

APPCS

Asia-Pacific
Chemsex
Symposium

**Evaluating the impact of a trauma-informed, holistic
intervention on quality of life for people engaging in chemsex:**

A pre-post pilot study at The Greenhouse

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Chemsex as a growing public health concern



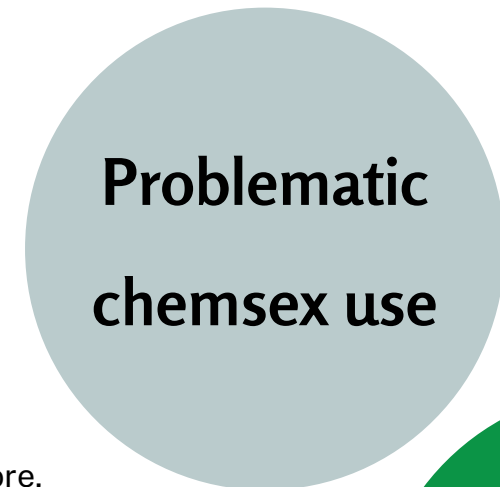
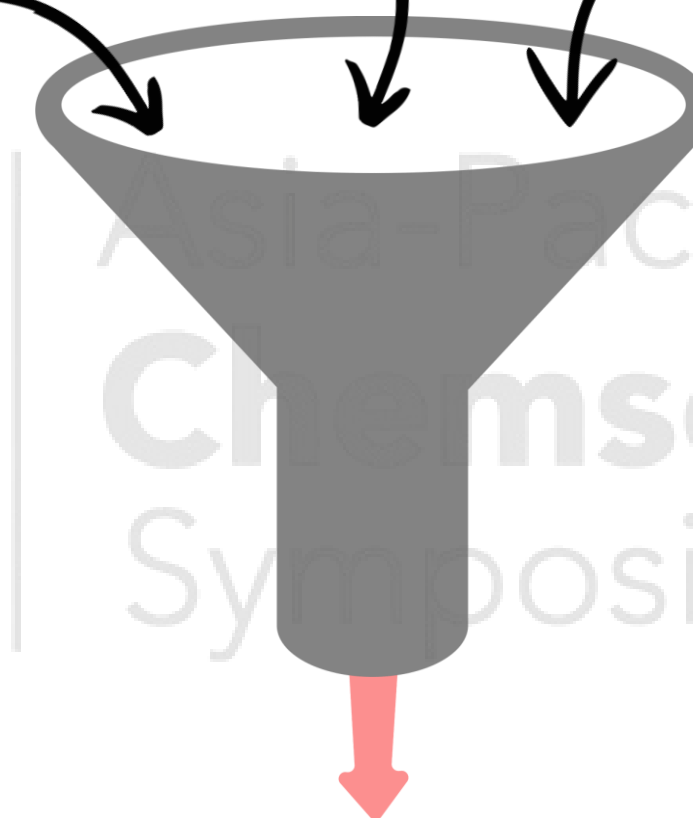
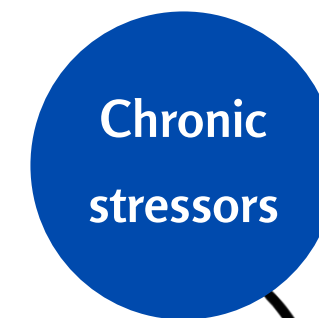
Increased risk of sexually transmitted infections (e.g., HIV)



Poor mental health



Substance dependence



Addressing these root causes is essential!

Upstream factors to problematic chemsex use

Traumatic experiences	Individuals with histories of trauma (e.g., abuse)
Chronic stressors	Discrimination (e.g., homophobia, transphobia), social isolation
Adverse childhood experiences	Neglect, abuse, household dysfunction during childhood etc.

