

ACT AOD Sector Project eBulletin: September 2008

The monthly ACT AOD Sector eBulletin is a concise summary of information, important developments, publications, events and other information relevant to AOD Workers in the ACT. The eBulletin is an activity of the ACT AOD Sector Project, Youth Coalition of the ACT. To subscribe, submit an item or to provide feedback email ebulletin@aodsector.org.au.

News from the ACT AOD Sector Project

ACT AOD Sector Project

The ACT AOD Sector Project is a capacity building Project that began in July 2007, and is funded by ACT Health. The Youth Coalition of the ACT provides support to ACT AOD Workers to conduct the AOD Sector Project. The Project aims to build the capacity and identity of the ACT AOD sector, foster intra and cross-sectoral relationships, and improve outcomes while maintaining respect for the diversity of services and for people who are affected by AOD.

For more information visit www.aodsector.org.au or contact Amanda Bode, ACT AOD Sector Project Officer, Youth Coalition of the ACT on info@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540.

September ACT AOD Sector Forum

The ACT AOD sector forum is for AOD Workers and is hosted by a different AOD service each month.

Date: Thursday 25 September 2008

Time: 9.15am for arrivals. 9.30 - 11.30am for forum.

Guest Speaker: Turnaround, Office for Children, Youth and Family Support,(OCYFS), Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS)

Venue: Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP), ACT Health Building, Level 1, 1 Moore St, Canberra City

Note: This forum is for AOD Workers only.

For more information or to RSVP contact Amanda Bode, ACT AOD Sector Project Officer, Youth Coalition of the ACT on info@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540.

ACT AOD Workers Urged to Complete the Sector Evaluation Survey

The ACT AOD Sector Project, the source of these eBulletins, is currently being evaluated by Canberra-based social researcher David McDonald, who also provides research support to the Project. As part of the evaluation, David has developed a brief questionnaire that can be completed online by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/5n2y3c>. The questionnaire has been designed specifically for workers in the ACT AOD sector to provide us all with an opportunity to have input into the evaluation of the Sector Project and to indicate how we would like to see it develop in the future. The views of all members of the sector, at all levels in your agency, will be welcome. The survey is short- it will take you less than 10 minutes - so why not visit <http://tinyurl.com/5n2y3c> now and make your contribution to planning for the future of the Sector Project.

As not all members of your agency receive these eBulletins, please pass on the information about the survey to your colleagues, and encourage them to complete it online.

Further information, including paper copies of the survey for anyone who cannot complete it online, can be obtained from the Sector Project evaluator, David McDonald, at 6238 3706 or

david.mcdonald@socialresearch.com.au.

See also the *Training and Professional Development* section for the 'ACT Training and Professional

In This Edition...

News from the ACT AOD Sector Project

Update on Project activities.

ACT AOD Sector Forum Update

Information from services that attended the AOD Sector monthly forum.

Sector Activities and Events

Launches, key weeks, international days and program and service activities.

News from the Executive Directors' Group

Information from the EDs' group that is relevant to the AOD sector and workers.

Sector Development

Information on networks, resources, websites, factsheets and tools for workers.

Training and Professional Development

Training for the AOD and allied sectors, including upcoming seminars, conferences, bus tours, courses and other professional development opportunities.

Policy, Reports and Research

New research, reports, inquiry findings, and any key policy activities effecting the AOD sector.

Media

Media releases and news items relevant to the ACT AOD Sector.

Development Calendar'

ACT AOD Sector Forum Update

This section reports on information shared by services, programs and workers who attend the ACT AOD Sector Forum. For further information about the following services visit www.aodsector.org.au

Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP)

Service spokesperson: Sally Billington

Email: sally.billington@act.gov.au

A new Program called IMPACT is currently being offered to people receiving opioid replacement therapy or people who are clients of Mental Health ACT, who are expecting a baby or have a child under two years of age.

The Program can help families by:

- Identifying needs
- Finding a key worker
- Finding services and supports that meet these needs
- Bringing professionals and agencies together who can work with families
- Making a plan that will support the individual and the family
- Offering support for individuals and families through pregnancy and until the child is 2 years of age

To refer to the Program, or for more information call 1 800 211 274. The IMPACT Program is a partnership between ACT Health, the Department of Housing and Community Services (DHCS), General Practice and Community Pharmacies.

