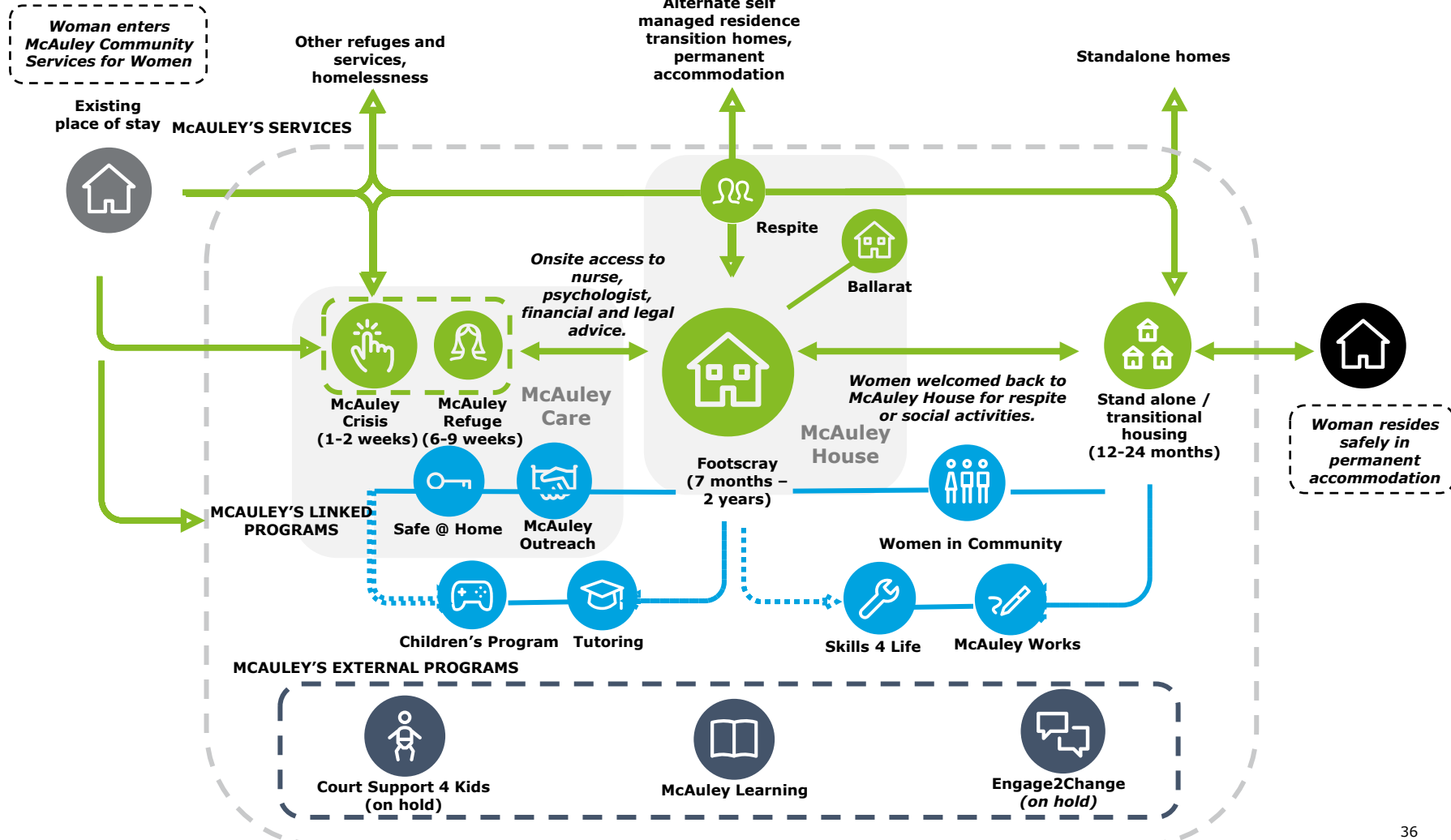
McAuley's service offering: FY21

McAuley's services are client-centred, comprehensive and connected

\$7.49 million in income (\$7.39 million in FY20)
67 staff employed

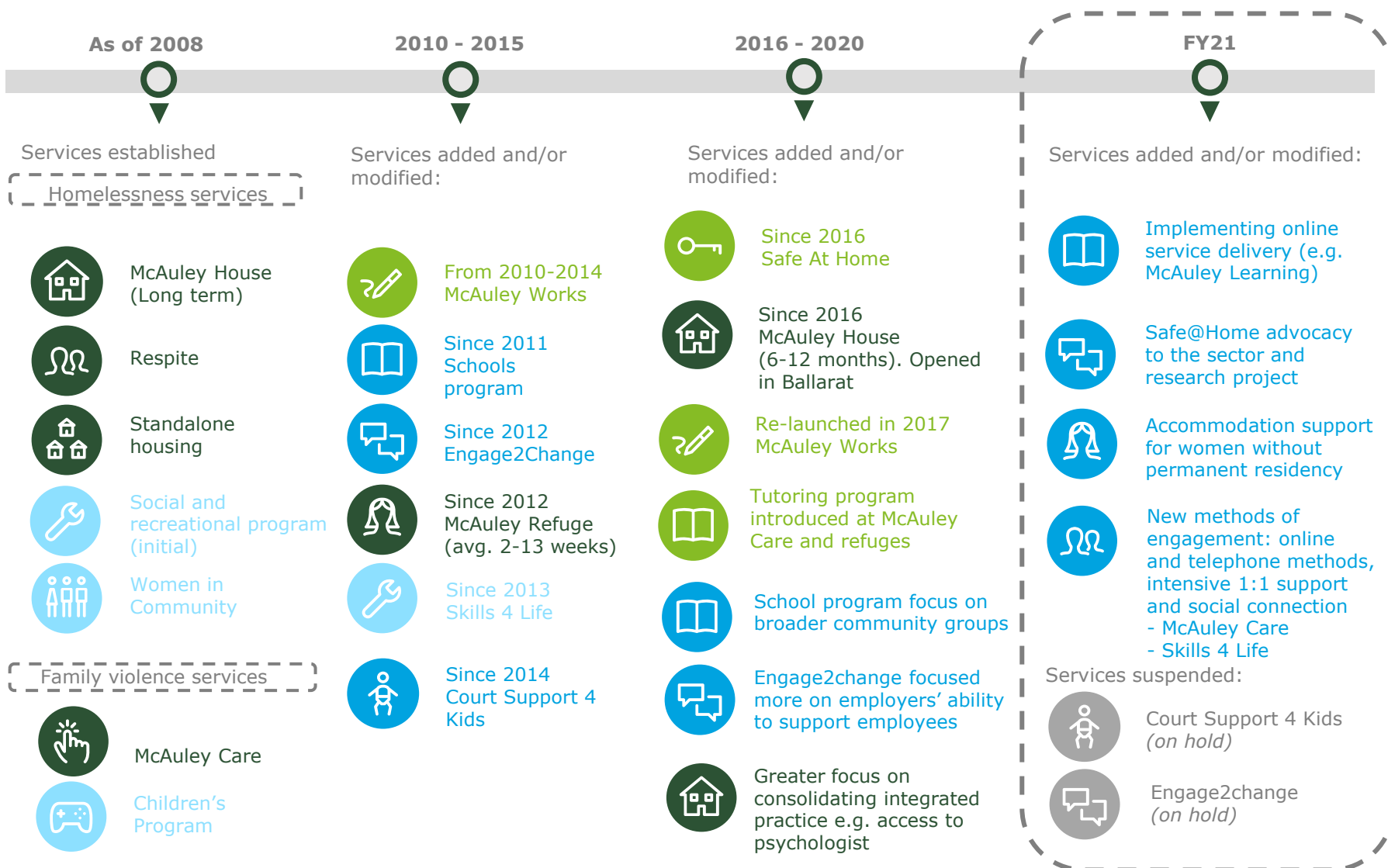
8 key service areas supporting **801** women and children

Figure 3: Overview of McAuley's service offering



McAuley's service offering: 2008-2021

McAuley's services are continuing to evolve and adapt to need



McAuley Crisis

Key statistics

McAuley Crisis involves the provision of emergency accommodation in crisis following family violence. It involves short-term accommodation, usually for one to two weeks in McAuley owned and managed accommodation, but does not include case management from McAuley.

Demographic profile



220 (266) clients



The average length of stay was **10** (7)⁵



104 (132) women



116 (134) children



The average age of women presenting is 34 (34)



4% (5%) of women are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



52% (53%) of women are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (based on country of birth)



44% (48%) of women's main language is not English

In FY21, the total number of clients residing in Crisis declined by 46, compared to the previous year.

However, clients in Crisis are on average staying for longer, compared to FY20.

Health



<1% (1%) of women always / sometimes need support with a disability or long term health condition



77% (68%) of women had a mental health diagnosis or identified mental health issues

Homelessness³



93% (96%) of women had a permanent address in the month before presenting



88% (92%) of women had lived in short term or emergency accommodation in the month before presenting and **2%** (3%) had been sleeping rough

Reasons for presenting⁴



100% (100%) due to family violence



66% (59%) due to lack of family or community support

49% (47%) due to mental health issues

1. This includes Newstart allowance, parenting payment, government pensions and allowances, disability support pension, youth allowance or carer allowance.
2. Statistics exclude data which was left blank, or had "Don't know" or "Not applicable".
3. It is assumed that respondents can only choose one response, however the data collection process in SRS is to be clarified with McAuley staff.
4. Respondents can have multiple reasons for presenting.
5. Average beds nights per stay (Source: Accommodation Data for persons who had a accommodation report)

McAuley Refuge

Key statistics

McAuley Refuge involves slightly longer term accommodation for women and children following family violence. Clients usually stay for six to nine weeks in McAuley owned and managed accommodation. McAuley Refuge involves case management for all women and children.

