



● leadership and influence

● a strong capable sector

● partnerships and collaboration

● organisational sustainability

ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025

ATODA
Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug
Association ACT

Our Vision

A healthy ACT community with reduced alcohol, tobacco and drug related harms, served by a high-quality treatment and harm reduction sector.

Our Purpose

To advocate for a strong and sustainable alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector in the ACT, using best practice policy, research and evidence.

Our Values

RECONCILIATION

ATODA acknowledges the harms that have been brought about by colonisation and the complex impacts this has had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination, health and wellbeing. We are committed to listening, learning and acting on our commitment to reconciliation in partnership with, and alongside ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.

INCLUSION

ATODA works to redress the stigma and discrimination that can arise from alcohol and drug use. We recognise that health is a human right for all people. Culturally and linguistically diverse and marginalised populations have a right to access safe, compassionate, culturally appropriate and affordable treatment and care.

EXCELLENCE

ATODA will strive for excellence in policy, advocacy and research on behalf of our membership. This includes building cross-sectoral partnerships, leading workforce and professional development initiatives, research design, implementation and translation, and capacity building for the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector in the ACT.

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.



Accredited at Certificate
Level of the Australian
Service Excellence Standards



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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 a significant contributor to the burden of disease in Australia, along with alcohol and illicit drugs.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

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

ATODA acknowledges, respects and celebrates the continuing cultures and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the life of the ACT and region. We respect and value the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 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 proud to have achieved the deliverables set out in our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2023–24. ATODA has sought opportunities to extend learning and embed cultural safety across the organisation, including participation by the staff team and Board members in cultural safety training with Big River Connections in September 2024. ATODA's Reconciliation Working Group met multiple times throughout 2024–25 to steer the Reflect RAP deliverables and to guide the development of the Innovate RAP for 2025–27.

The completion of our first RAP allowed us to reflect on the many opportunities to develop relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities in the ACT and to cultivate diverse ways of doing reconciliation in our work. ATODA will continue to meaningfully incorporate reconciliation-related actions and identify pathways to achieving RAP deliverables within resourcing constraints. ATODA seeks to be open to listening and learning as we engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

The ATODA team agreed that successful completion of the Reflect RAP provided solid basis for the development of a two-year Innovate RAP. Work on the development of the RAP began in January 2025 and received endorsement from Reconciliation Australia in June 2025. The Innovate RAP provides greater flexibility to add additional deliverables that are more closely tailored to our role as a peak body.

ATODA continues to seek opportunities to meaningfully incorporate reconciliation across our organisational practice, through reflexivity and openness to learning. We recognise, acknowledge and seek opportunities to support the incredible work of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and member organisations.



ATODA staff at a cultural safety training session in 2024

Message from the Chair

This year has been one of significant opportunity and change in the alcohol, tobacco and other drug service sector and policy environment in the ACT and at the national level. Bringing together the diverse views and perspectives of ATODA members, services and community voices is no mean feat requiring considerable skill and effort, courage and above all, a clear purpose and vision for a 'healthy ACT community with reduced alcohol, tobacco and drug related harms'. Our team at ATODA has this in spades, establishing intentional and valued relationships with services and stakeholders, listening to the voices of people with lived and living experience, collaborating and leading with influence and passion.



Sharon Tuffin
Chair

Launching our Strategic Plan for 2025–28 has made clear our intention to strengthen our leadership and influence to support progressive and evidence-based harm reduction and alcohol, tobacco and other drug treatment policies in the ACT. We are committed to establishing and maintaining partnerships, working collaboratively with others, and supporting a strong capable sector workforce. Throughout this Annual Report you will see evidence of our progress on these priorities.

The ATODA team and Board made steady progress on our reconciliation and inclusion commitments set out in our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, followed by the development of our Innovate RAP for 2025–27. We continue to listen, learn and be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations.

In addition to releasing several policy statements, our flagship and new look Service Users' Survey of Outcomes, Satisfaction and Experience (SUSOSE) report was released, providing important insights into the service system, experience of service users and opportunities for improvement. We are grateful for their wisdom, courage and resilience.

It is both a privilege and an honour to serve the ACT community and our members through the work of the ATODA team, sector, community and funders. I thank the Board for your continued good governance of the Association, and for your leadership and support for the work of our passionate, skilled and innovative staff team. On behalf of the Board, I congratulate the ATODA team for a productive and impactful year and look forward to the year ahead.

Sharon Tuffin
ATODA Board Chair

Message from the CEO

I am pleased to report that 2024–25 has been a year of strong delivery and continued progress for ATODA. This year marks the first under our new Strategic Plan 2025–2028, developed in consultation with members to deliver on ATODA’s vision: A healthy ACT community with reduced alcohol, tobacco and drug related harms, served by a high-quality treatment and harm reduction sector. Using our position as a trusted, evidence-informed peak body, our achievements over the past year reflect the collective effort of our members, partners, and the dedicated ATODA team. I am proud to share some highlights of our work across each of our four strategic priorities below.



