



atoda annual report

2018-2019



ATODA
Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug
Association ACT

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About ATODA

ATODA's vision is an ACT community with the lowest possible levels of alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) related harm, as a result of the ATOD and related sectors evidence-informed prevention, treatment and harm reduction policies and services.

ATODA works collaboratively to provide expertise and leadership in the areas of social policy, sector and workforce development, research, coordination, partnerships, communication, education, information and resources. ATODA is an evidence-informed organisation.

The ways we work, and the outcomes we strive to achieve, reflect our commitment to the values of population health, human rights, social justice and reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.

The mission of ATODA is to be the peak body representing and supporting the ATOD sector and community in the ACT.

Documents accompanying this annual report

ATODA's 2018 - 2019 annual report should be read in conjunction with our:

- Strategic Plan 2014 - 2019
- Financial Statements 1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands of the ACT and we pay our respects to the Elders, their families and ancestors.

Reporting on the Strategic Plan 2014 – 2019

ATODA's strategic plan outlines the vision, values, strategic goals, outcomes and decision-making processes of the organisation from 2014 – 2019. Throughout this annual report, each activity is cross-referenced to the strategic outcomes and strategic priorities of ATODA (below) to demonstrate our progress.

Our values	The specialist lenses we use	The ways we work	Our strategic outcomes (2014 – 2019)	Our strategic priorities (2014 – 2019)
Human rights Social justice Reconciliation	Cultural security Responding to the needs of those who most bear the burdens of harm Harm minimisation, including supply, demand and harm reduction Prevention and early intervention Population health Evidence Capacity building Health promotion	Leadership Accountable Collaborative Inclusive Reliable Responsive Reflective Effective Efficient Innovative Integrity	High quality services Evidence-informed practice Cohesive specialist sector	Improve the quality of service consumer participation Support the development of the workforce and services Improve policy, practice, participation and research collaborations Positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Chair's Report – 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

While my hope is that one day we will all do ourselves out of our jobs, unfortunately the Canberra community continues to experience significant drug related harms and there remains much work to do. Alcohol and tobacco continue to cause the largest burdens of disease, however worryingly, the ACT is also experiencing an opioid mortality epidemic consistent with that experienced in the 1990s. This highlights the importance of our sector having the resilience, agility, infrastructure and workforce capacity to respond to people's needs no matter what circumstance they are in and to all of the drugs impacting on our community. It also highlights the important role that ATODA as the peak plays in capacity building, data and monitoring, research, health service planning, leadership and strategy.

Another important role of ATODA is challenging stigma. The impacts of stigma are well documented and it is unacceptable that people can wait up to 18 years before seeking help because of it. ATODA seeks to challenge stigma through all its activities including education and training, written materials, representation, policy and public events. We have been pleased with the way the new Canberra Drug Policy Series is contributing to this endeavour. The contributions of the ACT's drug user organisation - the Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy - has been crucial in guiding the peak and the sector in challenging stigma and I would like to acknowledge its Executive Officer Chris Gough who is also ATODA's Vice Chair.

The drug policy environment can often be challenging. I am pleased to see that despite the challenges ATODA continues to have strong impact with its advice often being taken up by governments. ATODA has been strong in its leadership in evidence informed co-design and it is hoped that governments and decision makers will leverage this in future planning, commissioning and policy processes.

The Association's new constitution became operational at the 2018 Annual General Meeting, where the membership elected the Board which then appointed the Office Bearers. I was privileged to have been appointed as Chair by my colleagues. The Board then embarked on a collaborative process to refine the strategic direction of the Association; I would like to thank the membership and our stakeholders for their active engagement. It was clear through that process that ATODA is highly regarded and that its strategic direction is supported by the membership. The new Strategic Plan will be presented to the membership at the 2019 Annual General Meeting.

The Association is also in a strong financial position, having built reserves over time, which has been made possible through prudent financial management, business development and good governance and I would like to acknowledge the work of the staff, the Finance Committee and the Board in this successful outcome. This has enabled the Association to be an employer of choice and this year the Board enacted a plan to use reserves for employee benefits related to paid parental leave.

Support from many enable the achievements of ATODA this year including funding from the ACT and Federal Governments, support from Ministers, members, partners and stakeholders. I would like to thank my outstanding colleagues on the Board and the fantastic staff team lead by our impressive CEO Carrie Fowlie.

We look forward to working with you all again next year for a healthy and safe Canberra.

Sharon Tuffin, Chair

CEO's Report – 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

The Canberra community can be proud of the outcomes its alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector continues to achieve in delivering high quality specialist alcohol, tobacco and other drug services, research and policy. These achievements are particularly impressive given the extraordinary demands that are placed on our sector, including in light of the (up to) 500,000 Australians a year that cannot access the drug treatment they need because there is not enough funding or services available.

The service delivery arm of our sector has experienced particular challenges this year with the majority of public funding for non-government services requiring renewal on the same day within the context of both a Federal Election and a cultural review into the ACT public health system. ATODA undertook strong and sustained advocacy and supported collective action with a view to ensuring that services for the community would not be interrupted and our workforce would be retained. Many of the processes of funders were poorly managed, with deadlines missed and some services expected to continue operation for periods without funding. While we are encouraged by the increasing focus on outcomes, it is imperative to acknowledge that outcomes for the community can be directly impacted by commissioning processes and funding models.

Supported by ATODA, the sector and allied stakeholders engaged in intensive policy work over six months to inform the new ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2018-2021. This followed several years of advocacy to the ACT Government to re-establish lapsed drug policy and governance mechanisms. It is encouraging to see many priorities of the sector reflected in the Action Plan.

ATODA, in partnership with the ANU School of Sociology, launched The Canberra Drug Policy Series, which brings international speakers and perspectives, cutting-edge ideas and stimulating conversations about drug policy to our city. The Series promotes evidence-informed and social justice approaches to, and discussions about, drug policy and raises awareness about the need for and value of treatment, harm reduction, support and law reform. The Series also enables multiple and different voices in drug policy dialogues and has strong engagement from decision makers. The Series is also seeking to drive positive and anti-stigmatising public narrative about people who use drugs and drug policy issues. The series has generated 10,000 estimated engagements in person or online in its first year.

We greatly appreciate the support our sector has received from our elected members of parliament, particularly the former Minister for Health and Wellbeing Ms Meeghan Fitzharris and the new Minister for Health Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith. It is encouraging and energising that the ambitious drug policy agenda of the ACT Government is consistent with the ambitious agenda of the sector.

The commitment of ATODA's members and stakeholders has again been extraordinary this year, and this has enabled ATODA's work to be so strong. The people who work at ATODA are incredible - their knowledge, skills and dedication are second to none – thank you Amanda, Anke, Lisa, Dave, Julie, Jeanette, David and Annie. The quantity and the quality of work that can be achieved by only five full time equivalent staff in the office is amazing!

Finally, I would like to thank ATODA's Chair, Sharon Tuffin, and Vice Chair, Chris Gough and the Board for their stewardship, collaboration and support. It is an incredible privilege to be part of this sector and to work for the community.

Carrie Fowlie, Chief Executive Officer

Our Board, Staff and Consultants

Board

A Board was elected from the membership at ATODA's ninth Annual General Meeting in November 2018.

