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University

**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE
OF HEALTH INNOVATION**

Networks and social capital

A relational approach to primary healthcare reform

Back to Health Conference, Pacific Bay Resort, Coffs Harbour, 21-23 October 2022

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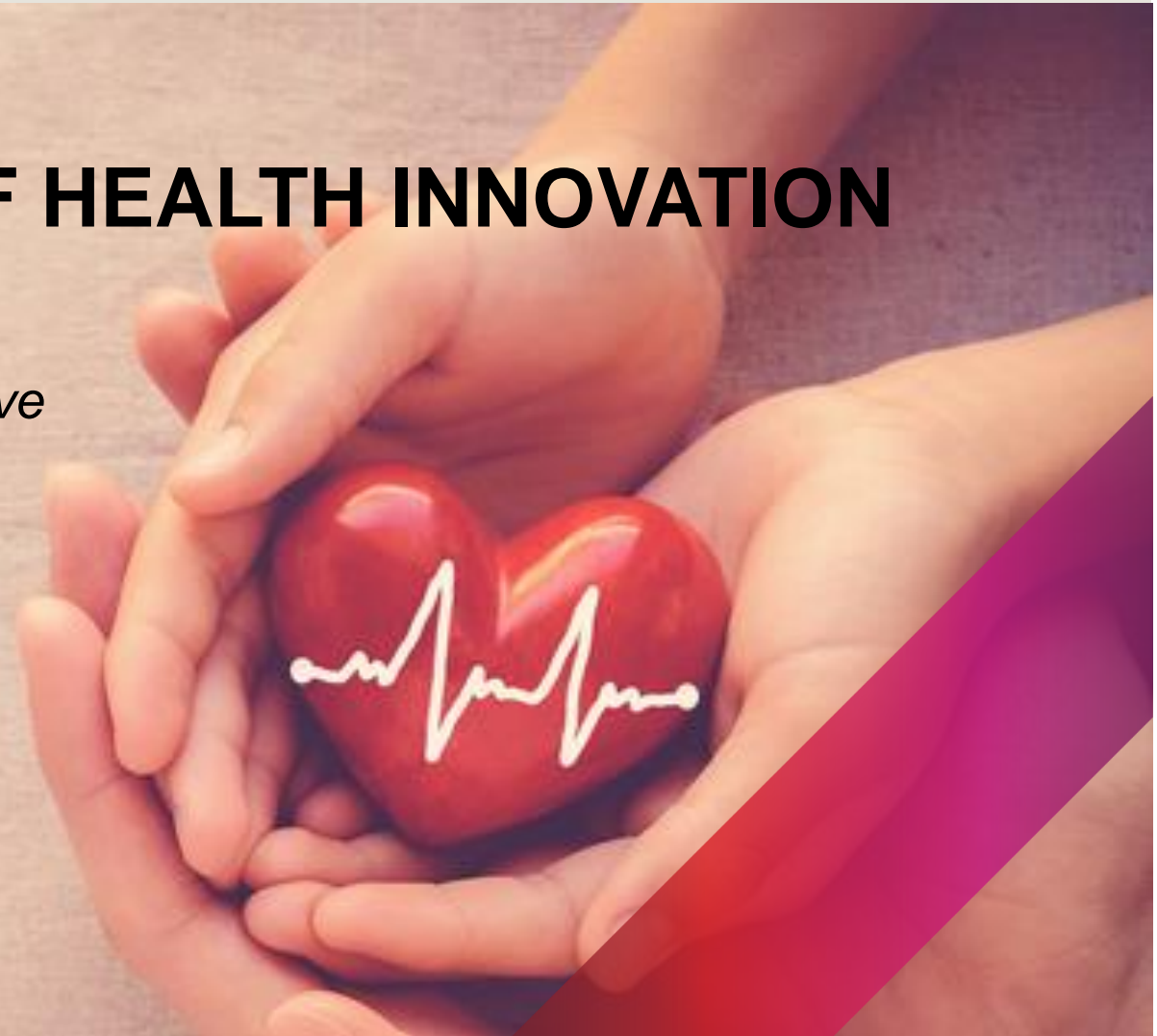
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**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE
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AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF HEALTH INNOVATION

Our goal is to co-create high-impact health services and systems research that drives positive change in policy, practice and behaviour for the benefit of all.

