Addressing mental health and alcohol/other drug use comorbidities: The National Comorbidity Guidelines project.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

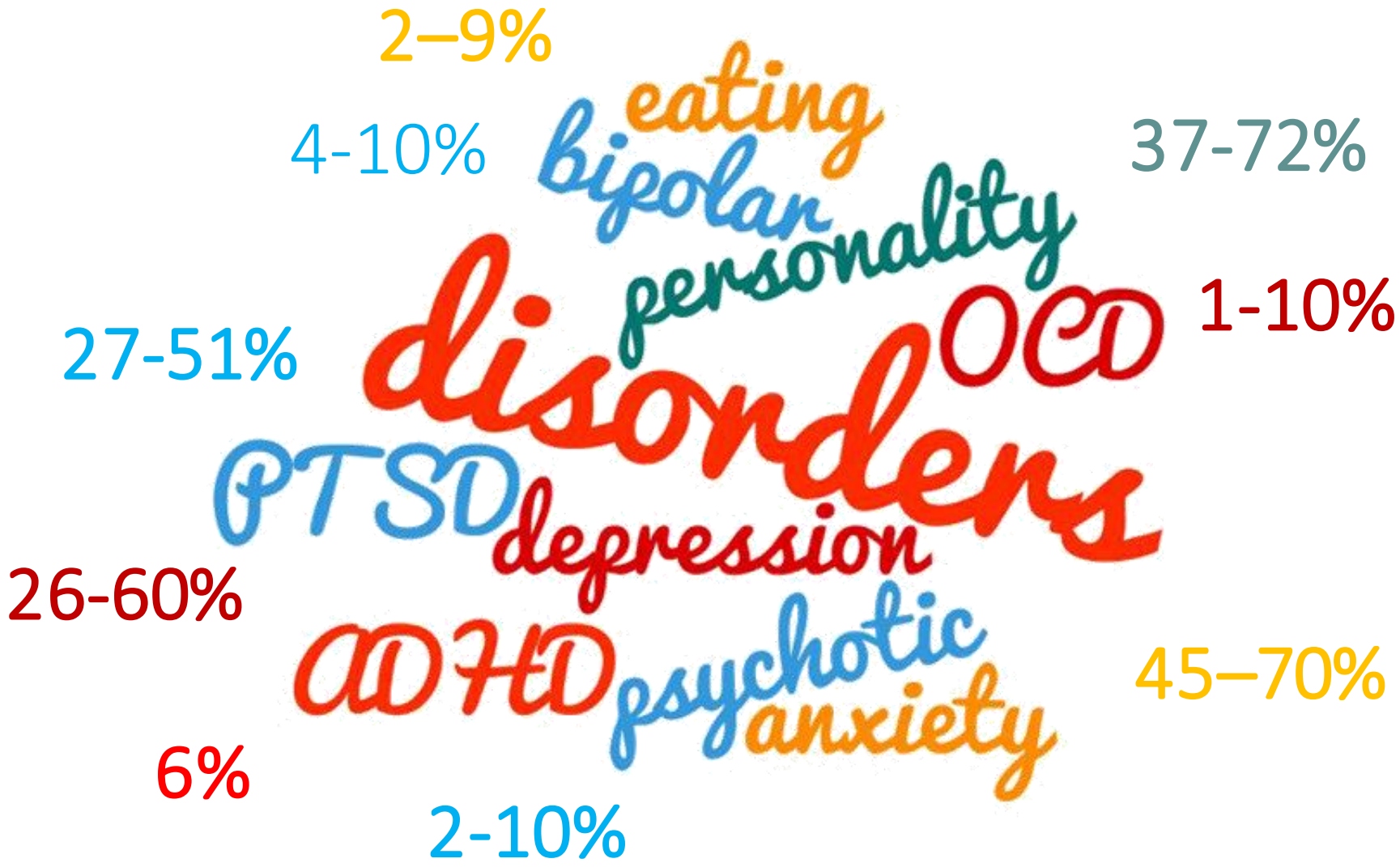
Matilda Centre

Overview

- Current issues in comorbidity
- Current developments to promote best practice in managing comorbidities.
- Further developments in the National Comorbidity Guidelines project