Demographic profile



62 (78) clients



The average length of stay was **199** (61)



25 (33) women



37 (45) children



The average age of women presenting is **41** (37)



None (9%) of the women are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



68% (53%) of women are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (based on country of birth)



60% (48%) of women's main language is not English

1. It is assumed that respondents can only choose one response, however the data collection process in SRS is to be clarified with McAuley staff.
2. Respondents can have multiple reasons for presenting.

In FY21, the total number of clients residing in Refuge declined by 16, compared to the previous year.

However, clients in Refuge are on average staying for longer, compared to FY20. Average bed nights per stay at Refuge has increased threefold in 2021 to 199, due to McAuley supporting an increased number of women without permanent residency, who lack other housing options and supports.

Health



None (<1%) of women always / sometimes need support with a disability or long term health condition



8% (7%) of women had an NDIS package



67% (61%) of women had a mental health diagnosis or identified mental health issues

Homelessness¹



44% (56%) of women had a permanent address in the month before presenting



76% (85%) of women had lived in short term or emergency accommodation in the month before presenting and **8%** (3%) had been sleeping rough

Reasons for presenting²



100% (100%) due to family violence



16% (15%) due to lack of family or community support

McAuley Family Violence Outreach

Key statistics


McAuley Family Violence Outreach, under McAuley Care, involves supporting women and children who live in their own accommodation in the community. This involves case management for all women and children. If a client living in the community is at immediate threat, or experiencing family violence, they may be transferred to Crisis or Refuge temporarily.


Demographic profile


 **385** (343) clients


 **172** (150) women

 **207** (192) children


 The average age of women presenting is **37** (37)


 **2%** (4%) of women are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

 **40%** (41%) of women are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (based on country of birth)

 **33%** (30%) of women's main language is not English

Reasons for presenting²

 **100%** (95%) due to family violence

 **16%** (22%) due to lack of family or community support


1. Age information was missing for six clients

In FY21, the total number of clients supported by Outreach increased by 42, compared to the previous financial year.


This year, almost 1 in 10 Outreach clients identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The prevalence of identified mental health issues is lower this year than previous years, though consultations with McAuley staff indicate this is not reflective of experience.


Health


 **2%** (1%) of women always / sometimes need support with a disability or long term health condition

 **2%** (2%) of women had an NDIS package

 **56%** (65%) of women had a mental health diagnosis or identified mental health issues

Homelessness¹

 **54%** (66%) of women had a permanent address in the month before presenting

 **8%** (10%) of women had lived in short term or emergency accommodation in the month before presenting and **3%** (2%) had been sleeping rough

1. It is assumed that respondents can only choose one response, however the data collection process in SRS is to be clarified with McAuley staff.
2. Respondents can have multiple reasons for presenting.

McAuley House Footscray

Key statistics

McAuley House (Footscray) provides medium term accommodation to women with particularly complex needs experiencing homelessness. Clients usually stay for seven months or more. McAuley House is also a location in which McAuley provides multiple of its support programs.

Demographic profile



40 (42) clients



The average length of stay was **259** (248) nights



The average age of women presenting is **40** (40)



5% (5%) of women are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



65% (56%) of women are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (based on country of birth)



53% (53%) of women's main language is not English

Reasons for presenting²



65% (57%) due to family violence



38% (40%) due to financial difficulties



38% (33%) due to mental health issues

In FY21, the total number of clients residing at McAuley House Footscray decreased by 2, compared to the previous financial year.

However, clients are on average staying for longer, compared to FY20.

Similar to other services, the prevalence of identified mental health issues is lower this year than previous years.

Health



8% (10%) of women always / sometimes need support with a disability or long term health condition



5% (6%) of women had an NDIS package



76% (80%) of women had a mental health diagnosis or identified mental health issues

Homelessness¹



28% (33%) of women had a permanent address in the month before presenting



60% (57%) of women had lived in short term or emergency accommodation in the month before presenting and **28%** (27%) had been sleeping rough

1. It is assumed that respondents can only choose one response, however the data collection process in SRS is to be clarified with McAuley staff.
2. Respondents can have multiple reasons for presenting.

McAuley House Ballarat

Key statistics

McAuley House (Ballarat) provides medium term accommodation to women with particularly complex needs experiencing homelessness. McAuley House is also a location in which McAuley provides multiple of its support programs.

Demographic profile



26 (14) clients



The average age of women presenting is **42** (42)



The average length of stay was **122** (115) nights.



12% (7%) of women are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



31% (21%) of women are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (based on country of birth)



35% (27%) of women's main language is not English

1. It is assumed that respondents can only choose one response, however the data collection process in SRS is to be clarified with McAuley staff.
2. Respondents can have multiple reasons for presenting.

In FY21, the total number of clients residing at McAuley House Ballarat increased by 12, compared to the previous financial year. Clients are on average staying for longer, compared to FY20.

Health



12% (21%) of women always / sometimes need support with a disability or long term health condition



19% (14%) of women had an NDIS package



38% (57%) women had a mental health diagnosis or identified mental of health issues

Homelessness¹



12% (14%) of women had a permanent address in the month before presenting



38% (21%) of women had lived in short term or emergency accommodation in the month before presenting and **15%** (14%) had been sleeping rough

Reasons for presenting²



85% (93%) due to housing crisis



62% (71%) due to family violence

46% (29%) due to housing affordability stress

McAuley Respite

Key statistics

McAuley Respite is offered through McAuley House. McAuley House has one respite bed which offers additional support to women with complex needs, which might otherwise have experienced the loss of their permanent accommodation. This bed is sometimes offered to Crisis clients.

Demographic profile



3 (4) clients



The average length of stay was **30** (15) nights



The average age of women presenting is **54** (48)



None (None) are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



33% (50%) of women are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (based on country of birth)



None of the women's main language is not English

Reasons for presenting²



67% (50%) due to time out from family / other situation and family violence



67% (50%) due to mental health issues



33% (75%) due to housing crisis

In FY21, the total number of clients supported by Respite decreased by 1, compared to the previous financial year.

However, clients are on average staying for twice as long (considering the average length of stay), when compared to FY20.

Health



None (None) always / sometimes need support with a disability or long term health condition



67% (50%) of women had an NDIS package



100% (100%) of women had a mental health diagnosis or identified mental health issues

Homelessness¹



67% (100%) of women had a permanent address in the month before presenting



None (25%) of the women had lived in short term or emergency accommodation in the month before presenting and **33%** (50%) had been sleeping rough

1. It is assumed that respondents can only choose one response, however the data collection process in SRS is to be clarified with McAuley staff.
2. Respondents can have multiple reasons for presenting.

McAuley Women in the Community

Key statistics

McAuley Women in Community refers to a group of women who were previously House or Refuge clients, who now live in their own accommodation. The program involves social and recreation activities to connect current and past residents. This includes women who have moved into permanent accommodation.

In FY2021, there has been an increase in women in community reaching out to McAuley for social connection and support.

Demographic profile



47 (38) clients



44 (34) women



3 (3) children



The average age of women presenting is **44** (44)



2% (6%) of women are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



47% (53%) of women are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (based on country of birth)



37% (58%) of women's main language is not English

1. It is assumed that respondents can only choose one response, however the data collection process in SRS is to be clarified with McAuley staff.
2. Respondents can have multiple reasons for presenting.

Women presented with wide-ranging needs relating to social connection and support with navigating systems.

Despite COVID-19 impacting on typical methods of engagement (for example, group activities with former and current residents), women were intensively supported through telephone consultations and connected to relevant services. Increased engagement from women can be taken as an indicator that McAuley is considered a trusted provider and point of re-connection for women.

Health



4% (6%) of women always / sometimes need support with a disability or long term health condition



5% (None) had an NDIS package



80% (85%) of women had a mental health diagnosis or identified mental health issues

Homelessness¹



70% (77%) of women had a permanent address in the month before presenting



7% (18%) of women had lived in short term or emergency accommodation in the month before presenting and **5%** (18%) had been sleeping rough

Reasons for presenting²



45% (53%) due to family violence



57% (50%) due to mental health



30% (45%) due to lack of family or community support

McAuley House Transitional Housing (THM)

Key statistics

McAuley House Transitional Housing (THM) involves transitional housing provided by Salvation Army. Often clients from McAuley House are nominated to receive this transitional housing. McAuley provides ongoing support to clients while in THM.

Demographic profile



18 (21) clients



The average age of women presenting is **45** (44)



None (None) are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



39% (38%) of women are from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (based on country of birth)



33% (32%) of women's main language is not English

In FY21, the total number of clients supported by THM decreased by 3, compared to the previous financial year.

Health



17% (14%) of women always / sometimes need support with a disability or long term health condition



78% (84%) of women had a mental health diagnosis or identified mental health issues

Homelessness¹



17% (36%) of women had a permanent address in the month before presenting



50% (55%) of women had lived in short term or emergency accommodation in the month before presenting and **11%** (20%) had been sleeping rough

Reasons for presenting²



72% (71%) due to housing crisis.