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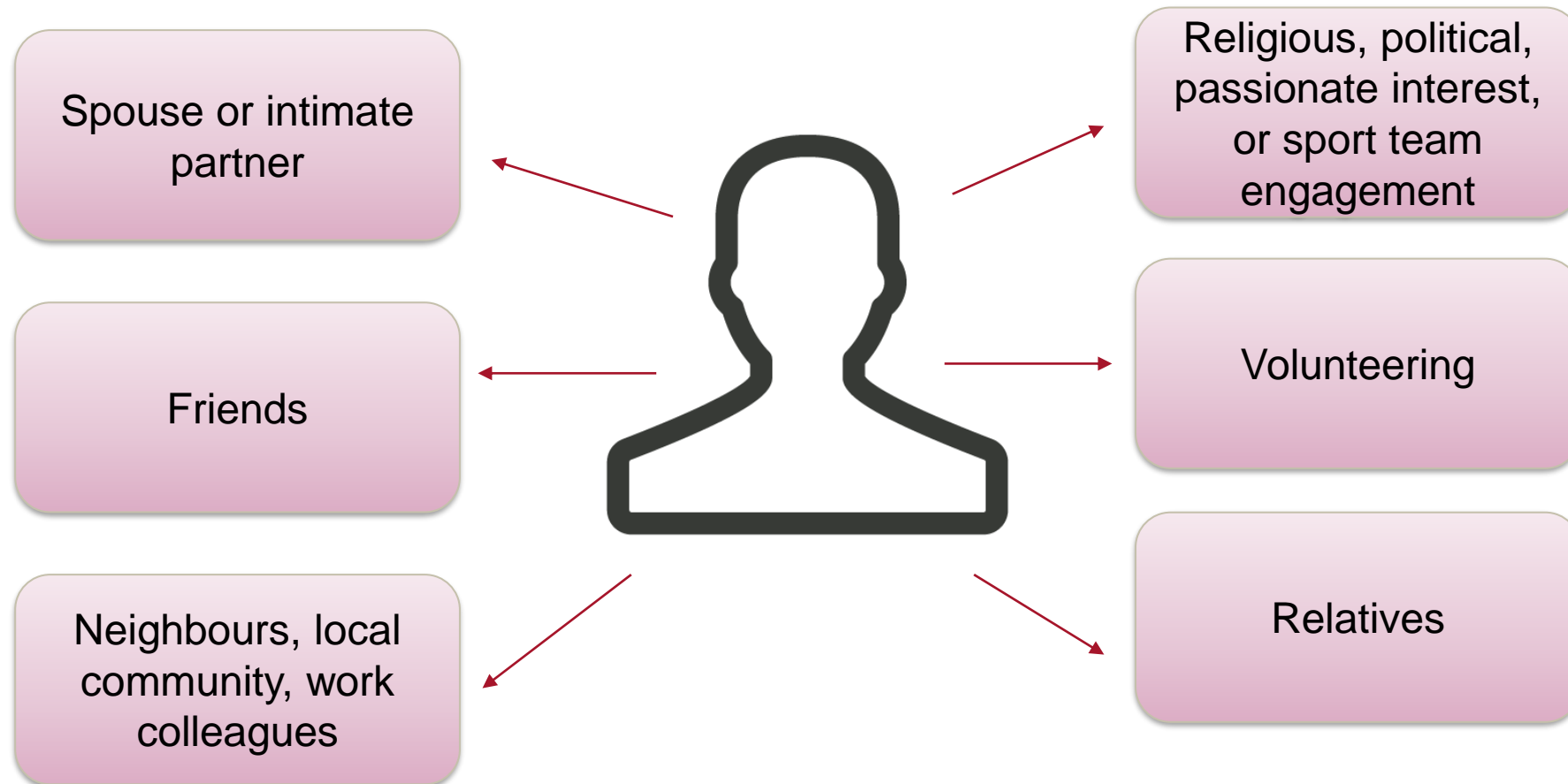
NHMRC Partnership
Centre for Health
System Sustainability

NHMRC Centre of
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Research Excellence
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Social capital

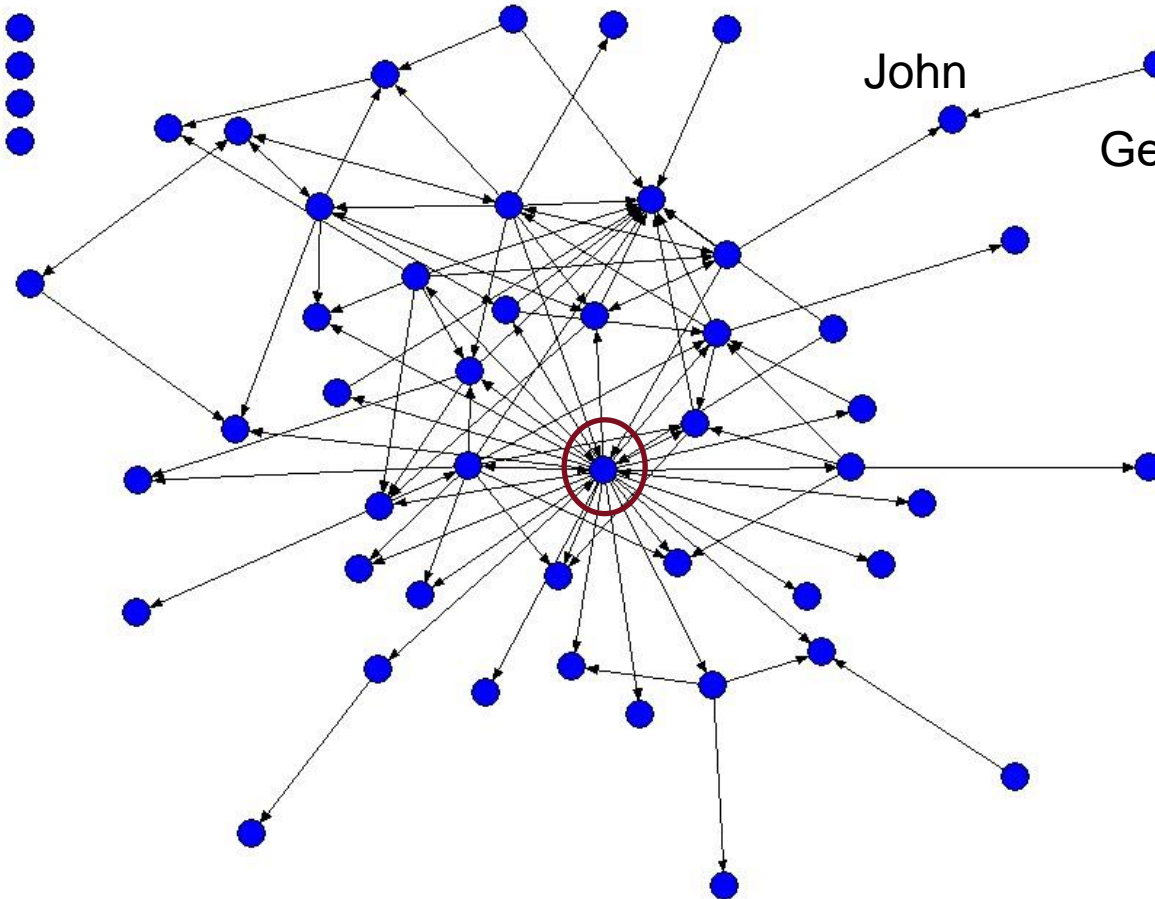
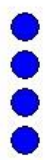
THE VALUE OF RELATIONSHIPS