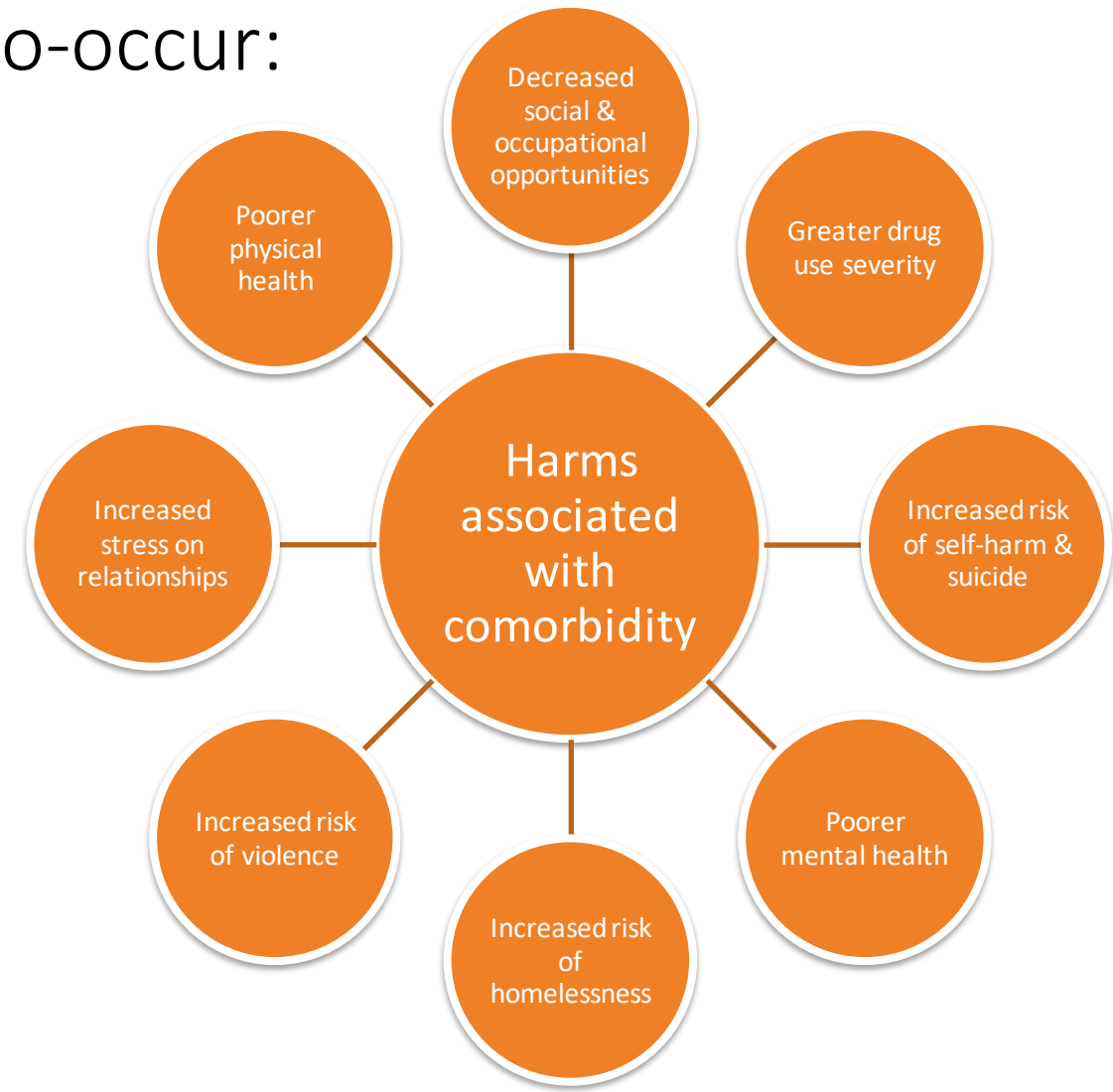
Current issues in comorbidity

- Mental health (MH) and alcohol/other drug (AOD) use disorders two of Australia's most common & burdensome health conditions
- Australians each year
- Co-occurrence is common
- with AOD use disorder also meet criteria for mood or anxiety disorder
- Australian clients in AOD treatment services meet diagnostic criteria for co-occurring MH disorder
- Co-occurring MH/AOD conditions both *under*diagnosed and *under*treated.


