The Spinal Cord Injuries Response (SCIR) is an initiative of the Department of Housing and Public Works and Queensland Health. The initiative aims to assist individuals with a newly acquired spinal cord injury who are being discharged from the Spinal Injuries Unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital following their acute care and rehabilitation. The initiative supports an individual’s safe and timely discharge from hospital to home and sustains their capacity to remain living in their community.

Eligibility
To be eligible for social housing assistance under SCIR you must:

- meet social housing eligibility criteria; and
- have a newly acquired spinal cord injury; and
- be a current patient in the Spinal Injuries Unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, or be undergoing an initial rehabilitation program with the Spinal Injuries Unit.

Priority social housing assistance will be provided to eligible clients where they are not able to return to their former residence. For more information, see the fact sheet Eligibility for housing assistance.

How do I apply for Social Housing?
Your Social Worker from the Spinal Injuries Unit will make a referral to the department on your behalf so your eligibility for housing assistance can be assessed. A Buranda Housing Service Centre staff member will visit the Spinal Injuries Unit to help you complete an application for housing assistance. To complete your application they will discuss the following with you:

- your household’s total income and assets (e.g. money in the bank, investments, property ownership and other assets);
- your living situation prior to your spinal cord injury;
- the housing needs you or your household may have and your bedroom entitlements;
- where you want or need to live;
- the process for sourcing a suitable housing solution, with modifications if required.

If you are eligible for social housing assistance, the department will start sourcing a suitable property. Your Social Worker will keep you informed of progress on this. While the department will endeavour to find a suitable housing solution in time for your discharge, this may not always be possible due to the lack of appropriate accessible properties. If this occurs, your Social Worker and the Housing Service Centre will discuss interim housing options with you.
How much rent will I have to pay?

Rent is assessed on a formula that considers all household incomes and whether the types of income received are assessable or non-assessable. The market rent is the maximum rent you can pay and is based on the rent charged for a similar property in the private rental market.

Housing Service Centre staff can estimate how much your rent may be when you are made an offer of housing assistance.

Modifications to Social Housing properties

If you are eligible for housing assistance, a departmental Occupational Therapist will conduct a home assessment with you to assess your health, safety and independence needs. The Occupational Therapist’s recommendations will be discussed with relevant staff of the Spinal Injuries Unit and the Transitional Rehabilitation Team. The department will search for available social housing properties that are matched to your housing needs.

Home modifications may be recommended to help you live safely and independently. The types of home modifications available include:

- changes to bathroom, toilets and kitchens;
- installation of ramps, grab rails and hand rails;
- other modifications to suit your needs based on the Housing Service Centre Occupational Therapist’s assessment.

Housing Services is committed to ensuring successful housing outcomes for all clients. Staff will work with you and relevant agencies to identify your housing needs and determine an appropriate social housing solution.

Further information

All SCIR Social Housing referrals are made via the Buranda Housing Service Centre. For further information on SCIR referrals, please contact the Buranda Housing Service Centre on 3405 5300. The following fact sheets may also assist:

- Applying for housing assistance
- Eligibility for housing assistance
- Housing assistance for people with a disability
- Housing entitlements
- How to work out your rent
- Waiting for housing assistance