61% (52%) due to family violence

1. It is assumed that respondents can only choose one response, however the data collection process in SRS is to be clarified with McAuley staff.
2. Respondents can have multiple reasons for presenting.

McAuley Works

Overview

McAuley Works assists women experiencing, or at risk of family violence or homelessness, in finding work. The program provides targeted support for women to secure and maintain employment and obtain financial independence, even if their risk of family violence is high and their employability is low.

McAuley is unique in filling the gap in supporting women experiencing family violence develop economic security. The provision of an integrated, connected employment support recognises that employment can protect against homeless, and deliver outcomes of a holistic nature, including women's confidence, self-esteem, and future independence.

McAuley Works: what's changed in FY21?

Like many other McAuley services affected by COVID-19 restrictions in FY21, McAuley Works faced impacts on its ability to deliver traditional face-to-face engagement and support for women.

While in previous years workers would travel around the state to meet with women, due to COVID-19 the program has utilised videoconferencing and telephone calls to engage and support women into employment. This has resulted in added efficiency, while ensuring [successful employment](#), and [holistic outcomes](#) for women.

"COVID has shown us that we can work differently without necessarily doing face-to-face engagement, and we can still deliver the services.

We are more efficient, and we work smarter – and we have been successful with women getting back into work."

Introduction of a new role

In FY21, McAuley funded a new role to provide case management support through the McAuley Works.

The case worker predominantly works with women referred by other organisations, and Family Violence Outreach clients. While there is a dedicated focus on family violence, the case worker also works to achieve other individualised goals set out by women.

The role is nuanced and specific, providing **specialised, intensive and holistic support** to women. In practice, it is **complementary** to other members of the McAuley Works team – who focus on supporting women into employment – and is another illustration of McAuley's **holistic and integrated** approach to deliver outcomes and enable lasting solutions.

In FY22, it will be necessary to define outcomes for this specific position, with a data collection strategy developed to ensure case studies and documentation are captured appropriately, thus enabling McAuley to understand the effectiveness of this role in supporting women.

McAuley Works

Key statistics



47 (155) women were referred to the program (internally and externally)



47 (95) women registered in the program



20 (36) women commenced employment through the program

Analysis of FY21 McAuley Works data shows that McAuley is supporting women to secure placements and employment outcomes.

Table 2 reveals that risk of family violence and employment readiness does not correlate to achieving employment outcomes. When the FV risk for women is major, and employment readiness is assessed as poor, outcomes are achieved, while conversely minimal risk and when excellent employability, does not correlate to the achievement of employment outcomes.

While McAuley's contract with Jobs Victoria sets outcomes based on job placements and employment targets (number of weeks in employment), these metrics are not fully representative of the effectiveness of McAuley Works, or the amount of effort from workers and case managers, involved in supporting her into employment.

Being a unique employment support offering within a family violence service, this could be supported by the adoption of more flexible targets, and realistic definitions of outcomes for women supported by McAuley Works.

The [holistic support and outcomes](#) that McAuley Works delivers for its clients are explored subsequently.


Table 2: McAuley Works: Severity of FV Risk & Employment Readiness, and outcomes achieved, FY21


	Woman's Employability Readiness Rating			Total
	FV Risk – Major / Critical High	FV Risk- Moderate	FV Risk –Minor / minimal risk	
	Employability – Poor / Challenged	Employability -OK/Good	Employability Excellent	
Registrations	18	22	6	47
Placements	9 (50%)	8 (36%)	3 (50%)	20 (43%)
Outcomes	7 (39%)	5 (23%)	0 (50%)	12 (26%)

Source: McAuley Works data provided to Deloitte, 2021.

Skills 4 Life

Key statistics

 **1682** (1425) interactions (approximately 140 per month) with a Skills 4 Life program.

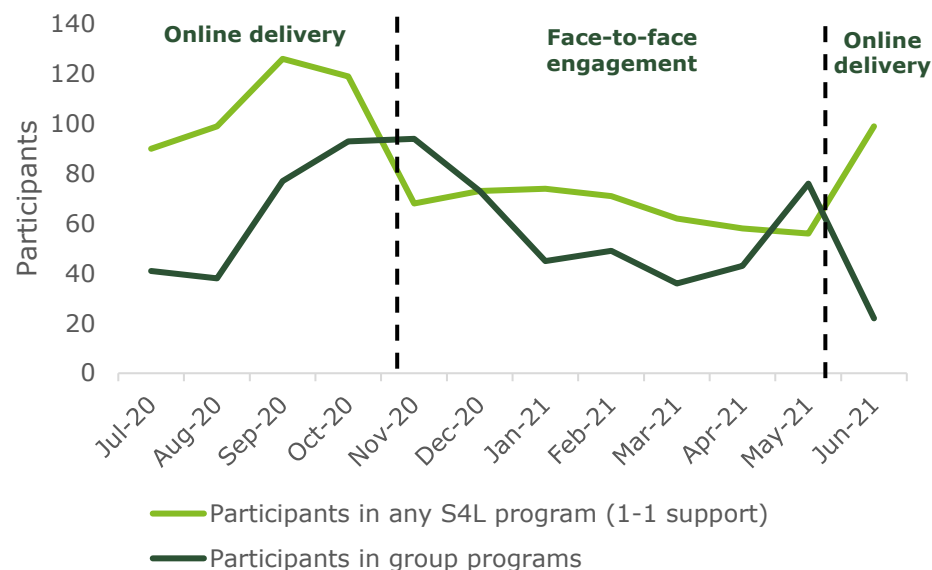
 **21** (20) group activities per month (on average)

Sessions were attended by women from:

- McAuley House: 828 one-on-one, 589 group (1017)
- Women in Community: 114 one-on-one, 97 group (287)

Overall, engagement has remained consistent with last year despite challenges presented by COVID-19.

Chart 14: Skills 4 Life engagement, no. participants in FY21



*Participants receiving 1-1 support may be same client on more than one occasion

Skills 4 Life supports women to build skills, breakdown isolation and experience fun and achievement. It involves events, celebrations, social activities, psychoeducational group programs and individual sessions to equip women with independent living skills and the ability to make informed, health and sustainable food choices. It is available to any McAuley clients, as well as women who are referred externally. The program is part of the wraparound service that McAuley provides for women.

Notably, COVID-19 restrictions have posed challenges to how Skills 4 Life is delivered. Consultations highlighted impacts on volunteer contributions as well as the loss of practical, face-to-face delivery which is fundamental to the program, and which has consequently resulted in lower levels of engagement (as reported by program staff).

Despite these challenges, McAuley has demonstrated its responsiveness in the delivery of the Skills 4 Life program:

- **Shifting to virtual delivery and engagement methods** (e.g. via videoconferencing) during periods of lockdown to provide support for women during this time.
- **Shifting directions in terms of response**, by providing more intensive, targeted one-on-one support via phone calls rather than its typical group activities. An increased number of participants received targeted 1:1 support in periods of online delivery that correspond to COVID-19 lockdowns (see Chart 14), and results in higher number of reported interactions compared to FY20.

An integrated service model

Clients are accessing the breadth of McAuley's multi-faceted services

McAuley's offering has grown over time into a sophisticated array of accommodation offerings, services, partnerships and programs.

This integrated service model seeks to ensure that the right services are accessible to women and children, at the right time, across the breadth of challenges faced in homelessness and family violence.

McAuley's integrated and connected service model also prevents women from needing to navigate complex systems across multiple organisations.

Evidence suggests that **clients are accessing McAuley's connected service offerings**.

In FY21:

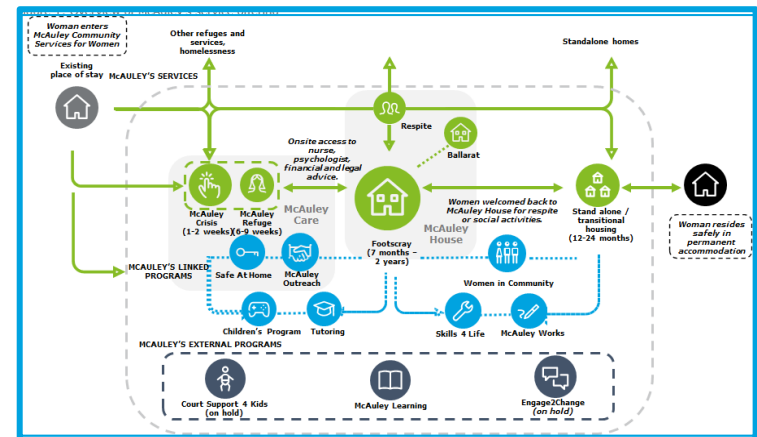
97 clients were supported by two McAuley services

