

# Making it work - improving participation support for disadvantaged young Australians

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## The research subject:

Inspired by social work practice and work in primary mental health care programs

Investigating the associations between unemployment, social exclusion and poor mental health

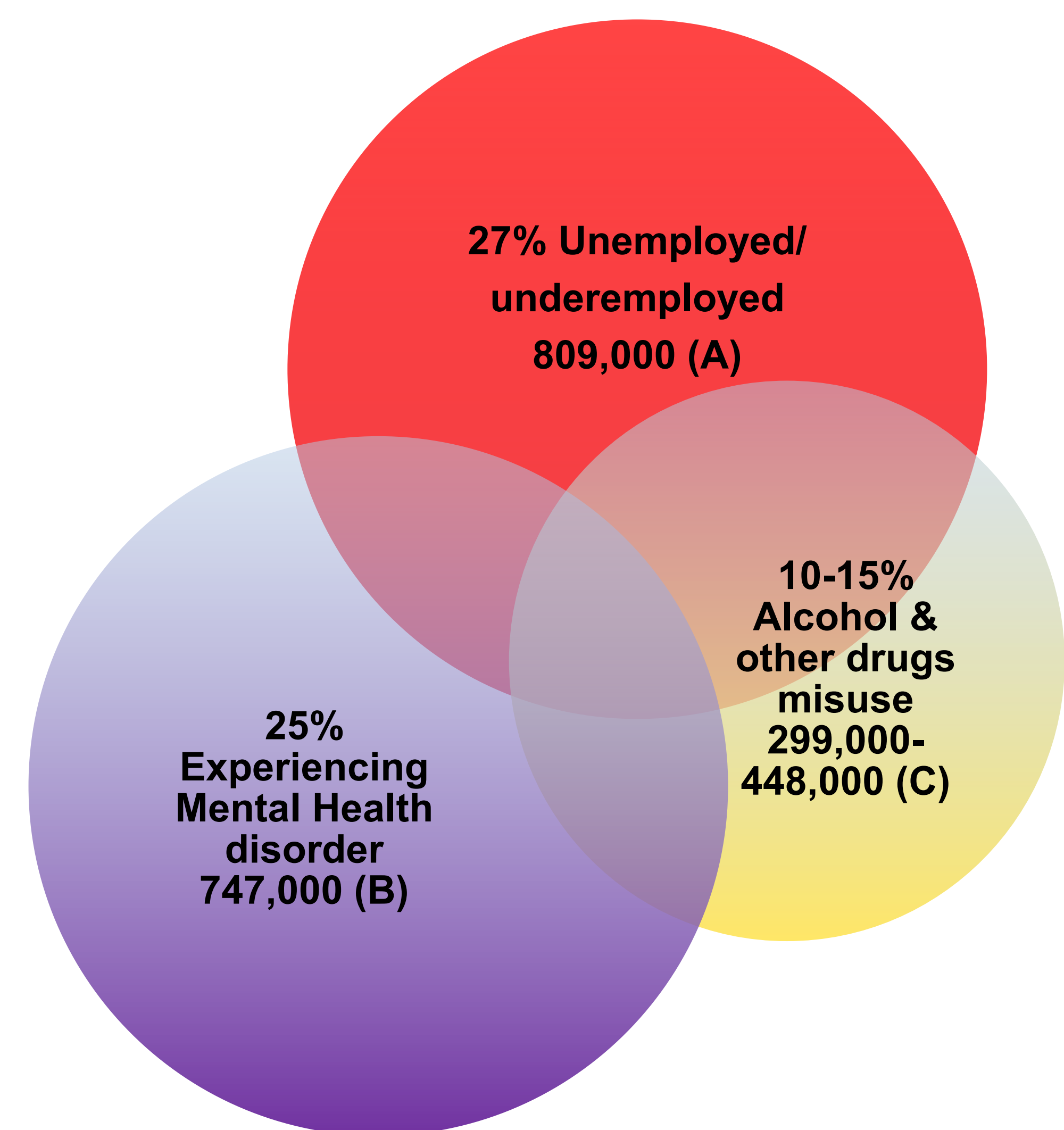
Critical analysis of policy and service gaps

Identifying innovations in policies and services led by agencies and practitioners