2–9%
eating
4-10%
bipolar
37-72%
personality
disorders
OCD
1-10%
27-51%
PTSD
depression
26-60%
ADHD
psychotic
45–70%
anxiety
6%
2-10%

Current issues in comorbidity

- When MH and AOD use conditions do co-occur:

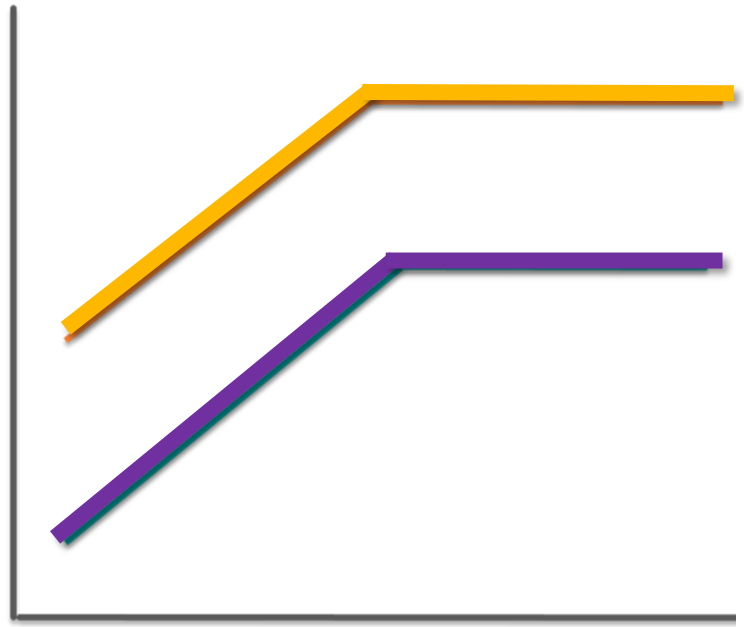


Current issues in comorbidity

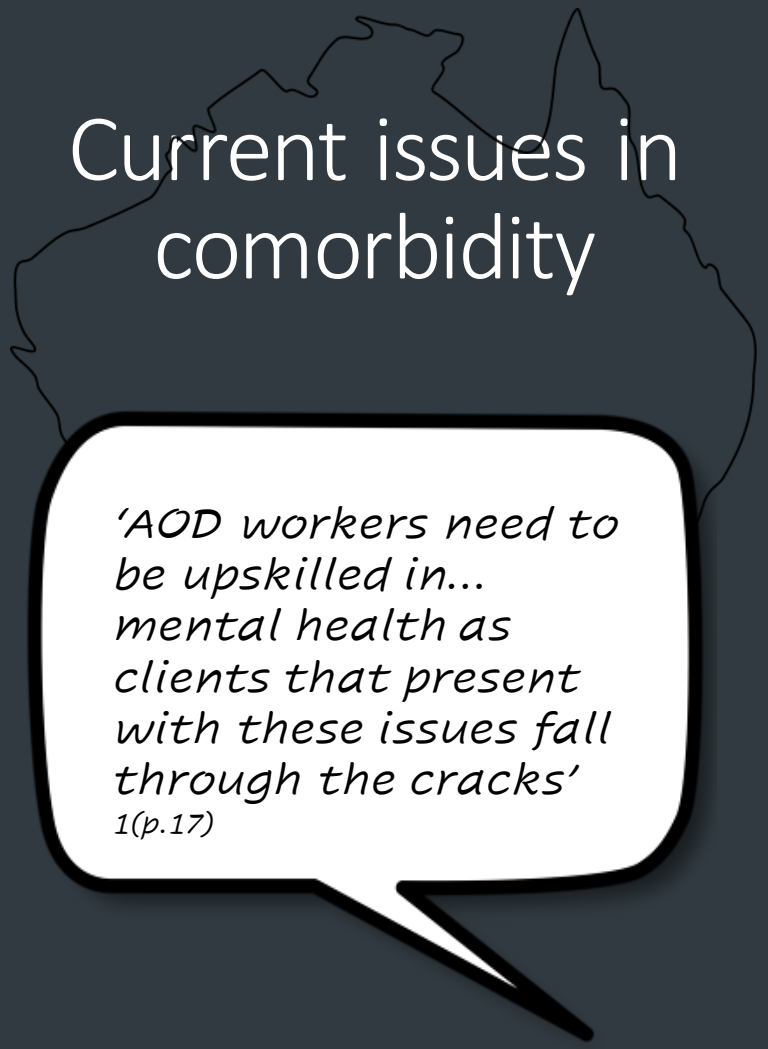
- A high priority population due to multiple biological, psychological, social risk factors
- Co-occurring MH/AOD conditions can complicate presentation, treatment and recovery
- AOD clinicians need to be aware of and manage (if not treat) co-occurring MH condition, take non-siloed approach
- Symptoms of co-occurring MH condition may impact on course of AOD condition and its treatment, and vice-versa
- Symptoms need not be diagnosable as a disorder to impact person's functioning and recovery

