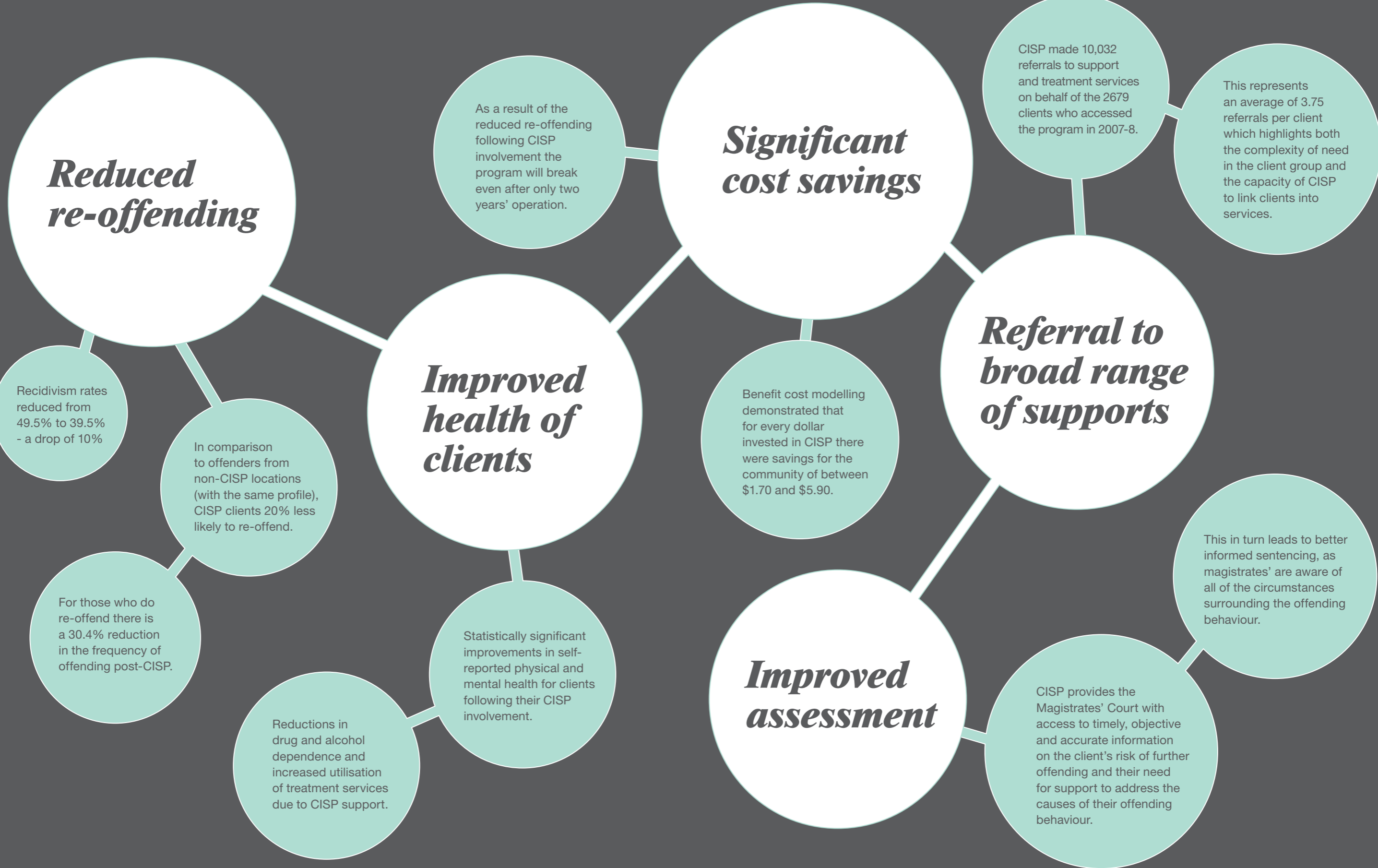


***Court Integrated
Services Program***
Tackling the causes of crime

Executive Summary Evaluation Report

Court Integrated Services Program Key Achievements



Message from the Attorney General

“If we’re truly serious about stopping crime, we must get better at tackling its causes – preventing people from being further into its cycle if it is their first offence; or breaking that cycle for those long caught on a roundabout of illness or disadvantage and offending behaviour.”

Traditional court processes are not always equipped to identify or respond to the full range of factors that lead people to commit crime. That’s why, over the last decade, Victoria has developed a suite of initiatives to do just that – to identify where diversion away from the criminal justice system may achieve better results; or where referral to treatment may break a vicious pattern and, ultimately, prevent further crime from occurring.

Established in 2006 the Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) was another step in this evolution – an integration of services and expertise to respond to the growing numbers of people coming before Victoria’s courts whose offending was linked to homelessness, poverty, substance abuse, mental disorder, or disability.

The results are already speaking for themselves. Rates of re-offending among participants are significantly lower than those in comparison groups; while frequency and severity of offending has also dropped. Drug and alcohol dependence amongst participants is down, while physical and mental health is up.

Sentences handed down to participants are much more informed and, therefore able to be more effective, while the number of referrals to services and treatment reflect the very acute need of many participants. In fact, for some, their involvement in CISP has been the first time that conditions, such as acquired brain injury, have been identified and therefore received support.

If an improvement in participant health and fewer crimes being committed is not enough, we only have to look at the savings to the taxpayer to see that CISP has been worth the investment. Estimates indicate that the program will break even after only two years’ operation while for every dollar invested in CISP, there are savings for the community of between \$1.70 and \$5.90. By any measure, then, CISP is contributing to a safer, healthier Victoria.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rob Hulls". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Honourable Rob Hulls, MP
Attorney-General

Introduction

The Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) began in 2007 after an establishment period in 2006.

By the end of 2009, the program had been running for three full years and, at that time, the Courts and Tribunals Unit of the Department of Justice wanted an independent evaluation to be done.

The Department of Justice engaged Dr Stuart Ross of Melbourne Consulting and Custom Programs within the University of Melbourne to conduct the evaluation.

At the same time, an economic evaluation was carried out by *PricewaterhouseCoopers*. This document is a summary of both evaluations.

What is the Court Integrated Services Program?

The Court Integrated Services Program (CISP) offers a coordinated, team-based approach to the assessment and treatment of defendants at the pre-trial or bail stage. It provides case management support and links defendants to support services such as drug and alcohol treatment, crisis accommodation, disability services and mental health services.