Sharon Tuffin	Chair	Karralika Programs Inc.
Chris Gough	Deputy Chair	Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy
Gerard Byrne	Treasurer	The Salvation Army
Bronwyn Hendry	Secretary	Directions Health Services
Susan Clarke-Lindfield	Member	Toora Women Inc.
Sue-Ann Polden	Member	CatholicCare Canberra-Goulburn
Sarah-Jane Olsen	Member	Hepatitis ACT
Kate Gardner	Member	Alcohol and Drug Service, Canberra Health Service

Staff

ATODA's staff team is made up of approximately five full-time equivalent staff, with the following people contributing over the course of the year:

Carrie Fowle	Chief Executive Officer
Amanda Bode	Senior Project Manager
Dave Corby	Office Manager
Anke van der Sterren	Researcher and Project Manager
Julie Robert	Communications and Project Officer
Jeanette Bruce	Organisational Development Officer
Lisa Alleva	Data and Project Manager
Annie Bleeker	Project Coordinator
Mark McKay	Senior Administrator
Xiaolan Li	Project Officer
Annette Houlihan	Project Officer

Consultants

Anne Tattersall	Uniting ReGen
Annie Bleeker	Training and Consultancy
David McDonald	Social Research & Evaluation
Jennifer Harland	University of Adelaide
Linda Jenner	360Edge
Nicole Lee	360Edge

ATODA would also like to acknowledge the financial, IT, legal and design support from:

MCS Accounting / Blue Arc IT Solutions / Lee Jackson Design / Lesley Porroj / Gil-Jones Barker Solicitors / CanberraWeb / GoHosting

Full, Associate and Individual Members

ACT Corrective Services
ACT Shelter Association
AIDS Action Council of the ACT
Alcohol and Drug Services, ACT Health
Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy
Canberra Institute of Technology
Canberra Recovery Services, The Salvation Army
CatholicCare Canberra and Goulburn
Directions Health Services
Families ACT
Family Drug Support
Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform (ACT) Inc
Health Care Consumers' Association of the ACT
Hepatitis ACT
Karralika Programs Inc
D McDonald
Mental Health Community Coalition ACT
Mental Health Foundation ACT
S Byrne
Ted Noffs Foundation
Toora Women Inc
Volunteering ACT
Wellways Australia Limited
Youth Coalition of the ACT

Funders, Partners and Supporters

Funders and Supporters

Members of ATODA
Ms Meegan Fitzharris MLA, Minister for Health and Wellbeing
Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, Minister for Health
Department of Health, Australian Government
ACT Health Directorate
Justice and Community Safety Directorate
Local Drug Action Teams, Australian Drug Foundation
Capital Health Network

Partners and Collaborators

- 360Edge
- ACT Corrective Services
- ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)
- ACT Greens
- ACT Health Directorate
- ACT Health Human Research Ethics Committee
- ACT Justice and Community Safety Directorate
- ACT Labor
- ACT Office of the Inspector of Correction Services
- ACT Policing
- ACT Shelter
- Agnes Shea OAM, Ngunnawal Elder

- AIDS Action Council of the ACT
- Alcohol and Drug Foundation
- Alcohol and Drug Services, Canberra Health Services
- Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania (ATDC)
- Association of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies NT (AADANT)
- Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol & other Drugs
- Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council
- Australian Drug Foundation
- Australian Illicit and Injecting Drug Users League
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Australian National University School of Sociology
- Barnados
- Belconnen Community Services
- Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy (CAHMA)
- Canberra Health Services
- Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT)
- Canberra Liberals
- Canberra Recovery Services, The Salvation Army
- Capital Chemist Dickson
- Capital Chemist Tuggeranong Square
- Capital Chemist University of Canberra
- Capital Health Network
- CatholicCare Canberra and Goulburn
- Centre for Social Research Methods, Australian National University
- Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research (CYSAR)
- Chemist on Northbourne
- Chief Minister Treasury and Economic Development
- Communities@work
- Companion House
- Consumer representatives
- Criminal Law Group, Department of Justice and Community Safety
- Department of Health
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Develin's City Chemist
- Directions Health Services
- Domestic Violence Crisis Service
- Domestic Violence Prevention Council
- Dr Anna Olsen, Research School of Population Health, Australian National University
- Dr Caitlin Hughes, Drug Policy Modelling Program, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW
- Drug Policy Modelling Program, University of New South Wales
- Erindale Pharmacy
- EveryMan
- Families ACT
- Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform
- Fred Monaghan, Ngunnawal Elder
- Gordon Ramsay MLA, Attorney General
- Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation
- Health Care Consumers' Association of the ACT
- Health Improvements Projects, Preventive and Population Health, ACT Health Directorate
- Health Protection Service, ACT Health Directorate
- Hepatitis ACT
- Interchange General Practice

- Karinya House
- Karralika Programs Inc.
- Lee Jackson Design
- Legislation, Policy & Programs, Justice and Community Safety Directorate
- McDonald, D
- Meegan Fitzharris MLA, Minister for Health and Wellbeing
- Mental Health Community Coalition ACT
- Mental Health Foundation ACT
- Ministerial Advisory Council on Women representative on the ACT ATOD Strategy Evaluation Group
- Mirjana Wilson, Domestic Violence Crisis Service
- Hepatitis Australia
- National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA)
- National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University
- National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales
- National Drug Research Institute (NDRI)
- Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies (NADA)
- NSW / ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance
- Odyssey House Victoria
- Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing, ACT Health Directorate
- Office for the Coordinator General for Family Safety, Community Services Directorate
- Office for Women, Community Services Directorate
- Optimal Pharmacy Plus Jamison
- Pharmasave Woden Pharmacy
- Preventive and Population Health, ACT Health Directorate
- Professor Alison Ritter, Drug Policy Modelling Program
- Professor Nicole Lee, 360Edge
- Public Health Association of Australia
- Queensland Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (QNADA)
- Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, Minister for Health
- Research School of Population Health, Australian National University
- Richard Cash, 360Edge
- Roslyn Brown, Ngunawal Elder
- S Byrne
- Several ACT High Schools
- Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT
- Social Research and Evaluation
- South Australian Network for Drug and Alcohol Agencies (SANDAS)
- St John Ambulance ACT
- St Vincent's Health Australia
- Ted Noffs Foundation
- The Connection
- Toora Women Inc
- Tracey Greenberg
- Uniting
- Uniting Care ReGen
- University of Adelaide
- University of Newcastle
- Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA)
- Volunteering ACT
- Wally Bell, Ngunawal Elder
- Wellways Australia Limited
- Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (WANADA)
- Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services

- Woden Community Services
- Women Youth and Children Community Health Program
- Women's Centre for Health Matters
- Women's Health Service - Division of Women, Youth & Children Community Health Programs, Health Directorate, ACT Government
- Women's Services Network
- Yellow Edge
- Your Discount Chemist, Griffith
- Youth Coalition of the ACT
- Yurauna Centre, Canberra Institute of Technology
- Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Women and Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
- YWCA

The year in review:

The 'Year in Review' in this annual report maintains a focus on the capacity building, sector and workforce development, resources and support activities of ATODA (which are the funded activities). Some examples of policy activities are also highlighted.

For further information, please visit www.atoda.org.au

Refining ATODA's vision, values, strategic priorities and outcomes

Updating the ATODA Strategic Plan

The ATODA Strategic Plan outlines the vision, values, strategic goals, outcomes and high level decision-making framework of the organisation from 2014 – 2019. The current Strategic Plan has served the organisation well, is reported on annually to the membership through the annual report and is used to guide the work of the Board and the Secretariat. In advance of the expiration of the term of the current Strategic Plan a consultative process commenced in 2019 to refresh the ATODA Strategic Plan. This process is seeking to:

- Develop a Strategic Plan that outlines the vision, values, strategic goals, outcomes and a high level decision-making framework for ATODA in the years ahead.
- Engage the ATODA Board, membership, staff and stakeholders in the review and revision of the ATODA Strategic Plan through a multi-component consultation strategy.
- Identify the strengths of the 2014-2019 ATODA Strategic Plan including opportunities to consolidate or embed existing approaches, as well as opportunities for development.

This included a members and stakeholder survey; engagement and consultations with the Board, an externally facilitated members workshop and the preparation of accompanying documentation such as a Program Logic.

A new Strategic Plan will be prepared for the membership for the 2019 Annual General Meeting.