Current issues in comorbidity

- Yet, people with co-occurring MH and AOD conditions benefit as much from usual AOD treatment as those with a single, standalone condition…



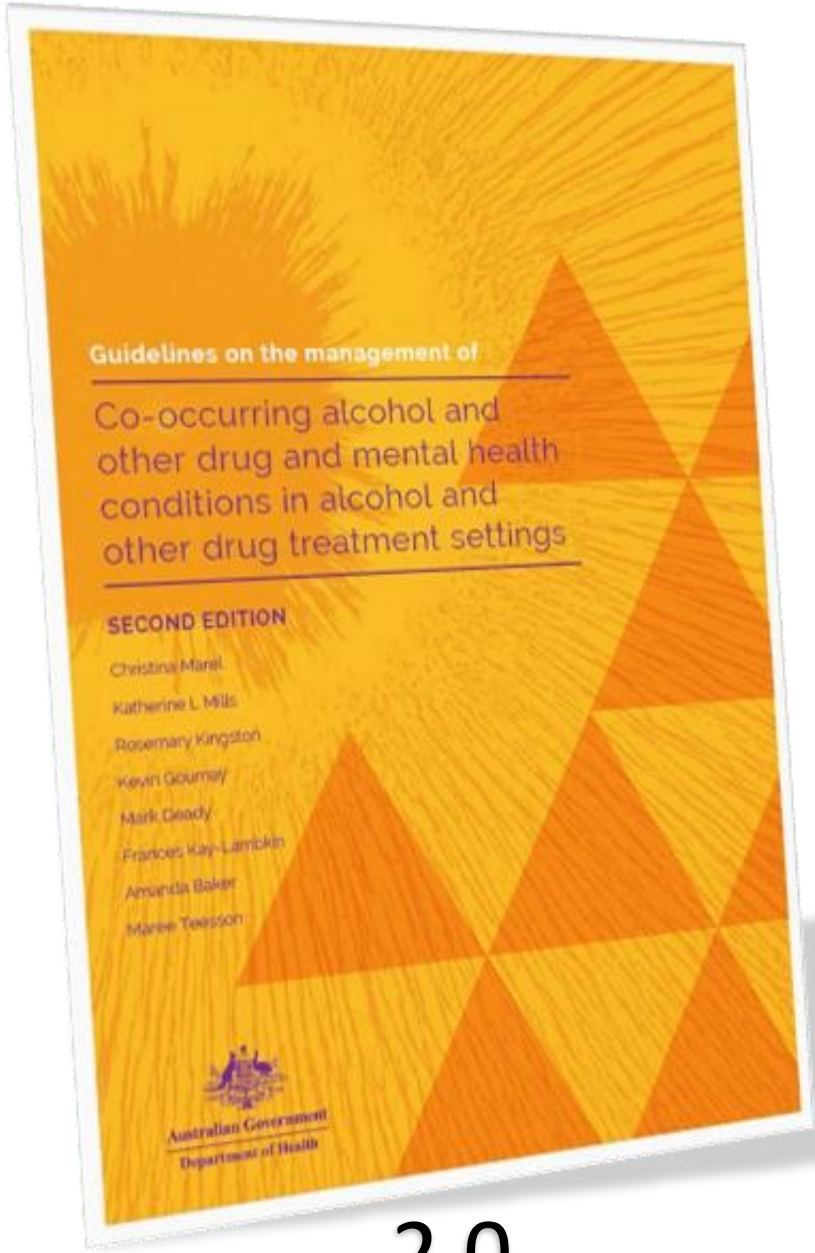
Current issues in comorbidity



- Managing comorbidity remains top-cited challenge among AOD workers [1]:
  - Training gaps with this client group (62%)
  - Common client group (40%)
  - Barriers to accessing resources (financial costs, lack of time, find relevant training, geographic constraints)
- Need for accessible, evidence-based guidance to:
  - Improve workforce capacity
  - Promote best practice in the management of co-occurring MH/AOD use conditions
  - Optimise outcomes for clients

[1.] Australia's Alcohol and Other Drug Workforce: National Survey Results 2019 - 2020

Current developments to promote best practice



2.0

Under development (due 2022)

3.0

Aims

- Increase AOD workers' knowledge and awareness of mental health conditions
- Improve the confidence and skills of AOD workers in relation to comorbidity
- Improve AOD workers' ability to identify mental health conditions
