

# **Characteristics of women accessing rehabilitation AOD treatment in NSW, by gender-specific programs**

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# Acknowledgement

- I would like to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are meeting here today. We extend this acknowledgement to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.
- For this study, we acknowledge our members and the women who access their services – their data, their story.

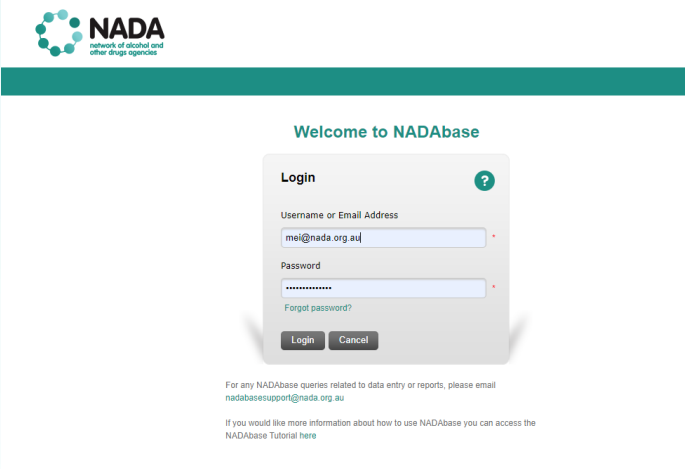
# Background

- Previous research did not observe differences in the risk of readmission and completion of treatment for women-only and mixed gender treatment programs for substance use disorders (1).
- Qualitative interviews provided mixed evidence that women with polysubstance use would benefit from engaging in women-only residential treatment (2,3).
- Little is known about other treatment engagement models including specialized non government organisation (NGO) alcohol and other drugs (AOD) services, especially in Australian treatment setting
- The information will help guide towards evidence generation at practice-level changes for improved outcomes among women seeking treatment in the broader AOD context.

1. Olivari CF, Gonzáles-Santa Cruz A, Mauro PM, Martins SS, Sapag J, Gaete J, et al. Treatment outcome and readmission risk among women in women-only versus mixed-gender drug treatment programs in Chile. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*. 2022;134.
2. 1.Day C, White N. Gender-Specific Online Content Is Important and Timely for Women Receiving Treatment for Substance Use Disorders. *Journal of Women's Health*.2020;29(5):605-606.
3. Neale J, Tompkins CNE, Marshall AD, Treloar C, Strang J. Do women with complex alcohol and other drug use histories want women-only residential treatment? *Addiction*. 2018;113(6):989-97.

# Data source, NADAbase

- National and NSW Minimum Data Set (2000)
- Client Outcome Measurement System (2010)
- Gender and sexuality data items (2016, 2023)
- Risk screeners (2017) – FDV, Suicide, BBV
- Nicotine dependence (2017)
- ATOP (2019)
- Under review or being considered:
  - Update risk screeners
  - Pregnancy status + children
  - Culture (First Nations and CALD)

