

RichmondPRA's Peer Operated Service in Hervey Bay

Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis

About RichmondPRA's Peer Operated Service in Hervey Bay

RichmondPRA's Peer Operated Service (POS) provides recovery-oriented support to adults with severe and persistent mental health issues in the Hervey Bay area, Queensland. It is run entirely by peer workers who identify as having a lived experience of mental health issues and who purposefully use this lived experience in their work. Individuals who attend the POS are referred to as 'peers'.

The POS is made up of three services: 1) Resource Centre – the 'hub' of the POS where peers can attend one on one support sessions, group sessions and cansocialise with other peers; 2) Warmline – a dedicated, non-crisis phone support service for peers who need support with their mental health recovery; and 3) Rest & Recovery House – short-term accommodation available for peers to take time-out from their current living arrangement. Peers voluntarily attend any or all of the services.

A model of Intentional Peer Support (IPS) is used to support peers on their recovery journeys at the POS. IPS is grounded in the intentional use of lived experience to engage with peers in a meaningful, positive and productive way.

About this project

RichmondPRA commissioned Social Ventures Australia to understand, measure and value the social and economic changes generated by the POS by undertaking a Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis.

SROI is an internationally recognised methodology used to understand, measure and value the impact of a program or organisation. It places a monetary value on the impact (the benefit) of an activity, and compares this with the cost, or investment required, to create that benefit.

The SROI methodology was used to assess the outcomes created in one year (2014), and the investment made to generate those outcomes. The analysis involved 24 consultations with stakeholders of the POS, including 11 peers, as well as a review of the program's historical data and past evaluations.

Key Findings

- RichmondPRA has had a significant positive social and economic impact on its stakeholders including peers, peer volunteers, peer workers and the Wide Bay Mental Health Alcohol & Other Drug Service (WB MH).
- When the total investment in the POS in 2014 is compared to the total social and economic value created, the SROI ratio is 3.27:1. This means that for every \$1 invested into the POS, approximately \$3.27 of value was created
- In 2014, 141 peers engaged with the POS, with 40% of those engaging intensely (at least once a week). In total, activities generated approximately \$2.1M in present value for its stakeholders across a range of outcomes (using a discount rate of 7%).
- An investment of \$0.7M (88% cash and 12% in-kind) was required during this period to fund the program. This equates to approximately \$5k for each peer who participated
- The largest portion of value created by the POS accrued to the peers (\$1.6M). 69% of this is attributable to social recovery (developing a larger and more diverse social network) and personal recovery (development of hope, self-determination and identity).
- The majority of the remaining value, \$0.6M, accrued to WB MH who experienced reduced pressure on their services due to lower peer admissions/re-admissions and shorter lengths of stay at their health services.

"This [the POS] has given me a glimmer of hope again. I have tried everything else and was starting to give up." Peer accessing the POS

"The POS influenced the Community Care Unit (CCU) in Bundaberg to include a model of intentional peer support. This is due to the respect the CCU has for the results coming out of the POS." WB MH

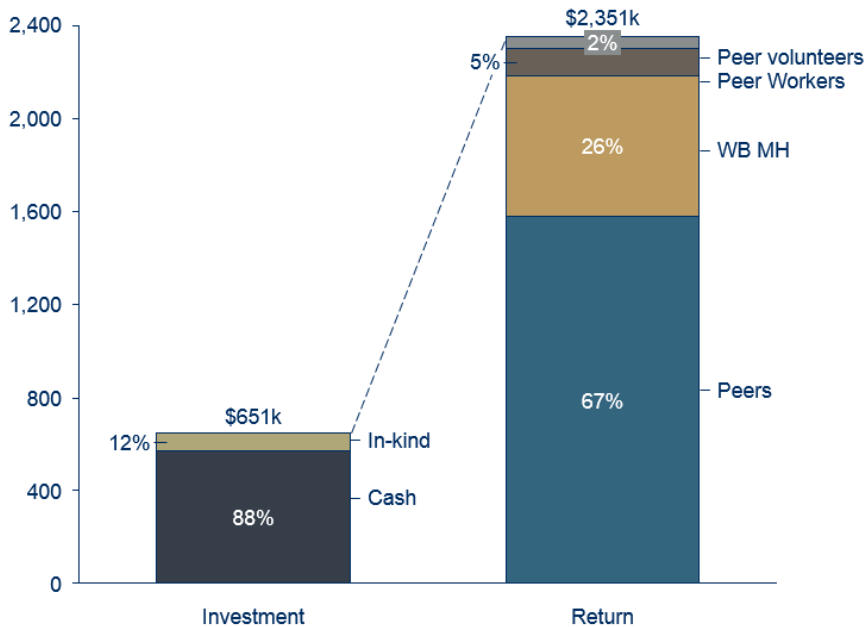
"I believe that these [peer support] services are the new evolution of psychiatry and although they are a new concept to mainstream treatment, they will be the 'norm' in the future." Dr Glen Adamson, Mental Health Intervention Coordinator, WB MH

Figure A below outlines the relationship between the investment and value created.

Investment to return

2014

Thousands of dollars



SROI ratio:

RichmondPRA delivered an SROI ratio of 3.27:1 based on the investment in 2014.

That is, for every \$1 invested, approximately \$3.27 of value was created.

Figure A – Investment by and value created for each stakeholder group (note: values are not discounted)

Insights

RichmondPRA is a leader in mental health peer work in Australia. The evidence provided in this analysis attests that the POS is bringing about significant, positive changes for peers, its employees and volunteers, and the health system, proving it was a good investment for stakeholders. The POS is an excellent case study for the use of peer work as a powerful component of mental health services in Australia.

A number of insights emerged through the course of the SROI analysis and are outlined below. These insights are important if considering improvement or replication of the POS.

1. Open, more mature peers who engaged intensely experienced the biggest changes

- *More mature in age:* peers who participated are generally of a more mature age (median start age: 44) and have been in and out of ‘the system’ for a long time.
- *Open and willing to reciprocate support:* we observed peers who participated were willing to interact with each other and reciprocate support to each other.
- *Biggest value for those engaging intensely:* our analysis showed the value of the program is biggest for peers engaging intensely (> once a week) and in the domains of social and personal recovery.

2. A 100% peer operated service and an informal environment were key differentiators that contributed to the results

- *Informal environment:* we observed the relaxed, non-clinical, unthreatening environment of the Resource Centre (located in a house) differentiated it from other services and promoted social interaction.
- *100% peer operated:* the commonality of peers, peer volunteers, and peer workers helped to break down barriers and build trust and relationships quickly. The peer workers’ passion and motivation for the recovery of peers was obvious and also helped build trust that contributed to outcomes. Further, peer workers and peer volunteers were a living, breathing source of inspiration for peers, proving recovery to the point of being able to work is absolutely possible.

3. The POS has contributed to system change

- *Acceptance and appreciation of peer workers:* WB MH has increased the use of peer workers in their programs after observing the success of the POS. The positive results coming from the POS also contributed to RichmondPRA’s ‘Why Not a Peer Worker’ employment policy.

SVA has outlined a number of recommendations for RichmondPRA in the full report. For more information about RichmondRPA or the full report please contact (02) 9393 9000.

SVA Consulting are experts in SROI. For more information contact consulting@socialventures.com.au.
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