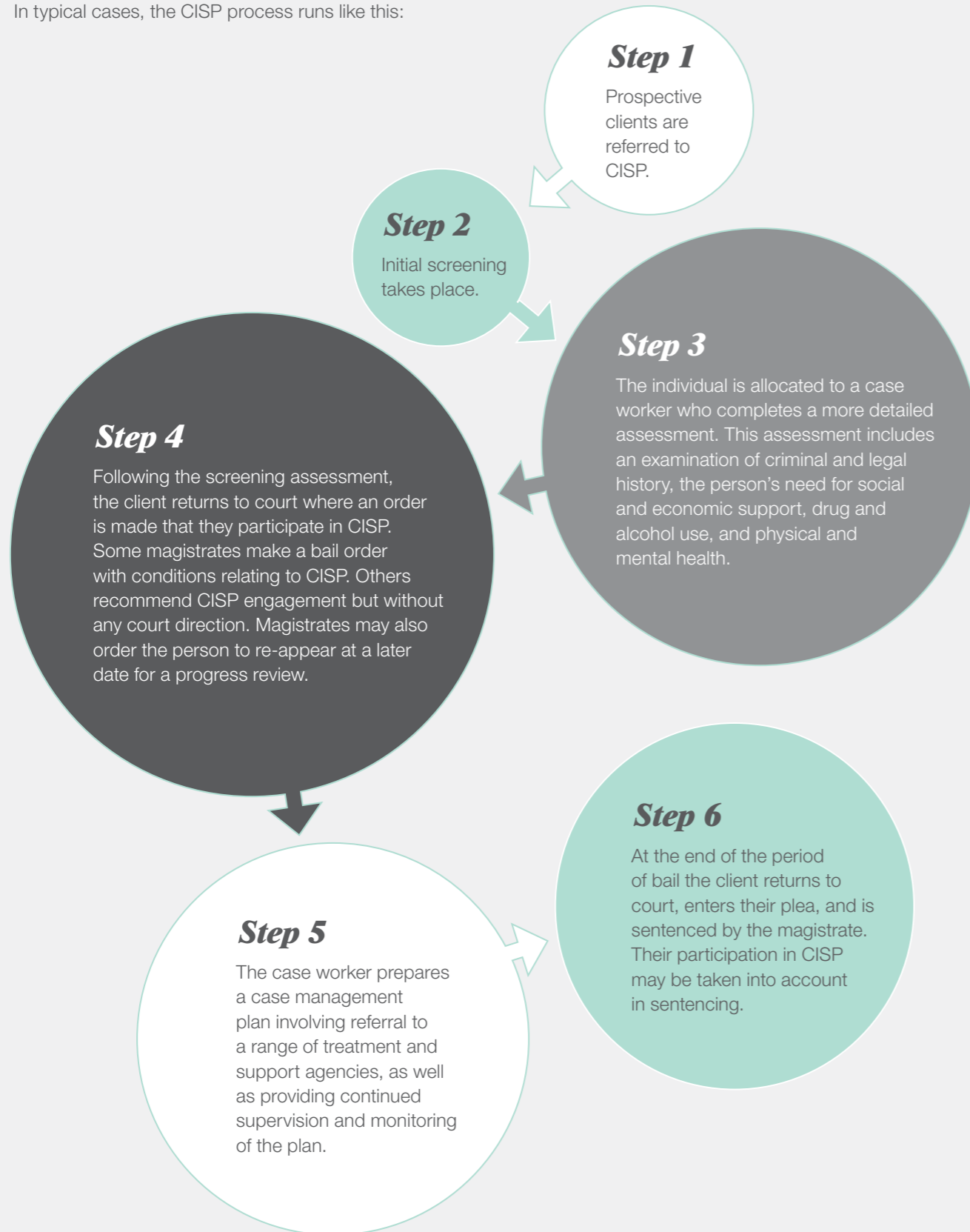
The CISP is managed within the Court Support and Diversion Services branch of the Magistrates’ Court of Victoria and operates at three Victorian Magistrates’ Court venues:

- Melbourne;
- Sunshine; and
- Latrobe Valley.

How CISP works on the ground

CISP can begin at any time between a person being charged with criminal offences up until they plead guilty or not guilty. The person may be in custody awaiting a bail hearing, already on bail, or summonsed to appear. Most participants are referred to CISP by their legal representative.

In typical cases, the CISP process runs like this:



Program Features and goals

The primary features of the CISP service model are:

- A multidisciplinary team-based approach;
- Case managers carry out a range of assessment, compliance, reporting, support and referral functions;
- Clients are allocated to the three program levels based on their assessed risk;
- Once engaged, a client is the responsibility of a CISP case manager, but other specialists may be consulted;
- CISP provides a range of direct services, with drug and alcohol, Acquired Brain Injury and accommodation service interventions delivered by contracted service providers;

- Additional services may be delivered by referral to external agencies, with brokerage funds available to pay for a range of treatment and support services including emergency accommodation, pharmacotherapy assessment or treatment, and education or other programs.

CISP aims to improve treatment, court, sentence and re-offending outcomes for program participants. These goals are all linked to one another; effective treatment of the causes of offending works to improve health and well-being of defendants and reduce bail breach rates. These outcomes lead in turn to an increased likelihood of rehabilitative sentencing and improved order compliance. Improved order compliance and reduced re-offending leads to less crime and safer communities.

Case Study

A 32-year old male on remand was assessed, at his request, for the Court Integrated Services Program (CISP). The person had a very long history of offending, and had served a number of jail and Community Corrections sentences.

At the time of his assessment he was facing two separate sets of charges involving burglary and theft, and was in breach of a suspended sentence. The most likely outcome for a defendant with this history would be a further jail sentence.

During the assessment, the CISP case manager noted that the person showed indications of an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) as well as other psychological issues and he was referred for further assessment. The defendant had been attending Turning Point, drug and alcohol treatment service for counselling where he had established a beneficial therapeutic relationship with his counsellor which he wished to continue.

While on CISP he continued his treatment at Turning Point, attended all appointments with CISP, found housing, maintained pharmacotherapy, was abstinent from drug use, participated in a Personal Support Program (PSP) through Centrelink and maintained psychological counselling as arranged through CISP.

The magistrate imposed a further suspended sentence. It was deemed by the magistrate that it would be counter-productive to impose an immediate custodial sentence given the progress made by the offender and his prospects for long-term rehabilitation.