Canberra Recovery Services, Salvation Army

Service spokesperson: Bob O'Heir

Phone: 6295 1256, Email: bob.o'heir@ae.salvationarmy.org

Provides a long term residential program for men aged 18 and over with dependence on alcohol, drugs or gambling. Participants are involved in group and individual support sessions and work therapy. Participants attend local AA, NA or GA meetings as part of their program. Some new programs currently being offered at Canberra Recovery Services include:

- Literacy and Numeracy Program
- 6 week employment re-entry course
- Recreational Program using YMCA facilities

The service is also exploring options of providing a certificate in Horticulture to men involved in the program and expanding the involvement of families in the service.

Directions ACT

Service spokesperson: Jo Smith

Phone: 6122 8000, Email: reception@directionsact.com

Some new programs currently provided by Directions ACT include:

- Althea Medical Centre is a primary health centre that delivers health and allied services to people with AOD related health issues. At the present time 6 clinics are offered with the option to expand the services in the near future. [Click here](#) to download a flyer for Althea.
- From 1 September to 12 September 2008, Arcadia House Detox and Withdrawal Centre are providing a Women's and Children's Program. It will provide an opportunity for women with accompanying children (aged up to 8 years) to detox in a safe environment. [Click here](#) to download a flyer for the

Consumer Participation

Information items about consumer participation that are relevant to the AOD sector and workers.

Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors

Information from and about allied sectors that is relevant to the AOD sector and workers.

Employment Opportunities

Employment opportunities in the ACT AOD and allied sectors.

Grants and Funding Opportunities

Upcoming grants, funding opportunities and tenders.

Program.

For more information on Directions ACT Programs visit www.directionsact.com

Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation

Service spokesperson: Selina Walker

Phone: 6231 9555, Email: selina@gugan-gulwan.com.au

Some programs currently provided by Gugan Gulwan include:

- Information, support, advocacy, case management and court support to young people aged 12 - 25 years experiencing AOD and/or mental health related issues. They have an Outreach Worker, Detox Support Worker, Dual Diagnosis Worker and Coordinator.
- Young Mens Mentoring Program from 5pm - 8pm on Mondays. This group provides opportunities for mentors to provide advice and support to young men experiencing difficulties with a range of issues.
- Young Mums Group from 10am - 2pm on Tuesdays. This group aims to support young mums in the community. 10 placements are available for childcare each week.
- Numeracy and Literacy Class from 9am - 3pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays. A teacher is employed to provide these classes to young people.
- Young Womens Group from 4.30pm - 7.30pm on Wednesdays. This group provides opportunities for mentors to provide advice and support to young women experiencing difficulties with a range of issues.
- Young Mens Group from 10am - 3pm on Wednesdays. This Program engages young men who do not attend school in a range of activities. The Program is now operated from Fyshwick at a workshop that involves mechanics, music and art.

Women's Information, Resources & Education on Drugs & Dependency (WIREDDD), Toora Women Inc

Service spokesperson: Paulina Hellec

Phone: 6248 8600, Email: wireddd@toora.org.au

Some programs currently being offered by WIREDDD include:

- Information and support for women about drugs.
- Confidential, free one-to-one counselling.
- Drop-in (Monday 11-4, Tuesday 2 -4, Thursday 11-4, and Friday 11-4).
- Groups including a Women's Relapse Prevention Group, Family of Origin Group and Beautiful Me Group (please phone for times).
- Note: Childcare can be organised if you call in advance.

Sector Activities and Events

Canberra Remembers Lives Lost to Suicide

Canberra After Suicide Support

Photos and memorabilia of loved ones are welcomed for the remembrance display. Loved ones can be acknowledged in the program by emailing emersons@netspace.net.au or by ringing Carmel on 0422 437 106.

Date: Friday 12 September 2008

Time: 7pm

Where: Calvary Chapel, Cnr of Plunkett and Maclaurin Streets, Chifley.

The Fairness Challenge

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

In the lead up to the 2008 ACT election, candidates and political parties will be setting out their priorities for Canberra's future. "The Fairness Challenge" alerts candidates of the current and future needs of people in our

community who experience disadvantage." The Fairness Challenge" is our call to the parties and candidates in the ACT Election to commit to a fair and equitable future for Canberra. "The Fairness Challenge" contains goals, targets and strategies to achieve social justice and developing community services, based on research and consultation with community organisations.

Visit http://www.actcoss.org.au/publications/Publications_2008/1808PAP.pdf to download a copy of the The Fairness Challenge.

