



Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Symposium Discussion
APSAD Canberra 2024





Ngunnawal, Ngunawal and Ngambri country. Photo: Steve Bittinger Source: The National Museum of Australia nma.gov.au

Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Paige Webb Housekeeping

Clare Rushton Presentation 1

Pauline Stewart Presentation 2

Sally Boardman Presentation 3

Heidi Gray Presentation 4

Julie Perrin Discussion time

Paige Webb Session wrap up and additional resources

Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Clare Rushton **1. Help-seeking among Australian families affected by a loved one's alcohol and other drug use: A cross-sectional study**

Pauline Stewart **2. The 5-Step Method: Service delivery for impacted family members**

Sally Boardman **3. SMART family and friends barriers to service access, supports and recommendations**

Heidi Gray **4. The effectiveness of online counselling for rural family members of people struggling with substance use**

Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Clare Rushton **1. Help-seeking among Australian families affected by a loved one's alcohol and other drug use: A cross-sectional study**

Pauline Stewart **2. The 5-Step Method: Service delivery for impacted family members**

Sally Boardman **3. SMART family and friends barriers to service access, supports and recommendations**

Heidi Gray **4. The effectiveness of online counselling for rural family members of people struggling with substance use**

Help-seeking among Australian families affected by a loved one's alcohol and other drug use: A cross-sectional study

Clare Rushton
University of Wollongong
cr566@uowmail.edu.au



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

Families in Australia

- Families experience stress, strain and burden and require support in their own right.
- Research to date in Australia has been limited to smaller -scale studies.
- Little is still known about Australian families' needs and experiences with help-seeking.

Study Aims :

To describe affected families in Australia and understand their experience and attitudes around help -seeking.

Method

Design: Cross-sectional survey.

Inclusion criteria:

- Australian residents (18+ years), affected by a loved one's alcohol or drug use.

Procedure:

- Recruitment from Sept 2023-April 2024.
- 20-min, administered online.
- Chance to win 1 of 5 \$50 gift vouchers.

The Family and Friends Survey

Is someone you care about using alcohol or other drugs?

Worried about a loved one's drinking or drug use?



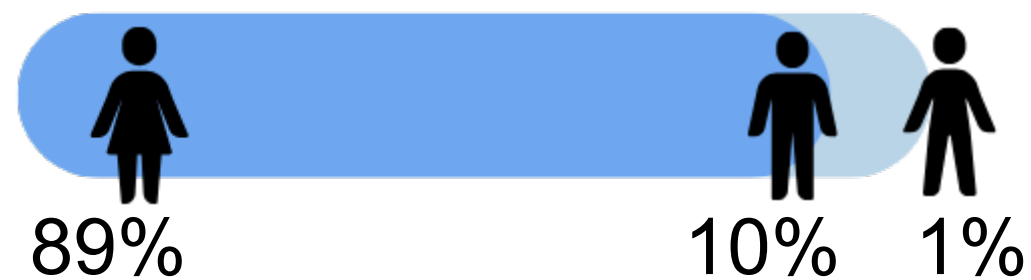
Social Sciences HREC Approval: 2023/093

The Survey:

- Developed in consult with lived-experience experts.
 - *Demographic characteristics* (e.g. age, gender, Person's drug of concern)
 - *Validated measures* (e.g. burden, distress, personal AOD use)
 - *Other items* (e.g. help-seeking, barriers, preferences)

Participant Characteristics (N=1066)