12 clients were supported by three McAuley services

8 clients were supported by four McAuley services

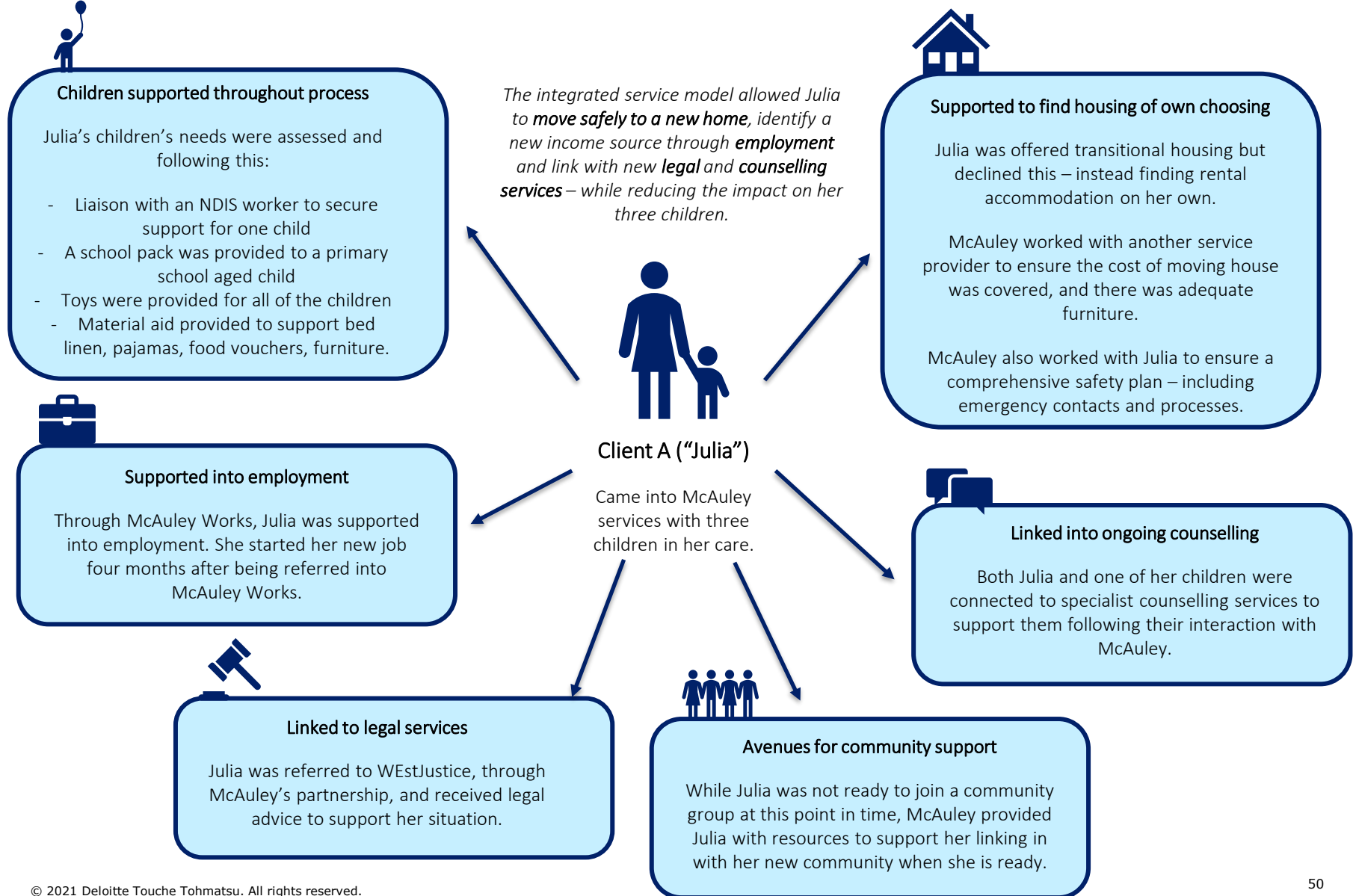
To understand how clients are experiencing McAuley's integrated services, de-identified case plans provided by McAuley were analysed to understand client experiences of McAuley's services.

The following section provides case studies to illustrate how women are supported by McAuley case workers to identify unique needs and aspirations, and work in close collaboration to achieve outcomes and lasting solutions to individual goals.



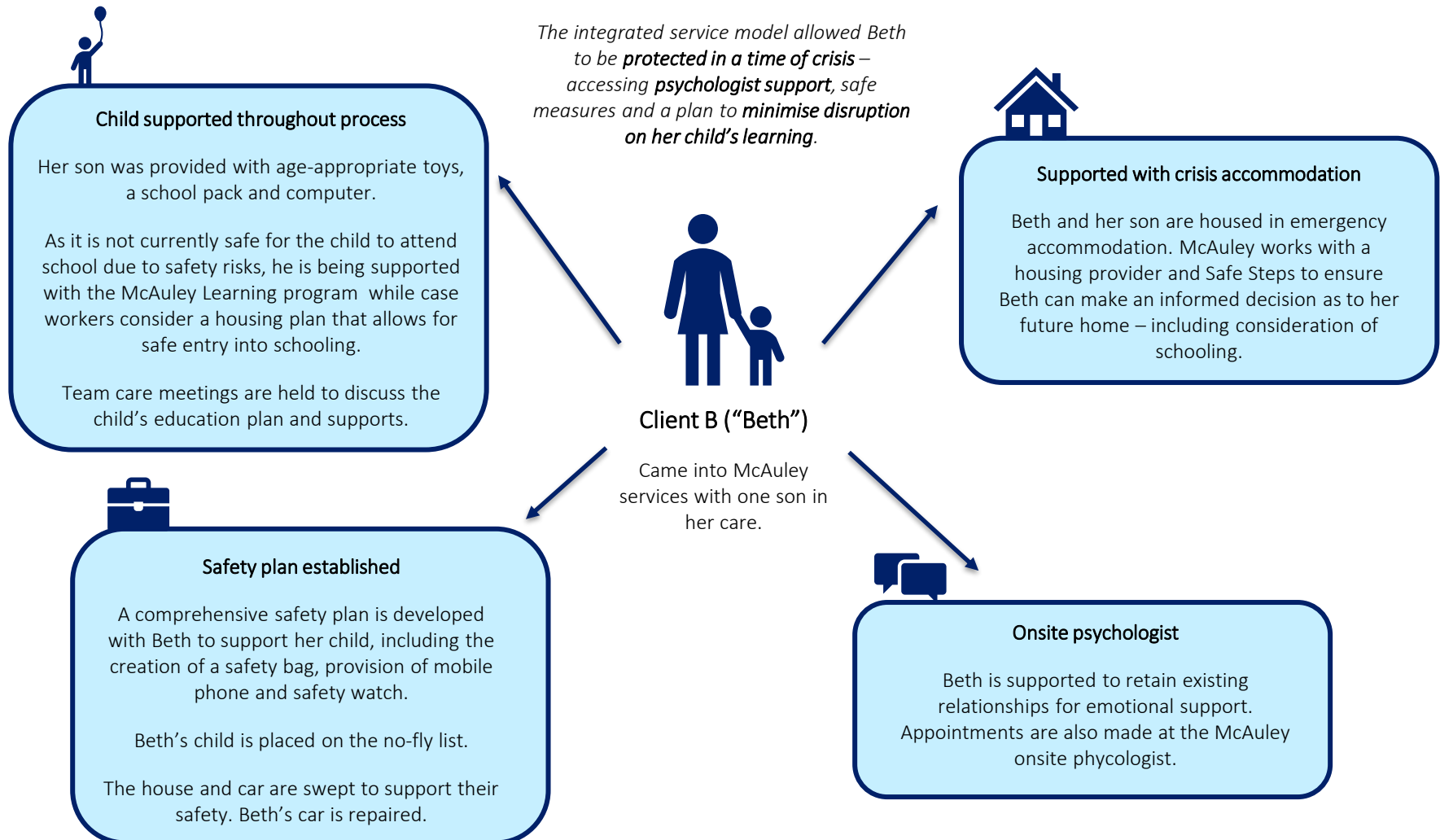
Case Study A

Supported to find safety in a new home and job



Case Study B

Supported through times of crisis



A strengths based approach

Clients are supported to identify their own pathway to independence

Analysis of several de-identified case plans for McAuley clients found that a strengths-based approach was used to support women **identifying their priorities** for what they wanted to achieve during their stay with McAuley, as well as the **strengths** each women could draw on to realise these objectives.

A de-identified selection of examples are provided here. The examples showcase the **breadth of professionals** that McAuley links each client – through holistic case management – to support their goals.

CLIENT D, "Yaren"

PRIORITIES

- Find work to be independent
- Study to enable this
- Find stable, safe and permanent accommodation
- Have my mother visit
- Get driver's license
- Improve English skills

STRENGTHS

- Determination
- Willingness to study
- Desire for independence
- Self reliance
- Desire to be reunited with mother
- Determination to communicate better

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Case manager, McAuley Works manager, housing worker

CLIENT C, "Leila"

PRIORITIES

- Find work to be independent
- Gaining access to the DSP
- Source stable, long-term housing
- Improve my fitness/health

STRENGTHS

- Determination
- Motivation
- Focused
- Support network
- Resilience
- Hope

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Case manager, medical professionals, housing worker, McAuley House nurse, dietitian, Skills4Life team

CLIENT E, "Rachel"

PRIORITIES

- Health, recovery and wellbeing
- Gain Centrelink support
- Immigration

STRENGTHS

- Determination
- Action oriented
- Focus
- Dedicated
- Courage
- Independence

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Case Manager, psychologist, GP, specialist doctors, immigration lawyer, WEstJustice.

05



Outcomes

McAuley's impact

Interpreting findings

This section presents an overview of the measurable outcomes realised by women and children through their experience of McAuley's services, illustrating McAuley's impact on the [seven key evaluation outcomes](#).

As described in Chapter 2, outcomes analysis is conducted by matching entry and exit risk assessments for clients, and analysing key measures of interest in the seven key outcome areas. In FY21, a 'pooled' sample of observations (that considers both FY20 and FY21) was utilised to mitigate the impacts of the [structural shift in data collection](#) for survey assessments.

