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**Richmond Fellowship NSW; Young Women's Dual Diagnosis Project.**

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**Background:** The Richmond Fellowship of NSW is the overseeing agency in a community partnership project in the Penrith LGA focusing on Young Women with Dual Diagnosis aged 18 to 24. The project advocates for consumers and community service providers to improve the support offered for consumers in the community. The project has been responsible for raising the profile of dual diagnosis within the broader community, identifying existing services, gaps and opportunities to better meet the needs of young women.

**Aim/Purpose:** By the conclusion of the project the steering committee, guided by the project worker hopes to have advocated on all levels of government, NGO's and services. Sustainable outcomes desired include improved access to services, increased vocational opportunities, advocating for stable accommodation, training of service providers including schools and the youth sector in dual diagnosis prevention, promotion and early intervention. At the conclusion of the project a best practice model will identify pathways of care within a recovery framework.

**Method:** Networking with drug and alcohol, mental health, accommodation, NGO's and youth services and other government agencies, has resulted in an action plan. Partnership agreements and combined activities, which focus on achieving sustainable outcomes, are the focus. Consumer activities to promote access to services include Sexual Health Week Relationship workshops, Mental Health Week Community Forum, art exhibitions and use of the Internet. A consumer reference group is consulted with at all stages of the project, establishing leadership capacity opportunities and ensuring consumer focus. The project worker is providing workshops to clinical and non-clinical services to assist with complex consumer issues. Cross-pollination of mental health and drug and alcohol knowledge is facilitated. Train-the-trainer resources are developing a common language to address barriers of access for consumers.

**Conclusion:** A solution-focused approach is essential in improving services for marginalised consumers. Occupational Therapist's expertise in engaging, empowering and fostering recovery with consumers is invaluable. There is an exciting opportunity for the profession of Occupational Therapy to apply practical knowledge and clinical reasoning skills in developing the community services sector. In addition with changes to the award and the rising profile of NGO's, we are in a position to specialise as leaders in the health and community services fields.