R.K.J. Tan et. al. (2021) Exploring the role of trauma in underpinning sexualized drug use ('chemsex') among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men in Singapore, DOI: [10.1016/j.drugpo.2021.103333](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2021.103333)
 A. González-Baeza et. al. (2023) Understanding Attachment, Emotional Regulation, and Childhood Adversity and Their Link to Chemsex, Substance Use & Misuse, 58:1,94-102, DOI: [10.1080/10826084.2022.2148482](https://doi.org/10.1080/10826084.2022.2148482)

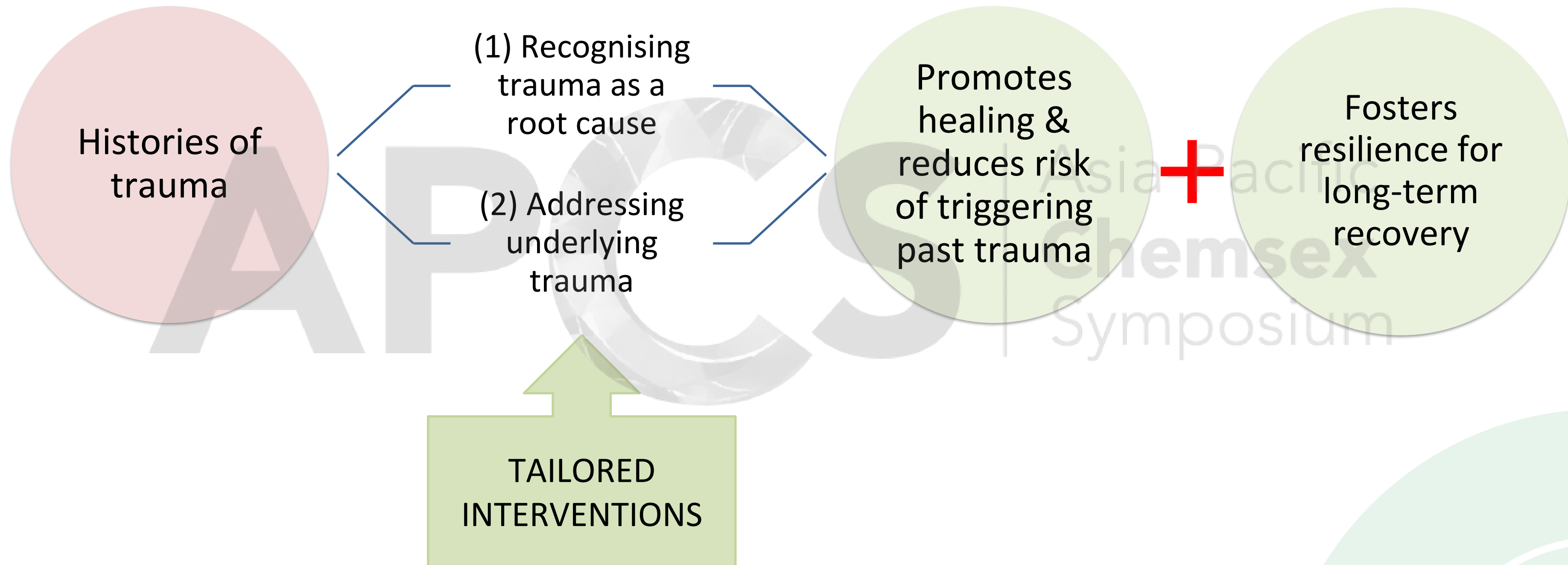
Trauma-informed approach in recovery services

