

**“it saved me”:
A historical analysis of a recovery focused
rehabilitation program for young people with a
serious mental illness**

Presented by
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The Richmond Fellowship of NSW

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“Enhancing the lives of people
affected by mental illness”



Introduction

How this project came about:

- History of the Young People’s Program (Brumby House)
- MHCC funding
- Social Justice & Social Change Research Group, University of Western Sydney



“Enhancing the lives of people
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The Research Project

- Mixed-method project
- Documentary - Retrospective analysis of clients case files over 10 year period; Annual reports and related documents
- Semi-structured Interviews (with current and past clients) x 15
- Focus Groups (with family members and key workers) x 1 each
- Analysis - Combination of content & thematic analysis along with the use of NVIVO

Aims

Four mutually informing aims:

- 1.To identify trends in the data concerning co-morbidity presentations and their predicative ability for recovery
- 2.To identify specific interventions, contextual factors or other indicators that influence individual recovery & service outcomes
- 3.To use the findings to plan for and inform future service planning for RFNSW YPP & related services
- 4.To use the findings to plan for & inform staff recruitment, training & workforce development within RFNSW, tertiary providers & the broader sector

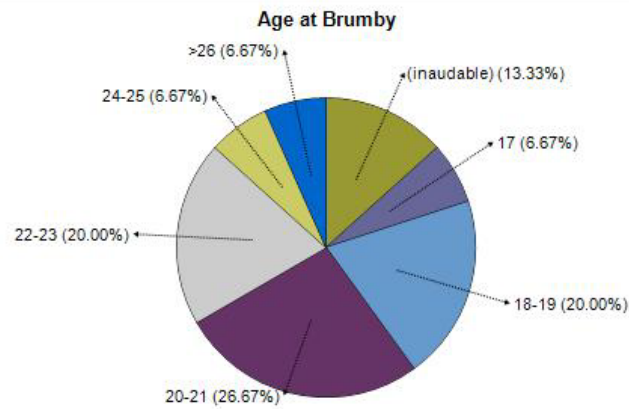
Challenges

- Making contact with clients over a ten-year period
- Ethical issues in relation to retrospective analysis of case studies
- Changing nature of documents

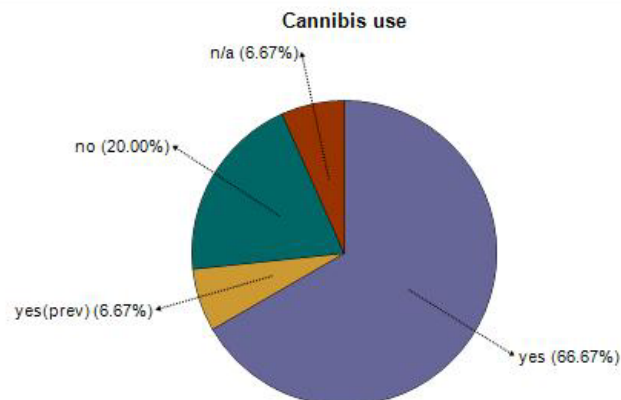
Interviewees Characteristics

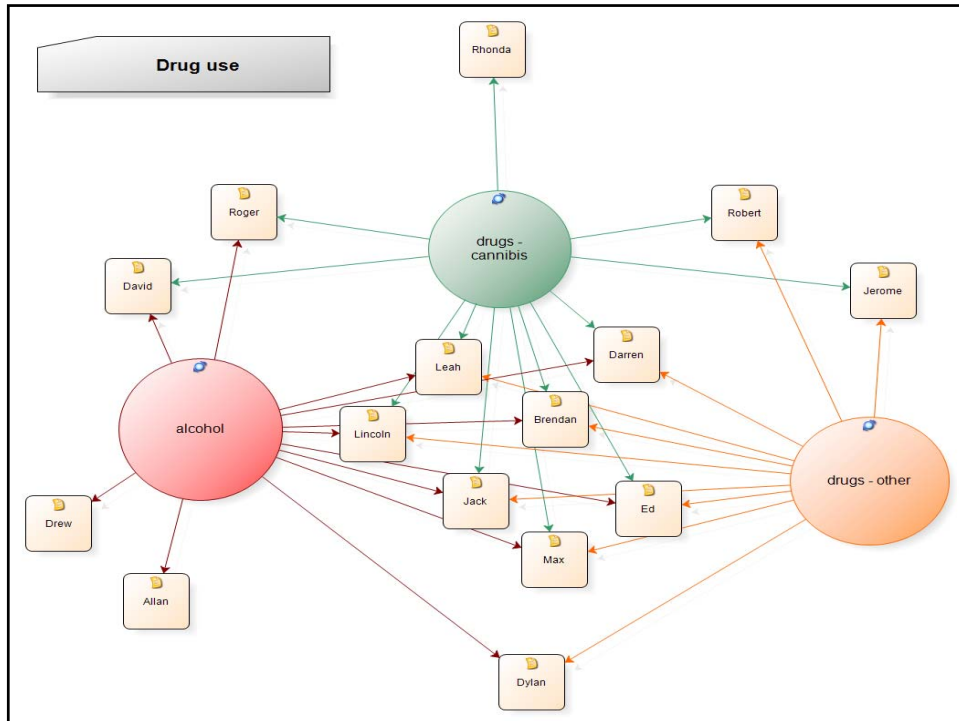
- Gender - only two women participants out of 15 interviewees
- Age when at Brumby House
- Cannabis Use
- Other drug use