Gender



Employed



66%

University graduate



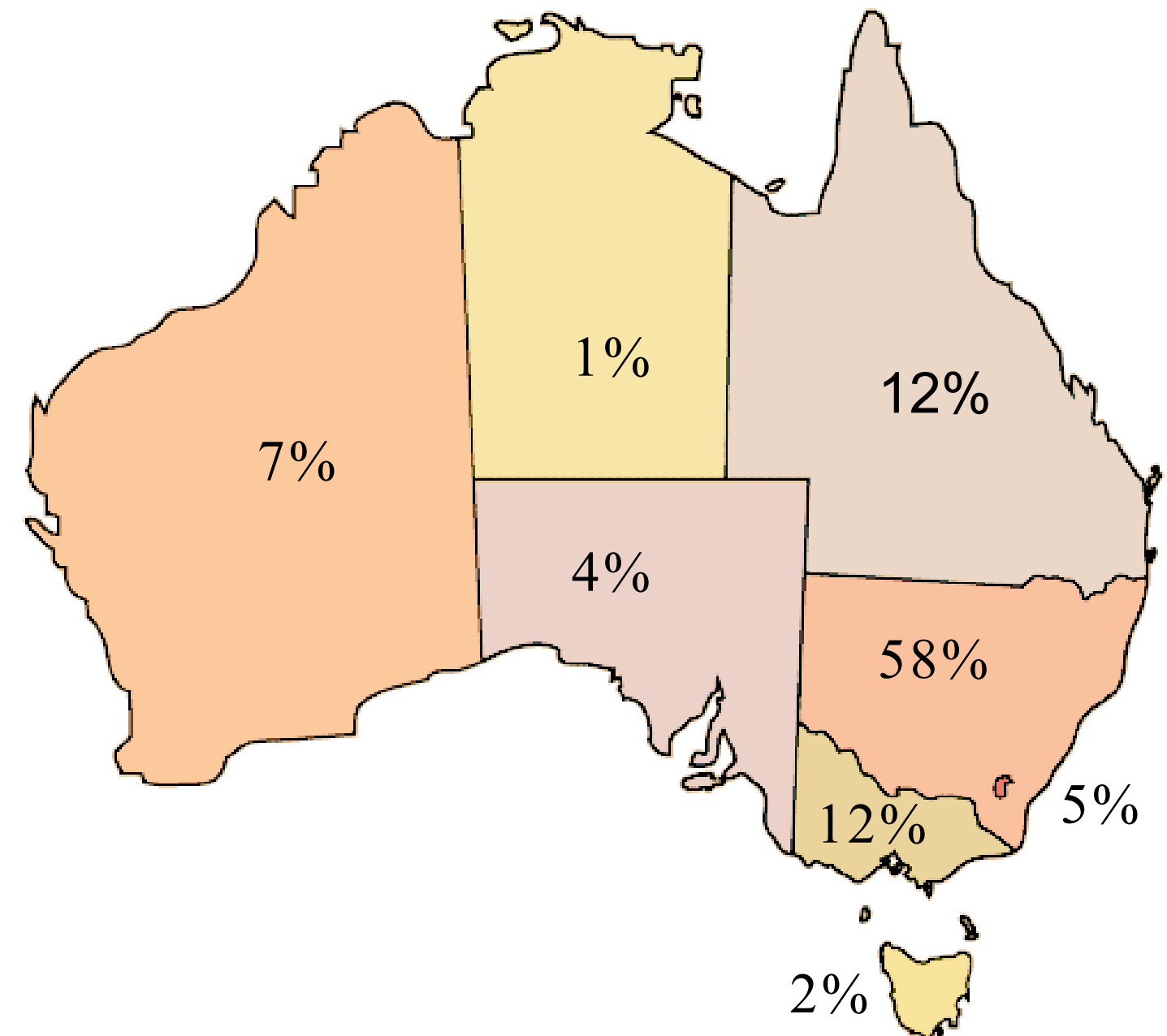
55%

Median age

54 years

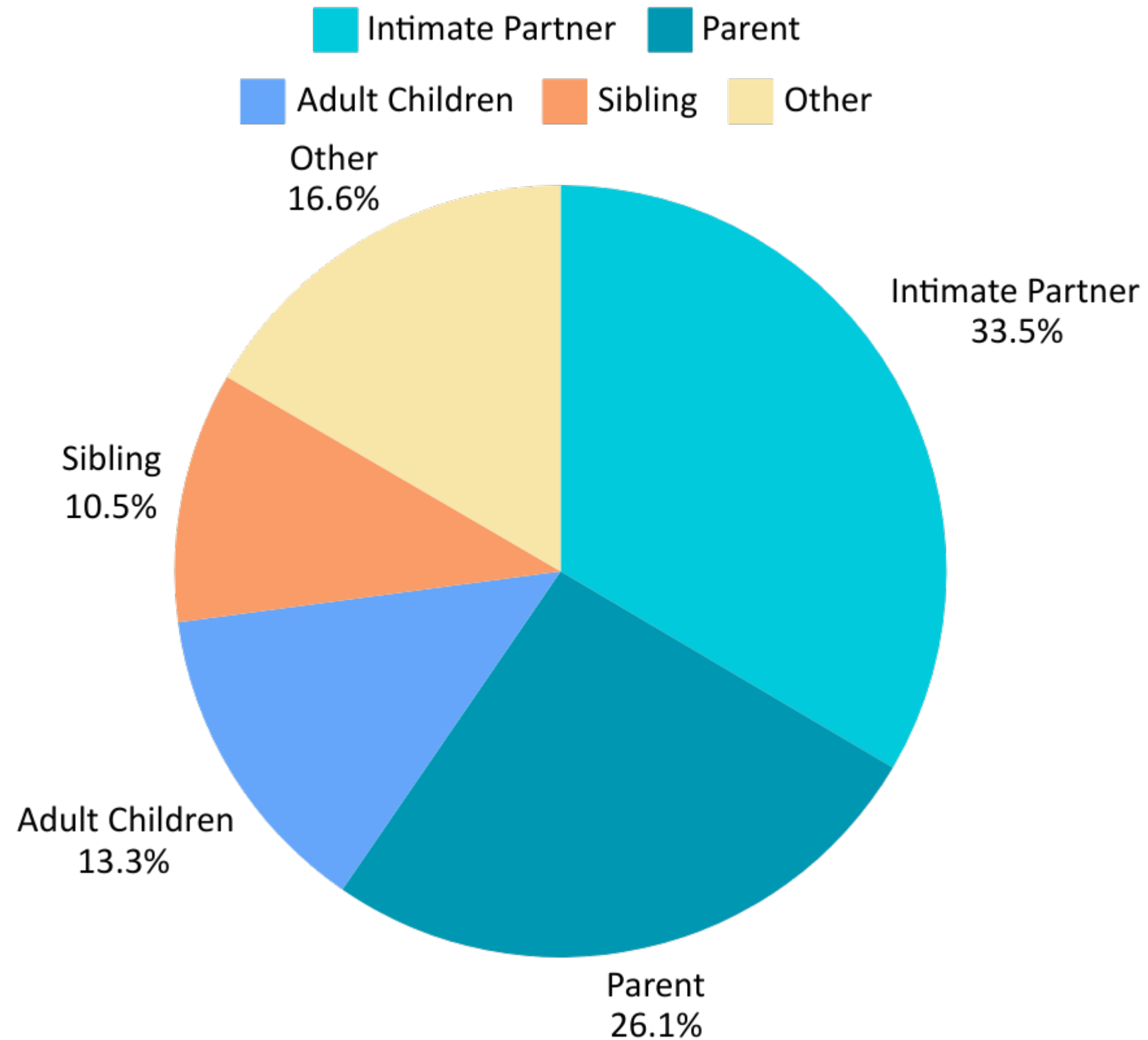
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

4%



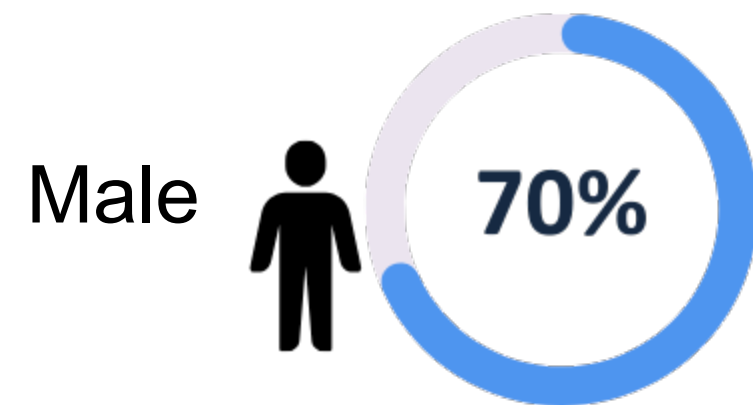
Participant Characteristics (N=1066)

Relationship to Person
using alcohol/drugs:

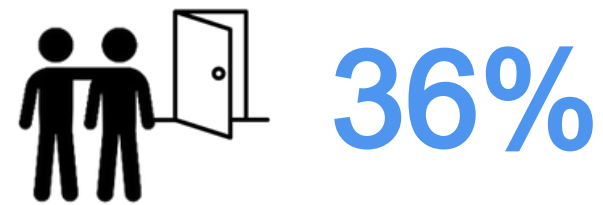


Participant Characteristics (N=1066)

Person using alcohol/drugs:



Accessed treatment



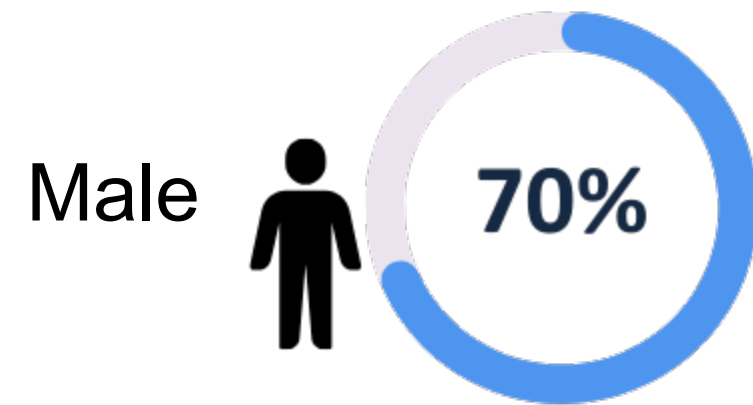
Injecting
drug use

17%

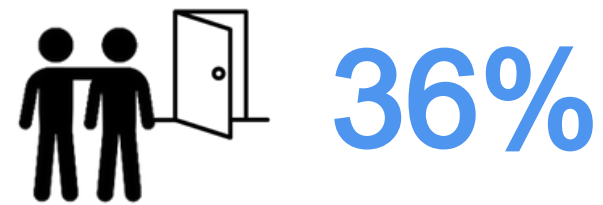
Characteristic	Percentage
Injecting drug use	17%

Participant Characteristics (N=1066)

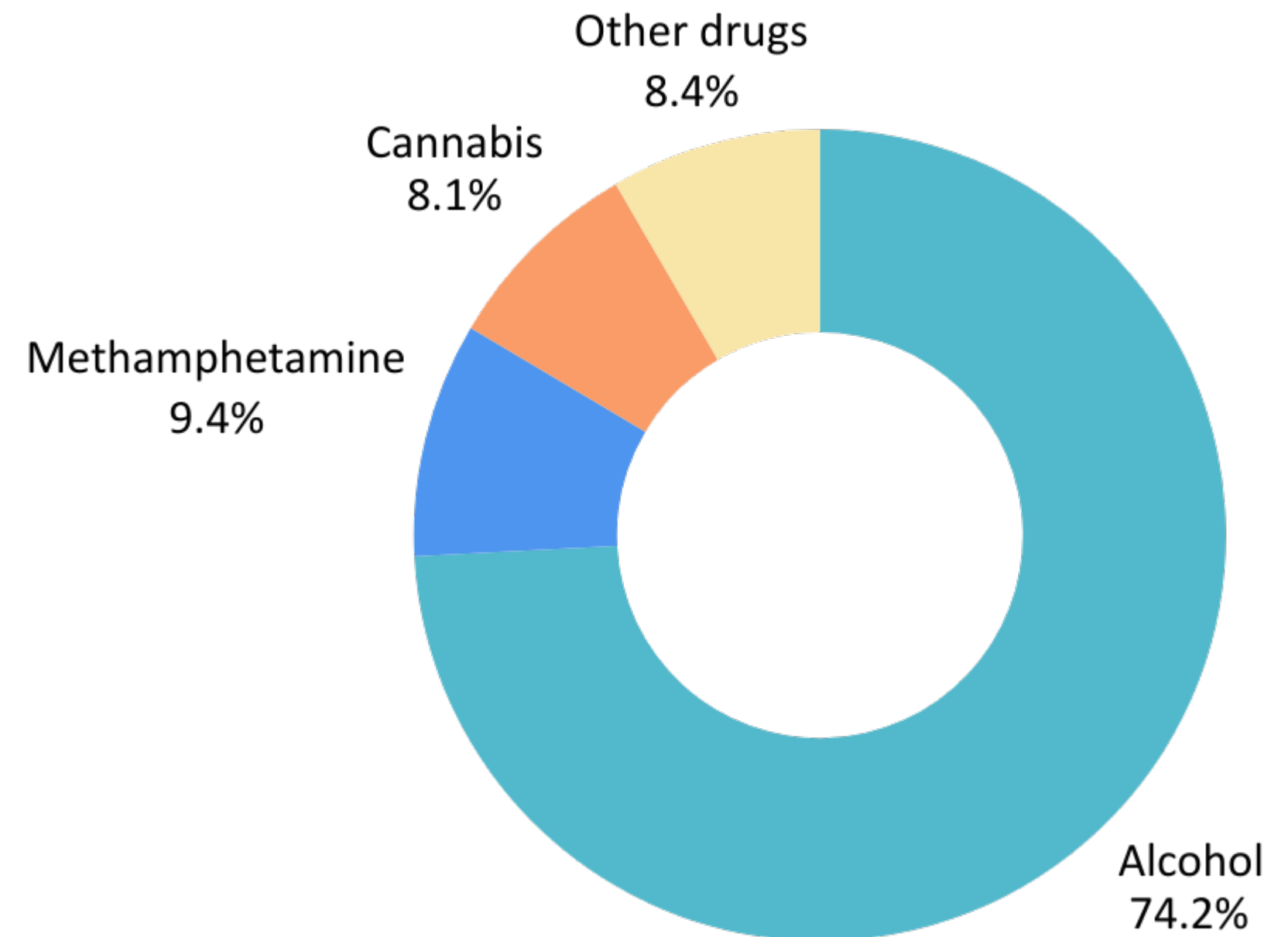
Person using alcohol/drugs:



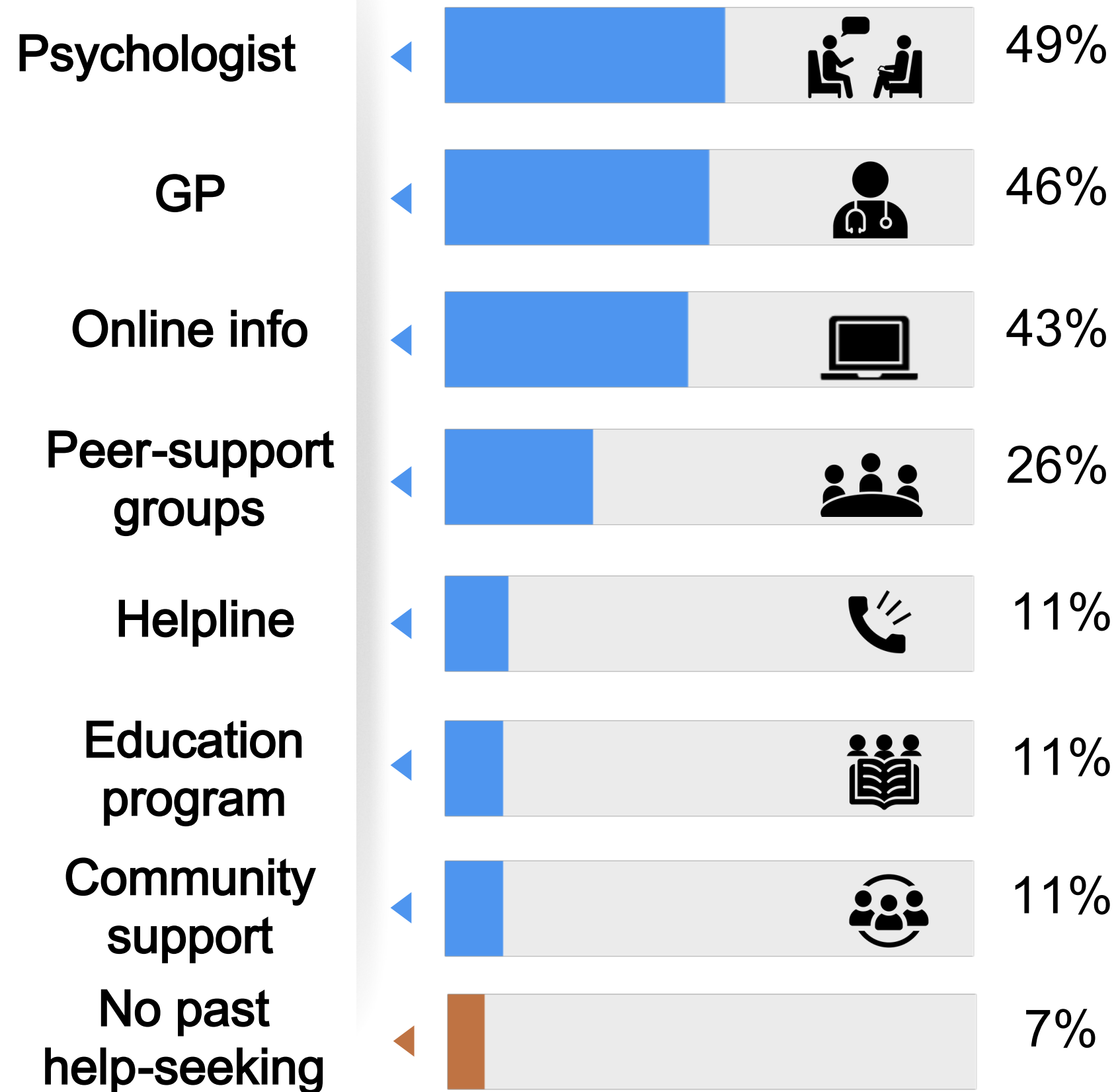
Accessed treatment



Injecting
drug use 17%

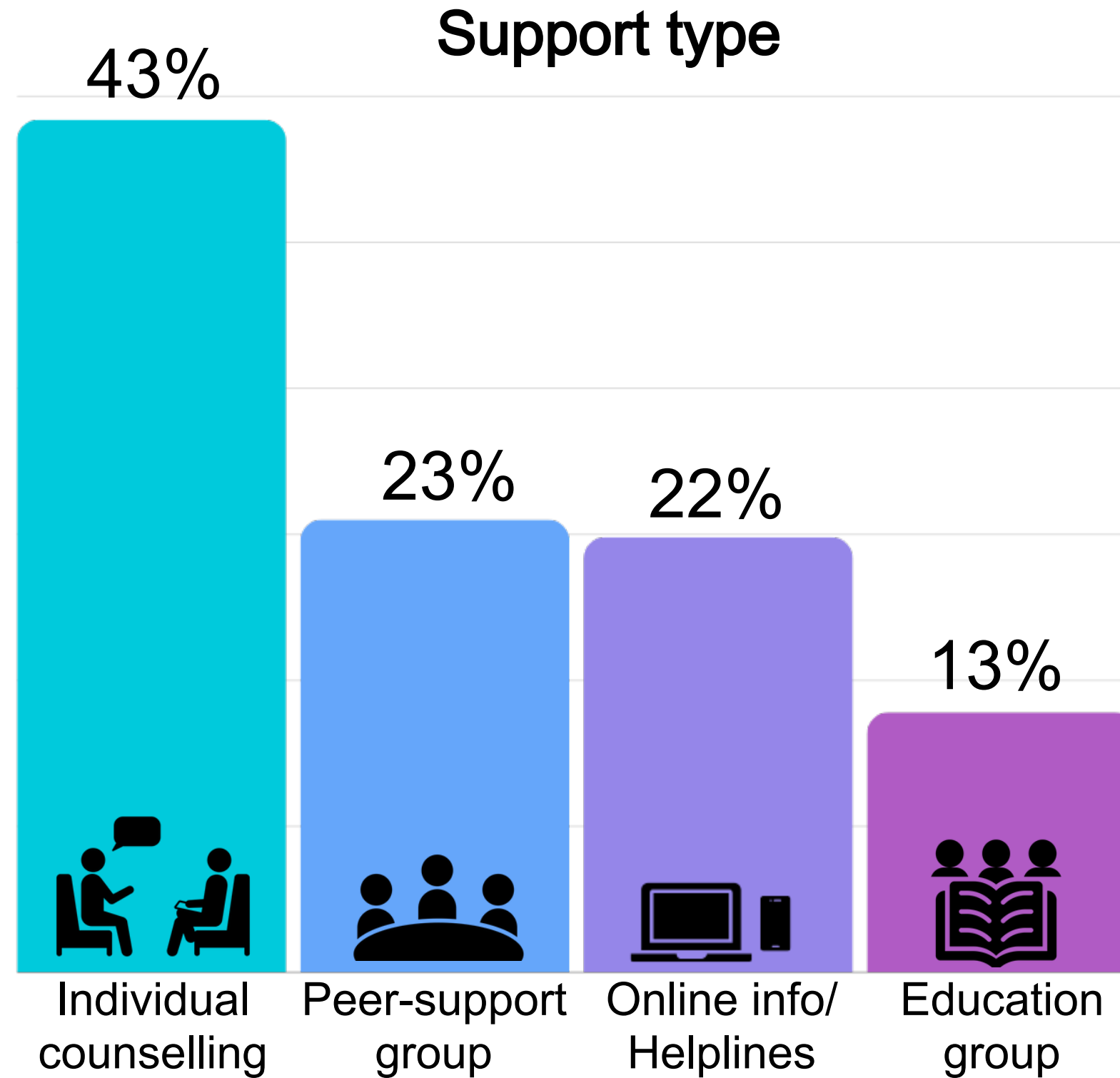
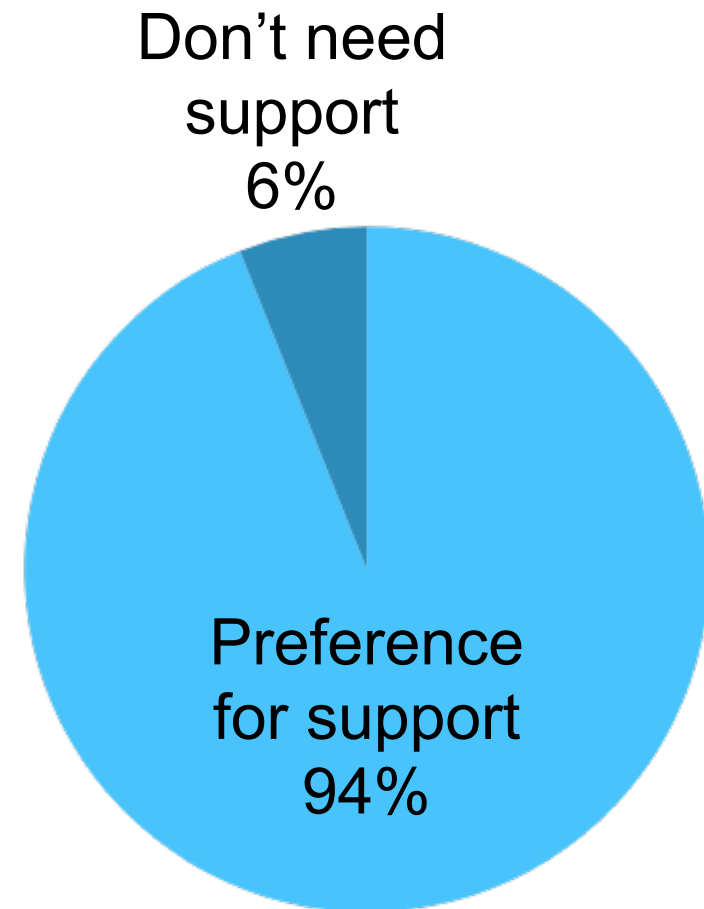


