

## TAPPING INTO THE UNDERUTILISED RESOURCE: WORKING WITH PARENTS TO IMPROVE YOUTH AOD TREATMENT OUTCOMES.

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**Introduction and Aims:** This presentation will present the findings from five years of outcome data from the Sydney Drug Education and Counselling Centre (SDECC) in the Northern Beaches of Sydney. SDECC utilises an innovative family-focused approach to treatment for young people with substance use and co-occurring mental health issues, providing intensive support for parents seeking treatment for their young person.

**Method:** Outcomes were examined for 404 young people (age 14-25 years; 52% male) and 315 parents from 2014 to 2019, taking part in the SDECC program. Mean scores were calculated for the ORS, SDS and DASS21 at intake and exit/follow-up. In addition, a thematic analysis of qualitative data from parents attending the group program was completed.

**Key Findings:** Overall, parent feedback on the program was very positive. ORS Scores for parents improved from 22 at intake to 27 at the most recent assessment and for young people improved from 21 at intake to 25 at the most recent assessment. DASS21 scores for symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress were reduced for young people and parents from intake to most recent assessment.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** *“This service has saved our family unit: my daughter and I are eternally grateful for the help, guidance and support we’ve received”* (Parent feedback).

Supporting parents provides positive benefits to young people through engaging them in treatment and reducing substance use, improving psychological wellbeing of parents and the young person, and stabilising the family system.

### **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

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