Anita Mills
Chief Executive
Officer

Leadership and Influence

- ATODA published policy position statements on e-cigarettes and tobacco, housing and homelessness and gambling harm reduction, and actively advocated for sector priorities in the lead-up to the 2024 ACT election.
- Submissions were made to important consultation processes including youth justice, ACT pre-budget process, the healthy prison review and housing as a human right.
- ATODA played an active role in the effective implementation of the ACT Drugs of Dependence Amendment Act 2022, including through the implementation working group.

A Strong Capable Sector

- In 2024–2025 ATODA launched the next iteration of the Service Users’ Survey of Outcomes, Satisfaction and Experience survey (SUSOSE), a unique piece of research offering policy-relevant insights into the effectiveness and responsiveness of treatment and harm reduction services from a service user perspective.
- ATODA supported key sector networks through convening monthly forums that provide constructive and collegiate spaces for deliberation, information sharing and troubleshooting.

Partnerships and Collaboration

- In 2024–25, ATODA worked with Mental Health Community Coalition, to deliver on the workplan for the second year of the ACT ATOD-MH Alliance (the Alliance).
- ATODA provided secretariat support to the Strategic Advisory Group and to three Alliance Working Groups.
- Together with the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT (MHCC), ATODA was successful in securing a substantial increase in funding for the Alliance for a further two years (2025–27).

Organisational Sustainability

- ATODA demonstrated strong financial performance in 2024–25, achieving a significantly higher surplus than the previous financial year.
- ATODA successfully completed its reaccreditation against the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) with a perfect score, demonstrating our commitment to corporate excellence and strong governance.
- ATODA continued to build upon our strong commitment to Reconciliation and embedding it across the organisation, progressing to the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan stage.

As this year draws to a close, I would like to thank the ATODA team, the ATODA Board and of course our membership for the incredible work you do. Together, we are continuing to lead, influence, and deliver meaningful change for the community.

Anita Mills
Chief Executive Officer

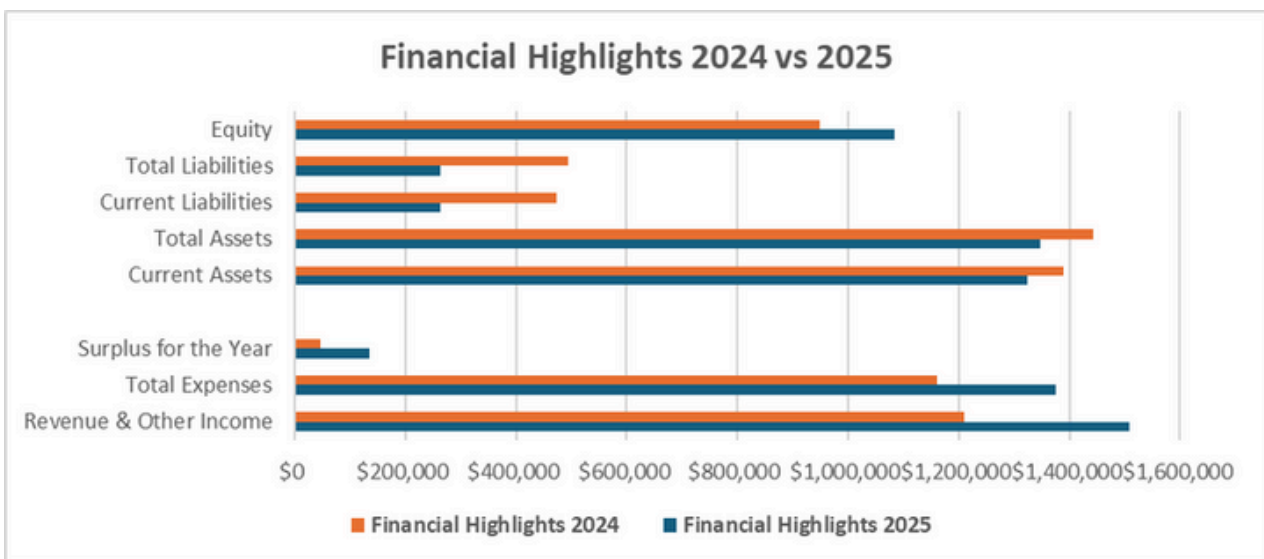
Report from the Treasurer

I am pleased to present the Treasurer’s Report for the financial year ending 30 June 2025. ATODA’s total revenue for the year from continuing operations reached \$1,509,238 and total expenses amounted to \$1,374,604.



David Baxter
Treasurer

The organisation experienced a strong financial performance in 2024–25, with total revenue and other income increasing by 24.8% compared to the previous year. This growth was primarily driven by a significant rise in grant funding, which continues to be the cornerstone of our revenue base. The total expenses for the year was up by 18.3% from 2023–24. The increase reflects strategic investments in staffing and operational capacity to support program delivery.



The balance sheet reflects a stable and resilient financial position, highlighted by a notable increase in equity of \$134,634, bringing total equity to \$1,084,136. This improvement is directly attributable to the year’s operating surplus.

We closed the financial year in a robust position, maintaining a healthy surplus of \$134,634 which is nearly triple the previous year’s result of \$47,372. These outcomes underscore ATODA’s effective financial management and its ongoing commitment to long-term sustainability.

We are proud to report that ATODA once again received an unqualified audit opinion for 2024–25, affirming our dedication to transparency, accountability, and sound financial governance.

