

The Forest



ENDING THE CYCLE OF REINCARCERATION
FOR PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS





AT BURNET INSTITUTE, WE PROUDLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE BOON WURRUNG PEOPLE OF THE KULIN NATIONS AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND ON WHICH OUR OFFICE IS LOCATED AND RECOGNISE THEIR CONTINUING CONNECTION TO LAND, WATERS AND COMMUNITY. WE ACKNOWLEDGE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES AS AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PEOPLES AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SOVEREIGNTY WAS NEVER CEDED. WE PAY OUR RESPECT TO ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT, AND EXTEND THAT RESPECT TO ALL FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE.

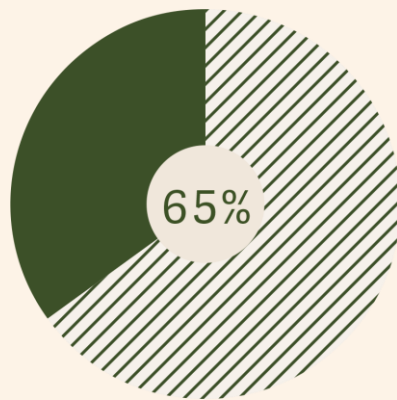


Burnet Institute

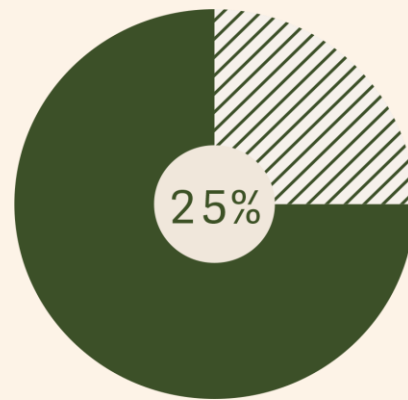
- Medical and health research institute
- Accredited international non-governmental organisation
- Australia, Indo-Pacific, and Africa
- Multidisciplinary teams
- Proud history



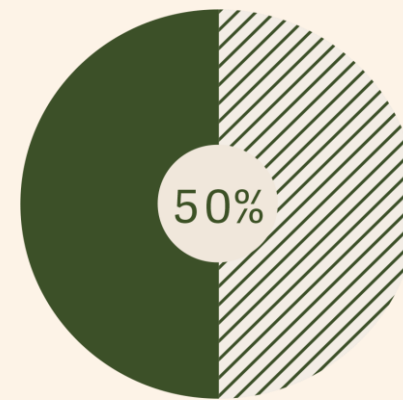
Prisons do not rehabilitate people who use drugs



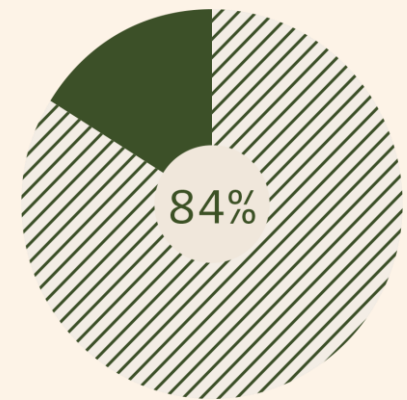
of those in prison
report recently
using drugs



of those in prison
report recently
injecting drugs



of people who use
drugs return to
prison six or more
times after their
first release



of people with
opioid dependence
return to prison
within two years
of release



Prisons cause and exacerbate harm

Of people with recent drug use histories released from prison:



One in four will
be released
into homelessness



85% will face
unemployment



44% will experience
mental ill-health

9%

will self-harm

9-13%

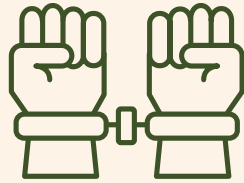
will overdose

12%

will attempt suicide



An unsustainable increase in cost



Imprisonment rate is rising from 128 to 214 per 100,000 over the decade



Victorian prison costs have increased by 74% since 2014

↑50%

Reincarceration above 50% and rising

20x

Repeatedly reincarcerating people costs **20 times more** than successfully reintegrating them into the community

This cycle has been recognised in multiple policy frameworks and reform initiatives:

- Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System
- Inquiry into Victoria's Criminal Justice System
- Early Intervention Investment Framework Paper



Telling new stories, building new worlds

- Crisis of incarceration or crisis of imagination?
- Role of abolition and lived experiences



Welcome to The Forest



Burnet
reach for the many





Foundation partners



sharc



WORKING TOGETHER TO END THE CYCLE OF REINCARCERATION FOR PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS

Planting the seeds for change

A public health model to end the cycle of reincarceration for people who use drugs

- Leverages meaningful partnerships and will place Victoria at the leading edge for systems change
- Strongly underpinned by evidence, building on what works
- Co-designed and led by and for people who use drugs and who have been incarcerated





A new ecosystem for Victoria

We integrate public health research, lived experience and community-led design to grow:

- A safe place for people to go
- Meaningful things for people to do
- People feeling secure in their health
- People being consistently supported





An environment where people can thrive

Peer mentoring

Peers provide support, inspire hope, and nurture positive relationships.

Social enterprise

Pathways to employment, including social enterprises that support skill development and on-the-job training.