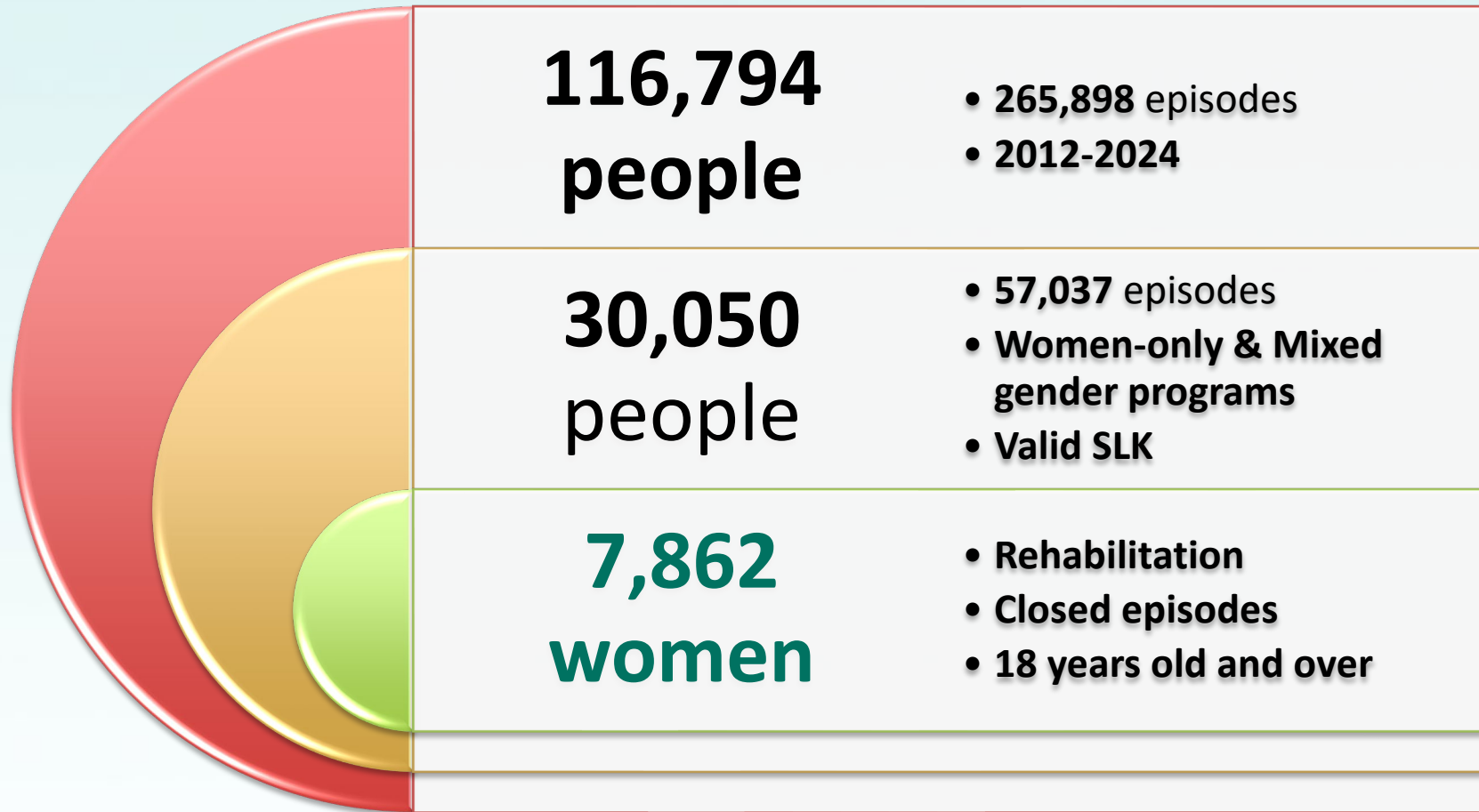


The screenshot shows the NADAbase login interface. At the top is the NADA logo (network of alcohol and other drugs agencies). Below it is a teal header bar. The main content area has a 'Welcome to NADAbase' message. A 'Login' box contains fields for 'Username or Email Address' (with 'mel@mada.org.au' entered) and 'Password'. There is a 'Forgot password?' link and 'Login' and 'Cancel' buttons. At the bottom, there is contact information for NADAbase support and a link to the NADAbase Tutorial.

# Methods

- NADAbase
- Routinely collected data from women accessing **rehabilitation** treatment at **31 NGO AOD services in NSW, FY 2012-2024**
- Women were **at least 18 years old, engaged with treatment for at least one day**
- For women presenting with more than one episode across the services, the **most recent episode** was analysed

