

A ROAD LESS TRAVELLED: REPRESENTING PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS

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BEING THE “VOICE”



BEING THE “VOICE”

“Piers made his presence felt at Madden's press conference, asking distasteful questions about whether her emotional speech could be attributed to her drug use and/or her state of mental health. In his signature loud and overbearing way, Piers barked out his boorish questions, embarrassing other journalists who genuinely wanted to understand the issue.”

Workers Online, May 1999.



BEING THE “VOICE”

“Annie's sick, erudite - and pathetic” and stated that my drug use “fell somewhere between repugnant and repulsive”.

Ray Chesterton, Daily Telegraph, May 1999.



BEING THE "VOICE"

"You're kidding yourself Annie!"

And declared that:

"It's not the discrimination that's killing the drug addicts of Sydney," he pronounced, "it's the fact that they like to use drugs which have the capacity to kill."

Piers Ackerman, Daily Telegraph, May 1999.



THE STATE OF PLAY



STATE OF PLAY...

- **Treatment Service Users (TSU) Project**
- 2 phases:
 - qualitative, social research project; and
 - 5 demonstration projects in a variety of govt & non-govt AOD settings.
- In collaboration with CSRH at UNSW.
- Conducted across different types of treatment services including opioid pharmacotherapy, residential rehabilitation and inpatient detox.
- In NSW, VIC and WA.
- Phase 1 research - face to face interviews with service providers from almost 80 services and interviews with almost 200 consumers drawn from those same treatment services.



STATE OF PLAY...

- **Treatment Service Users (TSU) Project**
- Interest in and overall support for consumer participation in AOD services.
- Very little consumer participation actually occurring in AOD treatment settings.
- Both both parties assuming a 'lack of interest' from the other party.
- Consumer participation activities were generally 'lower level' more 'passive' activities.
- Little evidence of 'higher level' activities that involve more meaningful engagement.
- Lack of proper resourcing and high level management support.
- Consumer participation in OPT area is more complex than in other areas.
- A lack of confidence and self-belief, concerns about confidentiality and about being labelled as 'difficult' or 'different' were also identified as barriers.



STATE OF PLAY...



"A ROAD LESS TRAVELLED"



A ROAD LESS TRAVELLED...



THE END.

