

## **Bridges Home Living Profile**

### **About Us and Our History**

Bridges Home Living assists people who have a disability to move into living arrangements and build community connections that most suit their interests and needs. Available in the metropolitan and south west areas of Western Australia the service is a partnership between Anglicare WA, Foundation Housing and Silver Chain. These organisations are combining their expertise in rental housing, home and community support to offer a range of flexible options.

Guiding all three organisations is a commitment to assist people with disability to live good lives at home and in the community – lives which foster health and well-being, which build friendships and which offer opportunities to participate and contribute in neighbourhoods and communities.

Anglicare WA works with people, their families and communities to enhance their abilities to cope with the challenges of life and relationships and to strengthen their resilience and capacity to thrive. Anglicare WA offers services in six broad areas; Relationships, Finances, Housing, Community, Youth and Training.

Silver Chain is one of the largest in-home health and care providers in Australia and has been established in WA for over 100 years. Silver Chain assists people of all ages including people with disability to maintain or regain their health and independence while living at home. A range of medical, health care, social and home help services are available.

Foundation Housing develops and manages quality rental housing for people on low incomes. As one of the largest affordable housing providers in WA, Foundation Housing assists over 2,000 households by providing an efficient and professional housing management service which assists tenants to sustain their tenancies. Based primarily in the metropolitan area, Foundation Housing works closely with community housing providers in the south west for people wanting to live in that region.

## Services we can offer

Bridges Home Living helps people with disability develop the type of living arrangement and community activities they would most like to have. Anglicare WA, Foundation Housing and Silver Chain work closely together with the person, their families and communities, and other organisations to provide a unique mix of opportunities.

The main features of Bridges Home Living include:

### 1. Finding and managing a home

Foundation Housing will help the person to lease a house, duplex or unit and to manage their tenancy agreements.

### 2. Coordinating and supporting every day home living

Anglicare WA Support Services include:

#### a. **Service design**

Bridges Home Living work with people to develop a practical plan for future living. A plan is developed by the person with disability and the people who know them best - family, friends, mentors, other residents and staff.

#### b. **Shared Living**

Some people with disability want to live with one or more other people who do not have a disability either in their home or in the sharer's home. Home sharers spend a good part of their lives with the individual and are selected very carefully by them, their family and Bridges Home Living staff. Time out for home sharers and holidays for individuals are planned regularly throughout each year to make sure the relationship remains strong. Back up support is on hand when unexpected home sharer commitments arise.

#### c. **Individual Living or Sharing Together**

People with disability may want to live alone or share with another person who has a disability and be supported by staff visiting the home daily or sleeping at the home each night.

#### d. **Living with family members**

People with disability may want to live in the same home with family members or in separate accommodation alongside.

### 3. Short term personal, health and domestic support

Silver Chain supports people with short term personal, health (medical, nursing, allied health) and domestic care at home. These services are available when needs arise which require specialised care over and

above every day home living arrangements assisting people to live independently in their community.

Most, if not all people with disability will be involved in home-based community and recreational activities during the week. Community activities, events and volunteer work complement home living and can be supported by the Anglicare WA Bridges program.

People with disability fund this support separately to Bridges Home Living. Alternatively, individuals may wish to use another organisation to provide this support. If so, Bridges Home Living will work closely with the other organisation involved.

### **Our experience**

Bridges Home Living has been developed from the highly successful Bridges program developed in 2003 to support people with disability at home and in their communities. Bridges currently provides support for 23 people with a broad range of intellectual and physical disabilities aged 16 to 70 years. A team of 35 Support Workers work flexible hours to meet the unique requirements of each person and family.

The Bridges program received high praise when it was independently evaluated in 2011 as part of meeting the quality standards required by the Disability Services Commission.

Evaluators reported that Bridges:

- Focused on the goals and aspirations of people with disability.
- Offered a wide range of activities which reflect the individual focus of the program.
- Supported people with disability to increase their status as valued members of the community by facilitating their role as volunteers and contributors to community activities.
- Maintained a person-centred focus while growing the program.
- Attracted support workers with a high level of qualifications and experience.
- Transferred experiences and values built through operating in rural areas into metropolitan areas.
- Had a positive impact on many people who use words like: 'Life saving', 'My support worker is brilliant' and 'Turning point in our life.'

Bridges Home Living provides the same quality of service strengthened by the additional expertise of Silver Chain and Foundation Housing.

Silver Chain offers care provided by trained professional staff, supported by robust clinical governance and backed by a research team to continually improve services.

Foundation Housing assists people to find a house or unit that meets their requirements and links them to a Housing Coordinator who helps manage all aspects of the tenancy including immediate assistance if circumstances place the tenancy at risk.

### **What it costs (service and price)**

It is difficult to provide accurate costs for Bridges Home Living as these will vary according to the unique needs, wishes and requirements of a person with disability and their family.

The following costs provide a rough guide only.

#### **1. Finding and managing a home**

The person with disability pays rent from their disability support pension to cover home maintenance and tenancy costs.

#### **2. Coordinating and supporting every day home living**

- a) **Service design** – A one-off cost of between \$1200 to \$1500 for interviews, planning sessions, and a written plan. This is not needed if a similar plan has recently been completed.
- b) **Shared Living with host sharer, couple or family**
  - Person with disability pays board and lodging costs from disability pension.
  - Host sharer receives carer reimbursement costs (generally around \$170 per day or between \$45,000 and \$65,000 tax free per annum).
  - Host sharer providing periods of respite receives carer reimbursement costs (generally around \$225 per day or up to \$23,000 tax free per annum).
  - Bridges Home Living senior support worker provides regular supervision and training (approximately \$10,000 per annum)

**c) Shared Living with host sharer or couple in individual's home (co-resident)**

- Person with disability receives rent and shared living expenses from person or people sharing their home (co-resident).
- Co-resident is employed by the person with disability and/or their family and receives support payments similar to host sharer (payments are taxable).
- Respite can be arranged in a range of ways with costs similar to host sharer respite.
- Bridges Home Living senior support worker provides regular supervision and training.

**d) Individual Living or Sharing Together**

People with disability living together share rent and living expenses. Costs will vary according to the unique circumstances and needs of the individual or people with disability. As a guide, Bridges Home Living support workers provide 24 hour support for home and community living from \$550 per day.

**e) Living with family members**

Costs will vary depending on the needs of the person with disability and family for support at home, community support and respite. As above, Bridges Home Living support workers provide 24 hour support for home and community living from \$550 per day.

**3. Short term personal, health and domestic support**

Hourly rate dependent upon complexity of care, skill level and numbers of staff required.