Social capital

SOCIAL NETWORK STUDIES

Did not
nominate
any
advisors



Mary

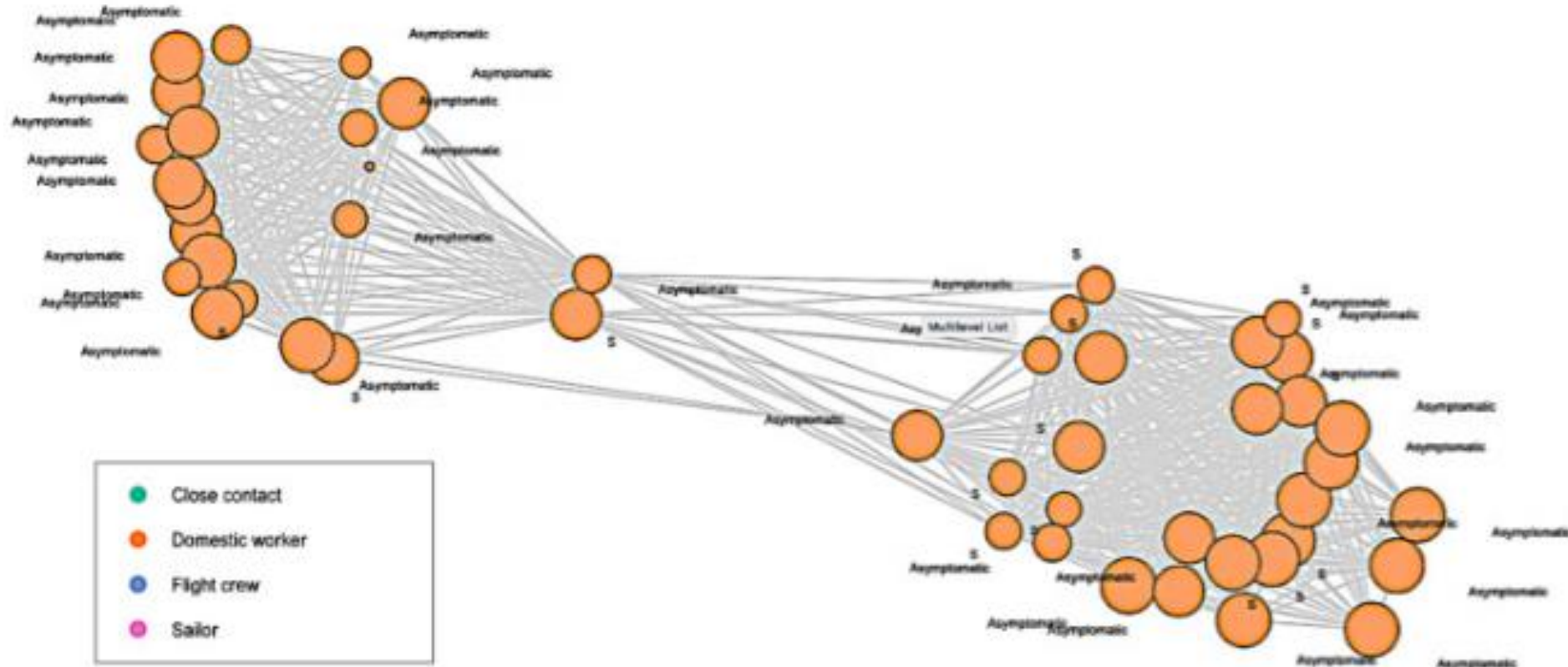
Gets health advice from ...