*If only it was this simple, and the pig might fly!*

## Estimating the problem: Population aged 15-24: 2,988,400 (2016 Census)



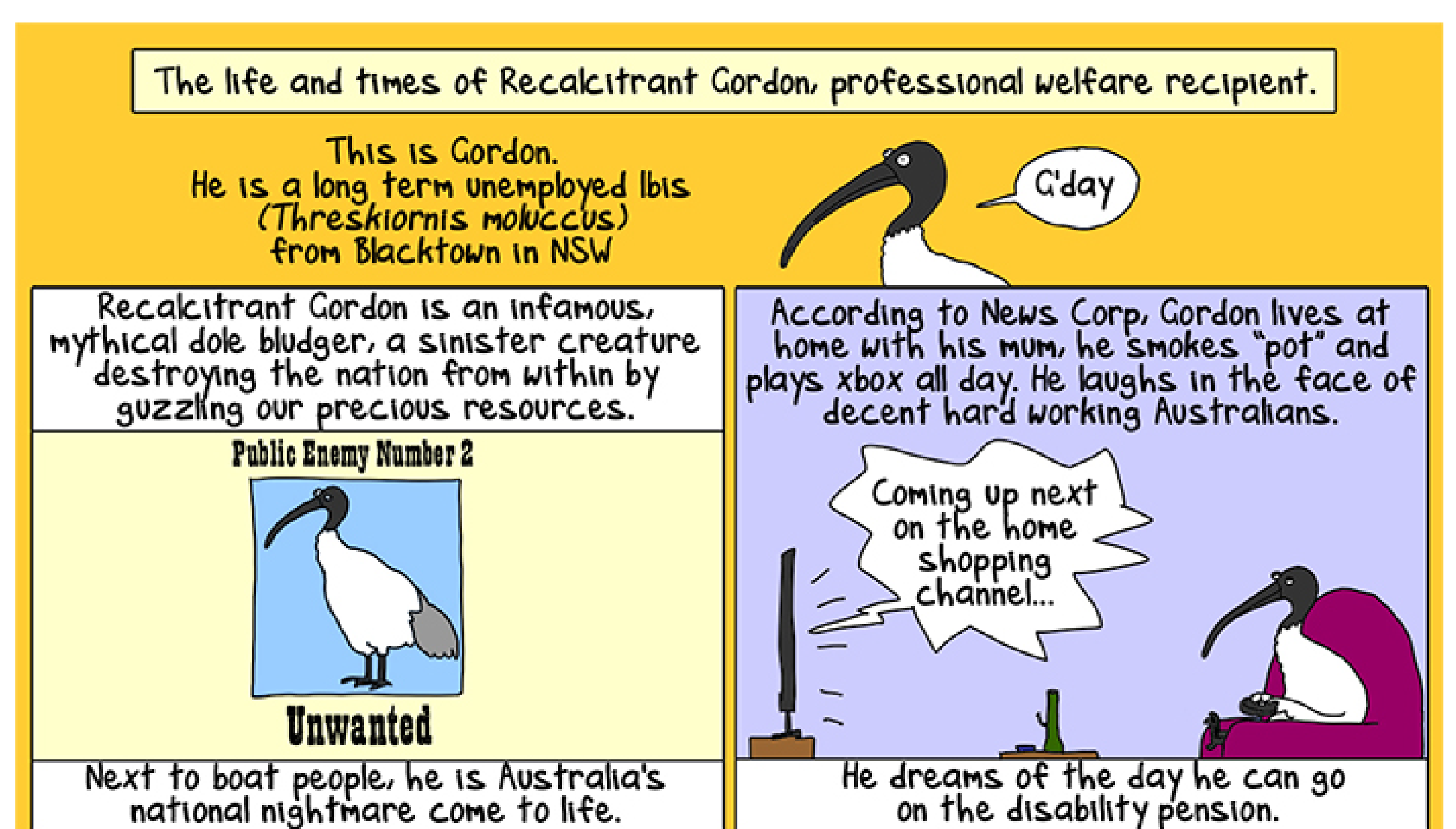
### Associations:

- ❖ Higher incidence of mental health disorders (30%+) in unemployed population: (A+B) 242,000+
- ❖ Alcohol & other drugs (AOD) comorbidity, 30% of people with MH disorders: (B+C): 224,000
- ❖ High risk and high needs group – unemployed, and with comorbid disorders: (A+B+C) ??????

Data from COAG, ABS & AIHW

There are many erroneous stereotypes applied to unemployed young Australians  
**How could this change?**

## How is the problem represented?



First Dog on the Moon – Guardian Australia

## Preliminary findings from the research:

- ¿ Employment services focus on compliance rather than assistance
- ¿ Sanctions and programs such as Work for the Dole don't help young people and can cause harm
- ¿ Long-term unemployment when young causes life long mental health and financial 'scarring'

## Some proposed solutions:

- ✓ Integrate mental health and employment support
- ✓ Reform *jobactive* contracts and Mutual Obligation
- ✓ Enhance programs that work – Individual Placement Support (IPS) & internships
- ✓ Increase jobseeker payments
- ✓ Post COVID-19 – strategies for job creation and expanded vocational education and training programs