Several key considerations for interpreting findings are outlined below.

1. McAuley's service provision directly removes women and children from immediate harm, preventing the escalation of domestic and family violence.

- The body of knowledge on domestic and family violence cautions that escalation of violence (frequency or severity) is present in many abusive relationships¹. This means that, in the absence of these services that provide this support, clients may fare worse than when they present. However, the impact (of service provision) is often challenging to measure.
- This means that, when interpreting findings of outcomes that domestic and family violence supports deliver, the *absence* of escalation of violence (and associated issues) should be understood as a positive outcome.
- Given the complexity of issues faced by women and children in crisis, tracking positive shifts in outcomes is challenging and the current [data collection](#) tools are not purpose built for this type of analysis.

2. Length of support can influence the outcomes achieved by women and children.

- McAuley's women-centric approach ensures women are empowered to be control of how and for how long support is received. As described by McAuley staff, it also ensures that "no woman leaves McAuley before they are ready".
- Domestic and family violence is a complex problem, with women often facing multiple issues for a long period of time. These issues, at times, can be challenging to overcome. As more data becomes available for clients staying for longer periods of time, McAuley's impact on more complex outcomes may become more visible.

3. A core focus of McAuley's services is to achieve holistic outcomes for its clients.

- These outcomes are complementary to, and should be considered together with the seven enduring outcomes that McAuley works towards. This illustrates a fuller and more representative overview of McAuley's true impact.

¹ Boxall, H., & Lawler, S. (2021). How does domestic violence escalate over time?. Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice, (626), 1-17.

McAuley's impact

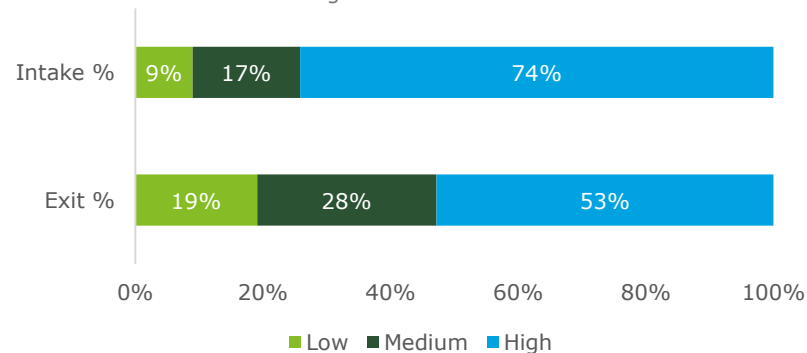
Ensuring that women and children are safe in times of crisis

McAuley provided Crisis support to 104 women and 116 children. All women presenting in Crisis had experienced family violence. McAuley's service provision directly removed women and children from immediate harm, preventing the escalation of domestic and family violence.

Furthermore, McAuley was able to reduce the overall level fear faced by women and referred many families in Crisis to other agencies or programs within McAuley.

The level of fear experienced by women in Crisis decreased over the length of their stay with McAuley. 21% fewer women experienced a high level of fear at exit (Chart 15).

Chart 15: Level of fear among women in Crisis at intake and exit



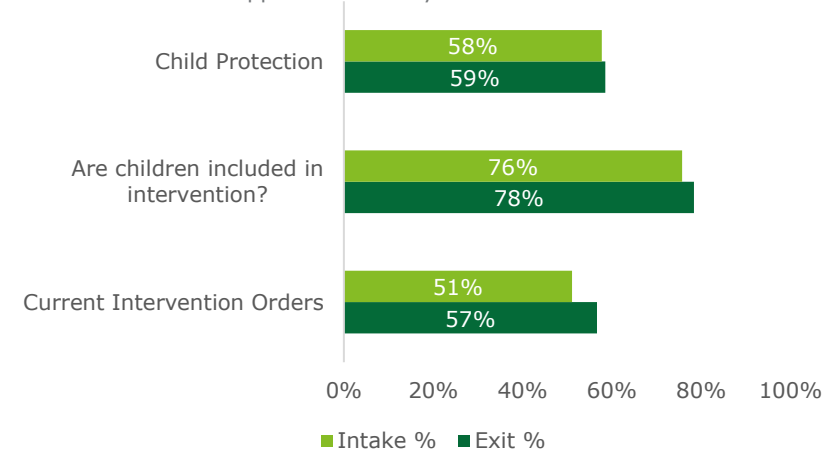
Source: N=91, SRS family violence risk assessment data, Pooled Sample FY 2020 and FY 2021; matched sample of 91 Crisis clients (women only).

Note: Where 0-3 is low, 4-6 is medium and 7-10 is high fear.

McAuley supported the safety of children through times of crisis by directly supporting children and providing links to external supports including child protection and gaining interventions orders.

However, as the majority of children engage with McAuley through Crisis services, there is limited time to influence court orders – observed in the negligible shifts between entry and exit below (Chart 16).

Chart 16: External support received by children at intake and exit



Source: N=91, SRS Family Violence Risk Assessment data, using a pooled sample FY20 and FY21; matched sample of 91 Crisis clients (women only).

Note: Where 0-3 is low, 4-6 is medium and 7-10 is high fear.

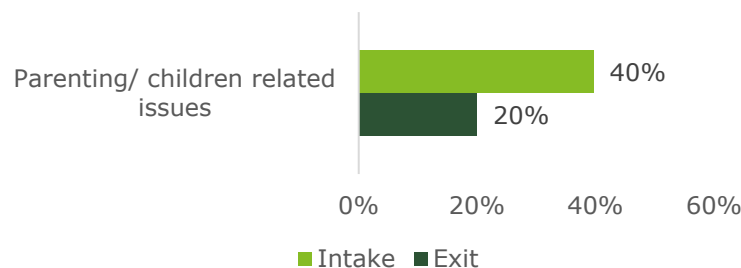
McAuley's impact

Diminishing further intergenerational costs

McAuley provided support to 371 children through its integrated services, diminishing the intergenerational costs occurring as a result of family violence. McAuley ensured the safety, wellbeing, and access to educational programs for these children.

Fewer McAuley Crisis and Outreach women reported parenting issues at exit (Chart 17).

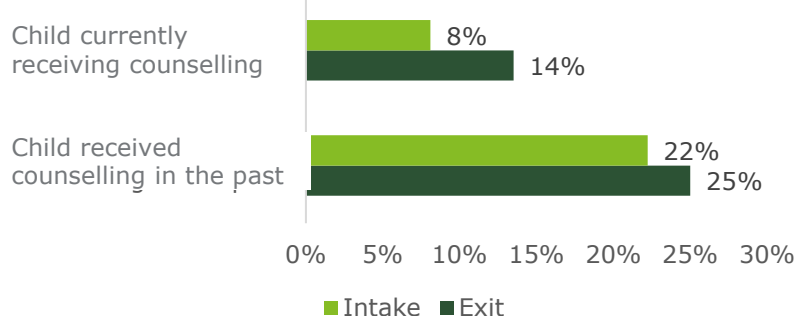
Chart 17: Proportion of women with parenting/ children-related issues, at intake and exit



Source: SRS McAuley Needs Assessment data, N=65; matched sample of McAuley clients whose exit assessment (mothers only). Pooled Sample (FY 2020 and FY 2021)

McAuley connected children to counselling services, throughout their stay (Chart 19).

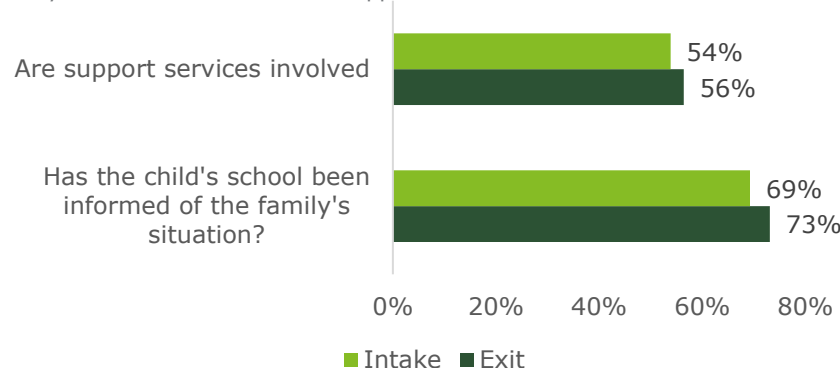
Chart 19: Proportion of children receiving or having had received counselling services (mothers' responses)



Source: SRS McAuley Child Risk Assessment data, N=42; matched sample of McAuley clients whose exit assessment. Pooled Sample (FY 2020 and FY 2021). (mothers only)

There was also a slight increase (2%) in support services involving children experienced by women in McAuley, which may reflect increased access to the legal system with McAuley support. Informing the children's school of the family's situation also increased at exit by 4% (Chart 18)

Chart 18: Proportion of children whose school had been informed of the family's situation and for whom support services have been involved



Source: SRS McAuley Child Risk Assessment data, N=42; matched sample of McAuley clients whose exit assessment. Pooled Sample (FY 2020 and FY 2021). (mothers only)

McAuley's impact

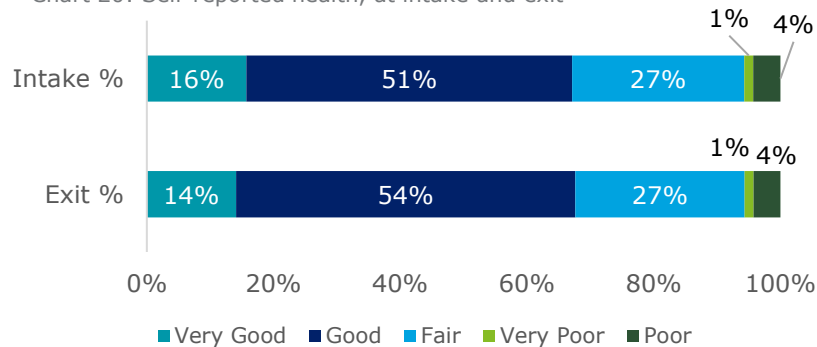
Working towards a healthier population, both physically and mentally

McAuley directly supports women's health through its provision of physical and health services onsite. Women's self-reported health outcomes improved as they spent 3 months or more with McAuley.