KEY EMPHASIES

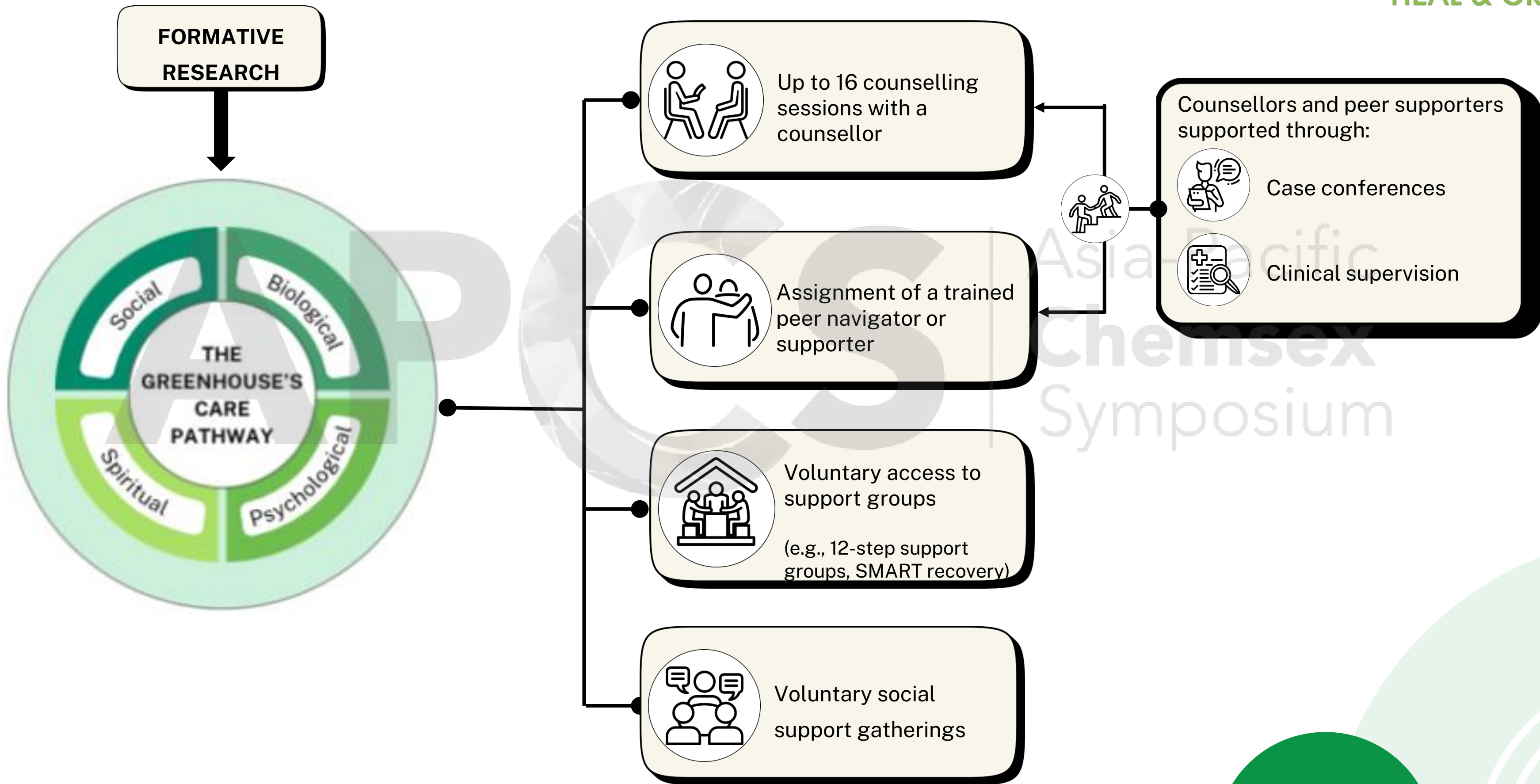
- Creating a **safe, supportive environment** that **avoid re-traumatization**
- Acknowledging the **emotional, psychological, and physical effects of trauma**