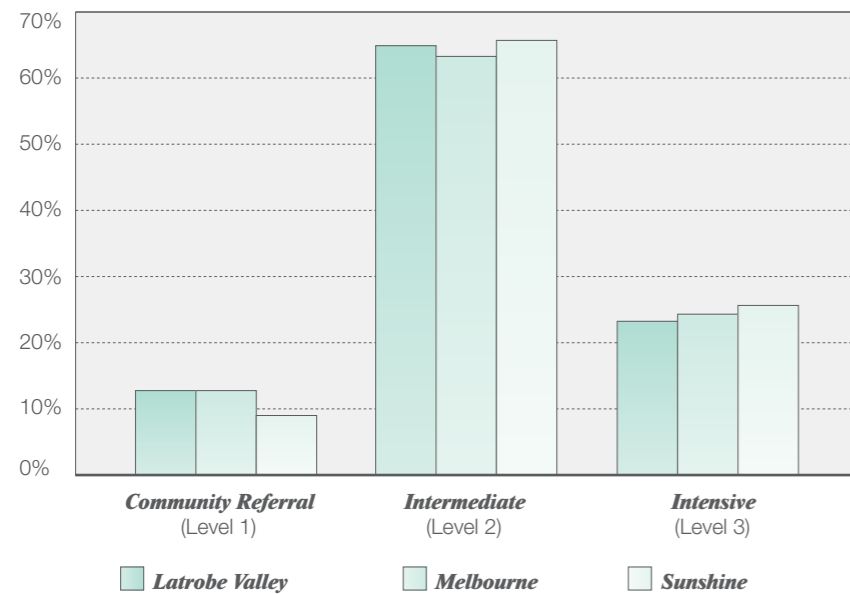
At the conclusion of the proceedings, the offender asked to address the court. He thanked the magistrate and his CISP case manager for the opportunity and indicated that he was planning to attend TAFE to study social work.

Referrals to CISP

There are three levels of the program in which defendants can participate:

- Community Referral (Level 1)
Where minimal support to link to community services is required
- Intermediate (Level 2)
Where case management support and monitoring is required
- Intensive (Level 3)
Where intensive case management and support is required

Figure 1. CISP clients by program level



The majority of referrals (75%) are made by clients' legal representatives, with referrals by magistrates accounting for a further 15% of referrals. Self-referrals make up around 5% of referrals, although it should be noted that some clients who wish to be referred to CISP may ask their legal representative to do this on their behalf.

During 2007 – 2008, there were some 3756 referrals to the CISP with 72% or 2679 assessed as suitable and accepted into the program. The average age of all clients was 32.7 years.

During the same time period, the program made 10,032 referrals for participants to treatment and support services, which is an average of 3.75 separate referrals per individual. (the number of referrals per individual highlights the complexity of needs). Around 40% of these referrals were for drug and alcohol services, 35% for material aid, 7% for housing, 5% for mental health, and 5% for Acquired Brain Injury issues.

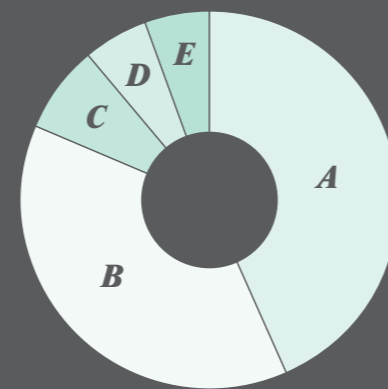
The mean period of engagement for clients who completed CISP (from notification of a program place to exit date) was 110 days.

Snapshot

2679
accepted into the program.

10,032
referrals made for participation in treatment & services programs.

110
average days to completion of CISP.



Referrals made for:

- A** | 40% Drug & Alcohol Services
- B** | 35% Material Aid
- C** | 7% Housing
- D** | 5% Mental Health
- E** | 5% Acquired Brain Injury Issues

Findings of the evaluations

Overall, the University of Melbourne evaluation found that...

...magistrates and other stakeholders showed a high level of support for the program and its outcomes; and, compared with offenders at other court venues, offenders who completed CISP showed a significantly lower rate of re-offending in the months after they exited the program.

Other key findings were:

- A study of health and well-being among CISP clients showed they had poorer mental health than comparable community groups and that their mental health improved during their period on the program.
- Achieved or exceeded its targets for the engagement and retention of clients, and that CISP was also able to match the intensity of intervention to the risk and needs of clients. Furthermore, CISP achieved a high rate of referral of clients to treatment and support services.