McAuley also indirectly supports the physical and mental health of clients through providing accommodation and safety from violence or rough sleeping, and through its referrals to other health services.

Minimal health outcomes were observed to shift between entry and exit. As more information is collected, it may become easier to identify changes in self reported health outcomes.

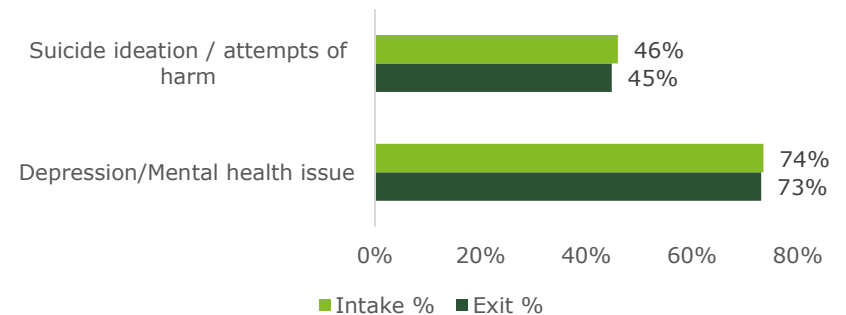
Chart 20: Self-reported health, at intake and exit



Source: SRS McAuley Needs Assessment data, N=26; matched sample of McAuley clients (women only). Pooled Sample (FY20 and FY21).

Improvements in **mental health outcomes were minimal**, as observed in Chart 21. In some ways, this is to be expected, given the complexity of vulnerability and mental health needs that women were reported to be experiencing at entry.

Chart 21: Proportion of women with suicide ideation and mental health issues, at intake and exit



Source: N=180, SRS family Violence Risk Assessment data; matched sample of McAuley clients for Pooled Sample (FY20 and FY21). Includes clients who transitioned between Crisis, Refuge and Outreach.

McAuley's impact

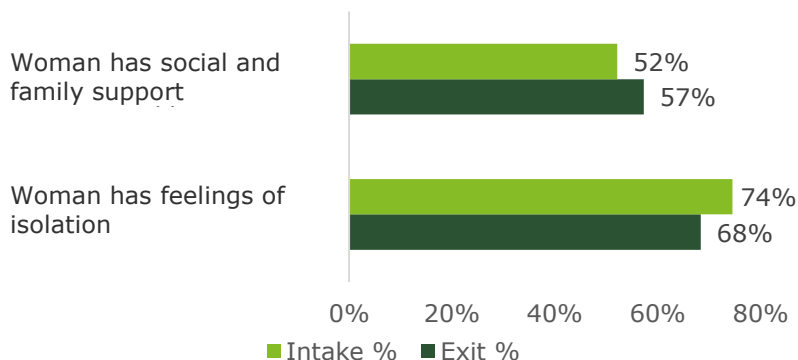
Fostering social connection

McAuley provides connections between the women and children it serves through various activities and events delivered across numerous services. Notably, McAuley pivoted to online delivery as many of its traditional face-to-face engagement methods were disrupted by COVID-19 – ensuring these supports could be provided to women at a challenging time.

81%¹ of all women in McAuley reported feeling isolated at entry to McAuley (FY20 and FY21). Through McAuley's active focus on providing women with opportunities for social connection (see [Women in Community](#) and [Skills 4 Life](#) overviews), the feelings of isolation, or social connection issues experienced by women are diminished.

McAuley's service provision led to an **increase in women reporting social and family support**, and a **reduction in feelings of isolation** at exit (Chart 22). In the context of COVID-19, with women at greater risk of social isolation, this is a notable outcome.

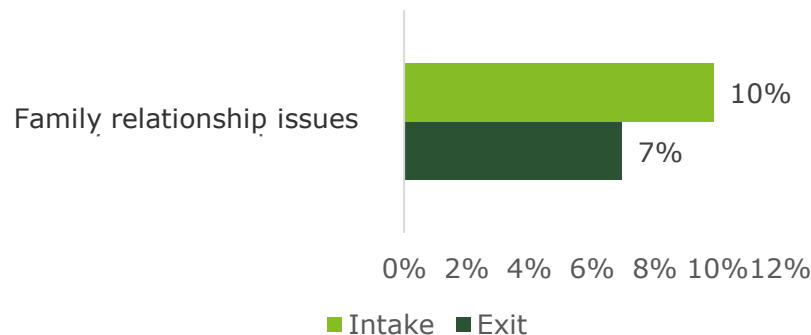
Chart 22: Proportion of women with social support, or feeling isolation, at intake and exit (women who spent at least two weeks with McAuley)



Source: N=100, SRS Family Violence Risk Assessment data; matched sample of McAuley clients whose exit assessment was at least two weeks after their intake (women only). Includes clients who transitioned between Crisis, Refuge and Outreach.

McAuley's activities led to a **decrease in women facing family relationship issues** (Chart 23), with 3% fewer women reporting these issues at exit.

Chart 23: Proportion of women with family relationship issues, at intake and exit.



Source: SRS McAuley Needs Assessment data, N=91; matched sample of McAuley clients (women only). Pooled Sample (FY 2020 and FY 2021).

1. Source: SRS Family Violence Risk Assessment, N=180, All Programs, Pooled Sample FY20 and FY21)

McAuley's impact

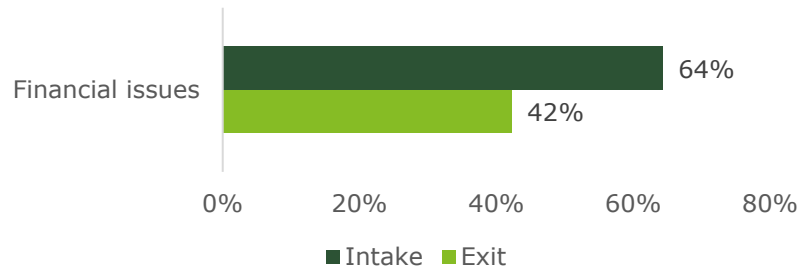
Providing the skills for women to live safely and independently

McAuley's integrated service model provides women with safe accommodation in times of crisis, as well as services that build independence – protecting women from falling into unsafe situations or homelessness.

McAuley's integrated model also **increases women's financial security** through assisting them to enter employment (see McAuley Works [outcomes](#) and [case study](#)), and through the provision of support payments and access to financial and legal services for women. This is delivered in partnership with other agencies.

McAuley reduces the financial issues experienced by women, and barriers to safe independence (Chart 24). The proportion of women reporting financial issues decreased by 21%, at exit.

Chart 24: Proportion of women with financial issues, at intake and exit.



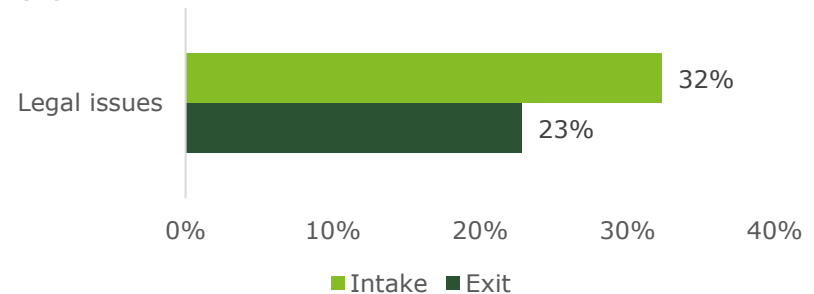
Source: SRS McAuley Needs Assessment data, N=70; matched sample of McAuley clients (women only). Pooled Sample (FY20 and FY21).

During their stay at McAuley, women are provided with a comprehensive range of supports that meet them at their point of need, including **access to legal support, financial counselling, and support for other living skills**.

These skills help women to maintain stability and independence in future living arrangements, while removing barriers to safe independence.

McAuley reduces the legal issues experienced by women (Chart 25). The proportion of women reporting legal issues decreased by 9% over the period of their stay with McAuley.

Chart 25: Proportion of women with Legal issues,, at intake and exit.



Source: SRS McAuley Needs Assessment data, N=70; matched sample of McAuley clients (women only). Pooled Sample (FY20 and FY21)

McAuley's impact

Advocating for the needs of its clients experiencing homelessness and family violence

McAuley has established a leading role in advocating for system change.

Through McAuley's explicit and sustained focus on the needs of women and children experiencing homelessness and/or family violence, the organisation has developed a unique insight into the junctures of these sectors, best practice in responding to complex need and is able to identify gaps in current policy and service delivery.