Trauma-informed approach in recovery services



Intervention Framework



Methodology of evaluation

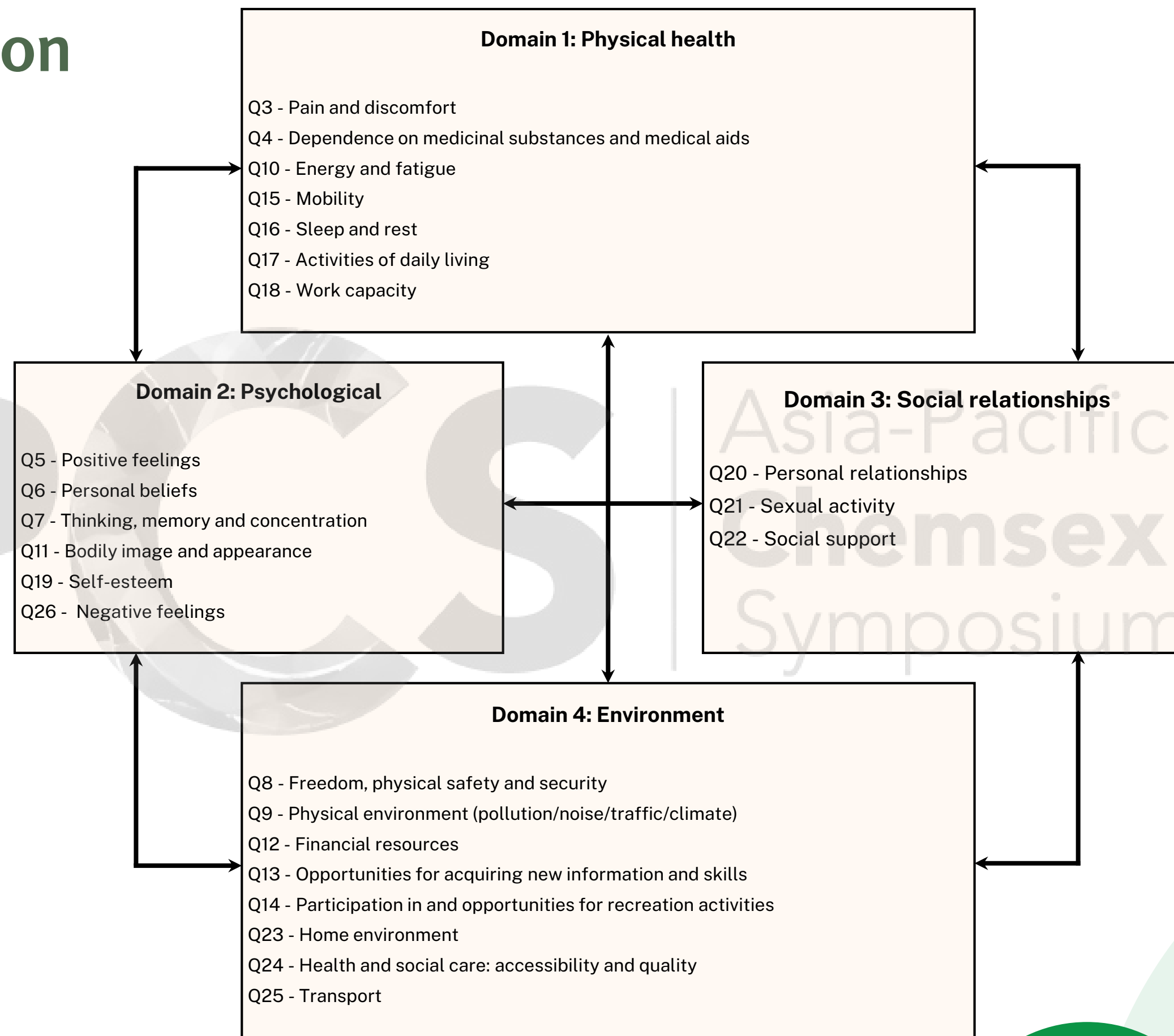
2020 2021
EVALUATION PERIOD



Pre- and post-survey utilising the WHOQoL-BREF



Retrospective qualitative counsellor case notes



The World Health Organization Quality of Life brief instrument (WHOQOL-BREF)

Study Findings

BENEFICIARIES

- Engaged in the programme for average of 6 months
- 14 beneficiaries completed both the pre-and post-intervention WHOQOL-BREF surveys

SOCIETY
integrating back into society

80% average improvement among our beneficiaries in satisfaction for their capacity for work**

“ Client has a strong sense of personal direction and started a new job which he is excited about.”

COMMUNITY
giving back - volunteerism

2021 **36.2%**
2020 **23.7%**

From 2020-2021, our **beneficiary-to-peer supporter conversion rate** increased significantly

“ Client shows continued effort to engage in value-directed living including giving back within context of recovery.”

INTERPERSONAL
rebuilding relationships

62% average improvement among our beneficiaries in social relationships domain of the WHOQOL-BREF survey as a result of TGH’s care pathway

“ Client achieved goal of forming healthy relationships with new partner.”

INDIVIDUAL
enhancing health & well-being

64% average improvement among our beneficiaries in the psychological domain of the WHOQOL-BREF survey as a result of TGH’s care pathway

43% average improvement among our beneficiaries in the physical health domain of the WHOQOL-BREF survey as a result of TGH’s care pathway

4 in 5 (77.6%) of our beneficiaries* have sustained their recoveries since taking part in TGH’s care pathway

“ Client has reported no urges towards substance use & practices strategies to reframe negative thoughts.”

“ Findings from qualitative case notes ”

Abbreviations: WHOQOL-BREF, World Health Organization Quality of Life Survey (Brief); TGH, The Greenhouse

Notes *Calculated based on the total number of care plan reviews conducted (for those who have faced difficulties in sustaining their recoveries) divided by the total number of beneficiaries in care

**Data collected (2020-2022) based on change in baseline for satisfaction for work capacity question under physical health domain in brief WHO Quality of Life (WHOQOL-BREF) survey