# Study population

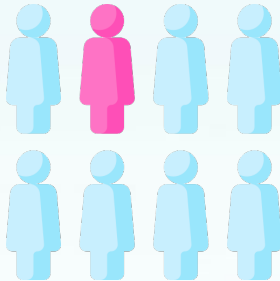


# Main measures and outcomes



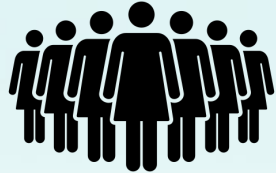
## Gendered-services

- **Women-only,**  
**n=2,363**
- **Mixed-gender,**  
**n=5,499**



**Planned completion  
vs Left treatment**

# Results: Study Population



75%

**25-50 years old**



23%

**Aboriginal &  
Torres Straits  
Islander**



56%

**Metropolitan NSW**

78%

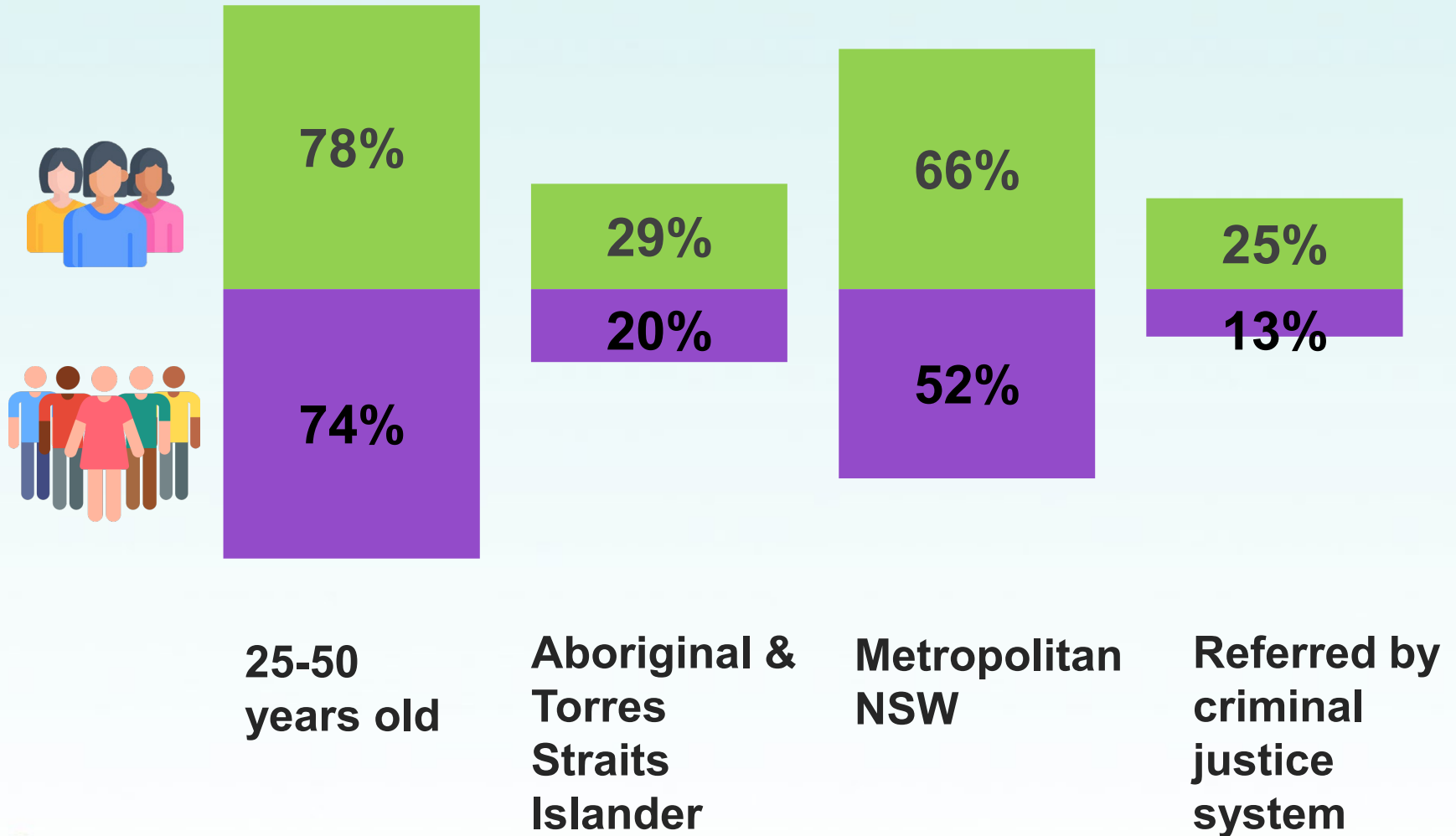


17%

**Referred by  
criminal justice  