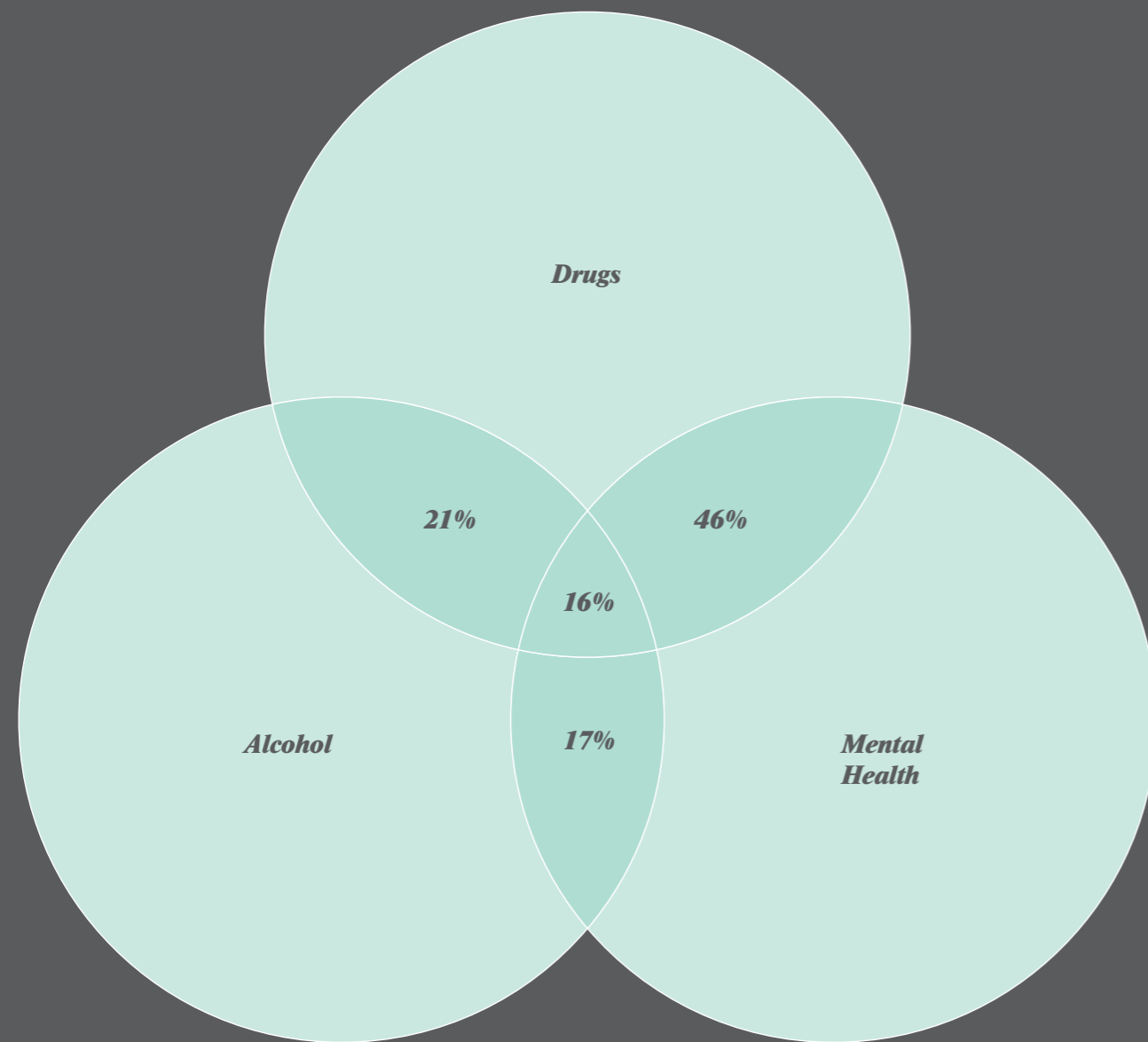
A look at CISP clients as people

The CISP was developed to address the increasingly complex needs of the defendants appearing before the Magistrates' Court in an integrated way. It brought together a range of existing support services into a single co-ordinated approach.

Even a brief glance at CISP clients as individuals soon highlights distinguishing features regarding:

- Drug and alcohol use,
- Mental health problems, and
- Acquired Brain Injury,
- Male/female gender split.
- Over representation of indigenous people,

Figure 3. Combination of problems at referral



Expressed as a percentage of the total number of clients who identified problems at referral.

Snapshot

81%
of CISP clients are male.

70%
CISP clients reported some level of illicit drug use.

1/3
CISP clients identified as having a possible mental health problem.

10%
CISP clients identified as having indicators of Acquired Brain Injury.

2,349
identified cases with drug problems.

32.7
years was the median age of CISP clients

Drug use

Overall, around 70% of all engaged CISP clients reported some level of illicit drug use and all three venues reported very high figures for problems with alcohol. Nearly two-thirds of Latrobe Valley clients (65.4%) were recorded as having alcohol issues with the figure for the other two venues being around 40%.

Figure 4. Total instances of drug problems

Current use of drugs reported 1,697

Past or present IV (Intravenous) drug use 1,326

Current Pharmacotherapy (Eg. Methodone, Naltrexone) 594

Overdose history 449

Table 1. Clients with identified drug problems

Drug Problems	Case Location			
	Latrobe Valley	Melbourne	Sunshine	Total
Current use of drugs reported	190	868	639	1,697
Past or present IV drug use	114	709	503	1,326
Current pharmacotherapy	27	299	268	594
Overdose history	45	261	143	449
Total	292	1,267	790	2,349

Indigenous participation

Clients who identified as indigenous (Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both) comprised 8.1% of all CISP clients.

This figure is reflective of the over-representation of indigenous people in the justice system more broadly. However, it does demonstrate a positive uptake of the program by indigenous clients. The Aboriginal Liaison Officer service within CISP is one way in which the Justice Department is assisting indigenous offenders.

Clients with identified alcohol problems

Total | 1,018 Instances of alcohol use



Severity of Alcohol Problems ■ Use ■ Abuse ■ Dependence ■ None 19 (1.86%) ■ Unknown 14 (1.37%)

Drug and Alcohol treatment agencies interviewed by the evaluators identified the major advantage of the CISP model is that clients also receive the social and material support that assists them to

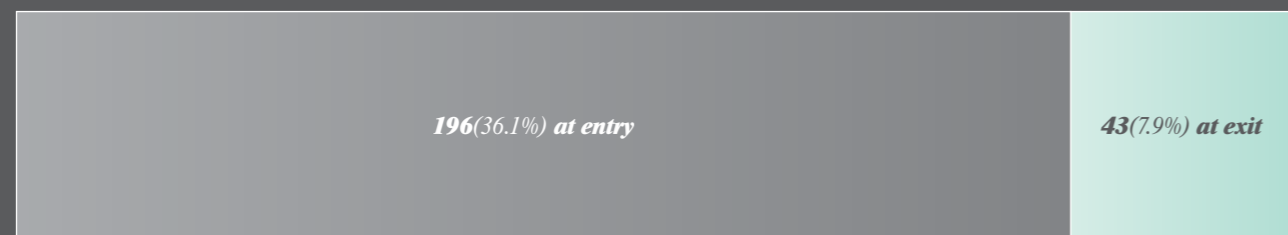
engage successfully with drug and alcohol treatment. In the first two years of operation CISP made 3830 referrals for Drug and Alcohol assessment and treatment.