News from the Executive Directors' Group

The Executive Directors' Group thanks all of those who have provided feedback on the tobacco and alcohol papers prepared to inform the development of the next ACT drug strategy. Below are the next papers focussing on strategic priorities in the areas of:

- [Community Education \(including school drug education\)](#)
- [Heroin, Amphetamines and Cannabis](#)
- [Polydrug Use, Comorbidity and Pharmaceuticals](#)
- [Service System, Consumer Framework, Diversion and Police.](#)

Any comments would be appreciated and can be directed to your Executive Director ahead of the next ED's meeting on 16 September 2008. A first draft of the whole strategy is now expected to be circulated in late September for comment. The ED's also thanks those who provided comment on Care and Protection's Urine Testing Policy.

Sector Development

2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: state and territory supplement

Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (AIHW)

This report presents data on patterns of drug use in each of the states and territories. It supplements the national findings from the '2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: first results' report, published in April 2008. The results are based on a survey of more than 23,000 Australians conducted in 2007, and provide profiles of drug use and community attitudes in each of the states and territories.

To download a copy or for more information visit <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10670>

AOD Worker Wellbeing: Online Program

National Centre for Education and Training and Addiction (NCETA)

NCETA is conducting a free, innovative Worker Wellbeing Program for employees in the AOD sector. The program is web-based and participation involves no more than 1-hour per week for 7 weeks, followed by a further session (of no more than 1-hour) after 12 weeks.

AOD Worker Wellbeing is available now from www.aodww.com.au

An information sheet is also available from http://www.aodww.com.au/files/AODWW_Information.pdf

National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre e-Zine: July 2008

National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC)

NCPIC produces a monthly E-Zine which examines a range of cannabis-related issues. As well as highlighting relevant research publications that have been recently published, it examines some of the cannabis-related media stories that have attracted attention each month, as well as providing some information on 'hot topics' such as cannabis potency. The July edition is now available from

<http://ncpic.org.au/ncpic/publications/e-zines/>

Positive Stories Project

The Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD)

The ANCD is urging people across Australia who have overcome problems with AOD to submit stories to the "Positive Stories" project to inspire others. The "Positive Stories" initiative is designed to get people to realise that they can beat substance misuse problems.

The "Positive Stories" website also contains details on agencies across the nation – in all states and territories – who can offer support, assistance and information about getting treatment. Anyone wanting to submit a story (which will be published in a manner to protect identity and privacy) or read many inspirational stories should go to www.positivestories.org.au

Young People and Drugs: What parents need to know

DrugInfo Clearinghouse, Australian Drug Foundation (ADF)

The recently updated 'Young people and drugs: What parents need to know' pamphlet provides a great starting point for any parent concerned about drugs. It includes basic information about drugs, common myths about drug use and what to do if you suspect your child is using drugs. Contact details for support services and more information are also included. A single free copy of the pamphlet is available to all DrugInfo Clearinghouse members located within Australia. To request your free copy, email your name, organisation and postal address to druginfo@adf.org.au or phone 1300 85 85 84. Subsequent copies can be ordered through the ADF resource catalogue or online at www.bookshop.adf.org.au

Training and Professional Development

ACT Training and Professional Development Calendar (September - October 2008)

ACT AOD Sector Project, Youth Coalition of the ACT

The bi-monthly Training and Professional Development Calendar is produced as a partnership between the ACT AOD Sector Project and the Youth Coalition of the ACT. The calendar compiles training and professional development opportunities available for workers from the AOD and allied sectors.

[Click here](#) to download the current Training and Professional Development Calendar or visit www.aodsector.org.au

For more information contact Amanda Bode, AOD Sector Project Officer, Youth Coalition of the ACT on (02) 6247 3540 or info@aodsector.org.au

Comorbidity Bus Tour

Youth Coalition of the ACT

The Youth Coalition runs monthly Bus Tours that provide workers with an opportunity to gain insight into, and build networks with, AOD, mental health, youth and community agencies in the ACT. Some feedback has included:

- "Fantastic way to meet people and learn about other organizations."
- "I made 17 contacts today which would have taken me a year to make otherwise."
- "I want all my staff to go."
- "It was a really good day. Stimulating and challenging."

Please note: These tours are popular and book out rapidly. We aim to get a diverse mix of services and sectors represented on the tour to facilitate networking and foster partnerships. Workers and other professionals with direct client contact get priority.