Past help-seeking (N=858)



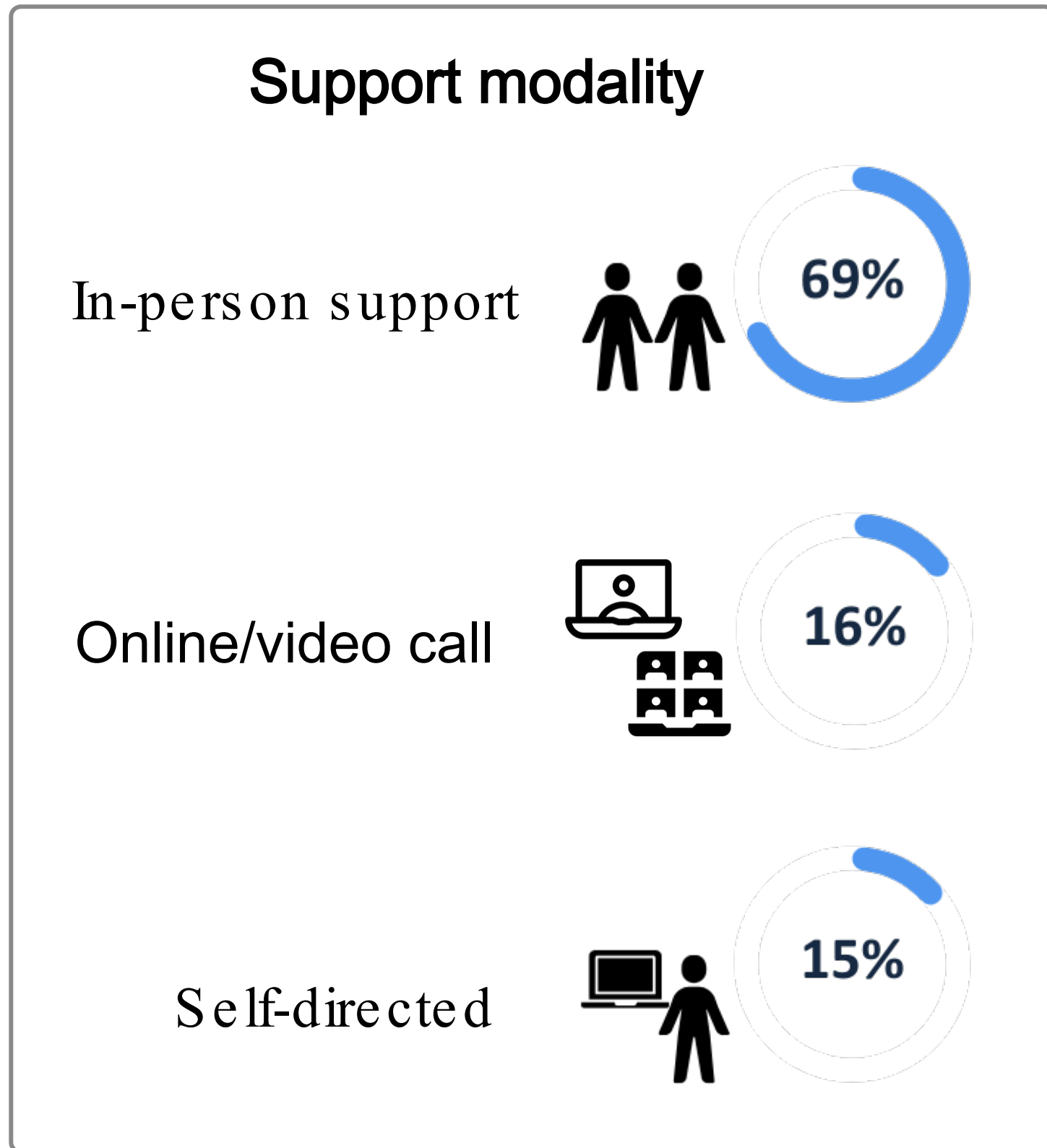
*Participants able to select **all** relevant options.

Future help-seeking preferences (N=726)



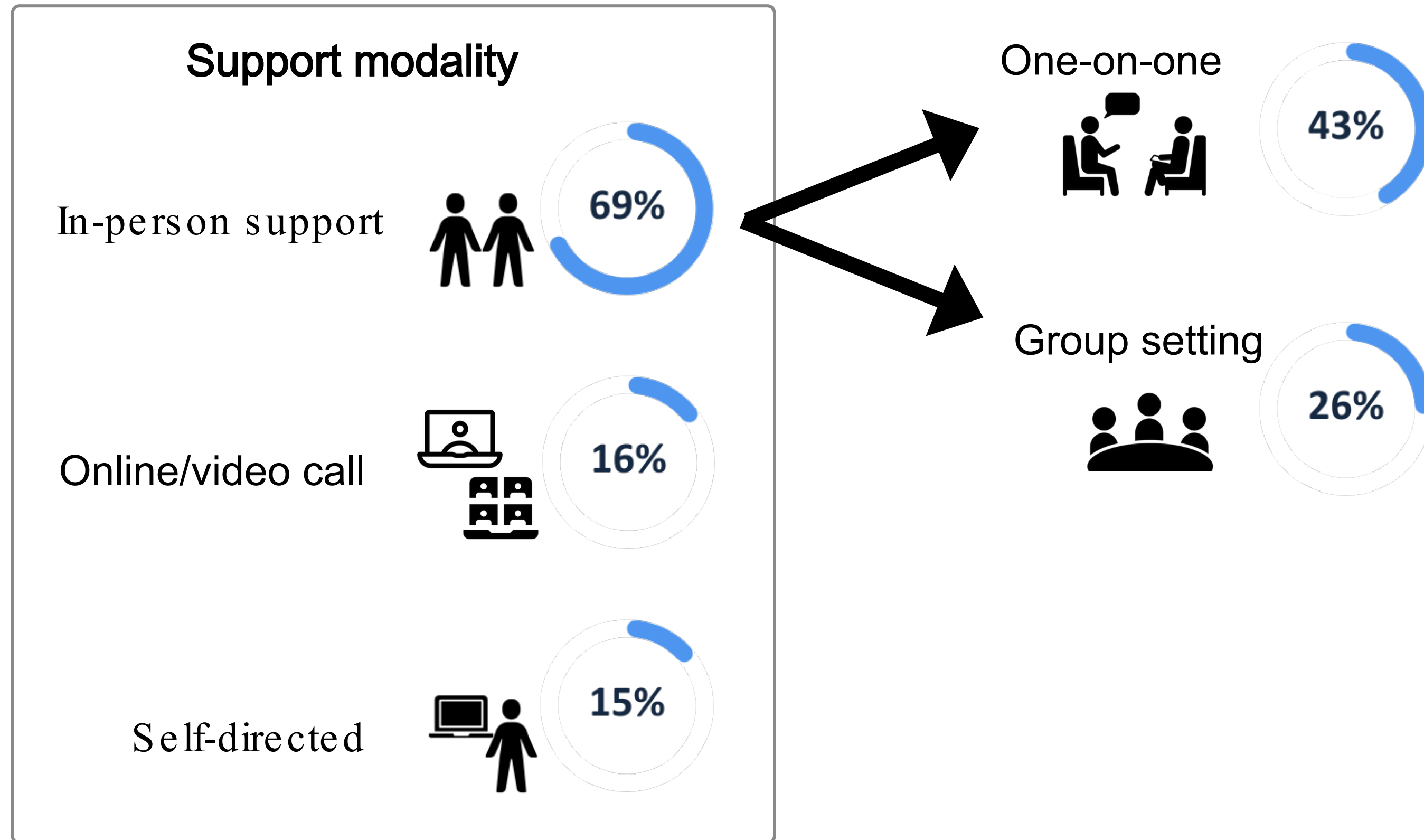
*Participants able to select **only one** option.

Future help-seeking preferences (N=710)



*Participants able to select **only one** option.

Future help-seeking preferences (N=710)




*Participants able to select **only one** option.



Families in Australia have diverse
needs and support preferences.