I would like to sincerely acknowledge the invaluable support of ATODA’s funding bodies throughout the year. I also extend my heartfelt thanks to our staff, board members, and stakeholders for their commitment and diligence.

David Baxter
Treasurer

ATODA Board



Sharon Tuffin
Chair

Appointed
(2 year term)
@ AGM November
2024



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
2024



Thomas Booth
Member

Appointed
(2 year term)
@ AGM November
2023

Board meetings in 2024–2025

A total of six ATODA Board meetings were held throughout the year: 16 August 2024, 30 August 2024 (extraordinary meeting), 18 October 2024, 22 November 2024, 21 March 2025, 30 May 2025.

ATODA Team



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



Ava Gajadtsy
Policy Officer



Brigit Perry
Communications
and Membership
Support Officer

*Thank
you*

ATODA extends its thanks and gratitude to Jeanette Bruce, Support Officer, for her excellent contributions to ATODA this past year in the areas of design and project support.

ATODA also acknowledges and thanks Leanne Bourke, former Policy and Projects Officer, for her dedication and hard work throughout her time working with the organisation.

ATODA Strategic Plan 2025–2028

During 2024–25, ATODA completed a new Strategic Plan following stakeholder consultation throughout 2024. The ATODA Strategic Plan 2025–2028 was published in December 2024 and forms the basis of all of ATODA’s strategic planning and reporting.



ATODA’s Strategic Objectives

-  **Leadership and influence**
-  **A strong capable sector**
-  **Partnerships and collaboration**
-  **Organisational sustainability**



Accreditation

ATODA successfully achieved re-accreditation under the The Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) in June 2025, receiving a perfect score against each standard. This highly successful outcome demonstrates ATODA’s strong commitment to excellence in governance and leadership, financial accountability and effective risk management, high quality service and outcomes, organisational credibility, team member development and workplace culture. Highlights from comments within the final assessment report on ATODA are below.



Accredited at Certificate Level of the Australian Service Excellence Standards



ATODA is commended for its sector leadership and engagement, clarity of purpose, support for collaboration and commitment to positive outcomes.

Members and stakeholders were highly complementary of the organisation, noting its strong leadership and support for groundbreaking achievements in the ACT’s ATOD sector, with many directly attributing positive changes to ATODA’s advocacy.

It is recognised for being a trusted and credible voice for the sector and a powerful advocate, for providing services tailored to individual organisations, and for provision of high-quality research. One stakeholder commented, ‘They are a strong voice for the sector; they advocate for the right change at the right time in the right way.’

Member engagement

Members of ATODA

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.

- ACT Shelter
- Alcohol and Drug Programs, Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn
- Alcohol and Drug services, Canberra Health Services
- Anna Olsen
- Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy
- Canberra Recovery Services, The Salvation Army
- David McDonald (Lifetime Honorary Member)
- Directions Health Services
- Families ACT
- Family Drug Support
- 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
- Vanessa Gstrein
- Volunteering ACT
- Wellways Australia ACT
- Woden Community Service
- Youth Coalition of the ACT

ACT ATOD Program Directory

The ACT ATOD Program Directory provides a whole-of-system map of the ACT ATOD sector, helping people to quickly locate key information about services. ATODA continued to receive positive feedback from ATOD workers that the Directory provides them with a useful snapshot of services available and information to support making referrals. In 2024–25, ATODA undertook an update of the Directory following the completion of the commissioning process to ensure that related changes to program delivery were reflected.



[Click to visit the ACT ATOD Program Directory.](#)



100%

Feedback from the annual ATODA Member's Survey in 2024–25 was highly positive overall, with 100% of survey respondents indicating they were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with a wide range of ATODA's activities and outputs.

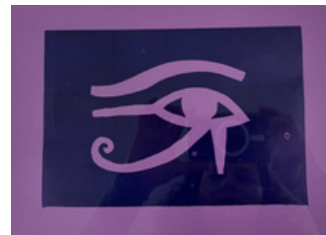
Member engagement

ACT ATOD Executives Group

The ACT ATOD Executives Group is convened by ATODA, and is a group for Executives of specialist non-government and government ATOD services in the ACT. It provides a mechanism for information-sharing, discussion and collaborative decision-making across policy, projects and sector developments. In 2024–25, 11 Executives Group meetings were held, with a representative from the ACT Government ATODS Policy Team providing a briefing at each meeting.

ATODA-CAHMA Art Exhibition

ATODA was pleased to host a diverse selection of artwork from CAHMA clients in 2024–25. The ATODA–CAHMA art exhibition is an ongoing project that allows people who use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to display artwork in the ATODA office, with the opportunity to sell art to the public (four artworks were sold in 2024–25). All profits from sales are returned to the artists.



'All Seeing Eye'
Steve Page



'Behind the Facade'
Taylor Munday



'Web of Life'
Julia Bitmead

Members' Forum

ATODA held a Members' Forum in April 2025 as part of its commitment to keep members informed and provided with opportunities for feedback and input on key projects such as the SUSOSE and the ACT ATOD Workforce Profile.

Remembrance Ceremony



ATODA joined a Working Group of partners - former members of Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform, Uniting NSW/ACT, Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy (CAHMA), and Directions Health Services - to organise and support the annual Remembrance Ceremony for people who have lost their lives to drugs, which took place on 21 October 2024.