Assessed alcohol problem status at entry and exit

Abuse



Dependence

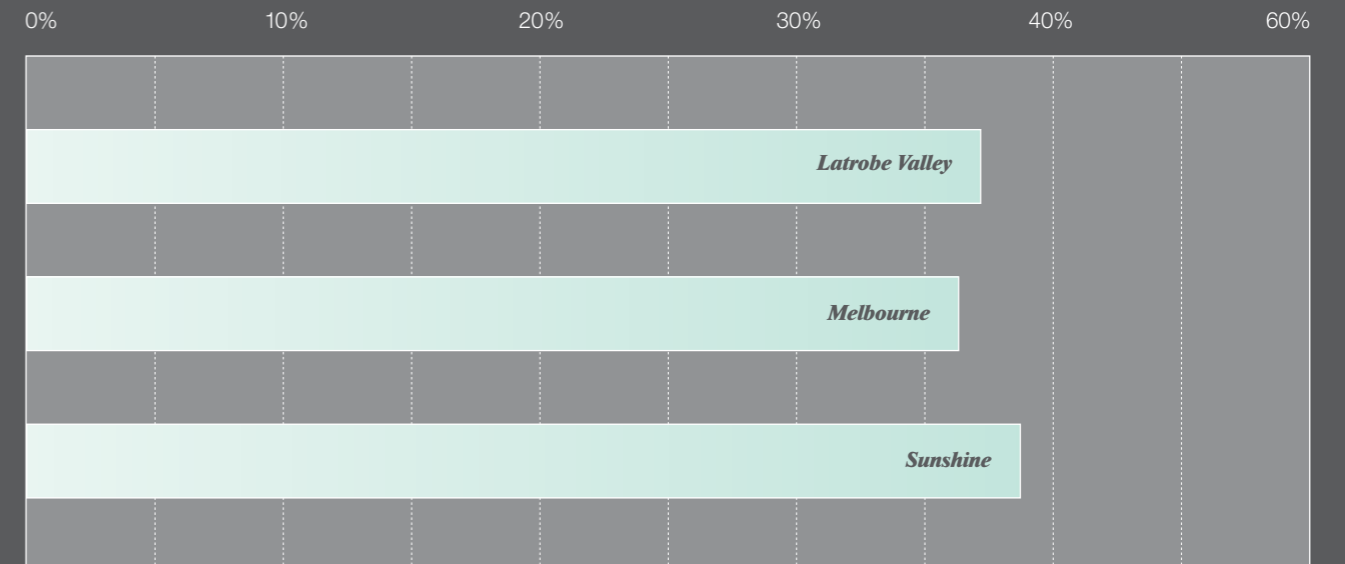


None



Whilst these results are based on self-reported use and are therefore not conclusive they do indicate a positive trend for participants accessing CISP.

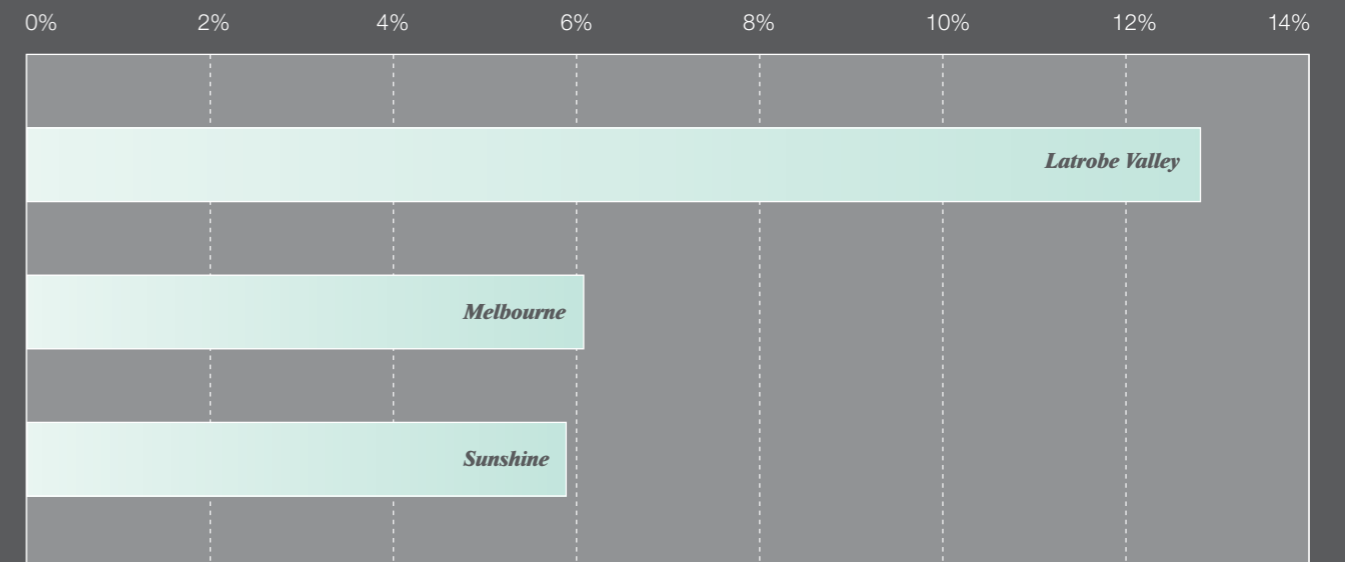
Mental health problems



Across the program, just over one-third of all clients were identified as having a possible mental health problem with little variation between the program venues.

Where mental health issues were identified, the majority of these clients were receiving some form of treatment (39.8%), had received treatment in the past (14.2%) or had a current diagnosis of their condition (20.7%).

Acquired Brain Injury at CISP exit



For Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), the screening assessment included several items that are indicators of ABI (head injury, periods of unconsciousness, inhalant use, long term drug or alcohol use).

A total of 174 clients or about 10% were identified as having indicators of ABI and were referred for CISP-funded neuropsychological assessment.

Client feedback

As part of the formal evaluation, a small group of CISP clients were asked to participate in an interview about their first hand experience of the program.

Most clients interviewed said that they were referred to CISP to help them with issues such as drug and alcohol addiction, homelessness, and mental health problems.

Respondents identified that they understood participating in the CISP program was likely to improve their court outcome.

All respondents said that they were "Very Satisfied" with their individual case manager.

“Generally comments centred on the case managers’ high level of availability to the individual, their empathy, support and knowledge of the court system.”

Housing issues as part of CISP

Improving access to stable housing is an important element in the CISP service delivery model.

While poor or unstable housing does not directly cause crime, it is a critical factor in achieving other program outcomes.

Defendants who are homeless or in emergency accommodation have a high risk of non-compliance with bail, are more likely to be remanded in custody, less likely to attend treatment programs and have poorer outcomes from treatment and support interventions.

In 2008 CISP made 412 referrals to long-term housing on behalf of their clients.

Figure 9. Proportion of engaged clients referred to housing services

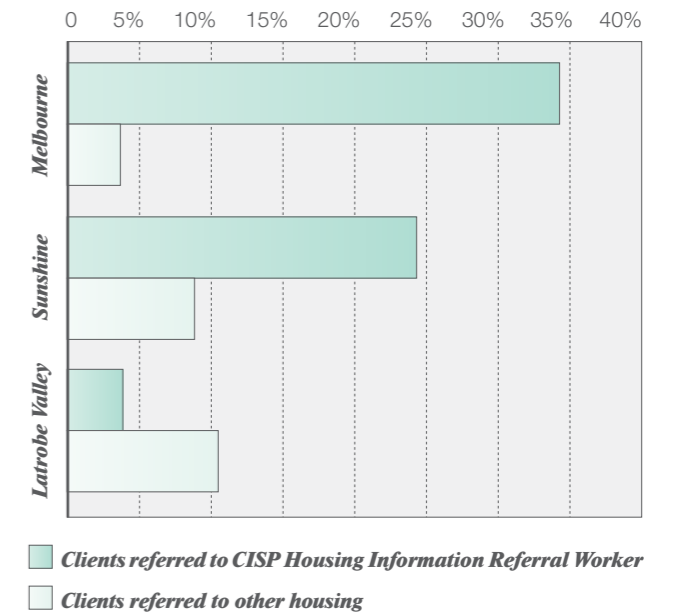


Table 2 below reflects the reality that for most CISP clients any change in their housing situation is likely to take longer than the period of their involvement with the program. The long term solution for many CISP clients is public housing. In the majority of cases, the detailed nature of the application process and waiting times involved mean that clients are not able to be placed in housing before they complete CISP.

