



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

ATODA

Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug
Association ACT

Our Vision

For a healthy, well and safe ACT community with the lowest possible levels of alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harms.

Our Purpose

To lead and influence positive outcomes in alcohol, tobacco and other drug policy, practice and research.

Our Values

Health equity where everyone can attain their full potential for health and well-being.

Collaboration, participation, diversity, human rights, social justice and reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.

Acknowledgement of ATODA members, funders and collaborators

ATODA's work would not be possible without the support of our members and funders, and our partnerships with services and organisations across a range of health, community, academic and government sectors. Together we work towards achieving the aim of a healthy, well and safe ACT community with the lowest possible levels of alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harms.





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Note: While the term AOD (alcohol and other drug) is commonly used to refer to the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector, ATODA's preference is to use the term ATOD. This acknowledges the role that specialist service providers in this sector play in providing tobacco cessation support, and because tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of the burden of disease in Australia, contributing far more than alcohol or all illicit drugs combined.

ATODA proudly acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as Traditional Custodians of the land we work on and recognises other people or families with connections to the ACT and region.

ATODA acknowledges, respects and celebrates the continuing culture and the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the life of the ACT and region and continues to learn from the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector.

Artist recognition

Title: Unspoken History, Map of Pain

Artist: Sharon

Date: 2020

To learn more, scan the QR code:



Reconciliation

ATODA is committed to working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations and communities to reduce harms caused by ATOD use in the ACT and beyond.

Since its establishment, ATODA has valued health equity together with collaboration, participation, diversity, human rights, social justice and reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.

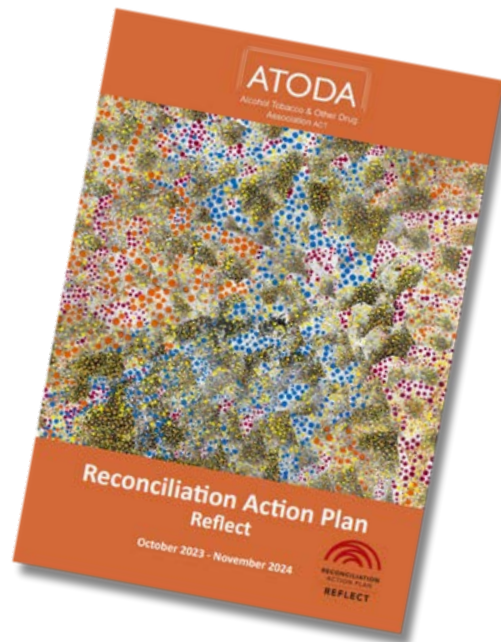
ATODA published and launched its Reconciliation Action Plan in 2023–24. This was a major step in ATODA’s reconciliation journey. The launch included a Welcome to Country by Selina Walker and a Smoking Ceremony performed by Bradley Bell. Special guests included Monica Ruffy, a key member of ATODA’s Reconciliation Working Group and artist, Sharon, whose valued work is showcased through ATODA’s corporate identity.



ATODA RAP Launch March 2024

Thank you

ATODA is grateful for the support of the sector and member organisations as we continue to walk this reconciliation journey.



In June 2024, as part of the organisation’s ongoing commitment to embedding reconciliation into ATODA’s work, the team experienced some on-country education with Ngunnawal traditional owners.

Local Aboriginal history and continuing connections to country were explored at sites at Red Hill, Stirling Park (Gurubang Dhawura), Tuggeranong Hill Nature Reserve and Lanyon Homestead.



On-country walk June 2024

Message from the Chair

The value and impact of the alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) sector is often hidden, understated or misunderstood—that is unless you work in the sector or are in need of such services for yourself or others you care about. The peak body, Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Association (ATODA), plays a big part in raising awareness of services and supports available in the community as well as working with governments and other funding bodies to better resource services to meet community needs.



During 2023-24, ATODA has worked hard to address stigma and discrimination, raise awareness of harm reduction and treatment services, elevate the voices of people with lived and living experience of substance use in policy development, support the workforce through education and training, and share research and best practice.