John

Influential "key player"

Health effects of social capital

1. Spread of infectious diseases

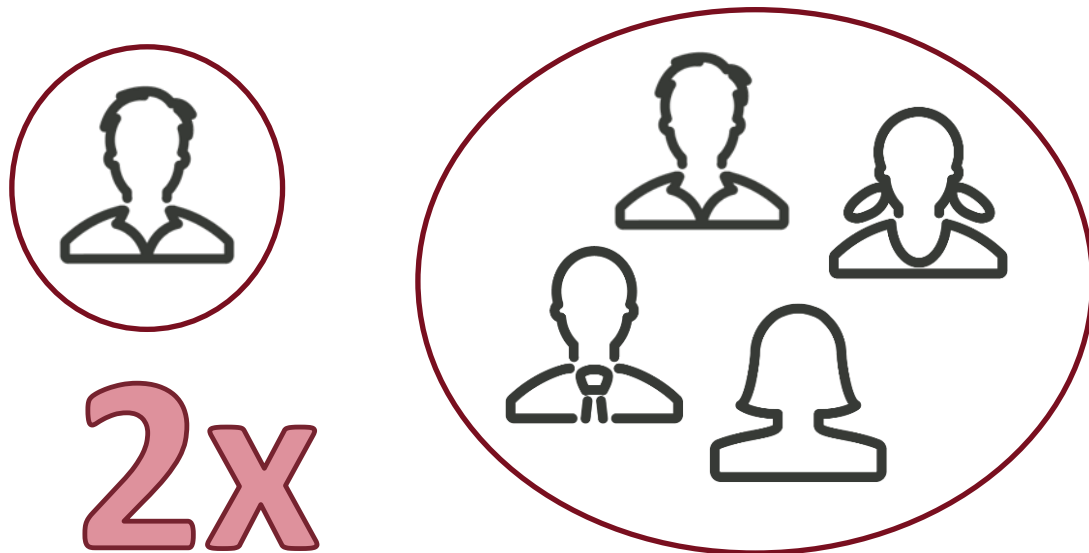


Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2022, 19(13):7565

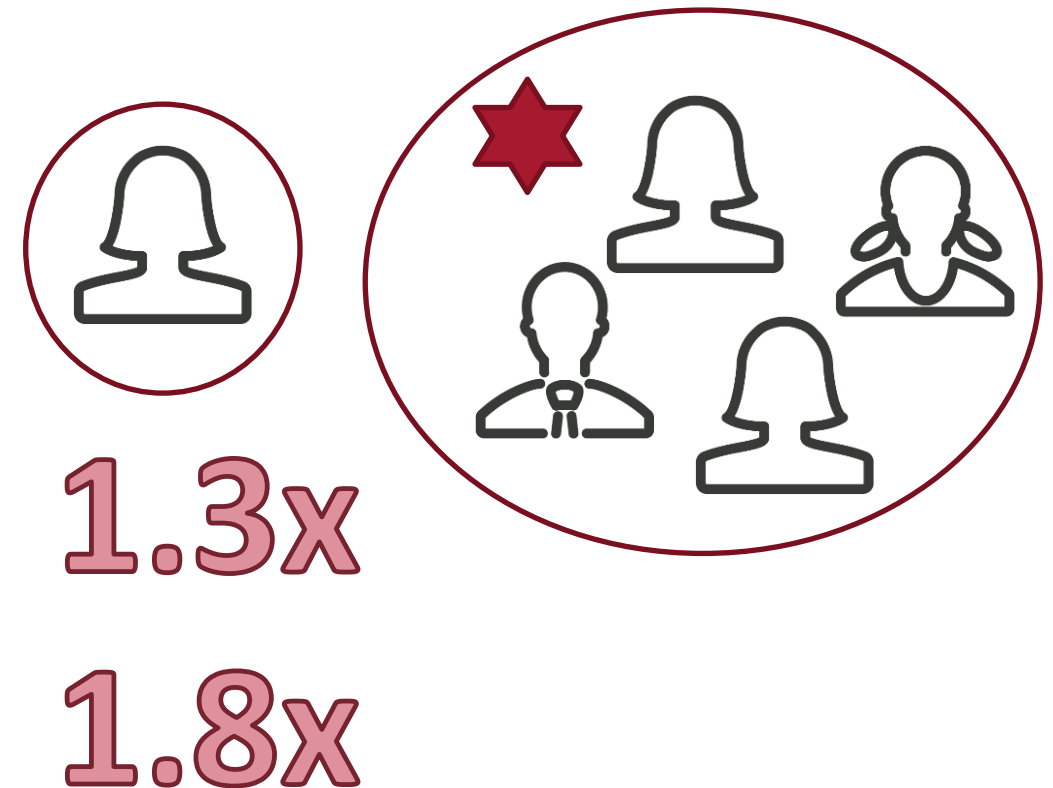
Health effects of social capital

1. Reduces mortality risk

People over 70



Breast cancer prognosis



Am J Epidemiol. 1979;109(2)

Breast Cancer Research and Treatment. 2013;137(1)