Evidence informed ATOD policy development, public engagement and priority setting

Supporting quality ATOD policy and governance

Influencing the Draft ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan

For over a decade, ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy documents have guided evidence informed drug policy and decision-making and have resulted in tangible outcomes for preventing and reducing alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harms in the ACT. Since the lapse of the previous ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy in 2014, the ACT has risked operating in a drug policy vacuum.

For a number of years, ATODA has called for the promulgation of a whole-of-government and -community, evidence-informed, coherent and consistent ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy. ATODA suggested this needed to include priority setting, an action plan and a governance group supported by a specialist alcohol, tobacco and other drug policy unit.

In February 2018, ACT Health released a Draft ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan (DSAP) to selected NGO stakeholders for consultation. ATODA made a submission to that process reflecting feedback from three stakeholder consultations it conducted.

Subsequent to this, a revised Draft ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2018-2021 was released by ACT Health for public consultation in late June 2018. ATODA undertook further extensive consultations to inform a submission with participation from the ATOD sector, allied services, peak organisations, consumer organisations and researchers. The submission made commentary in relation to:

- Achievements of Previous ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategies
- The Context of the Draft Drug Strategy Action Plan
- Risks Associated with the Draft Drug Strategy Action Plan
- Governance
- Engagement Including Consumer Participation
- Feedback on Specific Areas of the Draft Drug Strategy Action Plan
- Proposed Priority Setting Criteria
- Summary of Proposed Actions
- Appendices: A series of appendices (1 – 14) with detailed information on each of the proposed actions.
- Attachments: Letter to ACT Health regarding the request to reconvene the governance group prior to, and as part of, finalising the ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan (Attachment A); and an excerpt of the priority actions of the Draft ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan (Attachment B).

The ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2018-2021 was released on 11 December 2018 by the Minister for Health and Wellbeing. It outlines ACT Government priorities to address harms from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Many matters raised by ATODA are reflected in the ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan.

The first meeting of the Drug Strategy Action Plan Advisory Group, of which ATODA is a member, was convened by the co-chairs, the ACT Health Directorate and ACT Justice and Community Safety Directorate, in June 2019.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of evidence-informed practice and high quality services
- Priorities to improve research, policy, practice and participation collaborations; positively deploying ATOD expertise; and supporting the development of the workforce and services

Supporting positive health outcomes for the community via changes to workplace culture across the ACT Public Health System

Input to ACT Health's Independent Review into the Workplace Culture within ACT Public Health Services

In September 2018, the ACT Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Meegan Fitzharris MLA issued a statement on workplace culture which committed the ACT Government to an independent review of the culture within the public health services.

ATODA met with the Chair of the Panel for the Review and provided follow-up statements, in partnership with the Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT, related to opportunities for action to improve outcomes and relationships between the ACT Health Directorate and community NGO's. These shared statements, published as an appendix in the final Review report, noted that:

"Health services delivered by NGOs are an essential component of our ACT health system. The impact of systemic issues and workplace culture within ACT Health has adversely impacted relationships with NGO stakeholders, resulting among other things in reduced quality of policy outcomes and contract management relationships across sub-sectors.

The ACT Health Directorate needs to rebuild its corporate knowledge, relationships and specialist expertise in multiple sub-sector areas to enable genuine health service planning and implementation going forward; this will take considerable time, resources and processes. It is hoped, however, that a commitment to some immediate actions as outlined in this briefing, will make solid steps and reparations that will allow NGOs to work effectively with the ACT Health Directorate towards the values of care, excellence, collaboration and integrity."

The final report of the review identified external relationships with NGO's as a key priority, leading to recommendation 6 that the "Health Directorate re-establish open lines of communication with the NGO sector and other external stakeholders. The proposal by the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association (ATODA) and the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT (MHCC) to establish a peak NGO Leadership Group to facilitate this new partnership is supported."

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of high quality services & a cohesive specialist sector
- Priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services & improving research, policy, practice and participation collaborations.

Supporting engagement and expertise in ATOD policy development and implementation

Drug Services Forum

December 2018 Drug Services Forum with Ms Leonie McGregor, Deputy-Director General, Health Systems, Policy and Research, ACT Health Directorate

This Drug Services Forum was co-hosted by the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Sector and the NGO Blood-Borne Virus and Sexual Health Sectors and provided an opportunity to meet the new Deputy-Director General of Health Systems, Policy and Research in the ACT Health Directorate; for the new ACT Health Directorate to introduce itself; and to discuss the current NGO contract renewal processes.

The Forum built on work undertaken by the sectors in relation to the 'Shared statements on immediate actions required in relation to service funding agreements between NGOs and the ACT Health Directorate' prepared by ATODA, ACTCOSS and the Mental Health Community Coalition and used to inform communications with the ACT Health Directorate regarding urgent priorities in relation to a three year extension of funding agreements between the ACT Health Directorate and NGO's.

June 2019 Drug Services Forum with a focus on policy and funding to build capacity within specialist AOD services to respond to domestic and family violence

This Drug Services Forum was convened on 26 June 2019 with a focus specifically on the change in policy and funding to build capacity within specialist AOD services to respond to domestic and family violence. The Drug Services Forum involved Mr Alan Philp (Executive Group Manager Preventive and Population Health Division) and Mr Marc Emerson (A/g Director Health Improvements Projects).

The forum also provided an opportunity for attendees (specialist AOD services and allied sectors) to meet the ACT Health Directorate personnel responsible for AOD policy.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of high quality services and a cohesive specialist sector
- Priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services & positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Health services planning and priority setting

Needs and Priorities for the Capital Health Network's AOD Needs Assessment 2018-2019 (and beyond)

The Capital Health Network (CHN) and ATODA co-commissioned a rapid development and consultation process with specialist ACT AOD services to inform the CHN's AOD Needs Assessment for 2018 – 2019 (and beyond). The process and report, sought to inform the upcoming CHN commissioning cycle, by describing:

- what is currently being purchased by the CHN, the extent to which it continues to have a strong evidence base and address a demonstrated need, and the appropriateness of continuing to fund the activity through contract renewals;
- refinements that could be made to commissioning in the short-term;

- opportunities for longer-term planning and funding approaches; and,
- information on AOD related harms, the quality specialist service responses in the ACT, and the people who access them.

As part of its development, expert external clinical AOD consultants 360Edge were engaged to facilitate an AOD Needs Assessment Consultation Workshop with ACT specialist AOD services and the CHN on 22 October 2018. A draft version of the report was circulated, and feedback was received from a clinical consultant, specialist AOD services and the CHN.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of high quality service; evidence-informed practice and a cohesive specialist sector
- Priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services & positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Embedding and advocating for evidence in drug policy development

Adult Drug and Alcohol Court

The ACT Government committed to establishing a Drug and Alcohol Court (DAC) in the Parliamentary Agreement for the 9th Assembly. A range of activities have occurred in recent years to contribute to the development of the DAC. In the previous 12 months, this included the ACT Health Directorate commissioning a piece of work to estimate the costs of appropriate AOD treatment provision for the ACT Drug and Alcohol Court.

Throughout these processes, ATODA has continued to provide advice and guidance in relation to a number of key points:

- The ACT's ATOD sector - particularly the specialist alcohol and other drug service system it contains - is an essential partner in the development, implementation and evaluation of the new Drug and Alcohol Court. Communication and processes from the ACT Government should reflect this.
- The ACT Government has acknowledged that the specialist alcohol and other drug service system is full and that there is no excess capacity to serve Drug and Alcohol Court clients within existing resources (staffing, beds, treatment places, etc.)
- The primary management of people involved in the DAC should be conducted by health services
- A pre-requisite for the DAC to be successful is that it operates as an integral part of the specialist AOD service system and ATOD sector more broadly, rather than operate parallel to it within the justice sector.
- The importance of justice and AOD health services working together to develop a model of care that is realistic, workable and maintains the clinical integrity of AOD treatment.
- The ethical considerations in giving priority to treating DAC clients within AOD treatment services, considering the limited treatment resources that the ACT has in the AOD service system.
- It will be essential that a sound monitoring and evaluation system be resourced and established, before the DAC commences, since this is a new initiative with unknown outcomes

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of evidence-informed practice and a cohesive specialist sector
- Priorities of positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Ensuring quality health services are uninterrupted for the community

Working collectively for non-government contract renewal processes

Service funding agreements for both ACT Health Directorate and Commonwealth funding of non-government specialist alcohol and other drug services expired on 30 June 2019 and required renewal. This funding represents the majority of the public investment in alcohol and other drug treatment, harm reduction and capacity building.