It has been a particularly challenging year for ATODA and the ATOD sector more broadly, but one that has brought forth new ideas and approaches, new partnerships and projects. One of those initiatives involved a partnership between ATOD and Mental Health (MH) services and peak bodies through an ATOD/MH Alliance. Good progress was made through sharing learnings, workforce initiatives and advice to government.

We were very excited to have launched our Reconciliation Action Plan, confirming our continuing commitment to reconciliation, closing the gap and listening to the voices of First Australians. Our work to support and promote the significant impact of a peer workforce in the sector supporting service users, learning from those with lived and living experience across policy and program development and delivery, professional development and outcomes for the community.

ATODA is a trusted partner of services and government, and plays an important role in bringing evidence, information and insights together for transparent and sensible decision making. The work of the ATODA team throughout the intensive commissioning process has been outstanding.

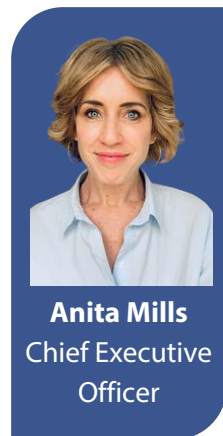
We thank the ACT Government and other funding bodies for their support of ATODA both through grants as well as being a valued partner.

As we close off the year and look to the future, I want to thank Board colleagues for their leadership and good governance of the Association, and involvement in strategic planning for 2025 and beyond. Finally, on behalf of the Board, I congratulate and thank the ATODA team for their fabulous work in supporting members, the ATOD sector and the community as demonstrated through the achievements set out in this Annual Report.

Sharon Tuffin
Chair

Message from the CEO

I was fortunate to arrive in the CEO role at ATODA just in time to celebrate the implementation of drug decriminalisation in the ACT; a huge milestone not only in our own jurisdiction—but for Australia. This was such a proud moment for the ATOD sector, and I want to acknowledge the tireless advocacy that occurred for years prior to this announcement. Wins rarely come easily in alcohol and drug harm reduction and public health more broadly—it's a long hard slog to achieve positive change. Thank you to all the team and members of ATODA, past and present, who contributed to this excellent outcome for the ACT community.



The first year on the job introduced me to the excellent and dynamic work across specialist ATOD services in the ACT. I have enjoyed getting to know all our members and thank everyone for the warm welcome and opportunities to visit services to get a better idea of how the sector works. The commissioning process for ATOD services dominated much of 2023–24 with public consultations, sector advocacy, government updates and ultimately a tender process. While the sector clearly demonstrated significant capacity and expertise to manage the additional demands of commissioning, I am sure that we are all looking to the year ahead content that the process has been resolved for the next funding cycle.

Within ATODA, I have focused on embedding a policy and advocacy agenda to support us to build on our policy output and engage effectively with government and key stakeholders. The team has pursued policy development in key areas of alcohol, housing and homelessness, and tobacco and e-cigarettes. We have also engaged in policy consultations and inquiries at the ACT and Commonwealth level during 2023-24. I am pleased to share that ATODA was successful in receiving grants from the Healthy Canberra grants program, Gambling Harm Mitigation fund and the Office of Mental Health and Wellbeing to undertake additional project work over and above our core funded activities. This reflects the strong ties ATODA has across the community sector and the capabilities and expertise we have on the team to continue to deliver project outcomes to a high standard.

Finally, I would like to reflect the disappointment and sadness brought about by the Referendum outcome in October 2023. Although we are still reflecting on this and there are many different viewpoints as to how to move forward, ATODA remains committed to walking the path of reconciliation through our own Reconciliation Action Plan. We acknowledge and respect the experiences and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia and look forward to continuing to build on these relationships in our own community in the years ahead.

Thanks for a great year.

Anita Mills
Chief Executive Officer

Report from the Treasurer

I am pleased to present ATODA’s finances for the year ending 30 June 2024.