Memorial at Weston Park, Yarralumla, ACT

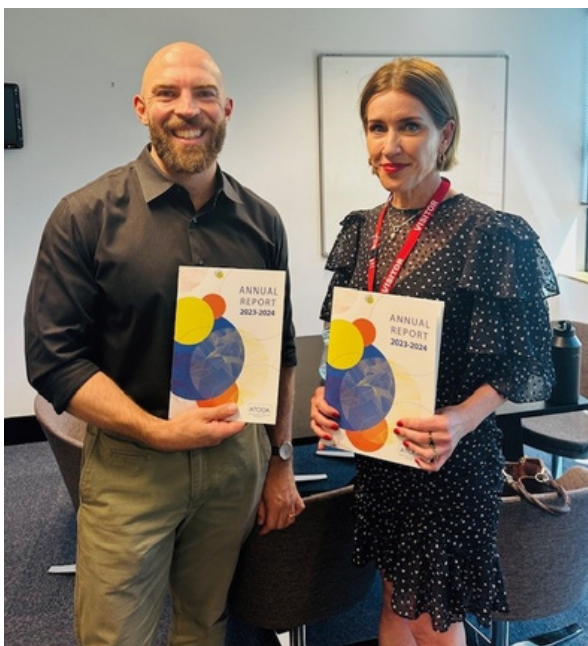
Stakeholder engagement

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

ATODA-led Engagement

ACT Government - Legislative Assembly

ATODA made representations and submissions to Members of the ACT Legislative Assembly and to ACT Legislative Assembly inquiries in order to influence and inform issues, policies and programs that affect the interests of ATOD treatment and harm reduction services. This engagement over 2024–25 included meetings with the ACT Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Community Services, the ACT Opposition Leader and other Members of the Assembly.



Stakeholder engagement

ACT ATOD Mental Health Alliance

The ATOD-MH Alliance between ATODA and the Mental Health Community Coalition (MHCC) continued to grow in 2024–25, with delivery of a work program centred around discussions to improve how the ATOD and mental health sectors respond to complex and co-occurring mental health and ATOD concerns.

The Alliance-building activities led by ATODA throughout this year involved organising and providing support to meetings among the Strategic Advisory Group and among the three working groups: Peer support, lived and living experience working group; Capacity building working group; and the Complex and co-occurring cohort advisory group.

ATODA has been successful with MHCC in securing funding for a further two years (2025–27) to progress the objectives and activities of the Alliance.



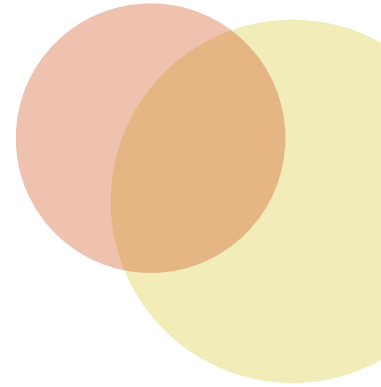
Peers, service users and people with lived/living experience across projects

In 2024–25, ATODA engaged people with lived and living experience of alcohol and other drug use through facilitating meetings, consultations and presentations across three key ATODA projects: the Service Users' Survey of Outcomes, Satisfaction and Experience (SUSOSE) Co-design Project; the AOD Mental Health Alliance; and Alcohol, other drugs and gambling in the ACT: a cross-sectoral approach to harm minimisation project.

Stakeholder engagement

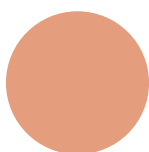
Network and committee engagement - ACT

- ACT Council of Social Service Peaks CEO Network
- ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan Implementation Working Group, the Evaluation and Monitoring Sub-Committee, and AOD Community of Practice
- ACT Justice Reform Group
- ACT Liquor Advisory Board
- ACT Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Coordinating Group
- ACT NGO Leadership Group
- ACT Peaks Policy Group
- ACT Tobacco and E-cigarette Community of Practice
- Canberra Gambling Reform Alliance
- Drugs of Dependence Implementation Advisory Committee ACT
- Gambling Harm Prevention Community of Practice
- Sector Sustainability Project Governance Group



Network and committee engagement - National

- Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council
- State and Territory Alcohol and Other Drugs Peaks Network
- Alcohol and Other Drugs Peaks Capacity Building Network
- Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy Officers Network
- National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction Workforce Reference Group (as the AADC representative)
- National Naloxone Reference Group
- National Practice Standards Steering Committee



In 2024–25, ATODA met regularly with the ACT Health Directorate, Capital Health Network and Commonwealth partners to share information about ATODA’s activities and engagement, and to discuss ATOD policy and advocacy issues.

Media and communications

News articles, interviews, radio

ATODA regularly engages with the media, using its position as a respected voice on ATOD issues to promote evidence-based approaches to policy and practice.