They require a choice of
approaches and modalities.



Acknowledgements

Lived experience

We acknowledge the individual and collective expertise of those with a living or lived experience of mental health, alcohol and other drug issues.

Research Team

- Clare Rushton
- Dr Briony Larance
- Dr Alison Beck
- A/Prof Peter Kelly



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

Thank you

Clare Rushton
University of Wollongong
cr566@uowmail.edu.au



Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Clare Rushton

1. Help-seeking among Australian families affected by a loved one's alcohol and other drug use: A cross-sectional study

Pauline Stewart

2. The 5-Step Method: Service delivery for impacted family members

Sally Boardman

3. SMART family and friends barriers to service access, supports and recommendations

Heidi Gray

4. The effectiveness of online counselling for rural family members of people struggling with substance use

IN THEIR OWN RIGHT:

*Service delivery for family members
impacted by the alcohol or other drug
use of family or friends*

The 5-Step Method

Psycho-educational Counselling programme

Dr Pauline Stewart

B.Ed., M.Ed., PhD., M.Ed (Counselling)
Registered Counselling Psychologist/
Educational Psychologist
Executive Officer and Founder



Family Drug Support
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Prepared for:
APSAD Conference
OCTOBER 2024
CANBERRA

How many people are impacted?

New Zealand estimate

Omnibus survey commissioned by Family Drug Support NZ (1,000+)

Over 41% impacted by the alcohol use of a family member or close friend

Over 29% impacted by the other drug use of a family member or close friend

Research in 8 NZ Universities (900+)

Alcohol – 36.2% impacted

Other Drugs – 37.5% impacted

10-12 people impacted by one person's alcohol or other drug use

Consistent with worldwide figures



Family Drug Support
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Impacted family members – emotional impacts

Impacted family members report they often feel:

- Anxious, worried
- Helpless, despairing
- Low, depressed
- Guilty, devalued
- Angry, resentful, hatred
- Frightened
- Alone (Concealed Stigma)
- Very sad (Chronic Sorrow, not grief)

Often too ashamed to access support and just “put up” with the situation, often due to **reputational protection**.

How is Family Drug Support NZ Helping Impacted Families?

5-Step Counselling Programme

Flagship programme available online (Zoom) throughout NZ

A five-to-six-hour one-to-one, evidence-based counselling programme, with an Accredited Practitioner, specifically for whanau/family impacted by the alcohol or other drug use of someone they care about.

Training of Accredited Practitioners in Christchurch, in person, twice yearly to build clinical capability.

5-Step Youth Programme

16 to 24 years old

A five-to-six-hour one-to-one, evidence-based online counselling programme, with an Accredited Practitioner, specifically for 16–24-year-olds impacted by the alcohol or other drug use of someone they care about.

Self-referral via website

Website: fds.org.nz

Videos, webinars, articles and other resources, to equip families/whānau members to develop coping and resilience on their own unique journey.

Single Session Consultation

A 1-hour online session for family /whanau impacted by alcohol or other drug use of someone they care about, regarding support needed.

Training of selected Accredited Practitioners online via Le Trobe University Australia recently.

Support Line

Support available via callback system from website, all year round.

0800 337 877

5- Session Special Programme

Provided when Impacted Family Member is doing 5-Step and focal person dies- Additional support including disenfranchised grief, wellbeing, etc

Whānau/Family Online Group

Convenient, accessible and confidential online support for family/whānau every Thursday 12noon -1pm



Family Drug Support

AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Step 1

Family member **story**

Listen, reassure and explore concerns

Step 2

Identify relevant and targeted **information**

Step 3

Explore ways of **coping** and responding

Step 4

Explore and enhance **support** and communication

Step 5

Review previous steps and explore further needs



Sessions:

1 hour each (5 hours total)

- Psycho-educational counselling
- via Telehealth
- Anywhere in New Zealand
- Irrespective of where the focal person is on their journey
- Additional 3 sessions subsidised
- Accredited Practitioners

Used in several countries including UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand



Family Drug Support

AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Evidence – Based, Accessible Support

- Self - referral via website www.fds.org.nz or via Supportline
- Within 24 hours, Application and Informed Consent **sent** via email to Impacted Family Member(IFM)
- Application / Informed Consent **submitted** by Impacted Family Member via website (or post or phone)
- Resources **couriered** to Impacted Family Member (designed for particular substance being used by the focal person)
- Impacted Family Member **matched** and **allocated** to Accredited Practitioner

Demographic Data

- Average Age of Impacted Family Member..... 52 years
- Gender of IFM.....Female = 79%
Male = 21%

- Average age of Focal Person with AOD use..... 32 years
- Gender of Focal Person..... Male = 79%
Female = 21%

Why use telehealth for services?

- Support can be provided to Impacted Family Members (IFMs) outside 'office hours'
- Allay IFMs concerns about reputational protection
- Support can continue for IFMs without disruption due to pandemic / illness / injury or physical disabilities
- IFMs with small children are able to access the service
- Wait times reduced
- AOD workforce increased (can work from home)
- IFMs feel comfortable in familiar surroundings

Evaluation of Programme

- ❖ *Pre and post assessment using Family Member Questionnaire (FMQ) (From 1,500 sessions)*
- ❖ *Post 5-Step online evaluation*
- ❖ *3-month post 5-Step online evaluation*

92% of IFMs starting 5-Step counselling, complete the 5 sessions of the programme

30% of IFMs completing 5-Step counselling are couples

90% of Impacted Family Members report reduction of family burden

Total Family Burden – reduced by **46%**

Further Evaluation at 3 months post 5-Step...

To what extent do you consider you are able to cope with your situation now?

82% report they were **more able**, or **much more able** to cope with their situation

How would you rate your overall wellbeing since you completed the 5-Step programme?

76% reported their overall wellbeing was **better** or **much better**

Final interesting question, not directly related to the outcomes from the 5-Step:

How would you rate your relative/loved ones' problem behaviours' since you completed the 5-Step programme?

51% reported the **focal person's behaviour** was **better** or **much better**

Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Clare Rushton

1. Help-seeking among Australian families affected by a loved one's alcohol and other drug use: A cross-sectional study

Pauline Stewart

2. The 5-Step Method: Service delivery for impacted family members

Sally Boardman

3. SMART family and friends barriers to service access, supports and recommendations

Heidi Gray

4. The effectiveness of online counselling for rural family members of people struggling with substance use

SMART Recovery Australia Family & Friends Programme

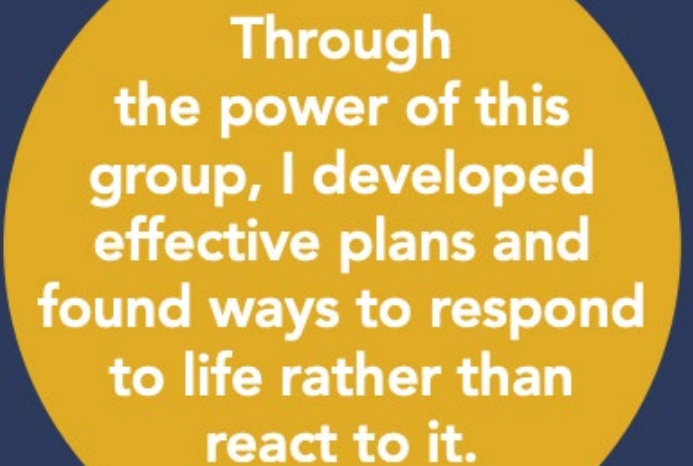
Sally Boardman
BSc(Hons) MPhil(Psych)

National Trainer
Innovation Manager
SMART Recovery Australia



SMART Recovery

- Strengths based, self management mutual aid
- Any problematic behaviour
- Utilising CBT and MI to help support change process
- Helping participants equip themselves with tools, skills and strategies
- Global program
- 31 Countries (USA, UK, Ireland, Denmark, Canada Affiliates)
- 13 different languages
- Delivered Face to Face and Online
- In Australia we partner with 100+ member organisations to facilitate over weekly 400+ recovery groups



Through the power of this group, I developed effective plans and found ways to respond to life rather than react to it.