system**



# Results: Study Population



# Results: Study Population



35%

**Living with friends  
& relative**



6%

**Employed**



40%

**Meth/amphetamines**



60%

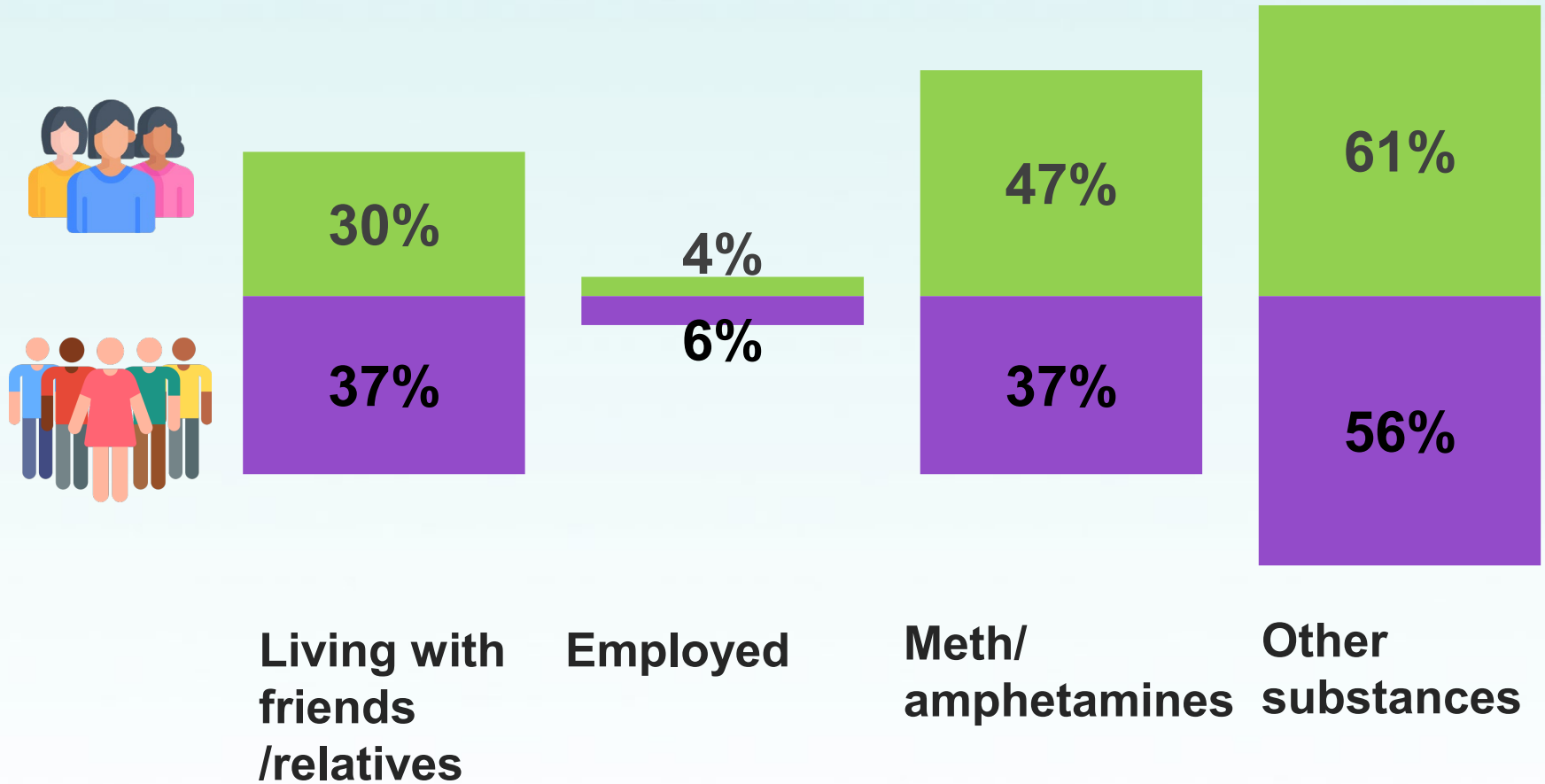
**Other substances**



**NADA**  
network of alcohol and  
other drugs agencies

UNIVERSITY  
OF WOLLONGONG  
AUSTRALIA

# Results: Study Population



# Results

- 38% women completed treatment
- 45.5% (women-only) and 35.3% (mixed gender) completed treatment