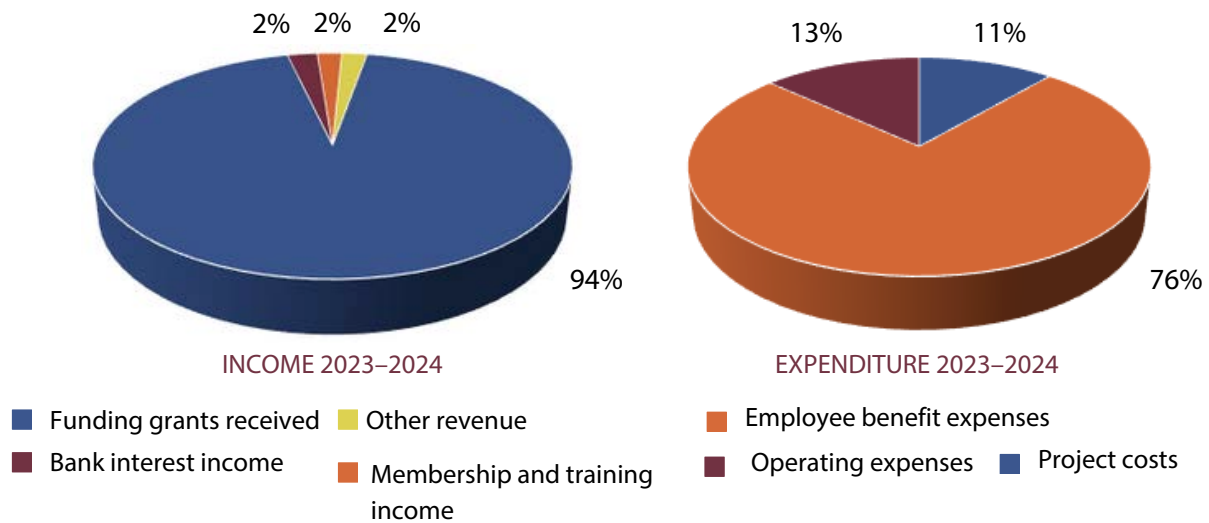
For full financial statements, please refer to our profile on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) website.

I wish to acknowledge the support and contribution of ATODA’s funding bodies during the 2023–24 financial year. Within this reporting period, ATODA has received funding from a range of sources including:

- Peak Body Program—ACT Health Directorate
- Alcohol and Other Drug Peak Organisations—Department of Health and Aged Care, Australian Government
- ACT Gambling and Racing Commission—ACT Government
- Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing—ACT Health Directorate



ATODA’s income for the year was \$1,209,313, and total expenditure was \$1,161,941 resulting in an operating surplus of \$47,372.



As of 30 June 2024, ATODA had a total equity balance of \$949,502. Strong retained earnings help to ensure ATODA’s sustainability as the ACT’s peak alcohol, tobacco and other drug organisation into the future.

ATODA has again achieved an unqualified audit opinion for the 2023–24 financial year. I am confident that the organisation’s financial planning and financial controls continue to be sound, and the organisation is in a position where it can continue to deliver on its objectives.

I would like to thank David Perceval of Perceval Smith Consulting for conducting the independent audit of ATODA’s finances for the 2023–24 financial year.

David Baxter
Treasurer

ATODA Board



Sharon Tuffin
Chair

Appointed
(2 year term)
@ AGM
November 2022



Vanessa Gstrein
Deputy Chair

Appointed
(2 year term)
@ AGM
November 2023



David Baxter
Treasurer

Appointed
(2 year term)
@ AGM
November 2023



Bronwyn Hendry
Secretary

Appointed
(2 year term)
@ AGM
November 2022



Thomas Booth
Member

Appointed
(2 year term)
@ AGM
November 2023

Board meetings

A total of **six** ATODA Board meetings were held throughout the year. The meeting dates were as follows:

14 July 2023

5 September 2023

26 October 2023

24 November 2023

23 February 2024

17 May 2024

Thank you

ATODA acknowledges Gerard Byrne (former Treasurer) who resigned from the Board in November 2023.

