CONTESTED HOUSING LANDSCAPES?
SOCIAL INCLUSION, DE-INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND HOUSING POLICY IN AUSTRALIA.
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Deinstitutionalization represents fundamental change in support and housing arrangements for people.

In Australia the focus has been on location and non-housing supports. Does not recognize that deinstitutionalization represents a radical re-housing for people.

Housing plays a major role in social inclusion – with institutionalization being at the extreme end of social exclusion
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Aim: To explore deinstitutionalization as a re-housing process.

Based on national research project funded by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute.

Interviewed 46 key informants in disability and housing agencies at state and territory levels.
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Findings:

- Deinstitutionalization began in Australia in the 1970’s.
  In 2000, 6000 people in institutional care (self-reported, varied definitions)

- Deinstitutionalization slowing down with most remaining residents having complex needs – ‘hard to place’
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- Countercurrents/influences on process:

  2. Over reliance on ‘formulaic’ housing i.e.. Group homes. Reflects the dominance of disability services in deinstitutionalization process. Increasing emphasis on ‘supported living’
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3. Independent living and individual funding. Deinstitutionalization process criticized by IL:
   ➔ Reliance on Group homes which limit choice and control
   ➔ Assuming that pwd should live together
   ➔ Granting funding to agencies rather than the person.
4. Industrial Relations.
   Opposition from unionized groups in institutions have delayed some closures eg. Willow Court Centre/Derwent Royal Hospital in Tasmania.

5. NIMBYism
   Based on prejudice and misinformation. “Avoidance strategies’ which can lead to ‘ghettoisation’ or pwd ending up in poorer areas.
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6. Transinstitutionalization
   Inadequate housing/support funding leading to pwid entering other institutions – prisons/psychiatric hospitals.

7. Homelessness.
   Increased levels of homelessness among pwid (US). Evidence sketchy for Australia, but significant users of homeless services.
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- Congregate care facilities will remain a feature of disability/housing supports – especially for people with higher levels of need.

- Direct funding not a panacea for housing/support needs. But could form an important part of the support framework enabling choice in accommodation type and support.
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- **Policy dilemma.**
  - Housing and Disability policy and funding disconnect
  - Joint initiatives dominated by disability agencies
  - Focus on support needs – housing after thought
  - Over reliance on simple model of group home
  - Danger that Group home becomes blue print.
  - Need for recognition of fundamental role of housing in process – major rehousing project
  - Community Care housing cannot develop at tangent to mainstream housing policy
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- Involvement of housing services in Ireland - Housing for pwid in Ireland – HSE funding

- Development of housing associations for pwid

- Future of congregated housing for pwid in Ireland – parent wishes?

- How far are we along the road of direct payments – agencies interests/structures?