- Provide guiding principles for working with clients with co-occurring mental health conditions
- Provide practical information on the management and treatment of co-occurring mental health conditions
- Provide information regarding referral processes
- Provide resources that may be used to facilitate all of the above

Part A: What is comorbidity and why is it important?

Part B: Responding to comorbidity

Part C: Specific population groups

Appendices

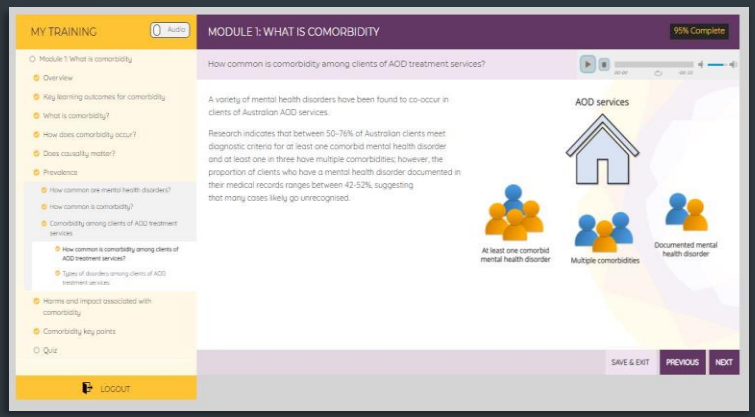
- Other Guidelines
- Other useful resources
- Research and information organisations
- DSM-5 and ICD-10 classification cross-reference
- Motivational interviewing
- Mental state examination
- Integrated Motivational Assessment Tool (IMAT)
- Additional screening tools
- CANSAS-P
- Kessler psychological distress scale (K10)
- Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS 21)
- The Primary Care PTSD Screen (PC-PTSD)
- Trauma Screening Questionnaire (TSQ)
- Psychosis Screener (PS)
- Indigenous Risk Impact Screener (IRIS)
- Adult ADHD Self Report Scale (ASRS)
- Suicide risk screener scorer and interpretation
- Referral pro forma
- Cognitive behavioural techniques
- Anxiety management techniques