ATODA Staff



Anita Mills
Chief Executive
Officer



**Anke van der
Sterren**
Deputy Chief
Executive Officer



Tess Rogel
Business Manager



Elisabeth Yar
Senior Research
Officer



Annie Bleeker
Senior Training
Specialist



Brigit Perry
Communications
and Membership
Support Officer



Leanne Bourke
Policy and Projects
Officer



Ava Gajadtsy
Policy Officer

[ATODA's Organisation Chart](#)



thank you

ATODA acknowledges and extends gratitude to valued staff who resigned over the past financial year—Siobhan Reeves and Jeanette Bruce. ATODA also wishes to thank Interim CEO Susan Helyar for her leadership during a period of change while ATODA recruited to the CEO position.

Member engagement

Members of ATODA

ACT Shelter

Alcohol and drug programs, Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn

Alcohol and drug services, Canberra Health Services

Anna Olsen - Associate Professor, ANU School of Medicine and Psychology

Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy

Canberra Recovery Services, The Salvation Army

Community Work Department, Canberra Institute of Technology

David McDonald (Lifetime Honorary Member)

Directions Health Services

Families ACT

Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform ACT

Family Drug Support

Gerard Byrne

Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation

Health Care Consumers' Association of the ACT

Hepatitis ACT

Karralika Programs

Mental Health Community Coalition ACT

Mental Health Foundation ACT

Meridian

Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT

Ted Noffs Foundation

Toora Women Inc.

Vanessa Gstrein

Volunteering ACT

Wellways Australia Limited

Woden Community Services

Youth Coalition of the ACT

**100% OF ATODA'S MEMBERS AGREE
THEY ARE SUPPORTED, INFORMED,
ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED THROUGH
ATODA'S ACTIVITIES**

2023 ATODA MEMBERS SURVEY

Thank you

ATODA's highly valued members continued to work in true partnership with the ATODA team toward a vision of a healthy, well and safe ACT community.

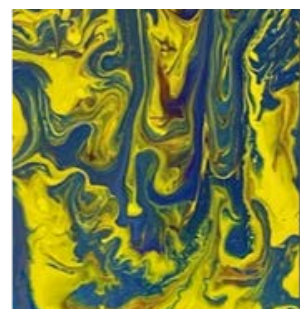
Member engagement

ATODA-CAHMA art exhibition

Now in its second year the ATODA-CAHMA art exhibition supported community members and service users to display artwork in the ATODA office and the opportunity to sell art to the public. In 2023-24:

10
artworks
sold

\$2500
of art
purchased



Artwork created by people who have lived experience of alcohol or other drug use, and/or experience of mental health issues.



ACT ATOD Program Directory

ATODA continued to support the ACT ATOD sector in updating and maintaining a comprehensive database of the diverse range of programs available.

<https://directory.atoda.org.au/>



Member engagement

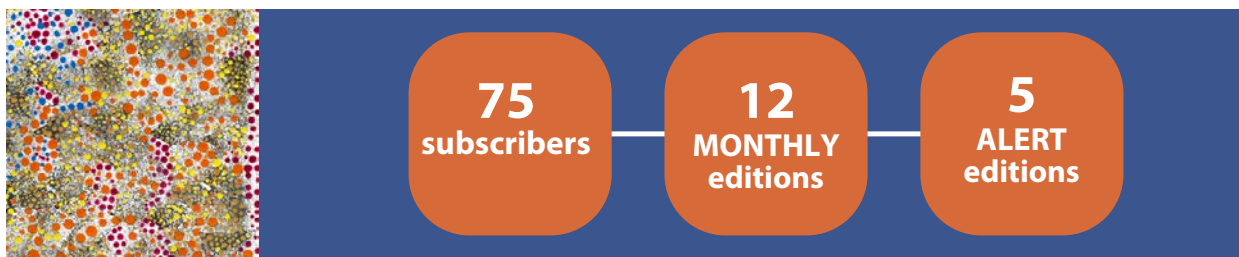
ACT ATOD Executives Group

The ACT ATOD Executives Group is chaired by ATODA providing a high level forum for government and sector engagement. This group advises on ATODA policy development, sector issues and is a valuable touch point for government to connect with and brief the sector. In 2023–24:

- The Executives Group discussed and provided input into sector professional development opportunities; the development of an ATOD peer workforce; the future of nicotine replacement therapy in the sector; ATODA Policy Position Statements; review of the ACT AOD Qualifications Strategy; and the Workforce Organisational Snapshot.
- ACT Health Directorate officials regularly attended meetings to enable open communication about the ATOD services commissioning process and outcomes; and the implementation of the *Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Act (2022)* legislation.