Processes conducted by funders did not meet the timelines required by non-government services, with some programs being expected to operate unfunded from 1 July 2019.

Significant collective work was required by the sector at an ACT and national level, for example via the State and Territory AOD Peaks Network.

Collective activities of funded non-government organisations, coordinated and supported by ATODA and other peaks, mitigated against interruption of health service delivery and loss of the workforce.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of high quality service; evidence-informed practice and a cohesive specialist sector
- Priorities of positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Further policy highlights

The Canberra Drug Policy Series

2018 saw the establishment of The Canberra Drug Policy Series, which aims to bring international speakers, cutting-edge ideas and stimulating conversations about drug policy to our city. This Series is a partnership between ATODA, Uniting and the ANU School of Sociology.

Four booked out events were held resulting in an estimated 10,000 engagements either in person or online. The events held were:

A drug policy conversation with Johann Hari

Held at The Canberra Theatre on 19 September 2018, this inaugural event featured a New York Times best seller and TED Talk superstar and challenged the premise of the 'war on drugs' and called for a compassionate, non-stigmatising and health response to people who use drugs.

A Luncheon with Dr Khalid Tinasti, Executive Secretary, Global Commission on Drug Policy

Held at the Legislative Assembly of the ACT on 15 October 2019, this event highlighted the value and importance of regulating drugs, and the important role that cities can play in innovative and progressive drug policy reform.

What happened when Portugal decriminalised all drugs? A Conversation with Dr Nuno Capaz

Held at The Shine Dome on 16 November 2019, this event showcased 18 years of reduced harms as a result of not criminalising people who use drugs and decriminalising all drugs.

10 years of global drug policy: What have we learnt and where are we heading? Highlights from the March 2019 UN Commission on Narcotics Drugs

Held at the Australian National University on 10 April 2019, this event showcased the importance of human rights and civil society, and how the international drug control system can impede local action.

All events included the voices of affected communities and others experts including:

- Associate Professor Helen Keane, Head, School of Sociology, Australian National University
- Mr David McDonald, Social Research and Evaluation & Australian National University
- Dr Caitlin Hughes, Criminologist, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre
- Mr Chris Killick-Moran, Director, Australian Department of Health
- Ms Judy Chang, Executive Director, International Network of People who Use Drugs
- Mr Chris Gough, Manager, Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy
- Ms Marion McConnell, Co-Founder, Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform
- Ms Selina Walker, on behalf of Agnes Shea, Ngunnawal Elder
- Mr Fred Monaghan, Ngunnawal Elder
- Mr Wally Bell, Ngunnawal Elder
- Ms Carrie Fowlie, CEO, Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT

These activities progress ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- *priorities* of improving policy practice, participation and research collaborations

Submission to the ACT Government Budget Consultation

ATODA, in consultation with stakeholders, made its annual submission to the ACT Budget consultation process for 2019-2020. The submission highlighted the ongoing challenges in the ACT drug policy and service delivery fields and called for funding and/or processes to:

- Increase the capacity of the ACT specialist alcohol and other drug services system
- Develop and implement a Canberra Drug Early Warning System (CDEWS)
- Improve alcohol and other drug treatment data collection, management, analysis and utilisation
- Develop and implement a deliberative democracy initiative with the aim of refining the ACT's policies regarding psychoactive substances
- Provide additional subsidised Nicotine Replacement Therapy to people who smoke and are accessing specialist alcohol and other drug services
- Selectively expand locations for the provision of specialist AOD services in areas of significant population growth
- Estimate the costs for appropriate AOD treatment provision for the ACT Drug and Alcohol Court
- Fully allocate the funds recorded in forward estimates until 2021-2022 directly to specialist alcohol and other drug services focused on 'increasing the capacity of specialist drug treatment services to deliver programs that integrate best practice in addressing family violence'
- Expand the ACT's existing Simple Cannabis Offence Notice scheme to cover all illegal drugs
- Establish an outpatient AOD withdrawal program

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of evidence-informed practice and high quality services
- Priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services; improving research, policy, practice and participation collaborations and positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Submission on the exposure draft of the Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill 2018

A Private Member's Bill, the *Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill 2018* was presented to the Legislative Assembly on 19 September 2018 by Mr Michael Pettersson, MLA. The intent of this Private Members Bill is to legalise the personal possession and use of small amount of cannabis.

On 22 November 2018, ATODA made a submission to the *Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill 2018* (the Bill) Exposure Draft that included the following suggestions and amendments:

- Repeal artificial distinctions between methods of cannabis cultivation
- Enabling not-for-profit alternatives to black market supply
- Consistency with existing smokefree legislation
- Embedding evaluation within the Bill
- Removal of the self-administration offence
- Establishment of an independent expert committee on drug policy and law reform.

ATODA also raised potential implementation problems with the draft including potential conflicts with:

- The Commonwealth Poisons Standard
- The Commonwealth Criminal Code
- International treaty obligations.

Following public submissions to the Exposure Draft, the Bill was modified to repeal the prohibition of the self-administration of cannabis included in the ACT *Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 2008*. The Bill was then introduced to the ACT Legislative Assembly on 28 November 2018 by Mr Michael Pettersson, MLA, with a motion that the Bill be agreed to in principle.

On 20 February 2019, debate on the Bill resumed, with the Legislative Assembly passing a motion to refer the *Drugs of Dependence (Personal Cannabis Use) Amendment Bill 2018* (the Bill) to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services for inquiry and report by 06 June 2019.

On 20 March 2019 ATODA made a submission to the Inquiry that included the following suggestions and amendments:

- Repeal of artificial distinctions between methods of cannabis cultivation
- Enabling not-for-profit alternatives to black market supply
- Consistency with existing smoke-free legislation
- Embedding evaluation within the Bill
- Removal of the self-administration offence (noting that the Bill now proposed repealing the prohibition of the self-administration of cannabis included in the ACT *Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 2008*)
- National and international aspects
- Establishment of an independent expert committee on drug policy and law reform
- Communications strategies.

In its submission ATODA also included discussion related to:

- Legalising minor cannabis offences is unlikely to lead to an increased incidence of health-related harms
- Road safety: recent research evidence casts doubt on the claim that a high relative risk exists between recent use of cannabis and road crash incidence

- Interrelationships between drug law reform and drug treatment
- The ACT Attorney-General could issue a directive that it is inexpedient to prosecute people for consumer-level drug offences generally, or consumer-level cannabis offences only.

On 6 June 2019 the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services delivered its report to the Legislative Assembly, with a response to be tabled by Government later in 2019 prior to debate of the Bill.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of evidence-informed practice
- Priorities of improving research, policy, practice and participation collaborations and positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Healthy Prisons Framework

On 6 February 2019, the Office of the ACT Inspector of Correctional Services (OICS) called for submissions from staff of ACT Corrective Services, detainees, community organisations, and the academic community, to the Healthy Prison Review of the Alexander Maconochie Centre. Reviews are conducted at least every two years by the OICS.

The Review is to be conducted mid-2019 and the review report is yet to be made publicly available.