The 4 Points

- 1** Building & maintaining motivation
- 2** Learning to cope with urges and cravings
- 3** Problem solving
- 4** Finding a lifestyle balance

The 4 Cs



Land, air, water, plants, animals, people, spirit, stories, lineage, home



Pride, traditions, protocols, practices, wisdom



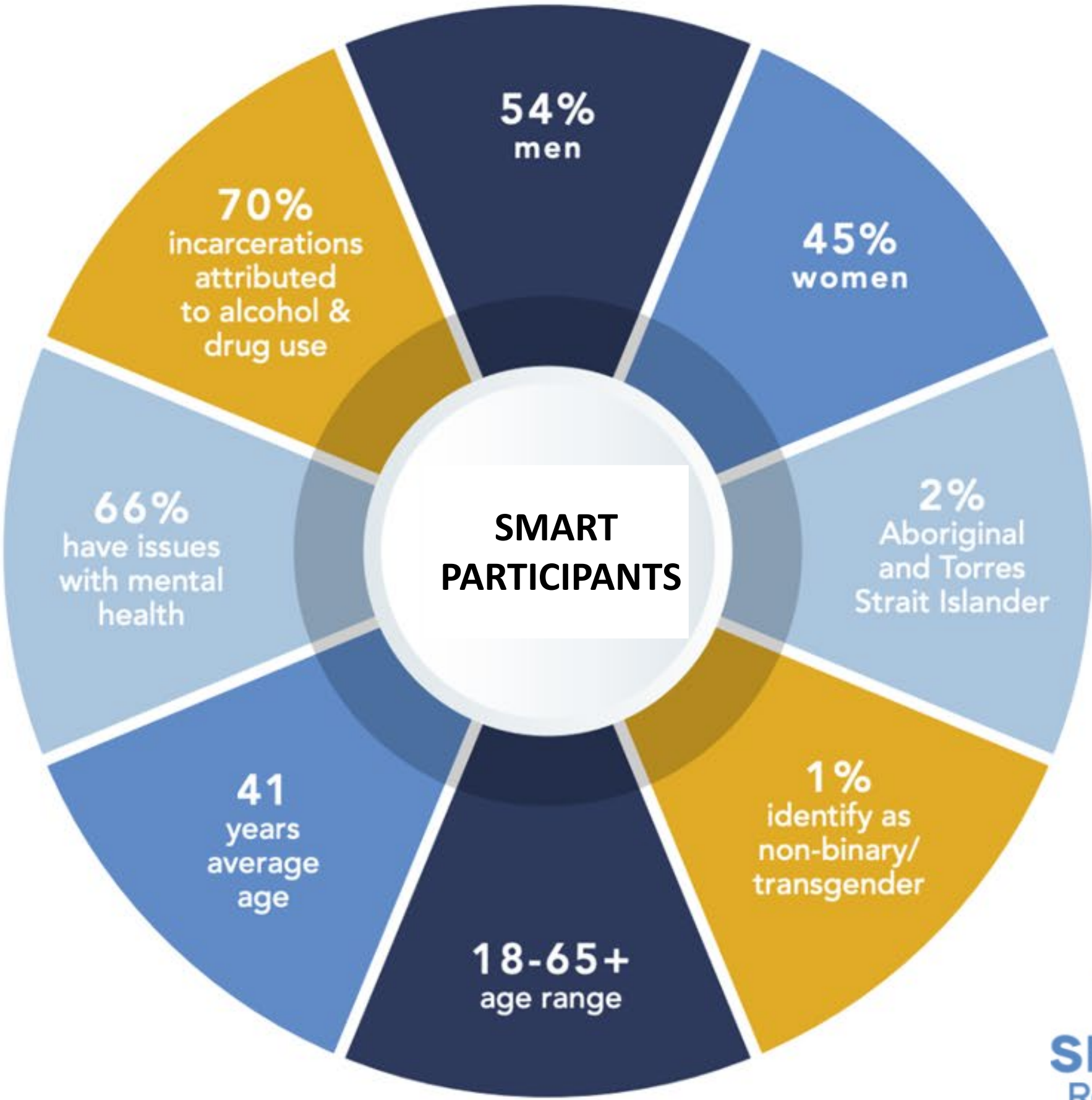
Belonging, extended family, diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait cultures and countries, support, resilience



Links, identity, peace, spirit.



By identifying the unhelpful thoughts and beliefs, I was able to change the behaviours that followed.
MARK





Face-to-Face



Online Training



Inside Out



Friends & Family



Yarn SMART



LGBTQI



Youth

SMART Family and Friends



- ◆ Developed 2009 to support significant others, family and friends
- ◆ Adapted slightly to be delivered as an 8 session course, and or on going meeting
- ◆ Equipping significant others with a tool kit
- ◆ Harm minimisation- Keeping self safe from harm, protecting the home, reducing harmful effects on others
- ◆ Influenced from 5 step model

SMART Family and Friends 4 Point Program

These 4 Points guide the goals that SMART participants work towards



Learning Skills to:

- Manage emotional upsets
- Change unhelpful thinking
- Improve communication
- Set boundaries
- Develop better functioning support systems and lifestyle balance
- Cope and regain control

Additionally Integrating

The 3 'Ps'

- Practice
- Patience
- Persistence

The 4 'Cs'

- You didn't **cause** it
- You can't **cure** it
- You can't **control** it
- All you can do is **cope** with it

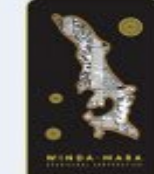
Why a Family & Friends Programme ?

- ~ 1 in 20 Australians currently experience addiction / substance use problems
- Significant impact on the social, physical and mental wellbeing of families and friends
 - challenging family dynamics,
 - financial strain,
 - loss of independence,
 - poor health / mental ill-health
 - social isolation.
- 42% of families and friends seek information or support
 - typically focused on the person of concern – not themselves
- Critical to remove the barriers preventing F&F from seeking support

SMART Family & Friends

addresses a crucial gap in support services specifically for people exposed to addictive or problematic behaviours.

- instant access, no referral needed
 - anonymity
- non-judgmental space
 - peer support
 - social inclusion
- tools and resources





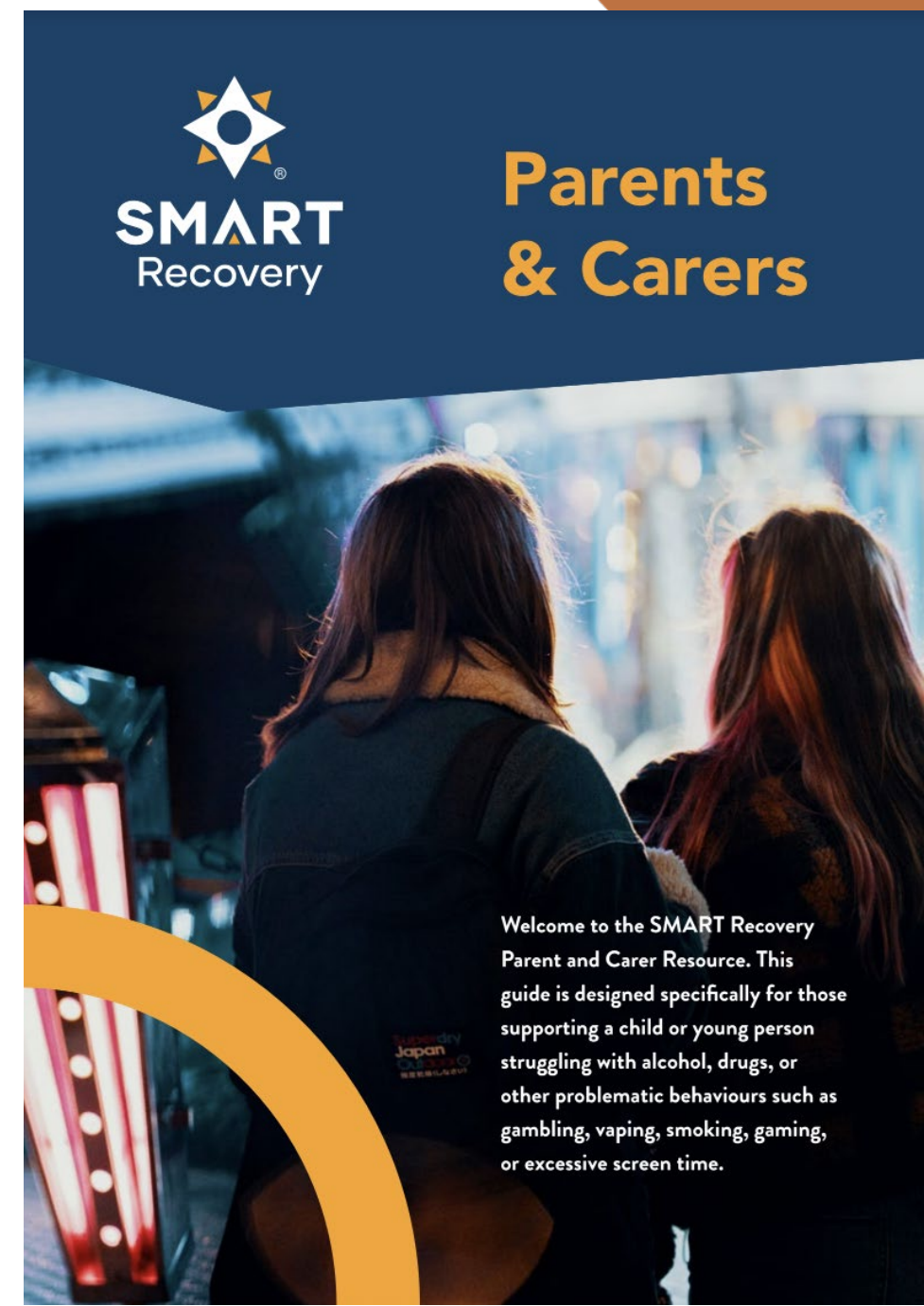
SMART Recovery provides a supportive community environment where individuals can connect with peers, share experiences, and receive encouragement. This sense of belonging and camaraderie fosters a supportive network that complements our efforts in providing comprehensive support to our beneficiaries.