ACT ATOD Sector Bulletin

ATODA produced and distributed the ACT ATOD Sector Bulletin to provide members, stakeholders and the public with important information relating to sector developments, events, resources and funding opportunities.



Sign up for ATODA's Bulletins [here](#)



"ATODA HAS BEEN EXTREMELY ACCOMMODATING AND INCLUSIVE OF OUR SERVICE AND OTHERS. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE EVERYTHING YOU DO FOR THE SECTOR IN CANBERRA"
2023 ATODA MEMBERS SURVEY

Stakeholder engagement

ATODA collaborates with stakeholders and allies through the organisation’s projects and activities, and progresses specific priorities through its engagement in territory and national groups, networks and committees.

ATODA-led engagement

ACT Legislative Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> engaged with Ministers, Opposition spokespeople, other Members and staff to highlight ATOD issues impacting our community, across the health, justice, human rights and gaming portfolios
ACT ATOD and Mental Health Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> established and led the Alliance, with the Mental Health Community Coalition (MHCC)—to develop a strategic approach to achieving better outcomes for people in the ACT region experiencing co-occurring mental health and substance use issues key outcomes included: release of joint statements on building workforce capacity: <u>Addressing gaps in workforce training and development</u>; <u>Building the capacity of the ACT peer workforce</u>; and successful application for funding to continue the Alliance
ACT ATOD Service Users Survey of Outcomes Satisfaction and Experience (SUSOSE) Project Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> led a co-design process involving ATOD service users and peers, service providers, policy makers and researchers in the design and implementation of a survey for people accessing ACT ATOD services
ACT Peer Workforce Development Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explored—with CAHMA and the sector—issues related to the lived/living experience and peer workforce in the ACT along with opportunities for future development of this workforce
University Drug and Alcohol Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> built capacity in ACT universities to strengthen alcohol and other drug policy and practice for the student cohort



Stakeholder engagement

Network and committee engagement - ACT

ACTCOSS Peaks CEO Group

ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan Implementation Working Group

ACT Justice Reform Group

ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Coordination Group

ACT NGO Leadership Group

ACT Tobacco and E-Cigarette Community of Practice

Canberra Gambling Reform Alliance

Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Act 2022 Working Group

Drug Treatment Working Group

Gambling Harm Prevention Community of Practice

Sector Sustainability Project Governance Group (ACT)

Network and committee engagement - National

AOD Peaks Capacity Building Network

AOD Policy Officers Network

Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council and State and Territory AOD Peaks CEOs Network

National Naloxone Reference Group

National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction Workforce Reference Group

National Practice Standards Steering Committee



Media and communications



News articles

[ACT proposes reforms to rapid alcohol delivery amid underage, harm concerns](#)

[A haven for 'drug tourism' or beacon of hope? The rhetoric around decriminalisation in the ACT](#)

[Will drug decriminalisation in the ACT reduce harm?](#)

[ACT drug laws are a positive step but further support is needed](#)

[ACT drug treatment services are not expecting a significant increase following decriminalisation](#)

[Strong support for tightening restrictions on alcohol delivery services, survey shows](#)

[Laws to remove penalties for nicotine-containing vapes in the ACT](#)

[The ACT has decriminalised many illicit drugs, but has some of the strictest penalties for possessing nicotine vapes](#)



Media releases

[ATODA welcomes the implementation of drug law reform in the ACT](#)

[ATODA Welcomes the Referendum on the Voice to Parliament](#)

[Canberrans support action to prevent harm from alcohol sold online](#)



Joint statements

[Joint statement by ATODA and the Mental Health Alliance: Addressing gaps in workforce training and development](#)

[Joint statement by ATODA and the Mental Health Alliance: Building the capacity of the ACT peer workforce](#)

Media and communications



Interviews



Survey shows strong support for alcohol delivery regulation

Without checks and balances, experts fear online alcohol delivery will cause harm behind closed doors.