- Opinion piece by Anita Mills, ATODA CEO in the Canberra Weekly, 3 October 2024 (print publication)
- [Opinion piece by Anita Mills](#), ATODA CEO in the Riotact, 8 October 2024
- [‘ACT election: results and reactions so far’](#) (author: Nicolas Fuller), Canberra Daily, 22 October 2024 - ATODA’s CEO congratulated elected candidates
- [‘Huff and puff: warnings over drug laws lack substance’](#) (author: Jacob Shteyman), The Canberra Times, 28 October 2024 - ATODA’s CEO commented on the impact of the implementation of decriminalisation legislation in the ACT
- [‘Patients stranded as GP clinic closes without notice’](#) (author: Lanie Tindale), The Canberra Times, 11 April 2025 - ATODA’s CEO commented on the impact of the closure of the Interchange General Practice on service users

Media Highlight

[‘Aussies in country areas are being urged to think about their drinking habits after an alarming rise in the number of people seeking support’](#) (reporter: Georgie Burgess), WIN News (Facebook), 21 February 2025 - ATODA’s CEO commented on the rise in complex and co-occurring needs presenting to ATOD services, and on the need for changes to regulations on online delivery of alcohol



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Media releases and joint statements

- [ACTforCommunity Campaign Launch](#) (issued by ACTCOSS) – July 2024
- [One year of drug decriminalisation in the ACT](#) – October 2024
- [ATODA Budget Submission 2025-26](#) – February 2025
- [ATODA launches the Service Users’ Survey of Outcomes, Satisfaction and Experience \(SUSOSE\)](#) – March 2025

Media and communications

Social media

In 2024–25, [ATODA's LinkedIn page](#) doubled its followers, and continued to support ATODA's strategic direction through providing relevant up-to-date communications for the sector and elevating the voices of its members and allied organisations. ATODA also regularly shared Drug Alerts from the fixed-site drug checking service CanTEST through LinkedIn to raise awareness in the sector and community of these alerts.



ACT ATOD Sector Bulletin

ATODA produced and distributed a monthly Sector Bulletin to communicate information, important developments, events, reporting on ATODA projects, resources, conferences, funding opportunities and other information relevant to the sector.



Reducing stigma in the media

ATODA strives to ensure that reporting of ATOD issues in media is undertaken responsibly, factually, and does not contribute to stigmatising people who use drugs, including through the use of stigmatising language.

In 2024–25, ATODA:

- Undertook daily monitoring of print, visual and online media and developed a process for responding to items that include stigmatising language or reporting
- Provided input to the Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council (AADC) resource: [Best Practice Guide for AOD Services in Media Engagement and Lived and Living Experience Storytelling](#).
- Updated the ATODA media release template to include advice for media outlets when communicating about alcohol and other drugs. ([Click here to see an example](#))

Policy and advocacy

Advocacy and feedback on ACT Government’s approach to commissioning

ATODA supported and advocated on behalf of ATOD treatment and harm reduction services throughout the more than two-year commissioning process. ATODA will continue to work with the Government beyond 2024–25 to ensure the sector’s needs are reflected in all ATOD sector-related funding.

Launch of ATODA’s ACT Election Platform

ATODA developed and launched its ACT Election Platform on the ATODA website in September 2024. Following the launch, ATODA’s CEO met with MLAs and candidates to provide and discuss the election priorities.



 [Click to view](#)

ACT for Community campaign

In collaboration with the ACT Community Peaks Network, the ACT for Community campaign was launched in July 2024 at ATODA’s office. This campaign was proudly supported by 85 ACT community organisations and demonstrated a strong and united sector voice. These coordinated advocacy and communication efforts contributed directly to a landmark outcome: a \$10 million investment in the community sector announced in the 2025/26 ACT Budget.



\$10 Million

investment secured for the ACT Community in the 2025/26 ACT Budget following the ‘ACT for Community’ Campaign

Policy and advocacy

Policy position statements and submissions

Development of policy position statements

The development of ATODA's policy position statements are aligned with organisational policy priorities, and developed via engagement with our ATOD sector members and other relevant stakeholders. ATODA published two statements in 2024–25:



Better Health through Housing



E-cigarettes and Tobacco



ATODA also developed a policy position statement throughout 2024–25 on the co-occurrence of gambling and ATOD harms, following feedback from the ACT ATOD Executives Group and the ATODA Board. The policy position statement was also developed to complement ATODA's release of the co-occurring gambling and substance use harms practice guide.



Reducing harms from the co-occurrence of gambling with ATOD use in the ACT

Click to view



ATODA submissions to government processes

ATODA engaged with and made submissions to a range of other ACT Government and Commonwealth Government consultation processes in order to influence and inform issues, policies and programs that affect our sector. In 2024–25, these submissions included:

- [ATODA Submission on the Health Impacts of Alcohol and Other Drugs in Australia – October 2024](#) (Commonwealth)
- [ATODA Submission to the ACT Pre-budget Consultation Process 2025-2026 – February 2025](#) (ACT)
- [ATODA Submission to the Healthy Prison Review – March 2025](#) (ACT)
- [ATODA Submission into Housing as a Human Right Amendment Bill 2025 – June 2025](#) (ACT)

67%

of ATODA members surveyed were very satisfied and 33% were satisfied with ATODA's policy submissions and policy position statements.

Policy and advocacy

Evaluations of the implementation of decriminalisation legislation

During 2024–25, ATODA continued to support the ACT Government and the ACT ATOD Sector toward the implementation and the evaluation of the Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Act (DoDA). This included engaging with the ACT-government-commissioned evaluation team to provide advice toward the development of the evaluation framework, and to support the evaluation process as needed.