On 3 June 2019 ATODA made a submission to the Healthy Prison Review of the Alexander Maconochie Centre. ATODA's submission included identification of issues around:

- Alcohol, tobacco and other drug services provided at the AMC, transparency and consultation
- Foundational human rights principles
- Access to drug treatment services
- Standard 81: a comprehensive and integrated drug strategy.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of high quality services and evidence-informed practice
- Priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services; improving research, policy, practice and participation collaborations and positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Supporting high quality specialist ATOD services

Skills development and training

Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATOD) and harm reduction training

ATODA engaged with allied sectors to provide tailored and subsidised alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) and harm reduction training. The one-day training course covered information about values and attitudes, ATOD use in the ACT and Australia, updated information about the harms and effects of ATOD as well as harm reduction approaches to use with clients. Participants were also provided with information about screening and brief intervention, referral and ATOD support and treatment services in the ACT. Training sessions were tailored to meet the needs of its specific target audience.

Partnerships were established with peak bodies - Youth Coalition of the ACT, ACT Shelter and the Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT - to support implementation to training within allied sectors. Partnerships were also established with service providers including the Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) and Companion House who work with survivors of trauma and torture. These partnerships resulted in seven different tailored training sessions provided to 50 workers from 18 different agencies.

Participants professional roles consisted of outreach workers; residential workers; school nurses; teachers, school administrators; police; high school and generalist youth workers and team leaders. Positive feedback on the training was received, participants reported improving their knowledge of ATOD in the ACT & Australia and of harm reduction strategies as well as their confidence in responding to people with ATOD issues.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- *outcomes* of high quality services and evidence-informed practice
- *priorities* of developing the workforce and services and positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Implementing evidenced based screening and brief intervention



ACT electronic Alcohol, Smoking & Substance Involvement Screening Test [ACT eASSIST]

Access ACT eASSIST online

Download ACT eASSIST

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) eASSIST provides a questionnaire which screens for all levels of problem or risky substance use. The ACT eASSIST provides an evidence based structured and consistent way for health, community and other workers to:

- > Identify if a client / consumer is experiencing alcohol, tobacco or other drug problems
- > Determine the level of risk of this use to help decide the next steps to take
- > Provide a structured 10 step brief intervention and accurate alcohol, tobacco and other drug information (including through prompts)
- > Produce a feedback report card for clients / consumers regarding the risks associated with their alcohol, tobacco or other drug use
- > Identify an appropriate ACT referral point for specialist alcohol, tobacco or other drug treatment and support.

Training and support to implement the ACT eASSIST is available from the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA).

For more information on the ACT eASSIST contact ATODA on:

Phone: (02) 6249 6358 / (02) 6257 2661
Visit: 11 Rutherford Crescent, Ainslie, ACT
Web: www.atoda.org.au

For more information on ACT alcohol, tobacco and other drug referral options visit the ACT ATOD Services Directory at: www.directory.atoda.org.au

ATODA has continued to implement a range of activities to strengthen evidence-based and consistent alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) screening and brief interventions across health and community services in the ACT. This includes maintaining the ACT eASSIST with the goal of supporting health and community workers to identify ATOD issues, match treatment and support needs, communicate services and referral pathways, and provide ATOD information, including that with a harm reduction focus. 946 people visited the ACT eASSIST website to download or use the ACT eASSIST (www.act-eassist.org.au)

ATODA also participated in the development of training videos for use of the ASSIST Lite in the Emergency Department as part of the ASSIST Portal managed by the University of Adelaide (www.assistportal.com.au)

The ACT eASSIST was developed through a partnership with the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre at the Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia (now based at the University of Adelaide) and is an electronic version of the Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST), designed by the World Health Organization. Further partnership activities have progressed with the WHO Collaborating Centre (University of Adelaide) to co-host half day workshop on the Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST) for participants who had completed the one-day ATOD information & harm reduction training (expected to occur in the second half of 2019).

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcome of evidence-informed practice
- Priorities of positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Further strengthening our competent, evidence-based and professional workforce

ACT Alcohol and Other Drug Qualifications Strategy

The ACT Alcohol and Other Drug Qualifications Strategy aims to ensure the development and maintenance of a competent and professional specialist workforce in the ACT. It also aims to ensure that all ATOD workers in the ACT have a shared minimum knowledge and skill base.

The three main components of the Strategy are: the AOD Skill Set (AOD specialised units of the Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs), the Remaining Units (non ATOD content of the Certificate IV in AOD) and First Aid Training.

The Strategy has maintained a focus on the provision of education and training through AOD specialist industry providers including through a partnership with Uniting Care ReGen.

A total of 45 scholarships were provided in this financial year including 15 participants who completed training for the AOD Skill Set and 30 for First Aid.

ATODA and its partners have redeveloped the training delivery approach, including through the provision of multiple student support days and additional information sessions for participants and managers.

Following the completion of the training, participants are receiving a nationally recognised Statement of Attainment. All of the training is coordinated by ATODA and fully subsidised for participating ATOD workers.



These activities progress ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- outcomes of high quality services, evidence-informed practice and a cohesive specialist sector
- priorities of developing the workforce and services and positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Improving awareness of, and referral to, specialist ATOD services in the ACT

ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Services Online Directory:

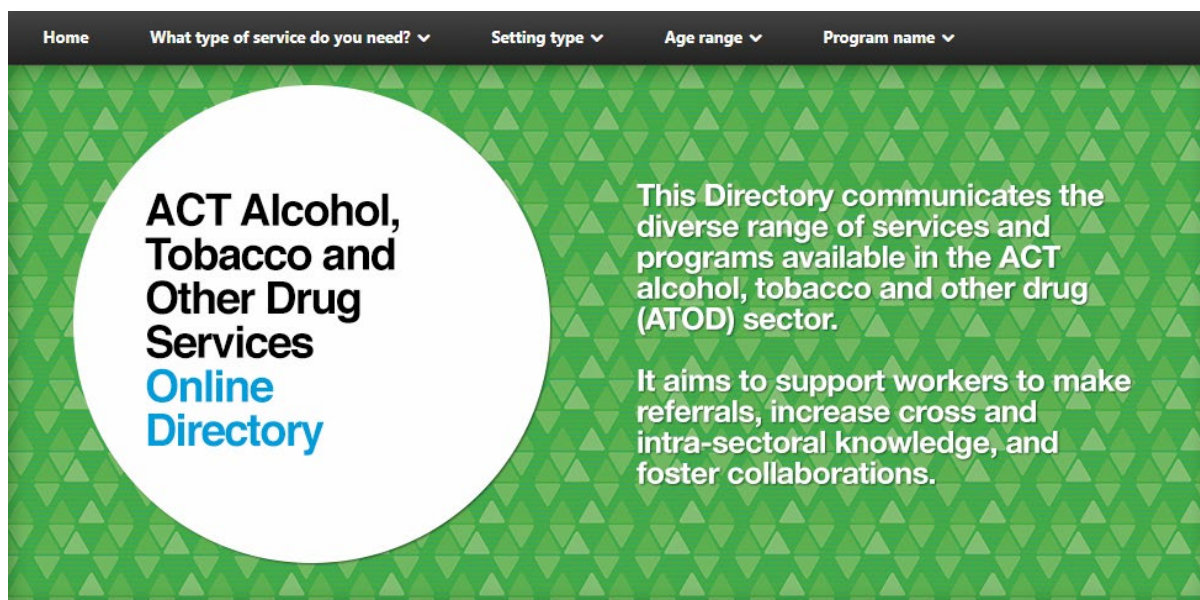
www.directory.atoda.org.au

The ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Services Directory communicates the diverse range of services and programs available in the sector. It aims to support workers to make referrals, increase cross and intra-sectoral knowledge, and foster collaborations.

Version 17 was launched in April 2019 and it includes:

- 36 detailed program profiles
- A full Directory and quick reference guides by service name and service types
- An interactive map of service locations
- Additional program profiles from the allied sectors

In the last year, the ACT ATOD Directory had over 10,800 visitors with 22,383 pages viewed.