**THE LINK
FOUNDATION**



Key Learnings & Recommendations

- Different Cohorts may benefit from specific meetings
 - E.g. Parents / Partners / Children
- Further Research



Welcome to the SMART Recovery Parent and Carer Resource. This guide is designed specifically for those supporting a child or young person struggling with alcohol, drugs, or other problematic behaviours such as gambling, vaping, smoking, gaming, or excessive screen time.

Thank you

SBoardman@srau.org.au

Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Clare Rushton

1. Help-seeking among Australian families affected by a loved one's alcohol and other drug use: A cross-sectional study

Pauline Stewart

2. The 5-Step Method: Service delivery for impacted family members

Sally Boardman

3. SMART family and friends barriers to service access, supports and recommendations

Heidi Gray

4. The effectiveness of online counselling for rural family members of people struggling with substance use

The effectiveness of online counselling for rural family members of people struggling with substance use

Heidi Gray
Rural Health Research Institute
Charles Sturt University



Background

An individual's use of AOD can greatly impact family and friend's physical and mental health, financial circumstances, and marital and family relationships. ⁸

Few AOD services provide support to family members. In 2022, only 8.1% of Australians receiving treatment or support for substance use were family or friends. ¹

People in rural Australia experience a disproportionate level of physical and psychological harm related to drug and alcohol use than their urban counterparts. ⁵

Online interventions for alcohol and other drugs have shown to be highly satisfactory for participants. ^{2,3,4}

Community Reinforcement and Family Training - CRAFT



Cognitive
Behavioural
Therapy and
Motivational
Interviewing ⁷

Positive
reinforcement
for non-using
behaviours ⁷

Increases family
members' own
social and
emotional well-
being ¹¹

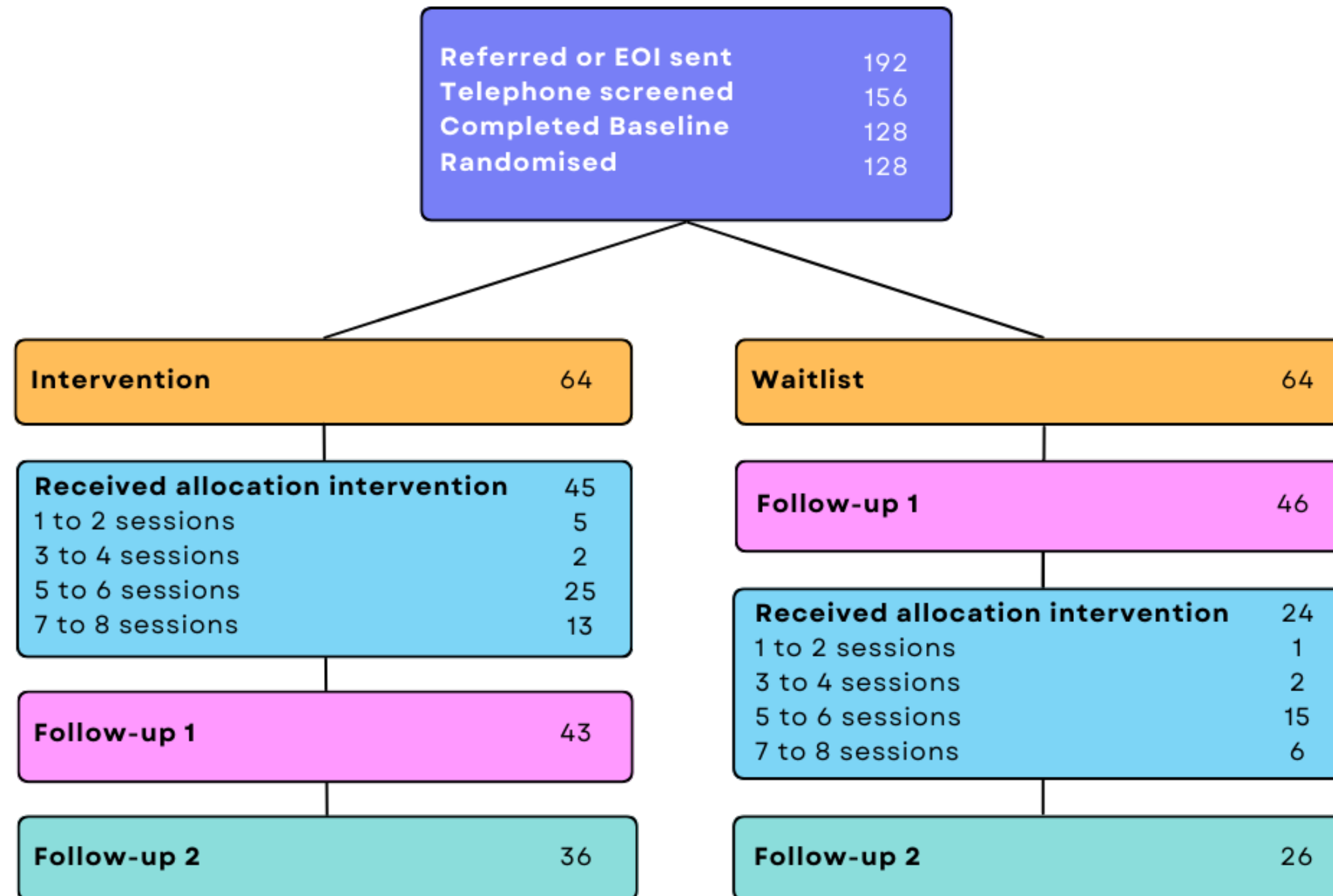
Positively
encourages
their relative to
use health and
substance
treatment
services ¹⁰