Age when at Brumby House



Cannabis Use

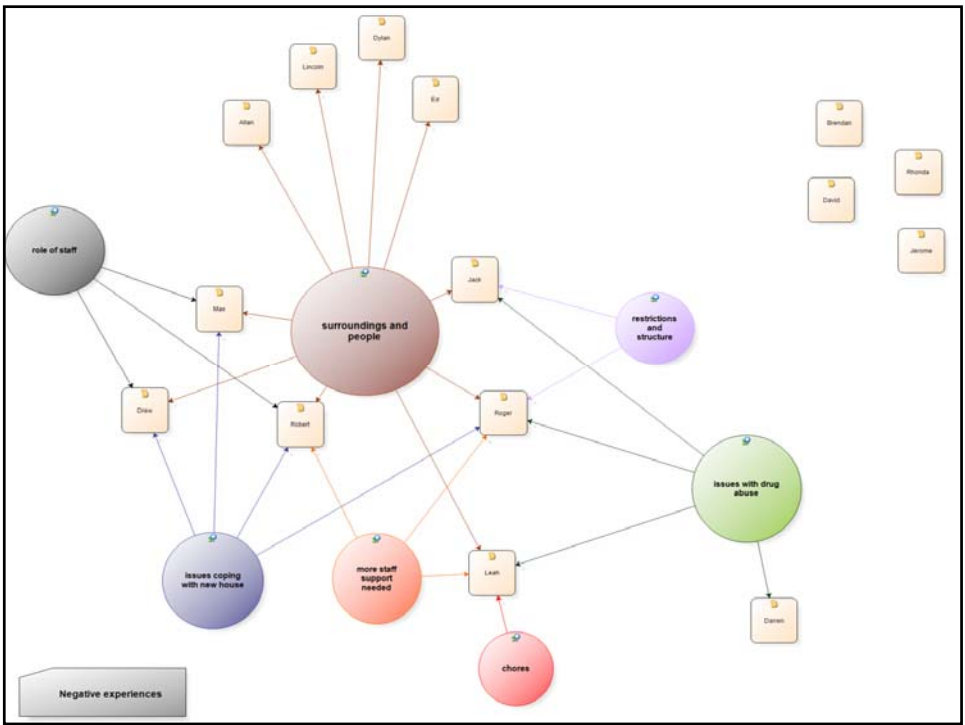
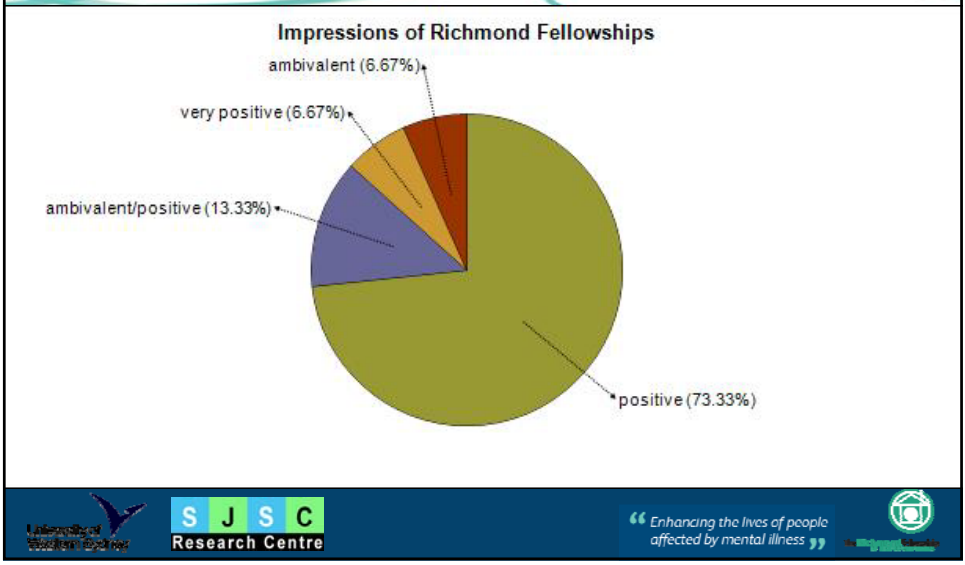