Worksheets

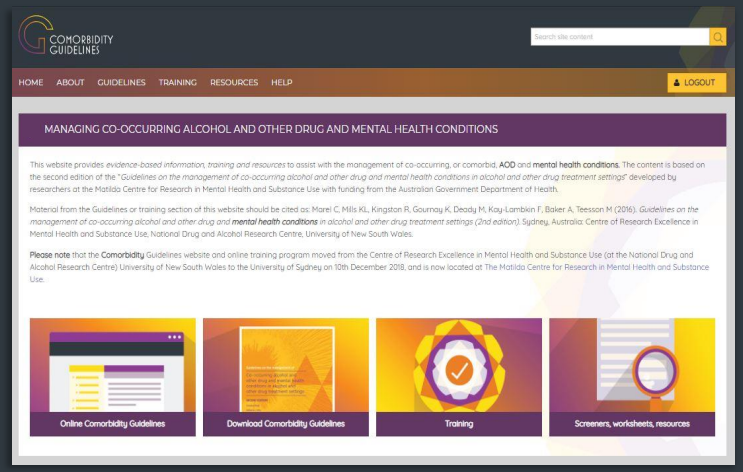
- Identifying negative thoughts
- Cognitive restructuring
- Structured problem-solving worksheet
- Goal setting worksheet
- Pleasure and mastery worksheet
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Controlled abdominal breathing
- Visualisation and imagery
- Food and activity diary
- Common reactions to trauma
- Common reactions to grief and loss

Dissemination and translation

Hardcopy



Online training



Website

Train-the-trainer

Coming in 2021: erin.madden@sydney.edu.au

Hardcopies

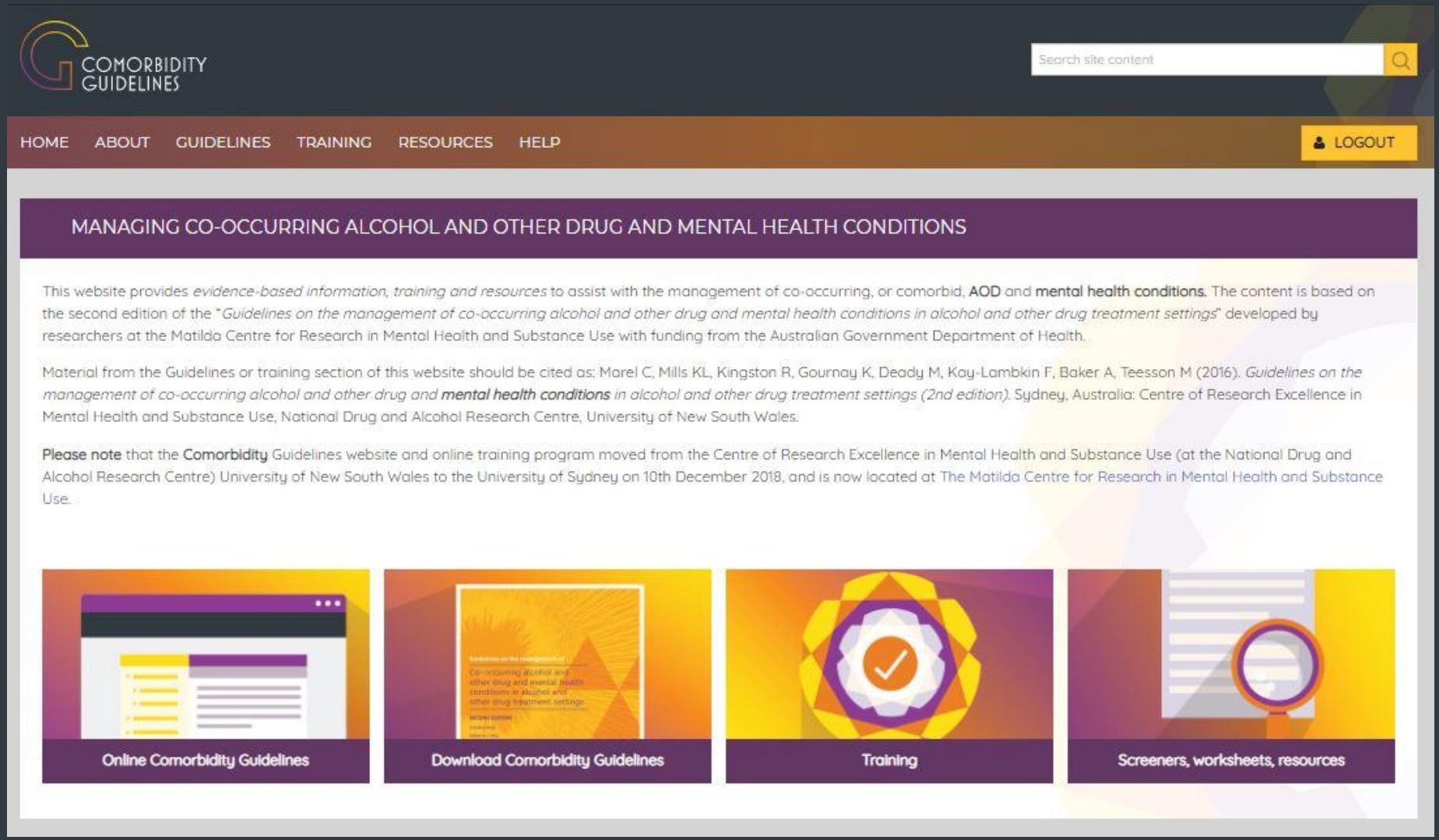
- 6,339 hardcopies distributed
- Hardcopies from (final!) print run available now
  - Demand remains high