ATODA is also undertaking a regular review over two years (2023–25) of the impact of the Drugs of Dependence (Personal Use) Amendment Act through focus group discussions with the ACT ATOD Workers Group and the ACT ATOD Executives Group. This review is set to be completed and published in the 2025–26 year.

ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022–2026

ATODA progressed actions in the [ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022-2026](#) (DSAP) via the following outputs and activities:

- Monitoring progress against the plan; including participating in the [ACT Government's mid-point review](#)
- Involvement in DSAP governance groups
- Providing training for ATOD and allied sectors
- Establishing the ACT ATOD and Mental Health Alliance
- Updating the online ATOD Program Directory
- Supporting the peer, lived and living experience workforce
- Engaging people with lived and living experience in policy and program development
- Qualitative evaluation of the implementation of decriminalisation legislation
- Supporting targeted Nicotine Replacement Therapy and workforce smoking & vaping cessation and harm reduction training

Research

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

The Service Users' Survey of Outcomes, Satisfaction and Experience (SUSOSE) is a survey undertaken every three years across all ATODA treatment and harm reduction services in the ACT. It is a vital tool for informing quality improvement, service responsiveness, and guiding broader policy and service planning processes in the sector. The most recent iteration of the survey was collaboratively re-designed to include an experience measure, and was implemented in 2023.

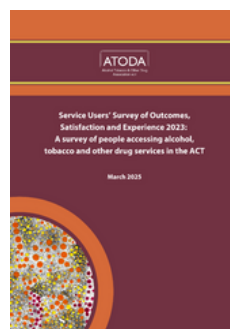
Throughout 2024–25, ATODA worked with the Project's Advisory Group on disseminating the findings of the survey and informing others about the collaborative research process.

A report and five plain language pamphlets were launched in March 2025 by ACT Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith at a community barbecue held at Veteran's Park.



Thank you

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



Click to view



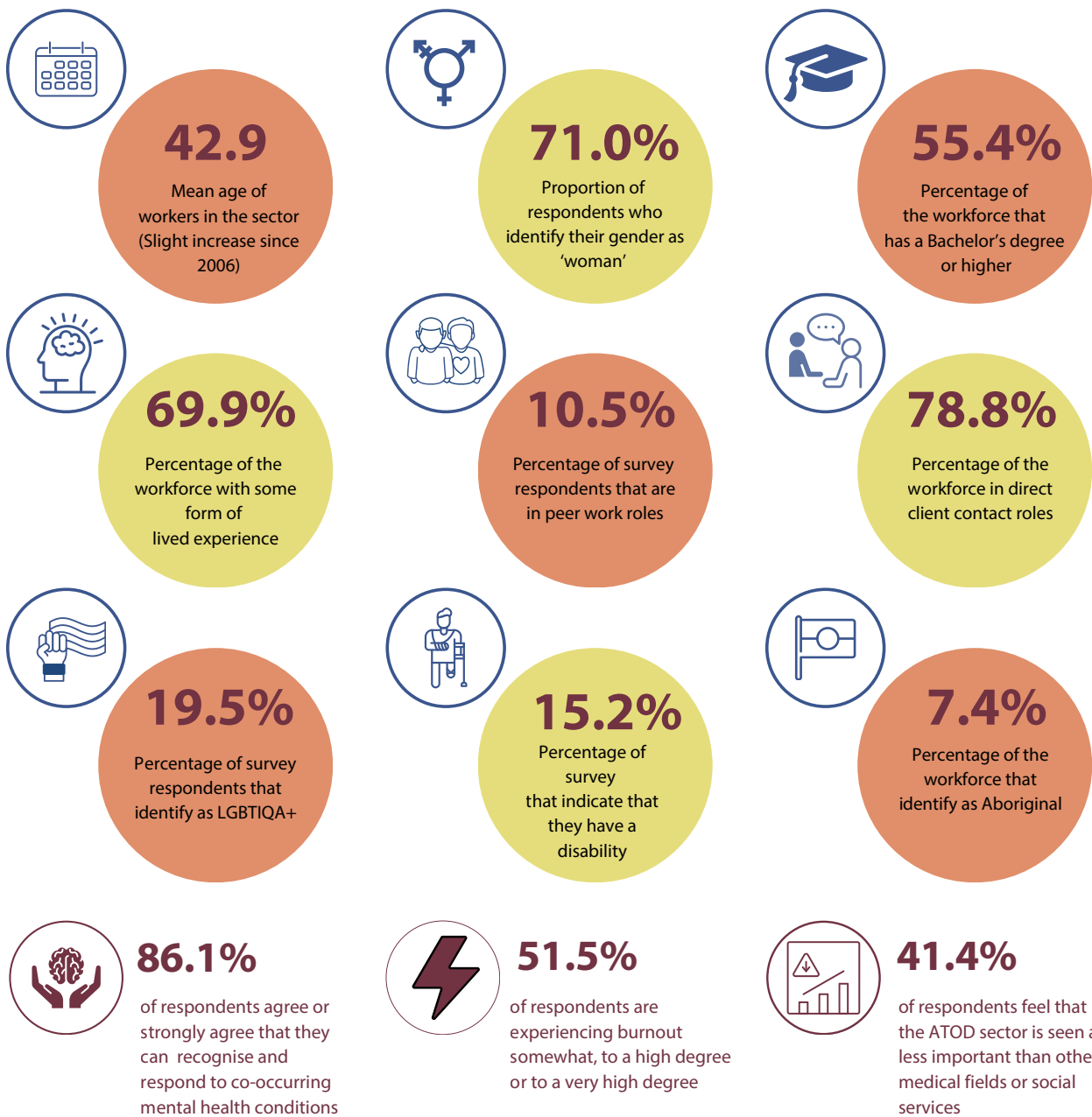
This research was noted by numerous external stakeholders and has been held up as an example on a national level – ATODA is commended for its inclusive approach in delivering a leading piece of research in its sector.

