



**advance to zero**

# Frequently asked questions

## Advance to Zero Database Transition

### Using the database now

#### **Why should services continue entering data in the database?**

The database continues to play an important role in supporting local service coordination. Information entered to the By Name List helps communities identify people who may require housing or support, understand who else may be working with someone, and coordinate responses more effectively.

Maintaining current information also reduces the risk of duplication across services and helps communities track progress. If data entry stops, a significant backlog of information would build up and place additional pressure on the workforce later.

#### **How is the data currently being used?**

Even while reporting is being improved, the database remains a key tool used in coordinated response meetings and By Name List discussions. Identified information supports services to understand what supports individuals require and helps to plan to address support needs and housing responses for people experiencing homelessness.

#### **What does “cleaning and updating existing data” mean?**

Following the transition to the new AtoZ database, some records require review to ensure the information is accurate, up to date and consistent across our practice.

Cleaning and updating data may include confirming current information about people on the By Name List, updating missing fields, and ensuring records reflect the person’s current housing or support status. This process also supports improved reporting and ensures future dashboards accurately reflect what is happening on the ground.

We recognise that this work can place additional pressure on services, and we are already planning around what support will be provided to communities to assist with this, including targeted hands-on support, practice guidance, and using existing coordination meetings to review and update records collaboratively.

This work will help ensure the database remains a useful tool for service coordination while also strengthening the quality of future reporting.



**How do we do an update for someone on the database, to keep them active?** (*We used to do 'located by service provider', what do we do now?*).

Currently, there isn't a specific action required to keep someone active in the database (previously recorded as "located by service provider"). The inactive protocol is not currently in operation in the new system.

For now, we encourage services to continue updating people's information whenever you have contact or new information, to ensure records remain as accurate and current as possible.

The developers are still determining how the inactive process will function in the new system. Once this feature is finalised and activated, guidance will be provided on how updates should be recorded to keep people active in the database.

## Dashboards and reporting

### Why can't I see the current dashboard?

Public dashboards rely on consistent definitions, reporting logic and reliable data. As outlined above, work is currently underway to align definitions across states and rebuild data quality following the migration to the new AtoZ database.

As part of the transition, data from the previous system was migrated into the new platform. However, it would not have been appropriate to automatically reactivate people's records without transparency about how their information is being stored and used in the new system. Individuals must have the opportunity to provide informed consent before their record is reactivated. In some communities this has required significant effort to reconnect with people and confirm consent. While this has taken time, taking a transparent and ethical approach was the right course of action.

Public dashboards will be restored once data quality and reporting definitions are aligned to ensure the information released is accurate and trusted.

### When will the new dashboards be released?

The aim is to release reliable public dashboards within the next six months. This timeframe reflects the work required to finalise shared definitions, validate data quality and ensure reporting accurately reflects what is happening on the ground.

- **What should we use in the meantime?** If you are looking for specific data, we encourage you to email [data@saaeh.org.au](mailto:data@saaeh.org.au) and we can assess whether the data required can be confidently provided, and if there are caveats to accompany the data. Other options include -
  - Census data (currently 5 years out of date)
  - The AtoZ Public By Name List Dashboards (collected from government and non-government funded organisations in a locally defined area, and maintained until May 2025) - [AZP Monthly Dashboard – South Australian Alliance to End Homelessness](#)



- Specialist Homelessness Services data (collected from Government funded organisations only) until December 2025 - [Specialist Homelessness Services: monthly data, Monthly data - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)

## The transition and improvements

### What work is happening to improve the database?

Work is currently underway across states to align definitions and reporting logic, strengthen governance arrangements and improve the usability of the database for frontline workers. Feedback from communities using the system is informing many of these improvements.

The AAEH has a technical team and National Data Lead supporting this work and has recently employed a new technical specialist who has already begun implementing changes that are currently being tested.

The first set of priorities are aligning key definitions within the system so that inflow and outflow can be accurately counted, reinstating the inactive protocol, implementing appropriate mandatory fields, and strengthening reporting and data access

### How can stakeholders provide feedback?

There will be opportunities for service providers and partners to participate in database consultation and provide information about their experiences using the new AtoZ database. Further information about how to participate will be shared soon.

### What happened to all the historical housing information from the old database?

- The historical data is currently held by AAEH in an unstructured format, which means it cannot be easily used in its current state.
- Addressing this has been identified as a priority in our database issue log.
- We are currently exploring options to reconstruct the data so it can be incorporated into the AAEH database.

### Will customisable team view be possible in the new database?

Currently, workers cannot create customisable team views themselves in the new database. However, if you email [data@saaeh.org.au](mailto:data@saaeh.org.au), the team can generate this information for you.

Setting up custom team views is not currently available within the system, but this has been recorded on the issues log and will be considered as part of future development and prioritisation.

### Why can't we just go back to the old database?

The previous database was generously provided in-kind by Micah Projects (QLD). As the movement grew, Micah Projects determined that the platform was not sustainable or designed to support the scale required for expanding state and national efforts. They made the decision to transition to a new system to support their own growth in Queensland.



As the previous platform was being phased out, remaining on that system was not a viable long-term option. The transition to a new database was therefore necessary to ensure sustainability, scalability and continued development of the Advance to Zero approach.