This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcomes of a cohesive specialist sector
- Priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services; and positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise

Supporting workers involvement in sector governance, capacity building activities and policy development

The ACT ATOD Workers Group

The ACT ATOD Workers Group is involved in the development, implementation, coordination, evaluation and promotion of key sector support activities for the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector in the ACT. The group identifies and seeks to respond to a range of issues relevant to frontline workers. The group continues to function as an essential component of the sector's governance and acts as a key advisory structure to ATODA.

The group implemented a workplan of diverse activities over the last 12 months with secretariat support provided by ATODA. Some priorities included:

- Informing ATODA's capacity building and policy activities
- Coordinating the implementation of the Service Users Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey, and participating in feedback and interpretation of the findings
- Participating in feedback and interpretation of the data from the 2017 ACT AOD Workforce Profile
- Undertaking an update of the ACT ATOD Services Directory
- Participating in consultations (including face to face and via survey) to inform the update of the ATODA Strategic Plan
- Providing guidance and advice to the development of proposals through submission processes regarding sector priorities

Workers Group members are:

- Alcohol and Drug Services, Canberra Health Services
- Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT
- AOD Program, Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation
- AOD Program, Toora Women Inc.
- AOD Program, Winnunga Nimmitjyah Aboriginal Health and Community Services
- Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy
- Canberra Recovery Services, The Salvation Army
- Directions Health Services
- Hepatitis ACT
- Karralika Programs Inc.
- Sobering Up Shelter, CatholicCare Canberra and Goulburn
- Solaris Program, ACT Corrective Services
- Ted Noffs Foundation

ATODA gratefully acknowledges the input and support of members of the ACT ATOD Workers Group.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcome of a cohesive specialist sector
- Priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services & improving research, policy, practice and participation collaborations

Specialist ACT ATOD Executives Meetings

A meeting of specialist ACT alcohol and other drug service Executives has been convened at least bi-monthly to provide opportunities for coordination and collaboration across ACT AOD services, and to discuss and progress key issues for services and drug policy in the ACT.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- Outcome of a cohesive specialist sector
- Priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services & improving research, policy, practice and participation collaborations

Supporting the availability and sharing of information about, and for, the ACT ATOD sector

Informing and educating members and stakeholders

ACT ATOD Sector eBulletins

The ACT ATOD Sector eBulletin provides summaries of information, important developments, events, reporting on ATODA projects, resources, conferences, funding opportunities and other information relevant to ATOD and allied workers in the ACT. The ACT ATOD Sector eBulletin has over 790 subscribers and reaches a diverse range of people involved in the sector from workers, to researchers and policy makers. 21 editions were disseminated to subscribers.

Research eBulletin

The monthly Research eBulletin features newly published research findings and other research activities of particular relevance to ATOD and allied workers in the ACT. It aims to highlight research developments specific to the ACT ATOD sector.

The Research eBulletin's evidence summaries are compiled by Mr David McDonald — National Alcohol and Drug Awards Honor Roll Inductee, Outstanding Contributions Award Recipient; Director of Social Research and Evaluation, Visiting Fellow at The Australian National University and consultant to ATODA.

Each Research eBulletin includes an ACT Research Spotlight to highlight research undertaken locally or information that has a particular local relevance. Those that were promoted in the last 12 months included:

1. Report on the 2018 Canberra Groovin' The Moo Pill Testing Pilot
2. ACT comparisons with other Australian jurisdictions with respect to hepatitis C risk, prevention, testing, treatment and reinfection in its prison
3. Trends in Canberra's drug overdose mortality
4. New data on drug arrests in the ACT and nationally
5. Contemporary Canberra public opinion on cannabis legalization
6. Canberra's drug strategic early warning data: the 2018 Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) and Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS)
7. Wastewater testing results showing ACT opioid consumption
8. Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission media release, 20 February 2019
9. Trends in recorded drug crimes in the ACT and Australia

ATODA gratefully acknowledge David McDonald's contributions to the Research eBulletin.

Update and Drug Talk Mailing Lists

Since the defunding of the Australian Drug Council of Australia (ADCA), ATODA has monitored and managed the *Update* and *Drugtalk* mailing lists. Over 700 people are subscribed to the lists.

The lists help subscribers stay informed of what is happening in the alcohol and other drugs sector, including keeping up to date with current events, research, news, job vacancies, publications and announcements. The lists also facilitate contact between those working in the sector and provide a forum in which people can seek information from a wide range of knowledge and expertise.

These activities progress ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- outcomes of evidence-informed practice and a cohesive specialist sector
- priorities of supporting the development of the workforce and services; and improving policy, practice, participation and research collaborations

Providing a central point for information

www.atoda.org.au

The ATODA website provides current and detailed information on the organisation, activities, projects, policy, publications about, and for, the ACT ATOD sector and allied stakeholders. The website is regularly updated and thus presents the latest news and events happening in the sector.

The website remains an essential communication mechanism for ATODA and the sector more broadly and is a key tool by which stakeholders can engage with ATODA's work. The value of the website is demonstrated through its constant popularity with an average of over 950 monthly visits and nearly 2,000 pages viewed every month.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- outcome of a cohesive specialist sector

Research, collective impact and contributing to the evidence base

Working collaboratively to enhance workforce qualifications, remuneration and wellbeing

Service Users Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey (SUSOS) 2018

The 2018 Service Users Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey (SUSOS) was conducted on a single day in November 2018 at twenty-four sites at all ten specialist alcohol and drug treatment and support services in the ACT (both government and non-government services). A total of 621 people who accessed these programs on a single day completed the Survey. The SUSOS aims to improve service responsiveness to the needs of people accessing specialist AOD services in the ACT and to inform quality improvement programs in the participating specialist AOD services. To do this, the SUSOS seeks to:

- provide a demographic profile of the population of services users accessing AOD treatment and support services in the ACT, thereby pointing to the potential needs of the AOD treatment population
- investigate service users' experiences of accessing ACT Health-funded and -delivered specialist AOD services
- investigate the perspectives of service users of the quality of these AOD services by assessing their levels and patterns of satisfaction, and

- investigate self-reported outcomes as a result of utilising these AOD services.

The ACT SUSOS is the only jurisdiction-wide survey of satisfaction and outcomes of people accessing specialist AOD services in Australia. These surveys have been conducted in ACT specialist AOD services every three years since 2009, and the results from 2018 will be published in 2019 and available as an ATODA Monograph.

ATODA would like to thank all of the service users who participated in the 2018 SUSOS and the workers at the 24 sites who facilitated the delivery of the surveys.

ACT AOD Workforce Profile: Qualifications, Remuneration and Well-being

The ACT Alcohol and Other Drug Workforce Profile aims to profile the specialist ATOD sector workforce in the ACT, and has occurred every three years since 2006. The fifth Profile was conducted in 2017 and involved administering a Workers' Survey (distributed to workers at each of the nine participating ACT specialist AOD organisations), and an Organisation Survey (completed by a manager or executive staff member from each participating specialist AOD organisation).

The profile informs a more detailed understanding of the sector, effective representation for the sector, future development needs and helps the sector to target current gaps in skills, knowledge and satisfaction. These findings can also be compared over time to the results from the previous surveys. For the first time in 2017, the survey has also measured worker wellbeing, enabling an examination of how these wellbeing factors and other workforce issues interrelate.

The profile report is complete and will be available in 2019 as an ATODA monograph.

Preliminary findings of the Workforce Profile were presented at the APSAD Scientific Alcohol and Drug Conference: van der Sterren A, Fowlie C, and Bode A. 'Workforce Characteristics, Capacity and Wellbeing: A profile of the specialist alcohol, tobacco and other drug workforce in the ACT', poster presented at the APSAD Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 4 – 7 November, 2018 (also presented as a one-minute presentation at the Poster Highlighting Session).