→ Distributed >17,056 hard and soft copies

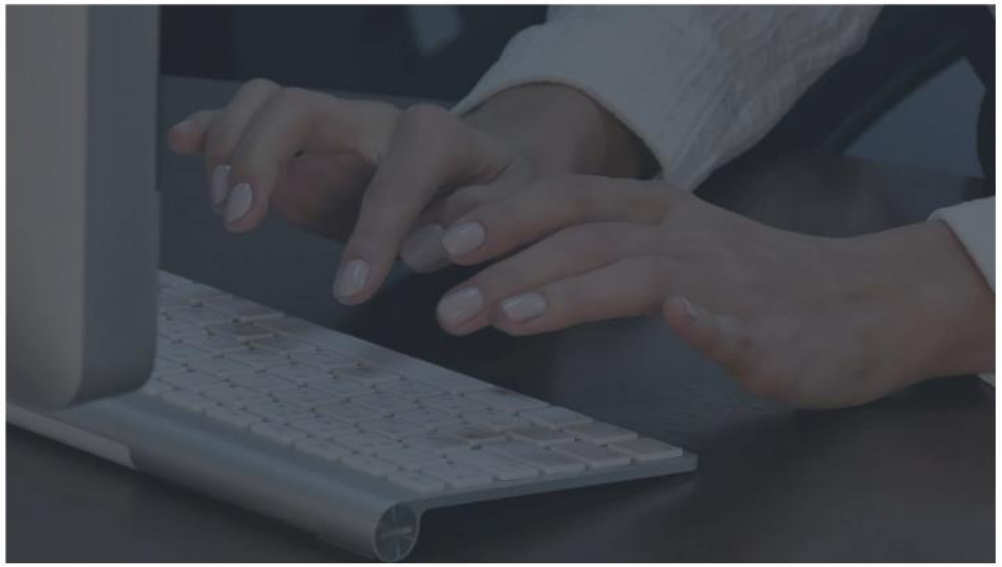
Website

1,670,782

website visitors
(since launch in 2017)



Online training program



Training Program

- 4,137 registrations
- 1020 completions
- Mandatory training

Online training evaluation:

95% gained skills

94% found training useful

97% satisfied

94% greater confidence

89% used what they had learned in clinical practice

59% improved client outcomes

I found the modules excellent and feel this resource would be a fantastic help with my professional growth
QLD Peer support worker

I think we could equally say "what a great session" and "what a great resource". A couple of people had already used the resource and were singing its praises to the others afterwards.
TAFE NSW

We already recommend the Guidelines as a standard text. Access to hard copies will be useful and the online resources look fabulous and will be used by students and trainers
TAFE VIC

I've been doing the training and I think it's great. Thank you very much for putting this together
AOD treatment staff NSW

