

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Age-Specific Housing

Professor Peter Phibbs of the Urban Research Centre is working in collaboration with Associate Professors Catherine Bridge and Bruce Judd of the University of New South Wales along with researchers from Murdoch University to investigate the age-specific housing market in Australia. This project is funded by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Ltd.

'As the population ages, affordable housing and care services will be in greater demand,' says Professor Phibbs. 'By retirement age some people will not own their own home, will have few savings and have little or no superannuation. They will have minimal capacity to cover increases in accommodation, living costs and increasing care needs without the leverage of equity from owning a home. The availability of affordable accommodation and care for older people has been adversely affected by the decline of social housing, boarding houses, caravan parks and affordable private rental properties. In addition, many new retirement village developments are targeted towards "luxury markets" and do not cater for people with few financial resources. Overseas experience has shown that housing with care provided promotes independence and high resident satisfaction. Care security and affordability is very important for older people on lower incomes and this study will examine in detail the condition of the current Australian age-specific housing market and future trends in order to inform policy makers at the state and national level.'

A literature review will examine the age-specific housing market in Australia and the demands for such housing. Quantitative analysis will use census and survey data from the age-specific housing and aged care sectors to determine the likely increases in demand. Housing providers will complete a survey questionnaire and qualitative in-depth interviews will involve residents of age-specific housing, as well as housing providers and national



and state key policy stakeholders. Analysis of the results will help determine the current and future needs of older residents and the possible challenges facing age-specific housing providers.

With rising rental costs, a greater need for more care services and the number of older people in rental housing predicted to more than double in about fifteen years, Australian policy makers and the age-specific housing market – both public and private – need to adequately cater for the future needs of the ageing population. This means affordable housing and appropriate access to care services for older people, regardless of demographics and financial resources.

Project Title: Age specific housing markets and housing and care for low to moderate income older persons.

Funding has been set at: \$10,720

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