Health effects of social capital

2. Can support good health behaviours

Adherence to ART, clinic
appointments

Breast cancer screening rates

higher

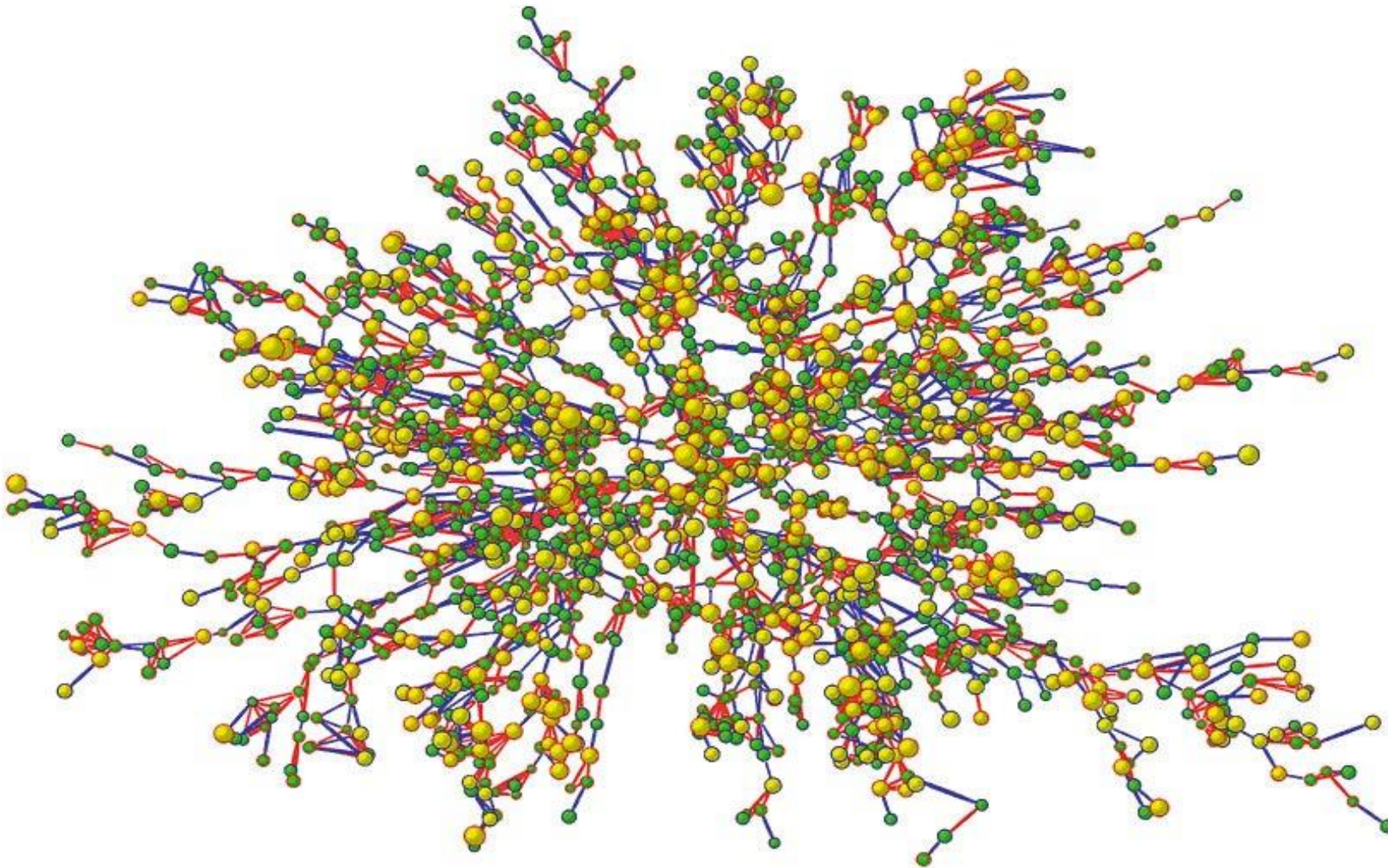
higher

Friends and family care about us
Reduced cognitive load to remember

Health effects of social capital

3. Can normalise poor health behaviours

Christakis et al's
Obesity network



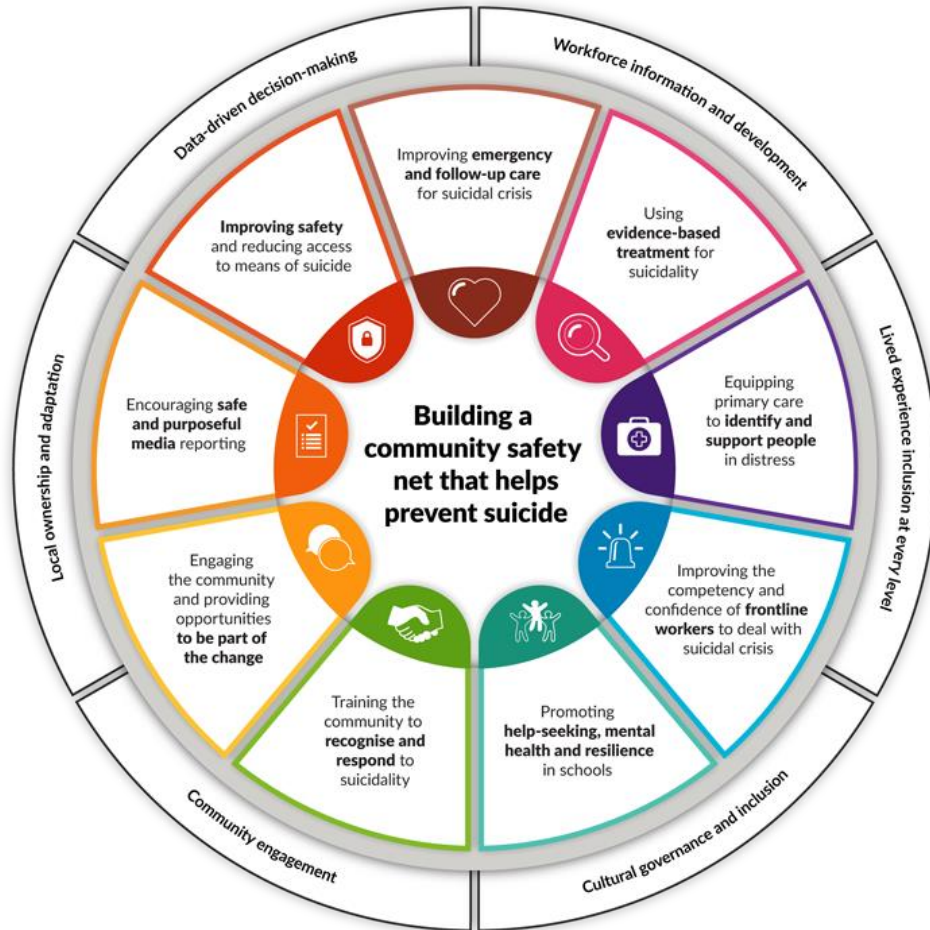
Social capital in community health initiatives

BUILDING CAPACITY

Changes the community context in which targets of the intervention live

Changes the capacity of the community to respond





- 9 evidence-based community-wide strategies
- Coordinators at each site