Table 2. Accommodation status at CISP entry and exit

Accommodation status	Status at entry		Status at exit	
	Frequency	Percent%	Frequency	Percent%
Owned or buying	149	12%	99	8%
Long-term rental	607	51%	667	56%
Residing with family	119	10%	153	13%
Supported accommodation	8	1%	23	2%
Boarding house or short-term rental	144	12%	126	11%
Emergency or transitory	100	8%	100	8%
Homeless	46	4%	12	1%
Unknown	27	2%	21	2%
Total	1,201	100%	1,201	100%

The role of magistrates and their perspective

There is a high level of support by magistrates for the CISP. This is demonstrated by the high rate of agreement between the recommendations of the CISP workers and case outcomes as determined by the court. And there is also an increasing preparedness by magistrates to refer defendants directly to the program.

Magistrates use the services provided by the CISP in four ways:

- 1. Providing a comprehensive and independent assessment of the problems and issues associated with a defendant;** CISP case managers are recognised by magistrates as officers of the court who can be relied on to provide independent advice. In this way, CISP provides a means whereby defendants can be formally assessed and the status of their issues or problems can be quickly and independently validated.
- 2. Selecting and organising an appropriate therapeutic response;** Where a magistrate identifies that a therapeutic response is appropriate, there remains the problem of determining what this response should be, and identifying an appropriate service agency. CISP allows magistrates to know what treatment resources are available, assists in choosing the most appropriate form of intervention, and generally improves the court's timeliness and efficiency in organising a therapeutic response.
- 3. Supervising defendant's through the course of their bail period;** magistrates see the supervision and case management process as helping to keep defendants "on track" and providing them with regular feedback on the progress of defendants.
- 4. Preparing defendants for a Community Corrections Order (CCO);** Involvement in CISP helps to prepare clients for a Community Corrections Order by "reducing the chaos in their lives" and giving them the experience of being a client in a highly structured and accountable program. Successful completion of CISP demonstrates that a defendant is likely to be able to handle the requirements of a Community Corrections Service order.

Through the evaluation, magistrates expressed a high level of satisfaction with the quality and timeliness of CISP services. Assessment reports were considered to be of a high quality and were generally provided within a reasonable time. Similarly, case management and monitoring were reported to be of a high standard.

While CISP was viewed by magistrates as greatly enhancing their capacity to identify and organise treatment and support services, there was also recognition that sometimes the necessary program or service resources were not available. The two areas most commonly nominated in this regard were places in residential drug detoxification or treatment programs, and assessments for Acquired Brain Injury.

In general, magistrates see CISP as a vital tool in addressing the causes of offending leading to sustained change. Without supports put in place by CISP many participants will continue to cycle through the justice system. Comments from magistrates include...

"CISP makes it possible for me to do my job properly."

CISP staff members were viewed by magistrates as being:

"An important source of information and advice."

"Knowledgeable about the clinical and support issues involved in case management."

"They are strongly committed to helping their clients."

Three critical outcome areas

1 Re-offending rates

There are two main measures of re-offending that effect the assessment of program outcomes:

- Whether a person re-offends at any time; and
- The period that elapses until they do re-offend.

As part of the evaluation, statistics relating to two groups were examined; one group of CISP clients and a matching group of offenders.

For the CISP group, around 50% were classed as re-offenders, of whom 40% had proven charges against them, and a further 10% had charges that had not been finalised. In the comparison group, 64% were classed as re-offenders, with 50% having proven charges recorded and a further 13% having unfinalised charges.

Figure 10 shows a statistically significant difference in the proportions of re-offending between the two groups – the re-offending rates for CISP clients are clearly superior.

2 Community Corrections Orders

Advice from magistrates indicates that successful participation in CISP is viewed as an important indicator of suitability for a Community Corrections Order. In addition, the treatment and support referrals provided through CISP have the potential to prepare offenders for longer-term case management under a Community Corrections order.

Community Corrections orders are a common outcome for CISP clients. For those clients whose court outcomes are known at the time they complete CISP, around one-third receive a Community Corrections order (Intensive Correction Order or Community Based Order). This number compares with less than ten per cent of defendants in all magistrates' Court cases. Thus, the impact of CISP on successful completion of CCO orders is a key outcome for this program.

3 Bail compliance

For a pre-trial program like CISP, improving bail compliance rates is obviously a critical outcome. However, bail data is not currently able to be extracted in a manner that allows reliable and consistent analysis of bail outcomes for CISP clients and Victorian offenders generally. There are several factors that complicate these calculations:

- Bail may be granted by police and not recorded on any court data systems;
- Calculating compliance rates with bail orders is difficult, as any individual may have multiple bail orders in the course of a single case; and
- Any bail order may give rise to multiple charges of fail to appear.

The CISP evaluation has led to changes in data collection for use in subsequent evaluations of court programs. Magistrates report that the information provided by CISP is invaluable in assisting their decision making around suitability for bail.

Snapshot

20%

reduction in re-offending rates for CISP participants.

30.4%

drop in re-offending frequency for CISP participants post program involvement.

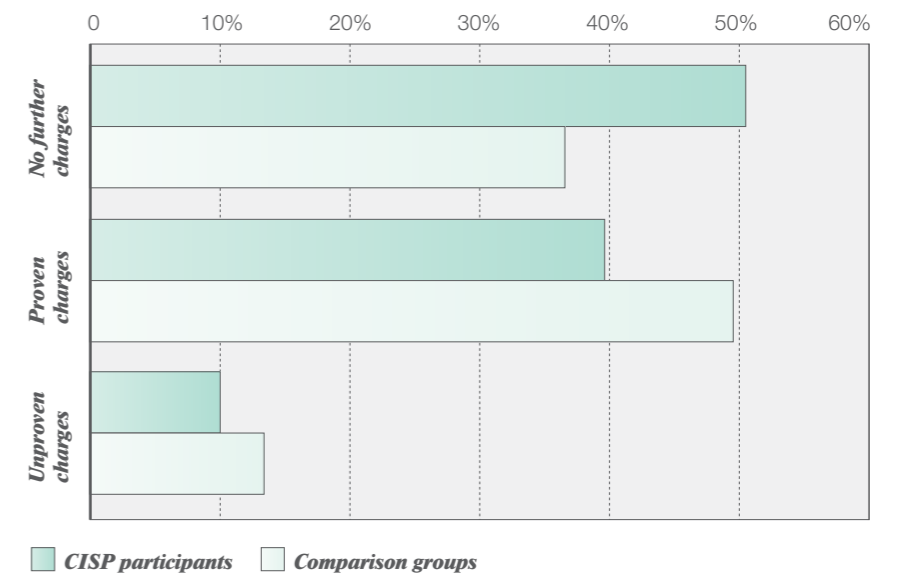
50.5%

of CISP participants incurred no further charges.