To put your name on the promotion list for the Bus Tours please email info@youthcoalition.net. For more information visit www.youthcoalition.net

ACTCOSS 2008 Biennial Conference: Community Sector Futures

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

Guest speakers will include Chief Minister Jon Stanhope MLA, Jackie Huggins from the University of Queensland, Debbie Kilroy from Sisters Inside, Lin Hatfield Dodds from UnitingCare Australia and Jon Falzon from St Vincent de Paul Society's National Council.

Date: Thursday 4 and Friday 5 September 2008

Time: 8am-5pm, Thursday and Friday

Where: Kippax Uniting Community Centre, Holt, Canberra

Cost: Members: \$165; Non-members: \$210; Corporate/Government: \$250.

RSVP: To book a place, phone 6202 7200.

Accidental Counsellor Training

Lifeline Canberra

The Accidental Counsellor Training program has been developed for people who find themselves in situations where counselling or empathetic communication is required. The program has been developed to provide participants with a range of skills to work effectively with clients who are distressed, agitated or in crisis.

Date: 18 - 19 September 2008

Where: Lifeline Canberra, Hackett Training Centre, Old Hackett Primary School, 114 Maitland Street, Hackett.

Cost: \$250

RSVP: To register visit www.act.lifeline.org.au, email training@act.lifeline.org.au or phone 6204 6405.

Aboriginal Culture, History and Heritage Training

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

This one-day workshop for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers gives participants a general introduction into the recent history of Aboriginal people in Australia. It aims to improve knowledge of Aboriginal culture and dispossession, and explores ways that organisations might improve their practice to respond to the needs of Aboriginal people.

Date: Friday 26 September 2008

Time: 9.30am - 4.30pm

Where: ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre, Lady Denman Drive, Yarramundi Reach

Cost: \$44 for SAAP Services, \$154 for Members, \$192.50 for Non-Members and \$231 per person for Corporate/Government

To find out more, download the registration form from <http://www.actcoass.org.au/flyer/ACHHSep08.pdf>

Challenging Behaviours

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

The aim of this course is to provide participants with strategies that can be used to achieve effective outcomes more often with clients that present with challenging behaviours. Participants will learn:

- Factors that are motivating distressed or angry clients;
- How to apply the three concepts of Acceptance, Awareness and Action;
- Ways to address challenging behaviours by calming people;
- How to get their message across powerfully and confidently;
- To set appropriate limits around challenging behaviours;
- How to debrief each other in handling challenging behaviours;
- and to enhance their organisation's care values of caring and respect when working with clients and other staff members.

Date: Thursday 2 October 2008

Time: 9:00am - 4:30pm

Where: ACTCOSS: Level 1, 67 Townshend St, Phillip

Cost: Members \$135; Non-Members \$195; Corporate/Government \$270

Presenter: Biff Ward of Spectra Consultants

To register for this seminar please email lisa@actcoss.org.au

For further details please contact Lisa on 6202 7200. Invoices for payment are sent after each seminar.

“There’s No Place Like Home” - Domestic Violence and Tenancy Law in the ACT

Tenants Union of the ACT

A day long training program for community workers covering ACT tenancy law and links with domestic violence issues

Date: Wednesday 8 October 2008

Time: 9am – 4.30pm

Where: ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre, Yarrumundi Reach (location details provided with booking)

Cost: \$70

RSVP: Essential by 26 September 2008

Cost covers lunch, morning/afternoon tea, associated manual and information packs.

For further details and booking, contact Izzy on 6247 1026 or tuact@bigpond.net.au

Building Better Boards: the ACTCOSS Governance Workshop Program

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

These workshops are designed for community sector Board or Management Committee members. They give participants a broad understanding of Governance responsibilities and how to make your Board or Management Committee function more effectively. The workshops have been scheduled to fit in with a typical organisation's timetable of audits, AGM's and new Members joining their Boards. The workshops include:

- Running an AGM - Wednesday 10 September
- Core Documents - Wednesday 24 September
- Planning Strategically - Wednesday 15 October
- Effective Meetings: Making them Work - Wednesday 29 October
- Board Basics - Wednesday 12 November

Date: Please see above for Workshop dates

Time: 5.30 - 7.30pm

Where: Room 10, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge St, Canberra

Cost: \$22 for members; \$27.50 for non members per workshop

RSVP: To register for any or all of these seminars please email lisa@actcoss.org.au

For more information contact ACTCOSS on (02) 6202 7200.