www.abc.net.au

ATODA CEO Anita Mills interviewed for ABC Canberra in February 2024



ACT loophole could see \$32,000 fine for vape possession

It's emerged a legal loophole could see someone caught with a nicotine vape fined more than \$30,000.

www.abc.net.au

ATODA CEO Anita Mills interviewed for ABC Canberra in April 2024



Radio

Canberra Drive: The decriminalisation of illicit drugs

Canberra Live: The anniversary of decriminalisation in the ACT

LinkedIn

13X
DRUG
ALERTS

23X
SECTOR
UPDATES

Increased media coverage and investment in ATODA's social media platform (LinkedIn) focused on communication that supported ATODA's strategic direction and promoted the voices of members and allies.

Policy and advocacy

Throughout the year ATODA represented the ATOD sectors' needs and concerns on key policy and advocacy priorities. This occurred through committee membership and media engagement—but also through specific and targeted activities and outputs, such as policy position statements and submissions.

ATOD services commissioning



ATODA played a key role in influencing the ACT Government's approach to ATOD services commissioning. In 2023–24 ATODA:

- supported and facilitated member input into the ACT Government's approach to the ATOD services commissioning process, including through regular attendance by the ACT Health ATOD policy and commissioning teams at ACT ATOD Executives Group meetings
- communicated and liaised with the ACT Health Directorate regarding the services commissioning process, including supporting and elevating the interests and needs of people accessing ATOD services

Funding to the ATOD sector to meet demand



In early 2024, ATODA made a submission to the ACT Budget 2024–25 Consultation process. This submission emphasised the need for sector funding through commissioning that meets the increasing demand for ATOD treatment and harm reduction services.

Alcohol related-harms



ATODA's members identified alcohol-related harms as a significant concern and priority for advocacy and action, resulting in the development of ATODA's policy position statement on Reducing Alcohol Related Harms in the ACT. ATODA also made a submission to the Justice and Community Safety Directorate: Response to Regulation of Same Day Liquor Delivery Providers Discussion Paper.

Policy and advocacy

Tobacco and e-cigarettes



ATODA's E-cigarettes and Tobacco policy position statement was developed with input from ACT ATOD treatment and harm reduction services and other stakeholders.

ATODA's pre-budget submission highlighted the need for further action on e-cigarettes and tobacco cessation and led to Ministerial interest in and public debate around, the removal of penalties for the personal possession on non-prescribed e-cigarettes.

Housing and homelessness



ATODA highlighted the growing community concern around insecure housing in the ACT, and the intersection between improved health outcomes and housing in the policy position statement: Better Health through Housing. This concern was also raised in ATODA's pre-budget submission.

Other submissions to ACT parliamentary inquiries and consultation processes

ATODA made the following additional submissions in 2023–24: Submission into Dangerous Driving: Sentencing and Recidivism; and Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT

[View the full range of Policy Position Statements on ATOD related topics here](#)



100% OF ATODA'S MEMBERS AGREED
THEIR VOICES AND NEEDS ARE HEARD AND
REFLECTED IN ATODA'S POLICY AND
ADVOCACY WORK
2023 ATODA MEMBERS SURVEY

Policy and advocacy

ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022–2026

ATODA's responsibilities and commitments to its members in relation to the ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022–2026 included the following activities in 2023–24:

- Monitoring progress against the plan
- Providing training for ATOD and allied sectors
- Establishing the ACT ATOD and Mental Health Alliance
- Providing the online ATOD Program Directory.
- Supporting the peer, lived and living experience workforce
- Supporting targeted Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Implementation of Decriminalisation

ATODA's advocacy work on the implementation of the Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Act 2022 included the following activities in 2023–24:

- Conducting a qualitative evaluation of ATOD services' perspectives
- Advocating for ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes
- Working with stakeholders on messaging and accurate public information
- Responding to increasing media coverage

Research

ACT ATOD Service Users' Survey of Outcomes, Satisfaction and Experience (SUSOSE)

Following engagement with ATOD service users, ATODA worked with members of the Project Advisory Group to re-design the SUSOSE—the survey used to collect information on the experiences of service users who access ATOD services. The survey included a 50-item experience-measure codesigned with service users of ATOD programs, peer workers from CAHMA, ACT ATOD service providers, policy makers from the ACT Health Directorate, and UNSW researchers. In 2023-24, the SUSOSE was implemented across ATOD treatment and harm reduction services, with **368** surveys completed and analysed.