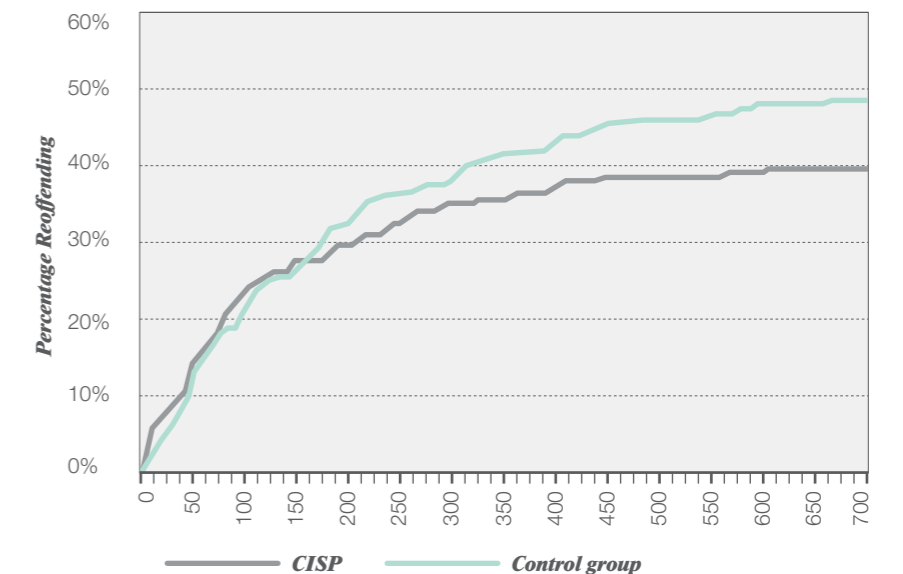
There was a demonstrable decrease in the seriousness of offending post CISP program involvement.

Figure 10. Re-offending percentages for CISP and comparison groups



A vitally important factor in any assessment of re-offending is the issue of how long it takes an individual to re-offend. The ideal outcome is that no re-offending takes place at all, but if re-offending is to take place, the longer it is delayed, the better.

Figure 11. Time to re-offending, CISP and Control group (Source: Department of Justice)



As Figure 11 shows, by 700 days – around the two year mark – the difference in re-offending between the two groups is substantial. Represented pictorially, it is clear that a widening of re-offending trends is evident at around 400 days – after that time, the trend for the CISP flattens while the figure for the control group continues to increase.

There was a 30.4% drop in offending frequency for CISP participants post-program involvement. Utilising the National Offence Index, a ranking of offence seriousness used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there was a demonstrable decrease in the seriousness of offending post-program involvement.

The economic evaluation

Table 3. The annual funding for CISP

(Source: Department of Justice, *Breaking the Cycle of Re-offending*, submission to ERC, 9 February 2005)

	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Funding	\$1.24m	\$1.50m	\$2.86m	\$2.92m

These amounts are actual and anticipated expenditure for CISP and they are the basis for calculating the cost component of the economic evaluation.

The key findings of the economic evaluation include:

There are significant benefits associated with CISP.

The key driver of changes will be a reduction in re-offending and concomitant reduction in factors such as the costs associated with sentencing for re-offenders.

The biggest quantifiable component of change is linked with imprisonment and the justice system. There are smaller but still significant benefits associated with the direct costs of crime.

Snapshot

\$1.98m

per annum in avoided costs of imprisonment as a result of the CISP program.

\$16,826,420

estimated total benefits from reduced re-offending over a 30 year period.

\$7,470,662

estimated total benefits from reduced re-offending over a five year period.

\$4,948,726

estimated total benefits from reduced re-offending over a two year period (already achieved).

\$5.90

worth of savings for the community for every 1 Dollar spent on the CISP

The economic evaluation of the CISP seeks to identify the costs and benefits associated with CISP in monetary terms. The focus is on cost effectiveness – measuring the relationship between program *inputs* and *outcomes*. Looking at costs to the community and to government, the key benefits of CISP are assessed as coming through:

- A reduction in re-offending – which will reduce the direct costs of crime (e.g. property damage) and costs associated with sentencing of offenders (e.g. prison)
- A reduction in the number of offenders sentenced to a custodial order following participation in CISP. This reduction will cut the direct costs associated with imprisonment.
- For those on a Community Based Order or another type of order, a reduction in the number of offenders who breach order conditions. This reduces the cost associated with locating and re-sentencing offenders.

The long term savings that CISP achieves are presented in the following table for three scenarios covering periods of 30 years, 5 years and 2 years.

Table 4. Scenarios of long term savings by CISP

Scenario (Net Present Value \$NPV)	Scenario 1 30 year benefits from reduced re-offending	Scenario 2 5 year benefits from reduced re-offending	Scenario 3 2 year benefits from reduced re-offending
Avoided cost of crime	2,839,653	901,265	378,754
Avoided cost of sentencing	10,866,122	3,448,752	1,449,328
Avoided cost of order breach	22,377	22,377	22,377
Avoided cost of imprisonment	3,098,267	3,098,267	3,098,267
Total benefits	16,826,420	7,470,662	4,948,726

Clearly, the greater the reduction in the rate and length of imprisonment and the rate of re-offending, the larger the amount of benefit realised.

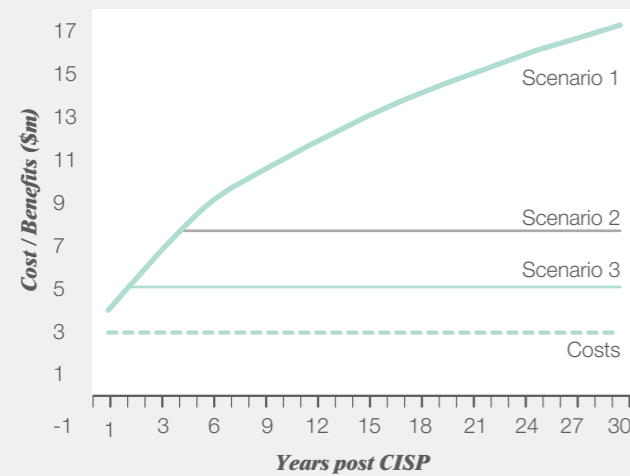
The size of the benefit is driven largely by a reduction in costs associated with imprisonment, rather than the direct costs of crime. In addition, the analysis cannot estimate the indirect costs of crime, such as pain and suffering, and actions taken by victims of crime to avoid a repeat of the incident (e.g. greater security measures).