ATODA Monograph Series

The ATODA Monograph Series enables communication of relevant bodies of work to a wide audience—alcohol, tobacco and other drug researchers, policy workers, practitioners, consumers and their friends and families in the ACT and region. During 2018 – 2019, ATODA released Monograph seven:

- 'Secondary analysis of ACT Data reported to the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set (AODTS-NMDS)'

Monographs in the series are available on the ATODA website www.atoda.org.au

These activities progress ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- outcomes of evidence-informed practice; and a cohesive specialist sector
- priorities of improving the quality of service consumer participation; improving policy, practice, participation and research collaborations; and positive deployment of ATOD expertise

Improving the health of Canberrans

Implementing tobacco management activities

ATODA shares the ACT government's commitment to reducing the impact of tobacco use on the health of Canberrans. While the ACT's smoking rate is currently less than 10%, high smoking rates are still experienced among sub-populations that are experiencing disadvantage. This includes people accessing alcohol and other drug services in the ACT—82% of participants in the 2015 Service Users' Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey (SUSOS) self-reported that they were smokers when they first started using the specialist AOD service.

In order to meaningfully achieve lower smoking rates in the ACT, ATODA's projects and resources focus on providing nicotine dependence treatment and support to people accessing specialist AOD services.

We CAN Project - Communities Accessing all-types of Nicotine Replacement Therapy

The We CAN Program (Communities Accessing all-types of Nicotine Replacement Therapy) aims to reduce smoking among people utilising specialist alcohol and other drug (AOD) non-government services by providing subsidised access to all-types of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). AOD workers provide a voucher to service users that is redeemable at a partnering community pharmacy for a full course (8 – 12 weeks worth) of all-types of NRT (e.g. patches, gum, lozenges, spray, inhalator). Service users concurrently receive smoking cessation support through the AOD workers and the pharmacies.

The Program enables best practice nicotine dependence treatment to be delivered to this population with extremely high smoking rates, and for this treatment to be implemented as part of routine AOD treatment and support within specialist AOD services. The Program:

- targets a priority population with very high smoking rates—i.e. people who access specialist AOD services;
- takes a settings-based approach, (i.e. delivering the Program in non-government specialist AOD services);
- enables delivery of best practice nicotine dependence treatment—full courses of combination NRT, complemented by specialist smoking cessation support
- Is implemented as part of routine AOD treatment and support—thereby increasing smoking cessation, and improving AOD treatment outcomes
- Leverages and enhances specialist AOD services' treatment and support expertise—including organisational tobacco management policies, and a trained workforce
- Leverages on existing smoking cessation training and resources through ACT community pharmacies
- leverages ACT Health and the Commonwealth's existing specialist AOD treatment and support investment

The *We CAN Program* continues to be delivered in eight specialist AOD NGO services, including all residential services. Operating data from the Program shows a potentially high rate of quit attempts—the majority of participating service users provided with a NRT voucher follow through on redeeming these at the community pharmacies. Many of these service users are accessing sufficient NRT to make a quality quit attempt, particularly as indicated by the amount of NRT purchased and whether they purchased a combination of patches and intermittent forms of NRT. All participating service users also received smoking cessation support from a specialist AOD treatment and support worker, complemented by support when attending the pharmacy.

The *We CAN Program* has demonstrated that people accessing specialist AOD services want to engage in smoking cessation, and best practice care, which includes full courses of

subsidised NRT, should be provided as core business. ATODA continues to advocate for further funding to be provided for the community to access subsidized NRT to meet demand.



NRT for Workers Project

ATODA continues to offer access to subsidised nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) to people who smoke who are ATOD, youth or mental health workers in the non-government, not for profit sector of the ACT and/or members of ATODA. This is to help them manage their tobacco consumption at work, engage with smoke-free environment policies, and support quit attempts at no cost to the individual employee.

Smoking cessation training

To support workers in specialist AOD services to better respond to people who request treatment for nicotine dependence, ATODA organised for the delivery of free training in 'Brief Interventions for Smoking Cessation: Training for ACT Alcohol and Other Drug Workers'. Two subsidised one-day training sessions were held in June 2019, delivered by Tracey Greenberg, NSW Health Smoking Cessation trainer. All ACT specialist AOD services (non-government and government) were invited to send workers along to this training.

Tobacco-related publications and presentations

van der Sterren A, Fowlie C, and Bode A. 'Collective Action on Tobacco Control by ACT Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AOD) Leads to Shifts in Tobacco Management and Smoking Cessation', presentation at the APSAD Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 4 – 7 November, 2018.

van der Sterren A, Fowlie C, and Bode A. 'A Successful Smoking Cessation Program for People Accessing Specialist Alcohol and Other Drug Non-Government Organisations in the ACT: the We CAN Program (Communities Accessing all-types of Nicotine Replacement Therapy)', poster presented at the APSAD Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 4 – 7 November, 2018 (also presented as a one-minute presentation at the Poster Highlighting Session).

van der Sterren A, 'Targeted collective action of tobacco control leaders to shifts in tobacco management and smoking cessation', webinar presentation to the Australasian Smoking Cessation Professionals Special Interest Group, 29 January 2019.

These activities progress ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- *outcomes* of high quality services and evidence-informed practice
- *priorities* of developing the workforce and services, and improving policy practice, participation and research collaborations

Leading the development of innovative approaches to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence in ATOD settings

In 2017, following an extensive year-long consultation and co-design process, ATODA completed and submitted the final report, *ACT Alcohol and Other Drug Safer Families Program 2017 – 2021: Design, Model, Implementation Plan and Evaluation Framework* (submitted 21 December 2017).

During 2018 - 19, ATODA undertook a number of unfunded activities related to the AOD Safer Families Program:

- Ongoing dissemination (online and in print) of the comprehensive toolkit to provide clinical and practical guidance for people who work in the ATOD sector to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence:
 - *Domestic and Family Violence Capability Assessment Tool: for Alcohol and Other Drug Settings*
 - *Scope of Practice: for Working with Service Consumers in Alcohol and Other Drug Settings who Experience or Use Domestic and Family Violence*
 - *Practice Guide: for Responding to Domestic and Family Violence in Alcohol and Other Drug Settings.*
- National dissemination activities including:
 - Presenting the tools at the South Australian Network of Drug and Alcohol Services Forum with a focus on Children, Young People and Families.
 - Liaising with stakeholders in the Victorian AOD sector who are proceeding with roll-out of the tools in specialist AOD settings.
 - Delivery of a paper and presentation at the 2018 APSAD Scientific Alcohol and Drug Conference: Bode A, Fowlie C, van der Sterren A, Lee N, Jenner L. 'Domestic and family violence (DFV) tools to guide practice in specialist alcohol and other (AOD) services—ACT AOD Safer Families Program', presentation at the APSAD Conference, Auckland, New Zealand, 4 – 7 November, 2018.
- Through the consultation and co-design process of the *AOD Safer Families Program*, it was recognised that currently DFV training is not sufficient to equip workers in specialist AOD services with the understanding and skills to respond effectively. ATODA continued to work with clinical consultants, 360Edge, to develop and evaluate a pilot of a specific training package for workers in specialist AOD services to improve understandings of, and skills in, responding to people who are experiencing or using domestic and family violence: 'Introduction to DFV for AOD Workers' and 'Advanced DFV Responses for AOD Workers'.
- Organising and facilitating Drug Services Forum in June 2019 with the particular purpose of:
 - re-igniting the dialogue about the funding and policy context of domestic and family violence responses in alcohol and other drug settings in the ACT
 - discussing the background and context of the project that the ACT Health Directorate has commissioned to undertake baseline assessments using the Domestic and Family Violence Capability Assessment Tool (DFVCAT) within alcohol and other drug services. (A further purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity to meet some of the new ACT Health Directorate staff in the Preventive and Population Health Group of the newly established ACT Health Directorate).