- ASES Accreditor's comments on ATODA's SUSOSE research project

Research

The ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Sector Workforce Profile 2024

The ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Sector Workforce Profile (the Workforce Profile) is a three-yearly project involving two surveys, undertaken to better understand current capacity and needs of the sector; to inform policy, advocacy and planning activities; and to support ATODA's strategic objective of maintaining and growing a specialist workforce to deliver high quality alcohol, tobacco and other drugs harm reduction and treatment services in the ACT.



Research

ATOD Research Bulletin

The ATOD Research Bulletin continued to be a valued resource by the ACT ATOD sector and other stakeholders, keeping them informed of the latest research developments in alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and supporting a solid ATOD evidence base.

[Click here to subscribe](#)



10

editions in 2024–25

830

subscribers

Academic and international conferences

APSAD 2024 - 'Inclusion, Innovation, Progress'

The Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs annual conference, APSAD 2024, was held in Canberra with strong ATODA involvement. ATODA's Deputy CEO took on a co-convenor role, working alongside other sector partners and the APSAD organisers. ATODA funded scholarships to facilitate and support conference attendance by workers from ATOD organisations and service user representatives. In support of the conference's intention to raise participation by people with lived and living AOD experience, ATODA staff mentored peer and service users representatives from the SUSOSE Project Advisory Group to present three papers at the conference on collaborative partnership principles, general SUSOSE findings, and valued worker attributes. ATODA staff presented a further two papers on smoking and vaping policy and practice challenges.



Other conference presentations in 2024–25

- 'Protecting our 'house of cards': maintaining and building drug harm reduction approaches', Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) Preventive Health Conference – Canberra, April 2025
- 'Justice to health: maintaining the change in a fragile system', Association of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies NT (AADANT) – Darwin, May 2025

Workforce and sector development

ACT ATOD Workers' Group

The ACT ATOD Workers Group is an essential part of ATODA's commitment to strong sector governance. In 2024–25, eleven meetings among worker-representatives from ACT ATOD organisations took place, providing a dynamic monthly forum to identify and respond to issues, share information about services and programs, discuss policy and other activities, and hear from a range of guest speakers.

A highly skilled workforce

As part of ATODA's commitment to developing and maintaining a highly skilled workforce, ATODA consulted services on their training needs and priorities and subsequently provided a range of targeted professional development opportunities:

- Four units of the Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Skillset provided by TAFE NSW to workers from the ACT ATOD sector under the ACT Alcohol and Other Drug Qualifications Strategy.
- A fully subsidized First Aid training session delivered by Canberra First Aid.
- Face-to-face workshops for Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST) training and LGBTIQ+ Awareness and Inclusion – Foundation training.



In 2024–25, there were 140+ enrolments by workers from most of ATODA's specialist ATOD treatment and harm reduction service members in subsidised professional development courses delivered by 360Edge.

Peer, lived and living experience workforce support and capacity-building

Capacity building of a lived and living experience workforce is an identified priority in the ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022–2026, and ATODA supported this in 2024–25 by:

- Supporting the Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation & Advocacy (CAHMA) to articulate their model of care for a peer treatment support model.
- Assessing an existing training workshop on bringing lived experience to AOD work, with a view to expanding future delivery of this workshop to the ATOD sector.
- Analysing and presenting data from the ACT ATOD Workforce Profile on specific issues, capabilities and capacities around the ATOD lived and living experience workforce.

Workforce and sector development

Training for allied and university sectors

ATOD Information and Harm Reduction Training for allied sectors

Three ATOD Information and Harm Reduction Training sessions were delivered to workers in allied sectors, including two trainings with workers in government services supporting children and young people at risk of harms, and their families. Attendees rated these trainings highly on all measures.



75%
of health and community workers agreed that they would implement something new into their work practice as a result of attending ATOD Information and Harm Reduction Training for allied sectors.

Training for the university sector


ATODA convenes and provides support to the University Drug and Alcohol Network (UDAN), that includes representation from the Australian National University (ANU), University of Canberra (UC), and the Australian Catholic University. In 2024–25, as part of this partnership, ATODA provided ATOD Information and Harm Reduction Training to approximately 260 students in ANU residences, and 75 student leaders in residences. ATODA also obtained an Australian Drug Foundation Local Drug Action Team grant, and delivered ATOD information, harm reduction and brief intervention training to 34 staff members from the ANU and UC.