A survey of CISP participants and a comparable sample indicates that CISP has resulted in avoided costs of imprisonment of \$1.98 million, and a 10% reduction in the re-offending rate.

The economic evaluation also demonstrated that for every dollar spent on CISP the following savings were given back to the community:

	Savings to the community		
	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
1 Dollar spent on CISP	\$5.90	\$2.60	\$1.70

Figure 12. Benefits and costs over thirty years



If the reduced rate amongst CISP participants is maintained for a period of two years, the benefits of CISP will have exceeded the costs. After three years, if the CISP program continues to have a lasting impact on its participants, resulting in a reduced re-offending rate, annual benefits to society will continue to accrue. The longer the impact of CISP lasts, the greater the benefits to society.

A key benefit that should result from CISP relates to the impact that completion of the program should have on client sentencing outcomes. Economic benefits are likely to accrue if completion of CISP results in either a reduced rate of imprisonment, or reduced imprisonment lengths. Both outcomes could bring about a reduced number of days of imprisonment.

Imprisonment sentences for CISP clients and the Control group

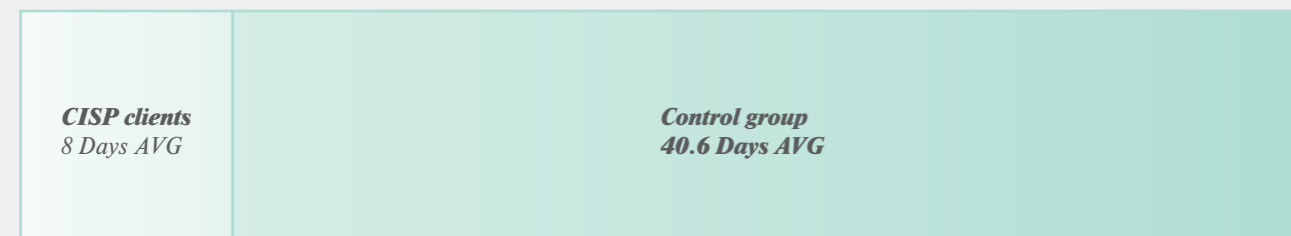
Sample data was collected on total days of imprisonment for sentences received by 200 clients that had completed the CISP program, across three sites. Sample data was also collected of total days of imprisonment for a control group of 200 persons who had not completed the CISP program (for most recent offences).

Table 5 identifies that clients who had participated in the CISP program received a total of 1,592 days of imprisonment whereas clients who did not participate in the CISP program received a total of 8,116 days of imprisonment. Figure 13 demonstrates the difference between the average days of imprisonment for CISP clients and non-CISP clients.

Table 5. Total days of imprisonment for CISP clients compared with the Control group

Site	Sample size	Total days of imprisonment
CISP	200	1,592
Control group	200	8,116

Figure 13. Average days of imprisonment for CISP clients compared with the Control group



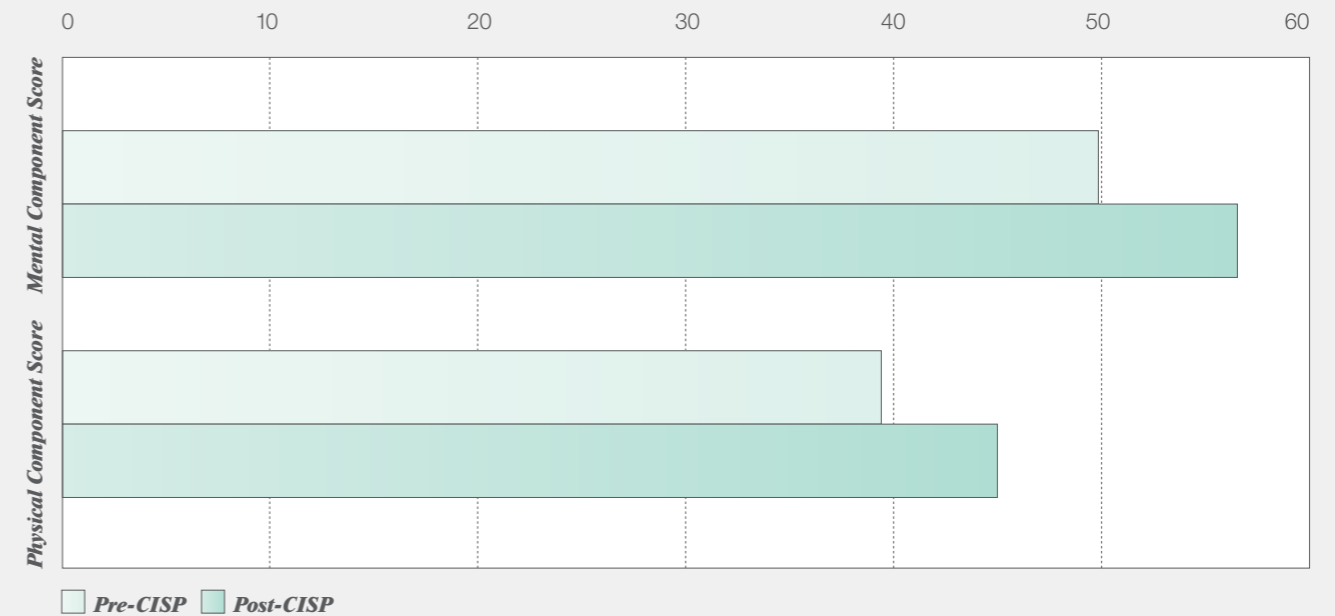
Courts are more likely to find that CISP clients have better prospects of rehabilitation and represent a lower risk to the community as compared to their counterparts that do not participate in the program.

This is reflected in the sentencing outcomes for CISP clients. Magistrates report using a client's period on CISP to gauge their suitability for a community based order as an alternative to incarceration.

Health and wellbeing outcomes

Clients of the CISP program experienced increased physical and mental health status during their time in the program as evidenced in the table below.

Figure 14: Brief survey instrument for measuring health status Component Score pre and post-CISP



“I’ve seen great results from it (CISP), what seemed like hopeless cases but seeing them over the four months, there are huge transformations that take place”

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