- Ongoing collaboration with clinical consultants, 360Edge, to partner on the *DFVCAT Baseline Assessment Project* (commissioned by ACT Health Directorate). This has included:
 - Working with 360Edge to submit a RFQ
 - Input into project plan and other project documents
 - Organising and running an Engagement Workshop (26 June 2019) for specialist AOD services to learn about the project
 - Ongoing communication with specialist AOD services to provide project documents, respond to queries.
- Number of briefings held with ACT Health Directorate related to:
 - Briefing and responding to questions from the Health Improvement Branch, ACT Health Directorate, on the submitted report, model, tools and program design.
 - Re-profiling of funds away from responses to DFV in AOD services to other Family Safety Initiatives.
 - Funding available to specialist AOD services to participate in the *DFVCAT Baseline Assessment Project*.
 - Clarification of intentions around funding of future activities using remaining money available to support responses to DFV in specialist AOD services.
- Coordination of a meeting on 22 October of specialist ACT AOD Executives to receive a briefing from ACT Health on the intended approach to the implementation of the AOD Safer Families Program in 2019.

These activities progress ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- *outcomes* of high quality services and evidence-informed practice
- *priorities* of developing the workforce and services; improving policy practice, participation and research collaborations; and positively deploying ATOD expertise.

Providing a resource for the community to prevent alcohol related harm

Impact Alcohol is a partnership between ATODA, ACT Health and the Western Australian Mental Health Commission. The project aims to reduce alcohol-related harms and ill health in the ACT and is supported by a website (www.impactalcohol.org.au). The website provides a range of resources and information related to alcohol, health, young adults and the community and is promoted through ATOD training programs provided to ACT ATOD and allied health sectors.

Three new on-line tools were added to the website to educate people about standard drinks and how to reduce alcohol related harms. <http://www.impactalcohol.org.au/alcohol-your-health/online-tools/> The tools include: *What is a standard drink*, *How risky is your drinking* and *the Alcohol Use Disorders Inventory Test (AUDIT)*.

In addition to the on-line tools, ATODA liaised with the Western Australian Mental Health Commission to renew the licensing agreement for the website for a further three years 2019-2021.



Impact Alcohol website analytics

There were 400 unique and return visits to the *Impact Alcohol* website in 2018/19 - 395 of these visits were from new users. The most popular pages were the three online tools with 920 views or 56% of total page views. The next most viewed page was the alcohol use statistics (90 views/5% of total views) followed by the health effects of alcohol on young people (31 views/2% of total views).

5-minute AUDIT Tool

One of the on-line tools that was added to the *Impact Alcohol* website was the Alcohol Use Disorders Inventory Test (AUDIT). The AUDIT was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a simple method of screening for excessive drinking and to assist in brief assessment. It can help identify excessive drinking as the cause of the presenting illness and provides a framework for intervention to help risky drinkers reduce or cease alcohol consumption and thereby avoid the harmful consequences of their drinking. The AUDIT also helps to identify alcohol dependence and some specific consequences of harmful drinking.

Local Drug Action Team (LDAT) program

ATODA received two small seed funding grants as part of the Local Drug Action Team Program to develop two Community Action Plans (CAP).

LDAT: Parents Prepared

The first CAP involved the development of partnerships with Belconnen and Woden Community Services to educate parents and workers about alcohol and preventing alcohol use amongst young ACT teenagers.

The Parents Prepared LDAT established a partnership with Belconnen Community Services and Woden Community Services to deliver worker training with the goal of strengthening their existing parent education programs in eight local high schools.

LDAT: University Drug and Alcohol Network

A second CAP involved the development of a University Drug and Alcohol Network (UDAN). Partners included the Australian National University (ANU), the University Canberra (UC) and the Australian Catholic University (ACU) – ACT Diocese. The aim of the LDAT is to support the creation of ACT university campus environments that promote responsible drinking and safer drug consumption policies and practices amongst students, staff and visitors.

The UDAN established a terms of reference, met and exchanged ideas and information including about best practice ATOD policies and procedures.

These activities progress ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- *outcome of evidence-informed practice*
- *priorities of improving the quality of service consumer participation and positive deployment of specialist ATOD expertise*

Improving national advocacy, collaboration and coordination

Working collaboratively with the Australian AOD Peaks

Peaks National Projects

ATODA continued to work closely with the State and Territory AOD peaks across Australia on three Peaks National Projects:

National coordinator

ATODA was pleased to be able to support and host the national coordinator in Canberra for the State and Territory AOD Peaks Network.

AOD Peaks Capacity Building Evaluation

This project aims to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework that includes establishing core evaluation measures to be used by AOD peaks' in a range of relevant activities in order to:

- promote consistency and validation in the measurement of agreed outcomes
- demonstrate national peak effectiveness
- contribute to individual peaks continuous quality improvement processes
- inform jurisdiction or national planning for future peak projects

During 2018-19, the Peaks collaborated to complete the development of this monitoring and evaluation framework that identifies shared Peak activities, outcomes and indicators which will enable all AOD Peak Bodies to evaluate our work the same way, and generate some nationwide data on our collective effectiveness in the capacity building space.

National AODTS-NMDS Project

This project aimed to increase the quality of the data collection in the AOD NGO sector by:

- developing and implementing nationally consistent infrastructure (e.g. training package and support materials) to support the consistently high quality collection and reporting of the AODTS-NMDS, and
- identifying trends and issues associated with the data collection to inform ongoing
- development and improvement of the data set.

During 2018-19, the Peaks (with leadership from NADA and QNADA) completed the development of a training package and supporting resources. This was piloted in three jurisdictions, including the ACT—participants included staff from specialist ACT AOD services and staff from the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare. The training has since been rolled out more broadly across other jurisdictions.

National AOD Research and Practice Project

This project is developing and implementing activities that enable the Network of Peaks to inform the national research agenda for the alcohol and other drug sector. During 2018-19, ATODA supported the Network to complete the activities of the Project, including the

dissemination of a survey to specialist AOD services, the findings of which were collated into a report.

These activity progress ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- *outcomes* of high quality services; evidence-informed practice and cohesive specialist sector
- *priorities* of supporting the development of the workforce and services; improving policy, practice, participation and research collaborations; and positive deployment of ATOD expertise.

Peaks Capacity Building Network

The Peaks Capacity Building Network (PCBN) forms part of the ongoing collaboration between the Australian State and Territory AOD peak organisations, which have been funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health to build the capacity of the Alcohol and Other Drugs sectors in their respective states.

The group is intended to facilitate collaboration, knowledge and information sharing on an ongoing basis to strengthen sector capacity, reduce duplication and further common strategic interests. It will act as a forum to discuss issues and provide input into the future directions, funding and activities of capacity building activities in the AOD sector.

The State and Territory AOD peaks participate in monthly network meetings with a specific focus on capacity building.

The role of the PCBN is to:

- Provide a centralised point for national coordination of capacity building activity
- Identify, advise and respond to national workforce/sector development requirements of the AOD sector in relation to the complex needs of clients and AOD services.
- Provide updates on state and territory initiatives relevant to the capacity building projects
- Share resources and leverage capacity, where practical.
- Provide a central contact point for communication with the Department of Health regarding capacity building activities across the country.
- Coordinate planning activities to identify shared priorities including those that could inform future resource allocation or tendering opportunities.

This activity progresses ATODA's Strategic Plan's:

- *outcome* of evidence-informed practice and cohesive specialist sector
- *priority* of development of the workforce and services

ATODA in the media

ATODA regularly make public comment and/or facilitates the media to access experts to make public comments. ATODA engaged with various media outlets including the ABC, The Canberra Times, The Riot Act. Various topics were covered including cannabis law reform, pill testing, ACT Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy Action Plan, tobacco, preventing opioid related mortality, random roadside breath testings, diversion and arrests for drug use and possession.



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