McAuley's activities that advocate for the needs of women and children experiencing homelessness and family violence include undertaking a 'Safe@Home' project, through which it is leading a cross-agency effort to better understand and address issues pertaining to Safe@Home. McAuley's work also includes:

- Understanding the data better – conducting research into the key barriers that prevent a safe at home approach
- Talking to women supported by McAuley, and advisory groups – to hear their lived experiences
- [Mapping the family violence and homelessness system factors](#) which support or present barriers to women residing or returning 'safe at home'

McAuley's work supports conversations with organisations across the sector to assist with action planning, cultural shifts, and an emphasis on the importance of the 'safe at home' approach in practice.

Furthermore, McAuley's advocacy in FY21 also includes:

- McAuley's investment in **data collection and evaluation** can improve the evidence base for best practice in supporting women through integrated service delivery.
- McAuley include women's views and stories in their submissions. McAuley provided **submissions for, and gave evidence for the following Inquiries** in FY21:
 - Inquiry into homelessness: (Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry - Legal and Social Issues Committee).
 - Inquiry into Homelessness (Australian Parliament, The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs).
 - Victorian Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor
 - Inquiry into Domestic, Family and sexual violence The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs.

In FY20, consultations highlighted the importance that McAuley continue with advocacy work and partnership building, in order to enable the expansion of services. McAuley's advocacy program in FY21 has expanded

McAuley's focus on holistic outcomes

Case studies

McAuley's focus on holistic support and outcomes is demonstrated through the following case studies. The holistic outcomes achieved through these services are complementary to the seven enduring outcomes that McAuley works towards, and should be considered alongside these in illustrating the impact of McAuley.

Achieving outcomes for children: McAuley Learning case study

- McAuley Learning, an online tutoring program that supports children whose education is disrupted by family violence, aims to deliver holistic wrap-around support for children. It is described by staff as a program where *"learning is the end goal, but not the first goal"*.
- A framework to learning is applied to ensure that wellbeing of children is prioritised and supported. The program lead ensures a safe online learning space for children, and tutors are trained to utilise trauma-informed awareness. A key aim of the tutoring program is to target children at their point of need, and develop their readiness and confidence in learning.
- The program provides targeted learning support in the form of appropriate resources and 1:1 tutoring support in identified areas, for example targeted at the child's reading level, with an aim of developing fluency and confidence.
- Observed outcomes for children arising from the McAuley Learning approach include the ability to identify what they enjoy and are interested in, increased confidence and readiness to learn, and ability to apply skills in their learning.
- Notably, the program is also described as a "family service" that achieves outcomes for both the child and the mother. Tutors work to re-establish the woman-child relationship and build up the woman's standing in the family, thus assisting to develop respectful relationships and building the woman's self-esteem.

Achieving holistic outcomes for women: McAuley Works case study

- McAuley Works is a specialist employment service for women experiencing family violence and homelessness. Connected to McAuley's broader service offerings, it is unique in that it provides targeted assistance and vocational support for women to achieve economic security.
- While a key metric of the effectiveness of McAuley Works is its employment outcomes for women, it is evident that a more nuanced measure of the effectiveness of McAuley Works is necessary, when considering the additional holistic outcomes that are supported through the approach to service delivery, and support provided to women who engage with the service.
- Qualitative case studies of women, and stakeholder consultations, suggest that outcomes achieved by women include feelings of empowerment, increased confidence, building self-esteem, awareness of rights, and capabilities to move forward into employment.
- While employment support workers focus on employment outcomes, a dedicated case worker focuses on broader outcomes that may include support with housing, Centrelink applications, and more.
- Through this type of holistic support and intensive case management involved in supporting women into employment, McAuley prioritises the achievement of holistic and employment outcomes, all with the aim of ensuring long-term and sustainable outcomes after securing work.



At the frontier of key policy and sector priorities

Family violence, homelessness, and mental health



McAuley operates at the critical intersection of family violence, homelessness, and mental health, connecting the dots between policies and sector priorities set out through the significant and ambitious reforms of state and federal governments. This approach is central to all of McAuley's work.

McAuley **leads the way in practice**, and **advocating for system change**. McAuley draws on extensive knowledge, and a contemporary evidence base of the issues women and children face, to highlight gaps in services and systems and the need for change.

Leading the way in practice

- **Providing connected systems and access points through an integrated model.** The evidence base suggests that the adequacy surrounding systems, especially mental health and housing policies, are essential for achieving sustainable solutions for women. McAuley delivers this through its complex array of sophisticated and integrated service offering, through which mental health is central to its approach.
- **Helping women experiencing family violence develop economic security.** McAuley meets the gap in the system through its unique employment support service offering, McAuley Works, which supports women to develop economic security, and reduces barriers to independence. Women are also matched with WEstJustice who deliver financial benefit to women through compensation, debt and fine waivers, and more.
- **Maintaining a focus on 'Safe at Home'.** McAuley's work supports conversations with organisations across the sector, action planning, cultural shifts, and emphasises the importance of ensuring the safe at home approach in practice.
- **Focusing on children's wellbeing:** Responding to trauma from children's exposure to family violence are essential in reducing longer-term intergenerational impacts. McAuley actively works in this space, responding to need through the provision of its online tutoring program (McAuley Learning), and other specific children's programs such as Court Support 4 Kids.

Advocating for system change

- **Family violence and homelessness:** McAuley is a long-time advocate for a 'safe at home' approach that seeks to address issues of family violence and a drift into homeless, and give women and children genuine choices to remain home when it is safe to do so.
- Through conversations with women, advocacy groups, and other organisation, and submissions to Inquiries, McAuley's work is intended to support with action planning, cultural shifts, and an continued emphasis on the visibility of a safe at home approach in policy and practice.
- **Mental health:** McAuley has put forward numerous recommendations as part of submissions to the Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system. Among many other recommendations, McAuley highlighted:
 - adequate and interconnected mental health supports for women *and* children, particularly in family violence and homelessness programs
 - the inter-relatedness between family violence, homelessness, and mental health.



06

Next steps and
considerations for FY22

Future directions

Next steps for McAuley and the evaluation

While the evidence supporting the strength of McAuley's integrated model continues to grow, there remain challenges in supporting consistent data collection to tell the story of McAuley's longitudinal impact. The below challenges continue to pose risks to the development of a quality, consistent, longitudinal evidence base to support decision making for McAuley.

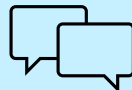
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1. Impacts on the longitudinal value of data collection: The shift to MARAM has resulted in implications for the FY21 evaluation, and going forward. It has resulted in the longitudinal value of the data collection in SRS across the past three years of evaluation being compromised, and the loss of several indicators that are important for McAuley (such as 'safe at home').
- 
2. Continual challenges to data collection: This year's evaluation has highlighted that several of the questions and data points are not consistently understood or entered by staff, and that staff turnover continues to pose a challenge for data literacy and consistent entry.

To ensure that McAuley's data collection remains fit-for-purpose, and that the future evaluation design can capture the full story of McAuley's services, the following next steps are recommended:

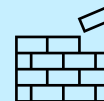
Development of a coherent **data strategy** that minimises duplication



A **consistent and empowering approach** to data collection



A focus on the **longitudinal story** for McAuley



Demonstrate the **effectiveness and efficiencies** of an integrated service model





Future directions

Specific recommendations for establishing a coherent data strategy

An overarching and coherent data strategy for McAuley would align MARAM, other program data not currently captured in SRS, case management notes and plans, and potential new data collection tools. This would allow McAuley to collect data on what's most important, better enable the evaluation to understand McAuley's longitudinal impact, and deliver important operational benefits for McAuley's day-to-day service delivery and decision-making. Specific recommendations are:

Develop and implement new data collection tools

- An **exit survey** could be developed to capture McAuley's key indicators of interest, mitigating the loss of indicators in the new MARAM assessment. This could include the 'safe at home' questions, and questions that directly ask about the impact of McAuley – helping to distinguish the attribution of changes to McAuley. An exit survey would also provide a more systematic picture of how women experience McAuley's integrated service model, and the holistic outcomes achieved in addition to the seven key outcome areas.
- A **longer term follow-up survey** (for instance, a telephone call six or twelve months after exit) would be ideal, although difficult – both from a data collection perspective, and particularly considering clients who are better off or had a greater positive impact from McAuley may be more likely to stay in touch with the program. However, follow-up data collection would allow McAuley to understand the longer-term accommodation outcomes, financial wellbeing outcomes, health and social wellbeing outcomes and family violence risks – providing a greater understanding of enduring outcomes that McAuley has generated for its clients.

Ensure program related data points are captured comprehensively

- Working with InfoExchange to ensure that **Person ID is recorded** for every client (and those for whom MARAM assessments are completed).

- Ensuring that clients' access and **interactions with multiple services are recorded in SRS**. The shift to recording Skills 4 Life data in SRS in FY22 presents a positive step in this direction. Further consideration should be given to how clients' interactions with connected services – such as the on-site nurse, psychologist, WEstJustice, Court Support 4 Kids, McAuley Works, and McAuley Learning – can be recorded systematically. Ensuring the completeness of this data will strengthen understandings of McAuley's integrated model and evidence of multiple uses for the ongoing evaluation.
- **Documenting McAuley Works case notes** to complement the GEMS system, and outcomes data captured for Jobs Victoria. This will highlight, and make explicit the additional tangible and holistic outcomes the service delivers for women. This should be targeted towards understanding and quantifying the 'inputs' of McAuley Works case management (for example, the time spent), tangible outcomes achieved (e.g. support with financial, legal, and wellbeing), and how the service empowers women to enter employment and remove barriers to independence.
- **Capturing McAuley Learning data** such as goals and achievements, number of sessions, areas covered, the support period for children, and ongoing engagement. This will enable understandings of how McAuley is delivering outcomes for children whose education is disrupted due to family violence – reducing intergenerational costs.