SINCE 2009, A SURVEY OF SERVICE USERS HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN ACROSS ALL ATOD TREATMENT SERVICES IN THE ACT. THE SUSOSE IS A VITAL TOOL FOR INFORMING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND SERVICE RESPONSIVENESS IN ADDITION TO GUIDING BROADER POLICY AND SERVICE PLANNING PROCESSES IN THE SECTOR.

Thank you

ATODA highly values the contribution of members of the Project Advisory Group for their continued work and support of the SUSOSE.

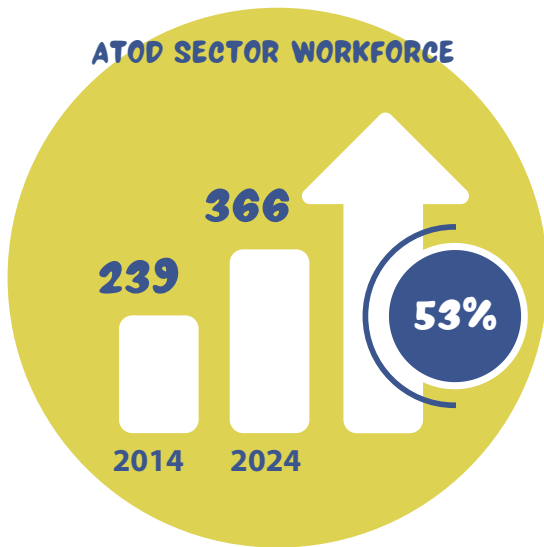
Alcohol, other drugs and gambling in the ACT: a cross-sectoral approach to harm minimisation project

ATODA secured funding through the Gambling Harm Prevention and Mitigation Fund to continue research considering the co-occurrence of substance use harms and gambling harms. The funding supports Phases two and three of the project, allowing ATODA to carry through the learnings from Phase one—to develop a practice guide and suite of training to support workers who are responding to co-occurring gambling and ATOD harms.

Research

ACT AOD Workforce Profile

Substantial work was undertaken toward the development of the 2024 ACT AOD Workforce Profile—a three-yearly collaborative activity conducted across all ATOD services in the ACT exploring a range of issues relevant to the demographics, capacity, capability, and wellbeing of the ATOD sector workforce. As an additional activity to support advocacy and sector capacity building, ATODA completed an organisation snapshot questionnaire in January 2024. Results from the questionnaire provide a baseline pre-commissioning overview of the sector that will be compared to results from the 2024 ACT ATOD Workforce Profile to be conducted post-commissioning.



The 2024 Organisation Snapshot shows a 53% increase in the size of the workforce over a ten year period, from 239 workers in 2014 to 366 in 2024.

ATOD Research Bulletin

ATODA produced and distributed the ATOD Research Bulletin to connect members and stakeholders with of the latest research developments in alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. The Bulletin continued to be highly valued by the ACT ATOD sector and others.

811 subscribers — 11 MONTHLY editions — TOP READ article

Themes that generated high interest included co-morbidities, stigma and discrimination, workforce development and opioid overdose.

[Sign up for ATODA's Bulletins here](#)



Research

Academic and international conferences

Canberra Health Annual Research Meeting - Canberra, 19 July 2023

Invited presentation	Collaborative redesign of an experience survey for use in the ACT alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector - a partnership between service users, service providers and government
Poster presentations	Harm reduction in unprecedented times: lessons from the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector's COVID response
	Reducing harms through collaboration: co-designing a service user experience survey

Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs - Adelaide, 13 - 15 November 2023