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

Responding to a priority identified in the 2018 ACT ATOD Workforce Profile, ATODA received funding from the ACT Government's Gambling Harm Prevention and Mitigation Fund Grants Program to deliver Stages 2 and 3 of a project to address co-occurring harms from gambling and substance use. In 2024–25, ATODA undertook Stage 2 of the project including a literature review to summarise current knowledge, and working with an Expert Committee of practitioners and researchers in AOD and/or gambling toward the development of a practice guide: *What's the harm? A guide to understanding and responding to co-occurring gambling and substance use harms in service settings.*

Thank
you

ATODA is grateful for the advice and support provided by the members of the Expert Committee toward the development of the Practice Guide.



88%
of ATODA members surveyed were very satisfied with ATODA'S provision of ATOD Information and Harm reduction training for allied sectors.

Workforce and sector development

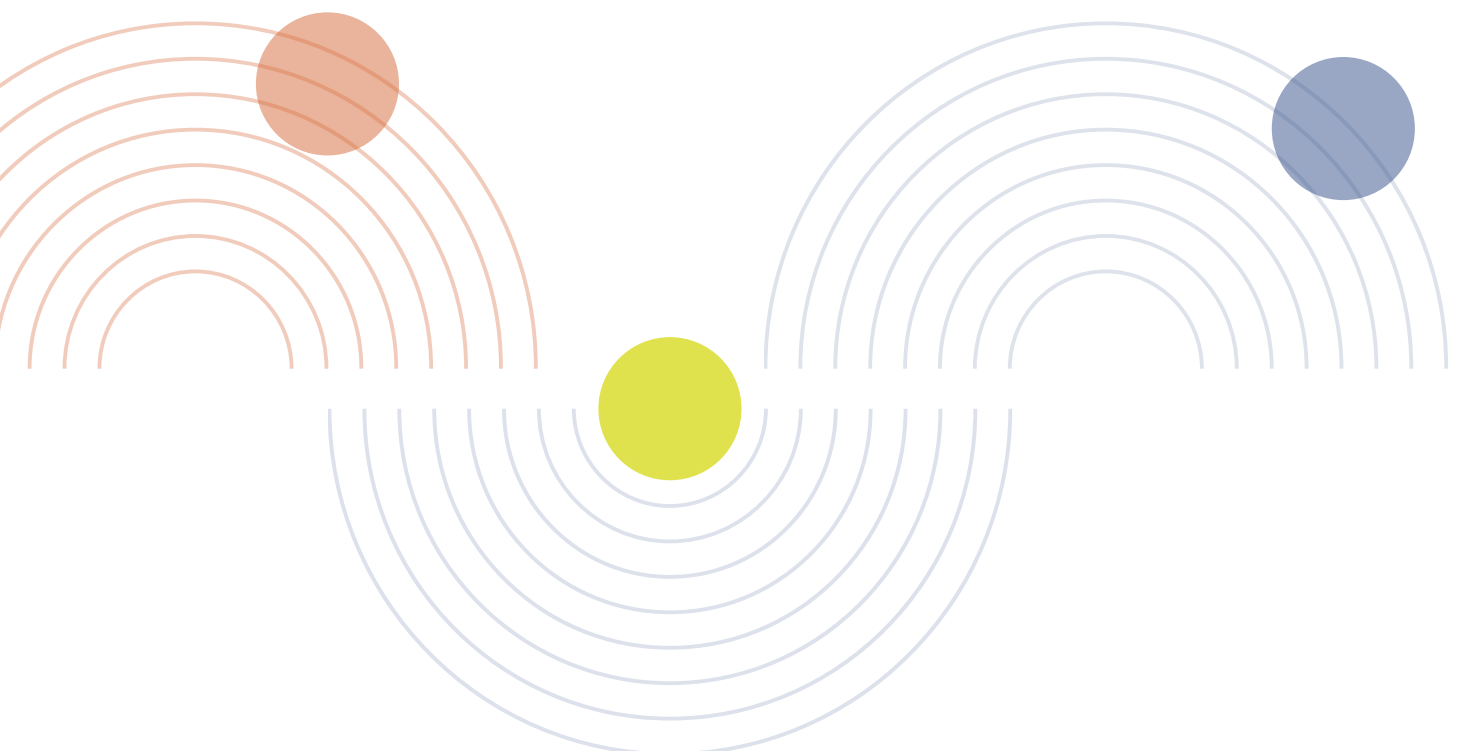
Reducing Nicotine Harms Project

ATODA received funding through an ACT Government Healthy Canberra Grant to redesign its program to improve nicotine dependence treatment and support to service users of ATOD programs through the Reducing Nicotine Harms Project. Following a scoping exercise and analysis of ACT ATOD Workforce Profile data, ATODA worked with the sector to design an approach to providing nicotine dependence treatment, support and harm reduction. This included the provision of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) for service users and workers, and developing smoking and vaping training for the ATOD workforce.



ATODA appreciates the support given by partnering community pharmacies in the ACT to providing NRT to service users of ATOD programs.

ATODA is pleased to be partnering with the Cancer Council ACT to develop and deliver training tailored to the needs of the ATOD workforce.



ATODDA





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