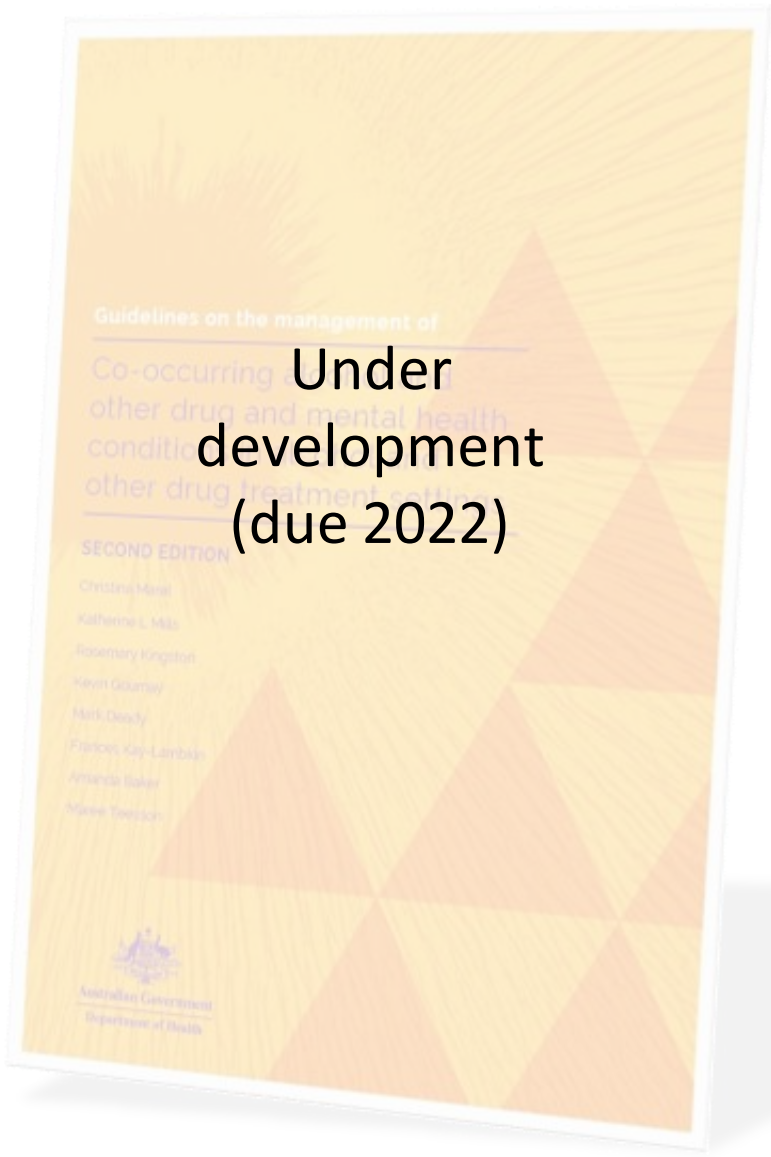
... this is an excellent resource and I have recommended many people who I supervise to do the online training
Social worker

My daughter is doing a Masters in psychology at Uni. I suggested that she do the AOD comorbidity guidelines training that I found on the comorbidity guidelines website. She found it so useful that she told her course supervisors who have recommended that every masters psychology student at Monash should do this!

Current developments to promote best practice

- Comorbidity guidelines, website, training resources effective in improving knowledge, confidence and skills of AOD workers
- Essential they are based on best and most up-to-date evidence
- Crucial they are distributed to where they are most needed
- Responsive to need and reflect current climate

Further developments on the Comorbidity Guidelines project



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Further developments on the Comorbidity Guidelines project

- Online survey of stakeholders ✔
- Consultation with expert advisory panel ✔
- Open discussion forum ✔
- Collating/ analysing feedback and workshopping revisions ✔
- Synthesis of best available evidence TO DO
- Drafting new Guidelines content TO DO

Snapshot of consultation feedback

- Diverse feedback with strong consistent themes over EAP/DF
- Strongest recommendation = replication of guidelines for MH workforce
- Other feedback included more detail on particular areas, e.g.:
  - Trauma-informed care
  - Neurocognitive impairments
  - Stigma – its prevalence and impact
  - The role of peer-workers
- Currently working how best to address and incorporate feedback

Thank you!

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