Oral presentations	Challenges in coherency: Navigating decriminalisation and regulations regarding nicotine-containing e-cigarettes in the ACT
	Drink in Check: Train-the-Trainer - Supporting universities to address risky drinking amongst students living on-campus
	Gambling and Substance Use: Responding to co-occurring harms in the treatment sector
	Measuring what's important: including previously under-explored themes of service user experience in a measure for use in alcohol, tobacco and other drug services
	Prioritising service-user perspectives in project design
Poster presentation	Redesigning the ACT ATOD Program Directory
Symposium presentation	Standing with the Lived Experience Workforce: Lessons from the states and territories
Panel symposium	Alcohol and other drug policy and the role of research in driving reform

[View the full range of Research Publications click here](#)



Workforce and sector development

ACT ATOD Workers Group

ATODA convened monthly meetings of the ACT ATOD Workers Group—a forum for information sharing and collaborating with frontline workers in the sector. In 2023–24 members were involved in the development, implementation, coordination, evaluation and promotion of key sector support activities such as:

- input into the development of ATODA Policy Position Statements
- identifying training and workforce development needs
- consultation on the development of the SUSOSE and ACT AOD Workforce Profile
- evaluation of the impact implementation of the *Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Act (2022)* legislation

A highly skilled workforce

Ensuring the ongoing development and maintenance of a highly skilled, competent and professional workforce across the ACT ATOD sector continued to be a priority for ATODA.

ATODA engaged TAFE NSW to provide subsidised nationally recognised industry endorsed training offering the AOD Skill Set Course to the workforce. In 2023–24:

- **AOD Skill Set Course** - **16** workers completed the course
- **First Aid training** - **Two** sessions provided to the workforce

What is the AOD Skill Set Course?

The AOD Skill Set Course is comprised of four core, AOD specific units from the Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs (CHC43215). Training fees are fully subsidised by ATODA with funding from the ACT Health Directorate.



ATODA HAS PROVIDED HUNDREDS OF INDIVIDUALS FROM ATOD SERVICES WITH ACCESS TO SUBSIDISED TRAINING SINCE FORMALISING A COMMITMENT IN 2017 TO ENSURE ALL WORKERS IN CLIENT-FACING ROLES HOLD OR WORK TOWARD A MINIMUM QUALIFICATION.

Workforce and sector development

Professional development

ATODA engaged [360Edge](#) to provide professional development and training to approximately **100** workers from the ACT ATOD Sector. In 2023–24 fully subsidised training opportunities included the following enrolments:

- **The Interplay between Acquired brain injury, Mental Health, and AOD** - **25** workers
- **Supporting smoking cessation** - **15** workers
- **Help! I've Been Subpoenaed: preparing case notes for court** - **10** workers
- **Mental health first aid** - **16** workers
- **Suicide prevention** - **12** workers

Training for allied sectors

In 2023–24 ATODA provided the following ATOD education and training to workers from various allied sectors:

- **ATOD Information and Harm Reduction** - **95** workers from the ACT youth, mental health and homelessness sectors and Child and Youth Protection Services.
- **Alcohol Brief Intervention** - **25** workers from Headspace, Canberra Health Services and Toora Women Inc.
- **Drugs and the Brain** - **25** workers from Directions ACT and CANTest.

Peer, lived and living experience workforce support

In partnership with the Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy (CAHMA), ATODA continued to support the peer, lived and living experience workforce. With funding support from the ACT Government a *Peer Workforce Development Working Group* was established to:

- scope peer workforce needs
- identify opportunities and barriers for expansion of the workforce
- advocate for funding, training, qualification pathways and networking opportunities for the peer workforce



100% OF ATODA'S MEMBERS AGREED
ATODA'S ACTIVITIES REFLECT A
SOUND UNDERSTANDING OF THE
ISSUES THAT IMPACT THEM
2023 ATODA MEMBERS SURVEY

Workforce and sector development

We CAN (nicotine replacement therapy) Program

ATODA continued to administer the We CAN Program throughout the year—a program working toward reducing smoking through provision of free access to nicotine replacement therapy to services users accessing ATOD services. In 2023–24 ATODA:

- worked with **six** community pharmacies across **eight** ACT ATOD programs to administer the program
- provided **208** vouchers to service users

Thank you

ATODA values workers in the ATOD sector who implement the We CAN Program and extends gratitude to participating partner pharmacies





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