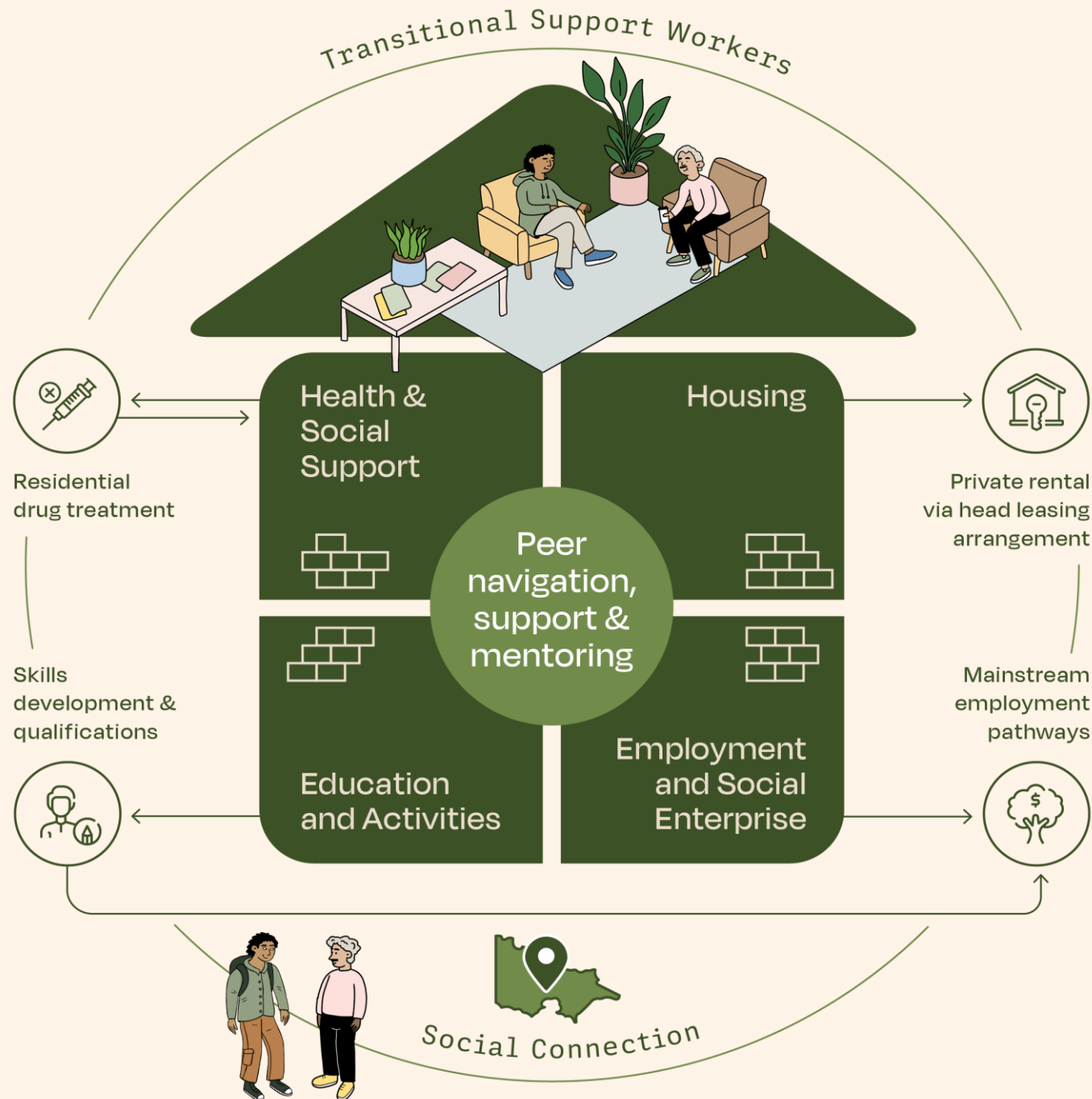
Health, housing, social supports

Multidisciplinary teams address the long-term needs of each person before, during, and after release and for as long as people need.

Activities and social connection

Recreation and education support programs promote connection and belonging.







On the ground

A four-year community trial of The Forest:



Will be in the
north-west region
of **metropolitan
Melbourne**



Will recruit **1,100
participants**
through in-reach
to prisons



Will start with **200
people** in the first
year and add 300
more people in each
following year



Will create more
than **100** jobs



Modelling approach and key findings

Method

Detailed cost benefit analysis adhering to DTF guidelines for economic impact assessment

- Literature and data review of expected impact of similar programs
- Detailed probable risk model informed by Burnet PATH and SuperMIX data
- Base Case and Impact Scenario projections for justice, health & other govt costs by risk cohort

Scenarios

Four Program Scenarios and seven Impact Scenarios

- Scenarios 1-3: Halving risk of unstable housing and unemployment in Year 1, and through time
- Scenarios 4-6: 50%-60% reduction in reincarceration risk, reduction in ED presentations
- Scenario 7: Combined (Scenarios 1, 3 and 6)

Findings

Strong net economic and social benefits expected from the program

- BCRs of between 3.0 and 3.8 depending on the Program Option implemented and the level of impact achieved
- Breakeven if reincarceration risk reduced by 18 per cent
- Strong alignment to EIIIF and PAD policy objectives

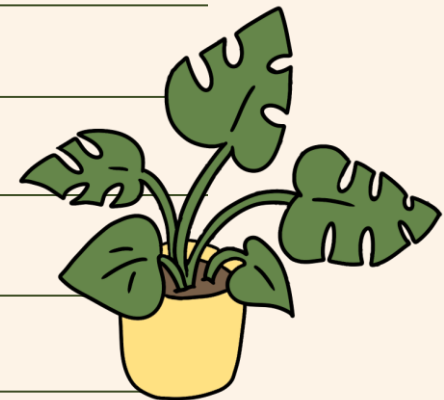


A 'no regrets' investment

We engaged Insight Economics to conduct rigorous independent economic modelling, which demonstrated The Forest could deliver:

3:1 benefit-cost ratio

	Over 4 years:	Over 10 years:
Avoided costs for Victoria	\$303m	\$2.3b
People supported	1,100	10,100
Fewer episodes of incarceration	380	3,000
People employed	195	2,500
People in stable housing	200	1,300



Ending reincarceration in Victoria



Thank you

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