- Supported by Black Dog Institute
- Site interaction and support

Evaluation research aim

- To assess what was implemented and how?
- How is the community changed?

Long et al.
International Journal of Mental Health Systems (2022) 16:10
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-022-00524-z>

International Journal of
Mental Health Systems

RESEARCH

Open Access

Networks to strengthen community social capital for suicide prevention in regional Australia: the LifeSpan suicide prevention initiative

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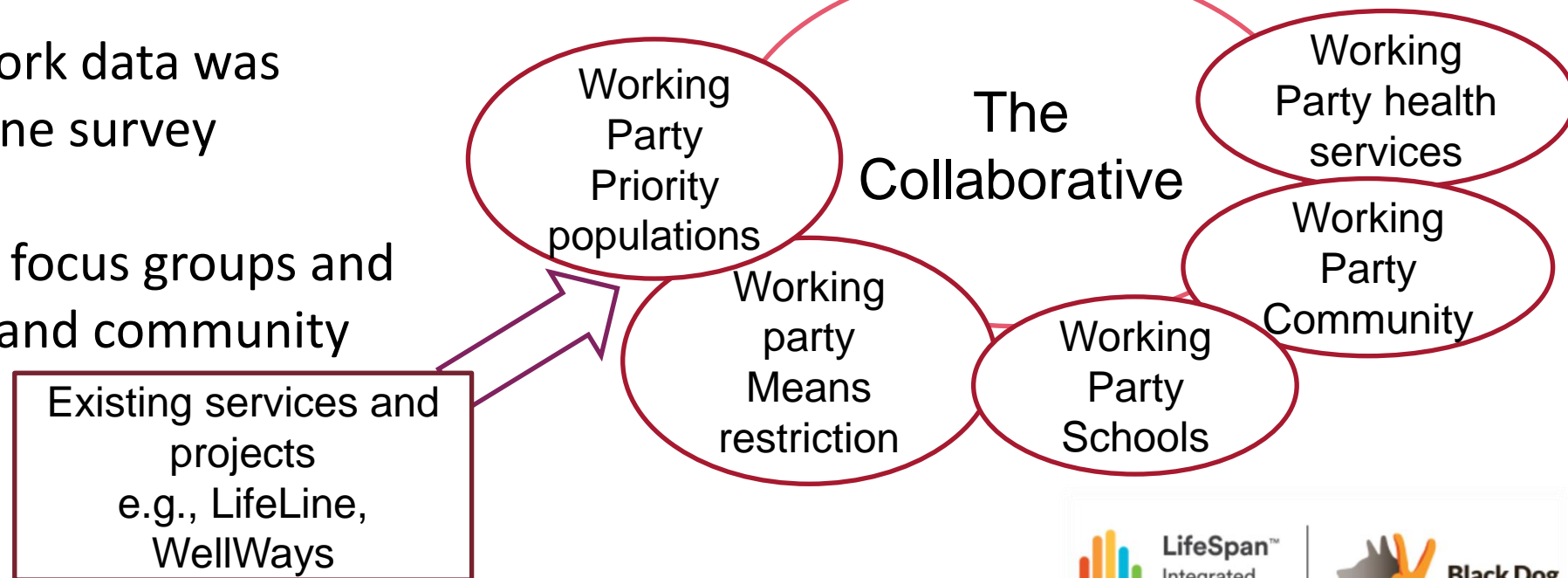
Participants: The Collaborative and working group members at four LifeSpan sites in New South Wales.