80% of people
who complete
CRAFT have
improved well-
being ⁶





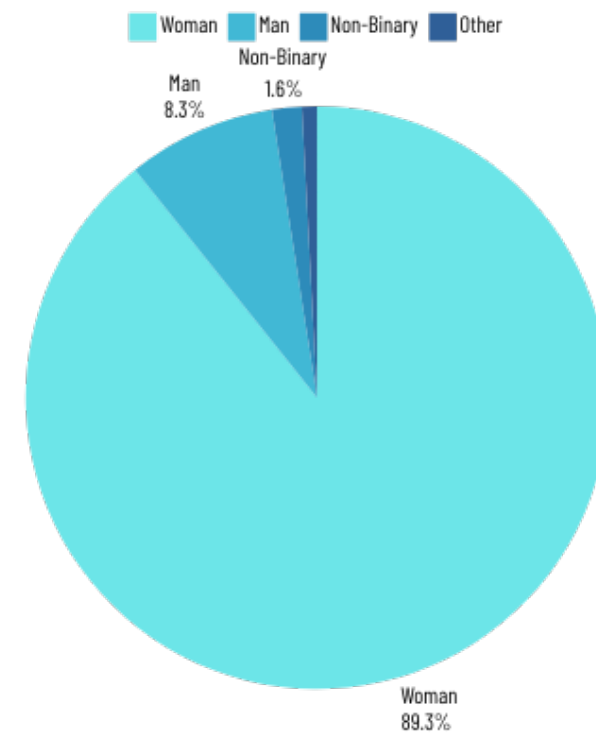
CONSORT



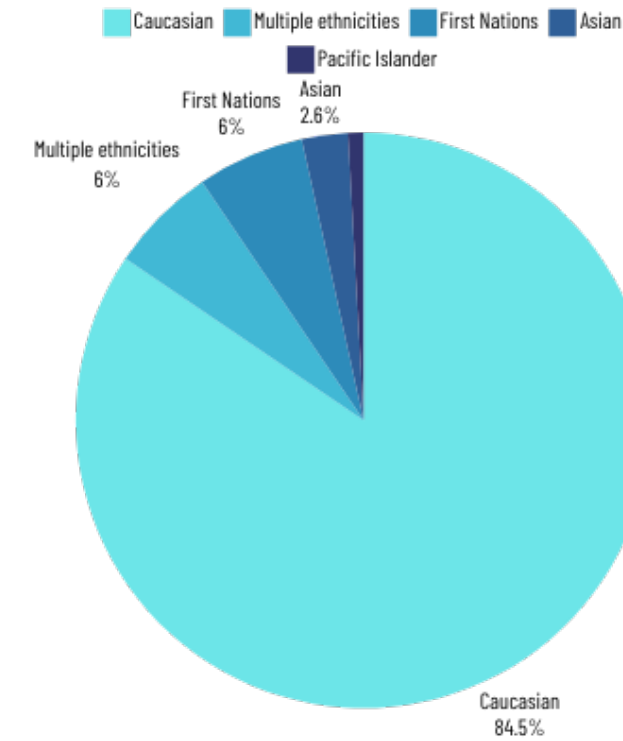


Demographics

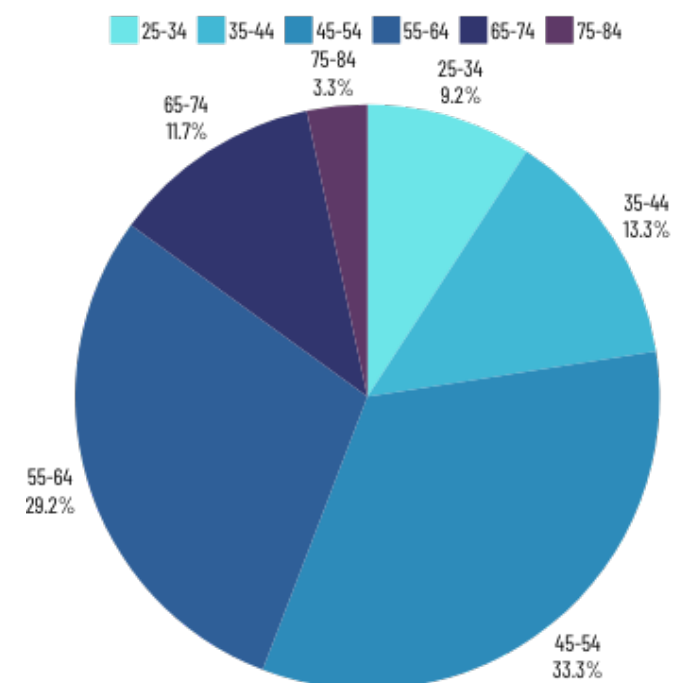
Participant Gender



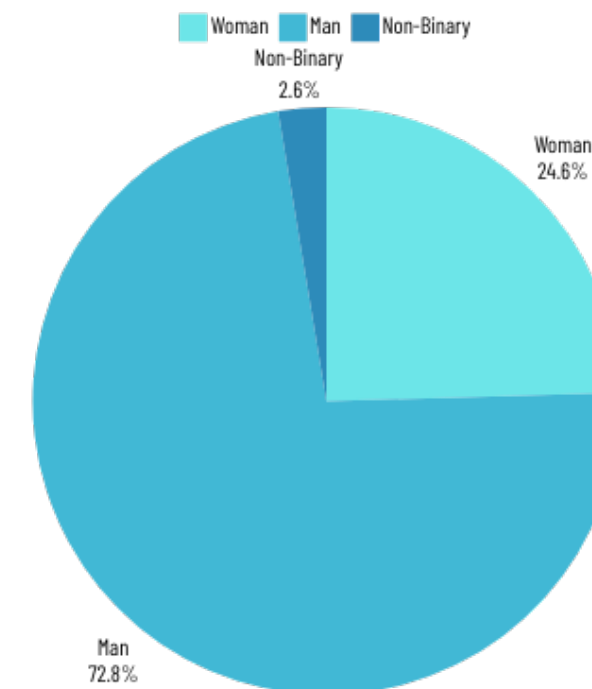
Participant Ethnicity



Participant Age



Gender of person using AOD





Mental health scores – Satisfaction With Life Scale

30 – 35 Extremely Satisfied

25 – 29 Satisfied

20 – 24 Slightly satisfied

15 – 19 Slightly dissatisfied

10 – 14 Dissatisfied

5 – 9 Extremely dissatisfied



Most groups fall here



CRAFT participants



Participant experiences

Communication strategies and techniques

- "I had to change the way I was thinking and sort of listen to it a bit and talk about it a bit, just to break the ice and start conversations." (P6)

Goal setting

- "...putting achievable goals in front of ourselves instead of being like, Oh, yeah, I'll quit this year." (P4)

Impact on mental health

- "I probably still use... deep breathing techniques...if I'm getting anxious, I'm running late to an appointment" (P1)

Ease of accessibility

- "We have access to healthcare professionals through technology that we might not necessarily have access to otherwise." (P2)



Contributions

Acceptability and feasibility of online CRAFT in rural Australia - contribute to the increasing world-wide use of CRAFT

Provide in-depth qualitative understanding of CRAFT

Experiences of caring for someone who uses AOD

Perceived accessibility to services, and what family members require

Department of Health and Ageing - implications for future funding and support for AOD treatment services working with family members and friends.



References

- 1) Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2023). *Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia annual report*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol-other-drug-treatment-services/alcohol-other-drug-treatment-services-australia/contents/treatment-types>
- 2) Dilkes-Frayne, E., Savic, M., Carter, A., Kokanović, R., & Lubman, D. I. (2019). Going Online: The Affordances of Online Counseling for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drug Issues. *Qualitative Health Research*, 29(14), 2010-2022. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732319838231>
- 3) Frueh, B. C., Henderson, S., & Myrick, H. (2005). Telehealth service delivery for persons with alcoholism. *Journal of telemedicine and telecare*, 11(7), 372-375. <https://ezproxy.csu.edu.au/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/telehealth-service-delivery-persons-with/docview/210703282/se-2?accountid=10344>
- 4) Giroux, I., Goulet, A., Mercier, J., Jacques, C., & Bouchard, S. (2017). Online and mobile interventions for problem gambling, alcohol, and drugs: A systematic review. *Frontiers in psychology*, 8, 954-954. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00954>
- 5) McCann, T. V., & Lubman, D. I. (2018). Help-seeking barriers and facilitators for affected family members of a relative with alcohol and other drug misuse: A qualitative study. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 93, 7-14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsat.2018.07.005>
- 6) Meyers, R. J., & Godley, M. D. (2001). Developing the community reinforcement approach. In Robert J. Meyers & William R. Miller (Eds.), *A community reinforcement approach to addiction treatment* (pp. 1-7). Cambridge University Press.
- 7) Meyers, R. J., Miller, W. R., Hill, D. E., & Tonigan, J. S. (1998). Community reinforcement and family training (CRAFT): engaging unmotivated drug users in treatment. *Journal of substance abuse*, 10(3), 291-308. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0899-3289\(99\)00003-6](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0899-3289(99)00003-6)
- 8) Orford, J., Natera, G., Copello, A., Atkinson, C., Mora, J., Velleman, R., Crundall, I., Tiburcio, M., Templeton, L., & Walley, G. (2005). *Coping with Alcohol and Drug Problems: The Experiences of Family Members in Three Contrasting Cultures* (1 ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203759608>
- 9) Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (2008). The Satisfaction With Life Scale and the emerging construct of life satisfaction. *The journal of positive psychology*, 3(2), 137-152. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760701756946>
- 10) Roozen, H. G., De Waart, R., & Van Der Kroft, P. (2010). Community reinforcement and family training: an effective option to engage treatment-resistant substance-abusing individuals in treatment. *Addiction (Abingdon, England)*, 105(10), 1729-1738. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2010.03016.x>
- 11) Smith, J. E., & Meyers, R. J. (2004). *Motivating substance abusers to enter treatment: Working with family members*. The Guilford Press. https://books.google.com.au/books?hl=en&lr=&id=qR_8jr5-kt4C&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&ots=KOTXXojleV&sig=pKV-c7YnpgVYPjjPSX4kW8Oh2ls&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

Thank you

Heidi Gray

hegray@csu.edu.au

Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Paige Webb Housekeeping, Acknowledgement of Country

Clare Rushton Presentation 1

Pauline Stewart Presentation 2

Sally Boardman Presentation 3

Heidi Gray Presentation 4

Julie Perrin Discussion time

Paige Webb Session wrap up and additional resources




Services for Families Affected by Alcohol and Other Drugs

Discussion Section



Reflections and Take-Home Messages

- Families need support to address their own health and wellbeing
 - Families generally need help to develop coping and resilience
 - Families need non-judgmental, evidence-based support
- 

AOD Family Research and Practice Network



<https://bit.ly/aodfamilynetwork>

Paige Webb p.webb@unsw.edu.au

Clare Rushton cr566@uowmail.edu.au

Pauline Stewart paulinestewart@fds.org.nz

Sally Boardman sboardman@srau.org.au

Heidi Gray hegray@csu.edu.au

Julie Perrin julie@karunacentre.com.au



Family Drug Support

1300 368 186
fds.org.au

Free information on all aspects of alcohol and drug use for the families of people who use substances. 24h phone support for families affected by alcohol and other drug issues and bereaved families in Australia.



Family Drug Support
New Zealand

fds.org.nz

Assistance for families, whānau and friends to deal with the alcohol and/or other drug use of their loved ones in a way that rebuilds and strengthens relationships and achieves positive outcomes for them, and for you.



SMART Recovery
Family and Friends

Smartrecoveryaustralia.com.au

Strengths-based mutual support program, run online. The program is designed to help anyone affected by the addictive behaviour of someone close to them.



FFSP
Providing an anchor for the storm

Friends and Family
Support Program

ffsp.com.au

Online interventions to help families and friends supporting a loved one using ice, alcohol and/or other drugs. Information and support for people experiencing domestic and family violence and living in rural or remote regions.



Al-Anon

1300 252 666
al-anon.org.au

Mutual support groups and phone support to help families and friends cope with the effects of someone else's drinking. Groups are run both online and in-person across Australia.



Family Drug and
Gambling Support

1300 660 068
sharc.org.au

Practical help, information and support to families and friends affected by someone's drinking, drug use or gambling.