Ensure MARAM data is recorded at entry

- **Maintaining the data sovereignty of McAuley**, and the completeness of data in McAuley's SRS system, is increasingly important. As assessments at entry are conducted by the referring organisation, rather than McAuley case workers, this information does not currently exist in SRS.
- Recording MARAM entry data in SRS delivers greater oversight for McAuley, ensures completeness of case information, and ensures the possibility of outcomes analysis (by considering a matched sample of entry and exit data). It is unlikely that data entry will place significant additional burden on McAuley, as the assessment replaces existing McAuley tools – however, these ramifications must still be considered (see page overleaf).

Future directions

Specific recommendations for ensuring a consistent and empowering approach to data collection

The implementation of a coherent and comprehensive data strategy (proposed to include new data collection tools, recording of MARAM data at entry, and the integration of multiple data points from various programs not currently in SRS) poses numerous operational implications for how McAuley manages its data collection and storage processes.

As the volume of data collection grows – providing likely benefits for McAuley’s day-to-day decision making and benefits for the evaluation in understanding the organisation’s longitudinal impact – it is increasingly important that:

- 1) Data collection and recording processes are undertaken consistently throughout the various program areas, and
- 2) This exercise remains empowering for staff, with duplication or time burdens on staff minimised to the extent possible.

Specific recommendations for McAuley are:

Embed consistent data collection practices through organisational development and personnel

- **Consistent data collection practices should be communicated** to all program staff, particularly as data from new program areas begins to be captured in SRS.
- It should be acknowledged that the value of consistent data recording in case notes and SRS is already well-understood by McAuley staff, and these practices are being championed by various personnel in the organisation. However, challenges still remain in the form of inconsistent data entry, or staff turnover – and a renewed focus on the consistent, best-practices of data

entry would deliver immediate benefits at this juncture of time.

Consider a data manager role within the organisation

- As data entry processes becomes increasingly embedded into the a day-to-day roles of McAuley staff, this enables McAuley to build a stronger evidence base of its service delivery and impact. However, McAuley would benefit from a **dedicated data manager to implement and oversee the overarching data strategy** across the various program areas.
- A data manager role could be specified to involve data capacity building for staff, empowering them to collect and draw upon an increasingly broad range of evidence in their work, and taking on some responsibilities for the data that would minimise any potential time burdens on staff.

Future directions

Specific recommendations for building the longitudinal story for McAuley, and establishing its effectiveness and efficiencies

This year's evaluation has established that the baseline of the evaluation has been compromised through a change in data collection tools.

It is also noted that, moving forward, MARAM will not capture some key indicators that are important to McAuley ([see Appendix](#)). Importantly, the current measures, while comprehensive and standardised across agencies, do not truly reflect the scope of McAuley's services, ambitions, excellence in integrated service delivery, or the experiences and outcomes of clients through their pathways with McAuley.

Nonetheless, the return to a 'baseline' presents several opportunities at this stage of the evaluation journey, and moving forward.

There are opportunities for the evaluation design to be reconsidered, in line with a new data strategy, to ensure it remains robust, responsive - and able to tell the story of McAuley's effectiveness, efficiencies, and the outcomes it delivers for its clients through its integrated service delivery model.

Moving forward, this can serve as the foundation for a longitudinal overview of McAuley's impact.

Specific recommendations are:

Reviewing the key outcomes

- The seven key **evaluation themes and outcomes could be redesigned** to be in line with McAuley's broader offerings and systems approach.
- **Outcomes could be simplified and centred** around McAuley's enduring/sustainable outcomes (safety,

independence, reduced likelihood to return to unsafe environment)

- Outcomes could **shift from the individual level to outcomes through a systems lens**. While McAuley's current assessment tools and MARAM measures individual level outcomes, there is the potential to establish overarching and holistic outcomes. These which may relate to women's level of independence, stability in accommodation after leaving McAuley, preconditions for being safe at home, and more longitudinal outcomes.
- **Outcomes can be focused on understanding McAuley's impact**, in addition to the individual level social determinants.

Developing several impact measures

- **New purpose-built measures should be established, and aligned to new outcome areas**. This would be collected through new data collection tools.
- **Quantitative measures and qualitative client voice can be developed** and integrated for greater alignment to McAuley's integrated services, mitigate the impacts of lost indicators through the shift to MARAM, and strengthen the evidence base that MARAM and McAuley's support period data provides.

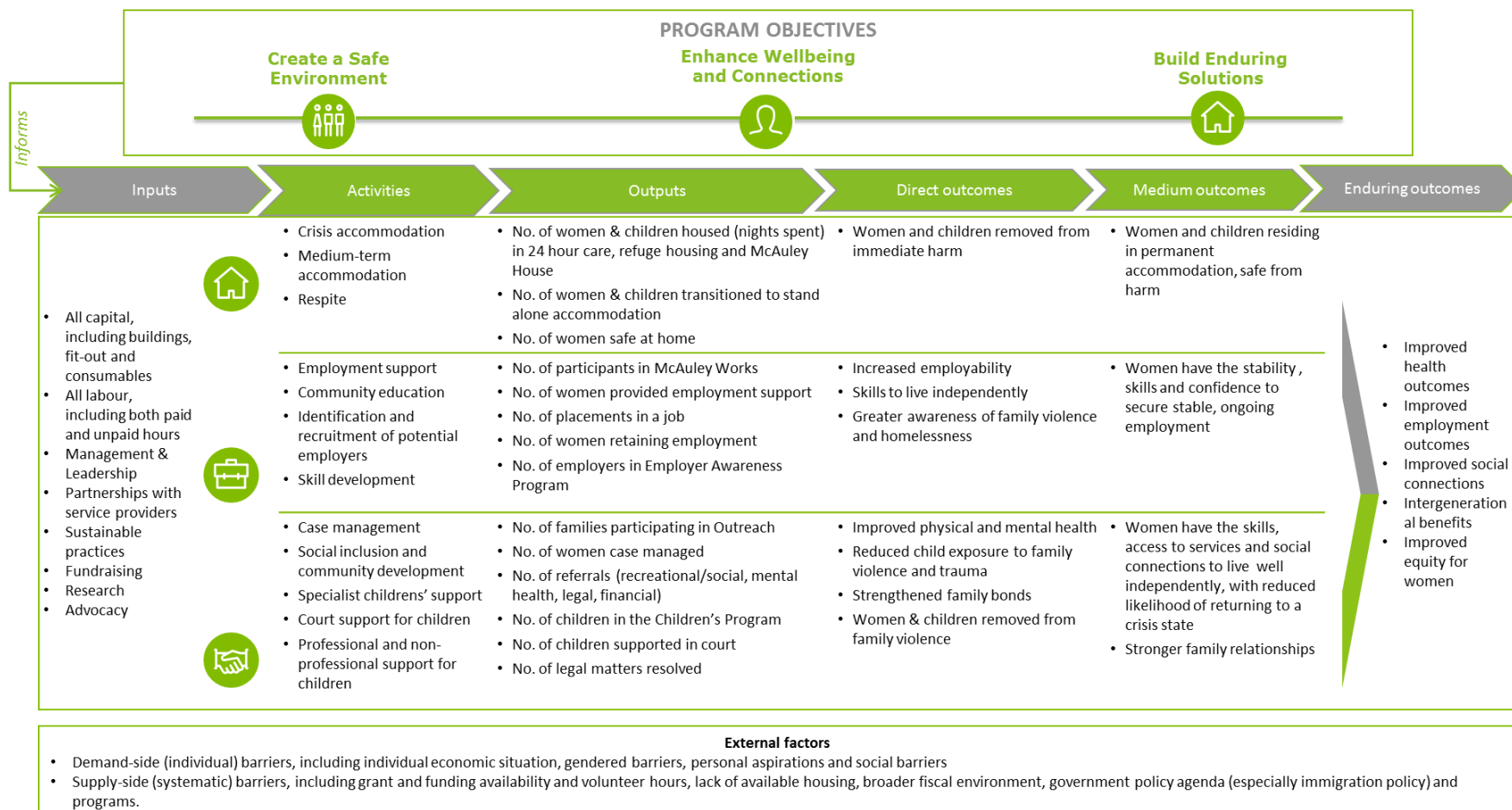
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Appendix

McAuley's current program logic

Updated program logic (2017)



Implications of the shift to MARAM

Key indicators not currently captured

These key indicators, previously captured in McAuley's Family Violence Risk Assessment, Needs Assessment, and Child Risk Assessment, are not captured in MARAM, or exist in a different format.

These are:

McAuley Assessment Tool	Current Indicator
FVRA	Safe to remain at home
FVRA	Safe to return home
FVRA	Can you rate your current level of fear?
FVRA	Assessed Level of Risk
NA	How would the client rate their health?
CRA	Are there concerns regarding the safety of the child in the perpetrator's care?
CRA	Is the child currently receiving counselling?
CRA	Has your child had any positive social connections at school or with other services?

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