Quantitative social network data was collected through an online survey

Qualitative data through focus groups and interviews with Lifespan and community stakeholders.

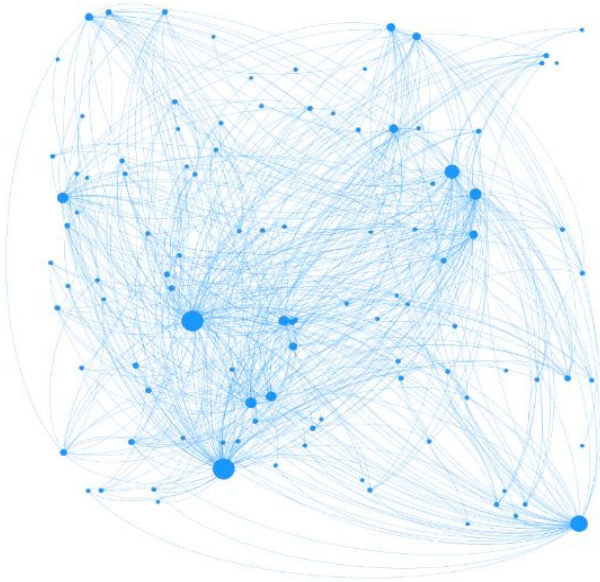
Black Dog Institute

LifeSpan Coordinators

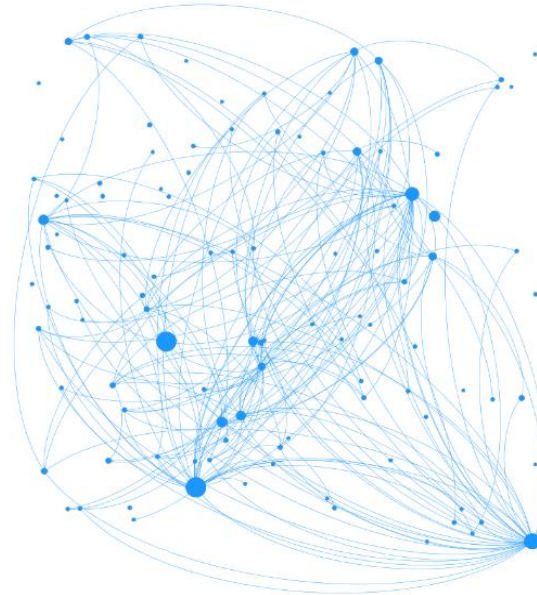


Site	Hosted by	Setting	Interviews	Number of Focus Groups (participants)	Invited to survey	Respondents to survey
Site Alpha	LHD	Metro / Regional	3	1 (5)	103	26
Site Beta	PHN & LHD	Metro / Regional	3	3 (26)	70	46
Site Gamma	LHD	Metro / Regional	4	1 (10)	75	11
Site Delta	PHN	Regional / Rural	6	n/a	-	-

