



ODYSSEY HOUSE  
VICTORIA

# Financial Security & Freedom

Sharon Rowe – Business Manager Residential Services

Odyssey House Victoria



ODYSSEY HOUSE  
VICTORIA

# Introduction





# Why Odyssey House took action

## The Issues

- COVID
- Residents struggle to engage with online finances
- MyGov
- Domestic Violence
- Unresolved financial issues





# What we did

## The Solution

- Established a Financial Counselling team
  - Qualified Financial Counsellor
  - Financial Facilitator
- Residents can access the service after 6 weeks in our program
- Service is offered in person at Lower Plenty, and online at Bairnsdale







# What does the Financial Facilitator do?

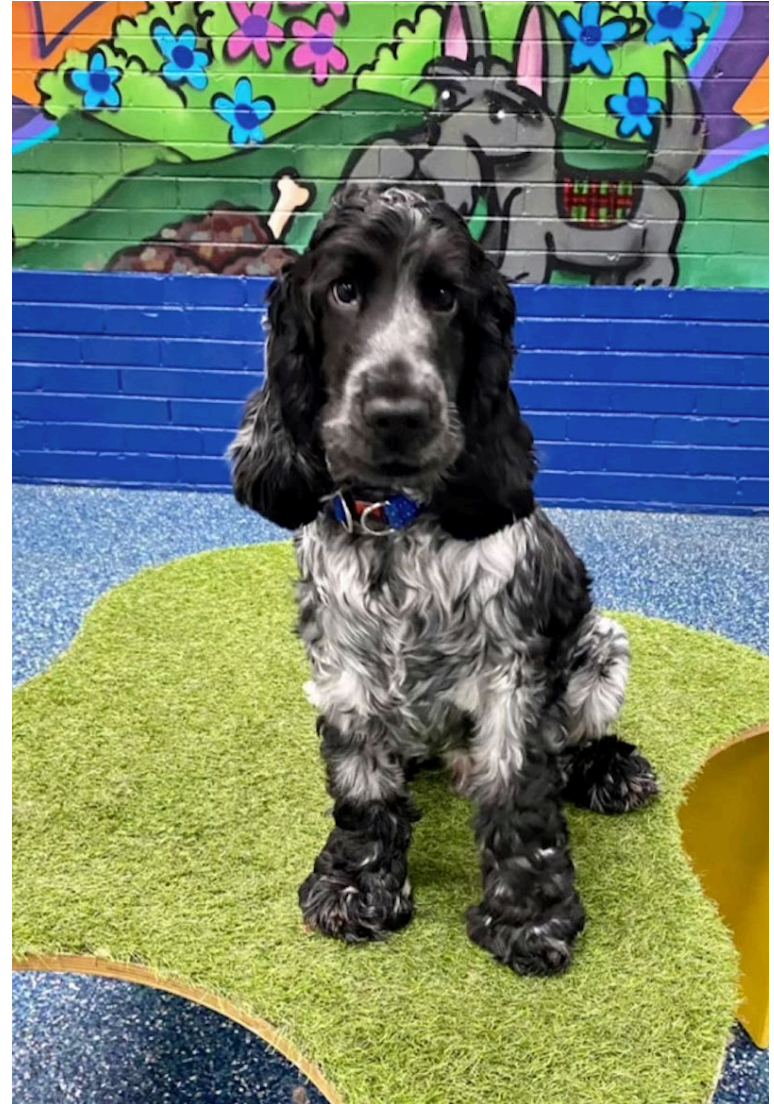
- Help getting Identification e.g. birth certificates, proof of age
- Assist with secure bank accounts
- Triage cases for the Financial Counsellor
- Works with Fines Victoria – Work and Development Permit
- Department of Justice – community corrections





# What does the Financial Counsellor do?

- Part of the therapeutic community
- Requires a relationship of trust
- Access to all support services
- Support with debt from multiple sources





# Partnerships and Relationships

## A network of partnerships and relationships

- Department of Justice & Community Service – Fines & Enforcement
- Department of Justice & Community Service – Community Correctional Service
- Centrelink
- Job Providers
- Bendigo Bank
- Debt Agencies





# Case Studies

## Case 1 - 42 year old male with 2 young children in his care

internet	497
Utility	4,439
Pay Now	215
internet	415
Court Fines	100
Fines Vic	14,254
<b>Total Debt Waiver</b>	<b>23,945</b>

## Case 2 – 45 year old female

Fines Vic	9,628
Credit Card	16,614
Personal loan	408
Bank Loan	20,160
<b>Total Debt Waiver</b>	<b>46,810</b>

Original bank loan was 25,160, FC negotiated \$5,000 repayment from superannuation





# Challenges

- Onsite OHV service only
- Complex cases with limited time
- ATO debt fraud
- Debt issues intertwined with AOD issues
- Ownership - staff driven with limited resident involvement





# What's Next

- Many residents are ill prepared to re-enter society and deal with daily administrative tasks
- Developing a Financial Literacy program as part of the therapeutic program
- This program will be based on the ANZ Money Minded Program
- Will be run as a tutoring program similar to our math and reading programs





ODYSSEY HOUSE  
VICTORIA

# Questions?