| <i>Predictors</i> | <b>Unadjusted model</b> |             |          | <b>Adjusted Model</b> |             |          |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|-------------|----------|
|                   | <i>OR</i>               | <i>CI</i>   | <i>p</i> | <i>OR</i>             | <i>CI</i>   | <i>p</i> |
| (Intercept)       | 0.55                    | 0.52 – 0.58 | <0.001   | 0.62                  | 0.54 – 0.70 | <0.001   |
| Mixed gender      | <i>Reference</i>        |             |          | <i>Reference</i>      |             |          |
| Women-only        | 1.53                    | 1.39 – 1.69 | <0.001   | 1.65                  | 1.48 – 1.83 | <0.001   |

\*\* adjusted for age, Aboriginal & Torres Straits Islander status, nominated language, primary substance of concern, referral by criminal justice system, living arrangement, types of income & remoteness of residence

# Interpretation

- **Completing treatment is one of the many facets of treatment outcomes.**
- **Real-world data**
- **NADAbase limitation**
- **Next step: Health outcomes**

## Thank you!

# Thank you!

## Questions?

# Back-up

Table 1: Characteristics of all women engaging with AOD rehabilitation treatment, NSW, 2012-2024

|   | mixed<br>(N=5499) | women<br>(N=2363) | P-value |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------|
| <b>Age, treatment entry,v2</b>                |                   |                   |         |
| 25-<50 years                                  | 4060 (73.8%)      | 1848 (78.2%)      | <0.001  |
| 18-<25 years                                  | 744 (13.5%)       | 337 (14.3%)       |         |
| 50 years and older                            | 695 (12.6%)       | 178 (7.5%)        |         |
| <b>Age, treatment entry</b>                   |                   |                   |         |
| Mean (SD)                                     | 36.6 (10.6)       | 34.6 (9.42)       | <0.001  |
| Median [Min, Max]                             | 35.2 [18.1, 73.4] | 33.2 [18.1, 73.1] |         |
| <b>Year, treatment entry</b>                  |                   |                   |         |
| preCovid, 2012-2019                           | 3797 (69.0%)      | 1387 (58.7%)      | <0.001  |
| postCOVID, 2020-2024                          | 1702 (31.0%)      | 976 (41.3%)       |         |
| <b>Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander</b> |                   |                   |         |
| Non Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander    | 4283 (77.9%)      | 1568 (66.4%)      | <0.001  |
| Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander        | 1085 (19.7%)      | 691 (29.2%)       |         |
| Not Stated                                    | 131 (2.4%)        | 104 (4.4%)        |         |
| <b>Primary substance of concern</b>           |                   |                   |         |
| alcohol                                       | 2046 (37.2%)      | 660 (27.9%)       | <0.001  |
| meth/amphetamines                             | 2046 (37.2%)      | 1106 (46.8%)      |         |
| cannabis                                      | 618 (11.2%)       | 218 (9.2%)        |         |
| opioids                                       | 600 (10.9%)       | 297 (12.6%)       |         |
| others  | 189 (3.4%)        | 82 (3.5%)         |         |
| <b>Referral by criminal justice system</b>    |                   |                   |         |
| no  | 4772 (86.8%)      | 1777 (75.2%)      | <0.001  |
| yes   | 727 (13.2%)       | 586 (24.8%)       |         |
| <b>Employment</b>                             |                   |                   |         |
| benefits/pension/retirementfund               | 4528 (82.3%)      | 2018 (85.4%)      | <0.001  |
| employed                                      | 316 (5.7%)        | 90 (3.8%)         |         |
| no income/dependent on others                 | 389 (7.1%)        | 176 (7.4%)        |         |
| others/not stated                             | 266 (4.8%)        | 79 (3.3%)         |         |
| <b>Living</b>                                 |                   |                   |         |
| alone   | 1502 (27.3%)      | 760 (32.2%)       | <0.001  |
| partner and/or children                       | 747 (13.6%)       | 328 (13.9%)       |         |
| alone with children                           | 484 (8.8%)        | 326 (13.8%)       |         |
| friends/relative                              | 2059 (37.4%)      | 710 (30.0%)       |         |
| others/not stated                             | 707 (12.9%)       | 239 (10.1%)       |         |