

Tuesdays with Nexus

Never above you, never below you,
always beside you – integrating peer workers
into existing services – what we have learnt a
year on

13 June 2023

Antony Alder and Kate Dobson
Lived Experience Peer Workers
The Department of Addiction Medicine



Introducing Today's Speakers



Chris Hynan

NEXUS Dual Diagnosis Consultation Service &
The Department of Addiction Medicine (DoAM)

Antony Alder

LE AOD Peer Worker
Department of Addiction Medicine

Kate Dobson

LE AOD Peer Worker
DePaul House (DPH), DoAM

The Stats

Feb – June 2022

Total number of clients = 145

Total points of activity = 433

Average Age

44.1 years

Females 44.5 (Min = 21.9; Max = 67.6)

Males 43.6 (Min = 27.1; Max = 74.9)

Gender

Male = 53.8% Female = 46.2%

To date

Total number of clients = 481

Total points of activity = 1518

Average Age

44.2 years

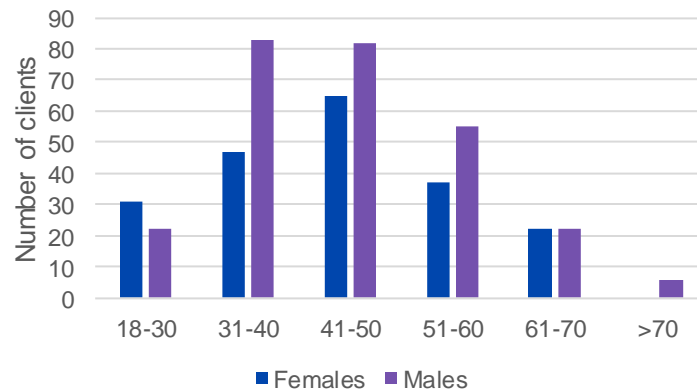
Females 43.8 (Min = 19; Max = 69)

Males 44.4 (Min = 18; Max = 76)

Gender

Male = 57.4% Female = 42.4%

Histogram - Age / Gender split



Peer Worker Interactions with Clients

What supports do we provide:

- Recovery in general
- Harm reduction
- Recovery groups - SMART Recovery, NA, AA
- Next treatment phase
- Client advocacy
- Psychosocial
- Emotional
- General wellbeing

Peer Worker Interactions with Clients

What activities do we do with clients to enable connections?

- One on one meetings with clients
- Attending group programs at DPH with clients
- CL ward round introduction / follow up
- Community follow up with out patients
- Depaul House:
 - group activity
 - relapse prevention group
 - walk with client(s)
 - external activity with client(s)
 - morning community meeting

Experiences/Reflections

Some lessons we have learnt

- Harm reduction and abstinence information for client's tool boxes
- Not having AOD Peer Workers working in isolation
- As our work is not outcome focused our work is guided by the clients themselves. We also seek feedback from clients via surveys, which lets us know if we are on the right track/have built connections
- Our presence within the AOD community is growing
- Changing the client's experience of hospital from one of stigma leading to an unwelcoming environment, to creating St Vincent's is a safe space and where needs are met

8	Do you have any feedback for our Peer Workers? Please explain: <u>Brilliant. To speak with others who can truly understand</u>
9	Did you enjoy receiving a welcome basket? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
10	Would you recommend Depaul to a family member or friend? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <u>5 STARS !!</u>

Do you have any further comments?

Love the staff, the programs, the medical care & support. Fantastic

We appreciate your valuable feedback!

Depaul House Client Evaluation

Version 2

May 2022

Brilliant ★



Challenges

Peer Workers do with not for

Clear definition of AOD Peer Worker roles so peer role drift doesn't happen:

- Staff expectations
- Clients expectations

Broader awareness of AOD Peer Workers within other departments within SVHM

Working part-time, losing traction with clients

Stigma – facing stigma amongst the broader workforce



Case study, the value of lived experience

Alex (pseudonym), 62yr old male.

- Vague history of prescription opiate addiction
- Roughly 9 week stay, complicated medical admission (endocarditis)
- Initially hostile towards DoAM team – absconded multiple times to use
- Introduced self as Peer Worker
- After initial hesitation, strong rapport developed
- Within next few days, client accepted and agreeable to treatment
- Commenced on Suboxone - positive response!

Where to next?

- Peer Worker role expansion – increase in EFT
- SMART Recovery Peer facilitated meetings
- Formal harm reduction education to clients
- Networking with harm reduction AOD peer workforce and CoP attendance



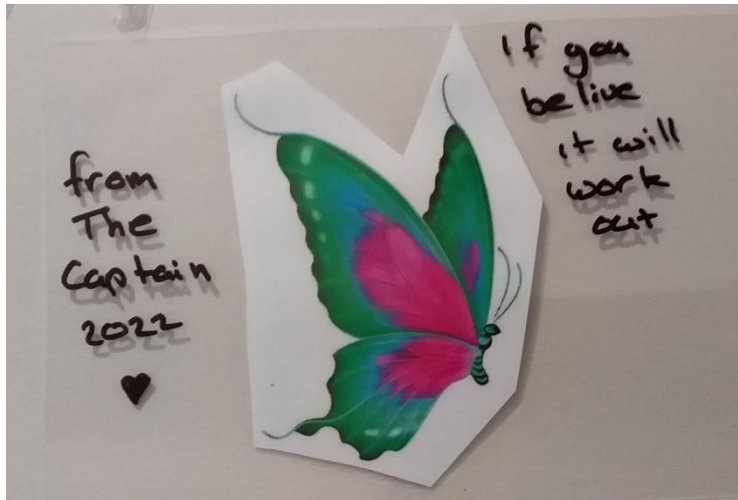
Tree of Hope at Depaul House

Before clients depart from Depaul House, they are welcome to leave a message on the Tree of Hope



Tree of Hope at Depaul House

From hopelessness to hope, some messages from clients



Questions/comments from the audience?