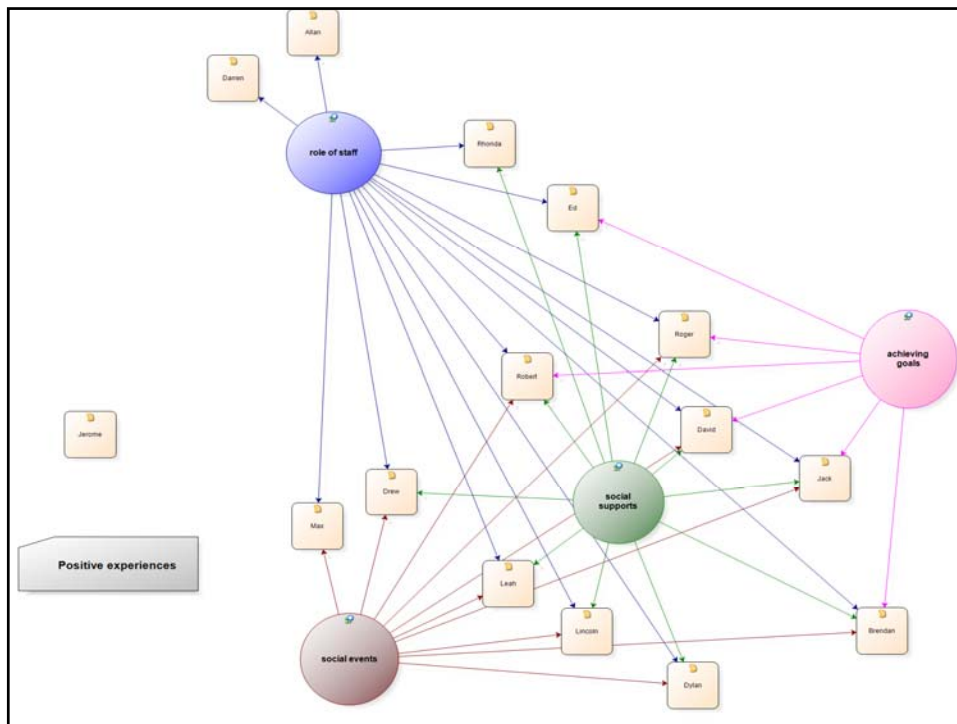


The results so far

- Three periods of the program
- Role of staff identified as key factor
- Social events and activities highly valued

Impressions of Richmond Fellowship





Role of staff

- “they just kind of knew who I was at that moment and helped me develop, you know”
- “I love the workers ... I love the workers here, they are just so caring and um ... they are just beautiful people”
- “Awesome, like the workers were really, really nice ... they don’t accept any like people with bad attitudes”
- “instead of like teaching you they will say, like they are good ... you have to learn it yourself you know”
- “Heaps and heaps of support”

Role of staff

- “they encouraged me to be more open. Um ... the respect they showed me ... they earned my respect by respecting me as an individual and who I was, what I was ... not many organisations do that. ... institutions for people with mental illness make you feel isolated and insignificant. BH didn't do that. They ... were .. warm ... respectful ... empowering force. ... [they] encourage you to be respectful towards yourself as much as to other people”
- “I still see things, still hear things, still feel things. But I cope with it and that's what it's all about. And that's a direct ... I would never have been able to do it without them” [BH & Richmond Fellowship]

Limitations

- Retrospective nature of the research
- Changing nature of the documents
- Lack of details on what factors make supportive staff

Implications for service delivery

- The views of the young people
- The views of family and other stakeholders
- The views of staff
- Staff recruitment & development
 - How do we get and retain great staff?
- Research & evaluation
 - Embedding research & evaluation into everyday practice