

THE VALUE OF PEER SUPPORT MENTORS IN THE FAMILY DRUG TREATMENT COURT (FDTC) PROGRAM

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Introduction:

The FDTC is the first court of its kind in Australia. It provides intensive therapeutic supports for parents who have had their children removed due to substance misuse.

SHARC is a unique peer-led organisation that provides self-help approaches to recovery from severe alcohol and other drugs (AOD) related issues. Its model of practice and service delivery is underpinned by peer support.

Abstract body text:

The FDTC provides an opportunity for parents to achieve rehabilitation and work towards successful family reunification. It comprises a dedicated multi-disciplinary team of professionals across a variety of services, led by a Magistrate. By combining this diverse range of individuals, the underpinning philosophy of collaborative practice is maintained, and positive outcomes are more likely to be achieved.

SHARC employs, trains and supervises Peer Support Mentors in an innovative approach to supporting parents in this program. They have lived experience of alcohol and drug misuse and are now in well-established and stable recovery.

Entering the third year of this partnership, the number of Peer Support Mentors has doubled and the breadth of support has expanded to include a Peer Support Group. The support given in this peer connection has many positive and far reaching benefits for all involved.

Discussions and Conclusions:

Peer Support Workers are a valuable and complementary support to peers/parents. We will demonstrate how the justice system and the AOD sector can be enriched by their employment.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

This program is a partnership between SHARC and Court Services Victoria (CSV). SHARC holds the governance responsibility and is subcontracted by FDTC.