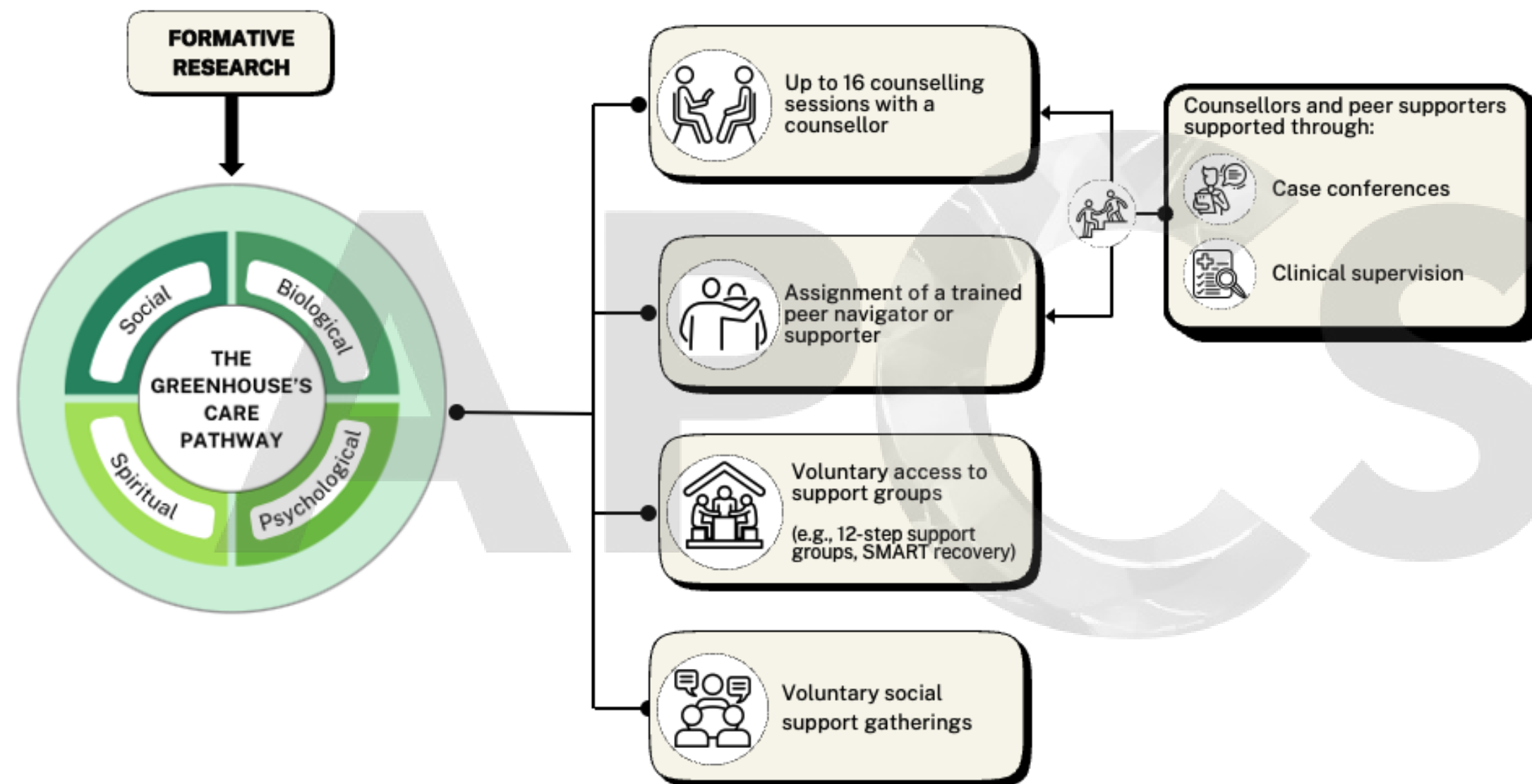
Limitations, gaps & biases of study findings

LIMITATION

- Only 14 beneficiaries completed the WHOQOL-BREF survey at both the pre- and post-intervention time points
 - Limited manpower resources to fully implement evaluation measures

GAPS & BIASES

- Findings are based on individuals who completed both the intervention program and evaluation measures
 - Not all beneficiaries who benefited from the program completed the survey at pre- and post-intervention
 - Some program participants did not require that level of support, formed their own support systems during the intervention period
 - Some beneficiaries dropped out of the program (intervention failure)



CLOSING REMARKS

- Improved quality of life for beneficiaries at The Greenhouse
- More work can be done to:
 - Scale up this intervention
 - Identify mechanisms for effectiveness

Acknowledgement

BENEFICIARIES

THE GREENHOUSE

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