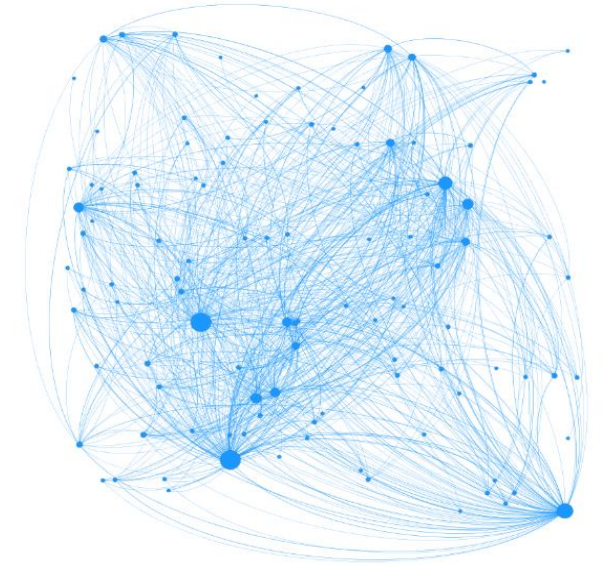
Results Site Alpha



Existing ties

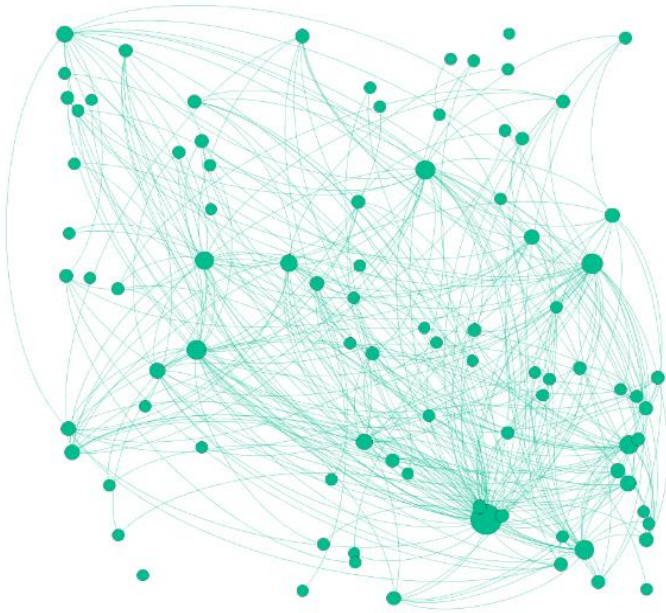


New ties

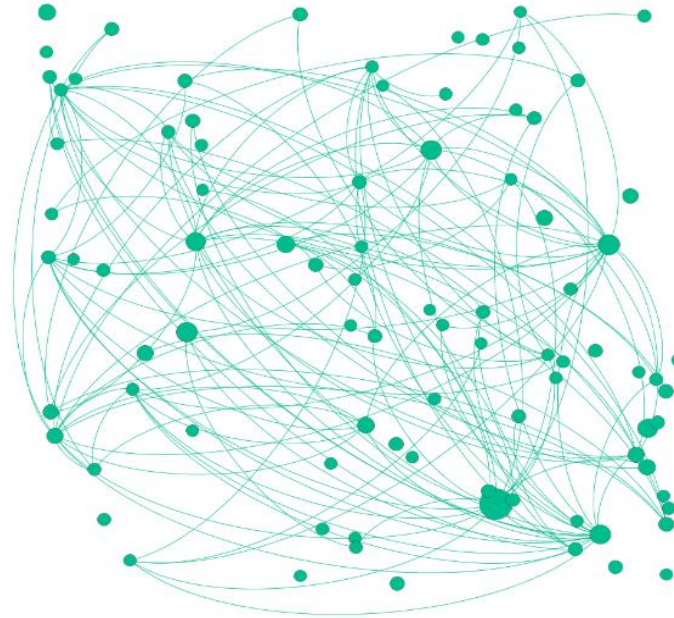


LifeSpan ties

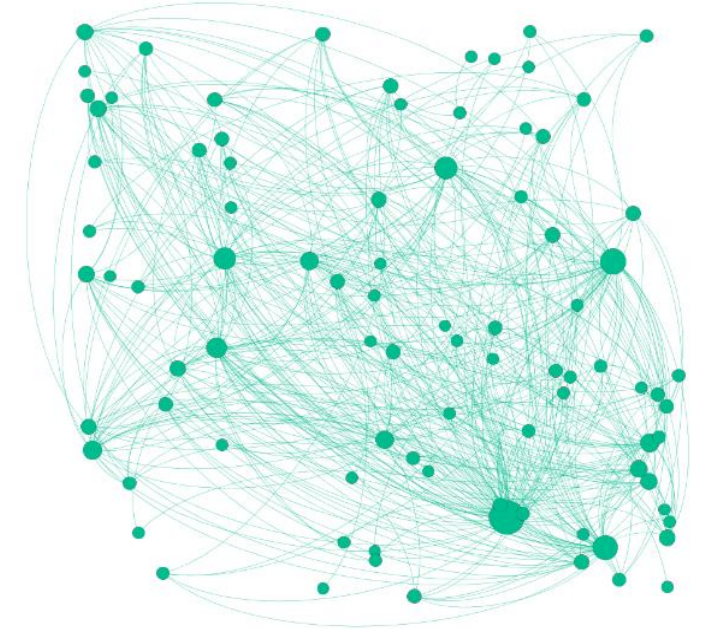
Results Site Beta



Existing ties



New ties



LifeSpan ties

Results

I did feel like I was spending a lot of time having coffees and talking to people and not a lot of time 'working' [LC Delta]

What I've noticed is that people wanted to do something, and that it's disparate. When I first started, there were disparate groups all over the place, not coming together [LC Beta]

I love the way that anyone can be invited to champion this cause regardless of whether you're in a high level, executive position, or, you know, if you're just a regular person [PP Alpha]

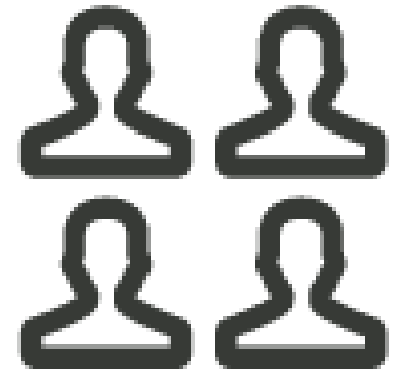
But you can see how this [Collaborative group] kind of held a lot - no matter what happened, we were here together, working on it, trying to make the best of the situation, whether it was good, bad or whatever. So, you know, we are grateful to LifeSpan for helping be that glue. [LHD Gamma]

Certainly, from our perspective, we just see too much of it [death by suicide] every day. We had one yesterday, with one of our ex-colleagues. Yeah, there really has been a lack in support for families as well as the individuals. So, to get all the players together to a one stop shop is a great idea [P Beta]

Social capital in community health

BUILDING CAPACITY

- Building social capital in the community has clear health advantages
- Can improve health outcomes and foster healthy behaviours
- Downside is it can also foster poor health behaviours
- When implementing change in community health, ways to harness positive social capital should be considered
- It takes time to build community social capital
- Go for sustainable change not short projects that won't last



References

USE WHEN ONE COLUMN AND BULLETS REQUIRED

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