Accredited Mental Health Training Opportunity

Mental Health Community Coalition ACT with the Mental Health Coordinating Council of NSW

The Mental Health Community Coalition ACT has negotiated with the Mental Health Coordinating Council of NSW to bring an exciting mental health training opportunity to the ACT. The Mental Health Coordinating Council of NSW is a registered training organisation and courses are aligned with units of competence from the nationally recognized Certificate IV in Mental Health Work (Non-clinical) qualification. This is an agreed voluntary minimum standard for mental health work in NSW. Community service workers outside of the mental health community sector will also find these courses helpful in increasing their knowledge and skills in responding to people with mental health issues. A unit titled 'Mental Health & Substance Abuse' will be offered in the ACT in semester 2, 2008.

Date: 11 - 12 November 2008

Cost: \$300 per two-day unit. The Mental Health Community Coalition ACT is offering a \$50 subsidy to the first

15 registrants from their member organisations.

For further information or to register please visit www.mhccnsw.org.au

Policy, Reports and Research

Note: Most of the reports and research items referenced below are available from the Alcohol and Other Drug Council of Australia's National Resource Centre at www.adca.org.au/content/view/19/57/

What options are available for police to respond to alcohol in Australia?

The Conference of Commissioners of Police of Australasia and the South West Pacific Region requested that the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund (NDLERF) investigate and report to it about the policing of alcohol. The project was implemented by Roger Nicholas, a senior researcher at NDLERF in Hobart. It presents a 'menu of options for police to reduce the social harms associated with alcohol consumption in Australia', covering three areas: measures for which police have major responsibility; measures which impact on policing, but which police would not have primary carriage in implementing; and potential research that would enhance our understanding of the role of police in reducing alcohol-related social harms in Australia. It concludes that '...policing agencies in Australia have primary carriage of dealing with many of the alcohol-related social harms present in Australian society. They are also well placed to intervene in many of these harms'.

Nicholas, R 2008, *Understanding and responding to alcohol-related social harms in Australia. Options for policing*, National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund Discussion Paper, NDLERF, Hobart,

<http://www.ndlerf.gov.au/pub/Alcohol%20Paper%20-%209%20May%202008.pdf>

What evidence-informed interventions are available to address volatile substance use in Australia?

Eight years ago the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Tropical Health published an important report *Petrol Sniffing in Aboriginal Communities: a Review of Interventions* by Peter d'Abbs and Sarah Maclean.

This has recently been updated under the auspices of the National Drug Strategy, providing a solid base for understanding the issues and the interventions available for dealing with them. The new edition is broader than the first, addressing volatile substance misuse generally rather than being confined to petrol sniffing in Aboriginal communities. Volatile substance misuse is defined here as 'the deliberate inhalation of a volatile substance in order to achieve a change in mental state'.

This monograph reviews the epidemiology of volatile substance misuse and then details a wide range of interventions that are available for dealing with the problem, classified under the headings of supply reduction, demand reduction, harm reduction and law enforcement. It concludes by discussing broad strategies needed in this area.

d'Abbs, P & MacLean, S 2008, *Volatile substance misuse: a review of interventions*, National Drug Strategy Monograph Series, no. 65, National Drug Strategy, Canberra,

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-volatile-sub-misuse-mono-65-cnt>

Which alcohol interventions are most cost-effective?

Economic evaluation is a powerful tool for policy analysis, and assessing the relative cost-effectiveness of different interventions is a well-established approach to priority setting. The Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation commissioned Australian researchers to undertake a cost-effectiveness study of interventions to reduce the burden of harm associated with alcohol in Australia. The report on the study has come to be known as 'the Doran Report' after its first author. Some of its findings challenge contemporary policy thinking relating to alcohol:

Two interventions stand out as being most effective and cost-effective: changes to the way taxes are imposed and advertising bans...Increasing the minimum legal drinking age to 21 years is also dominant, although the potential health gains are small given the target range is

persons aged 18 – 20 years. All other interventions [assessed] have a high or very high probability of being under the \$50,000 per DALY cost-effectiveness threshold. The exception is residential treatment for alcohol dependence (with or without naltrexone) which is not cost-effective...

In terms of the most cost-effective package of interventions, the expansion path includes (in order of incremental cost-effectiveness): volumetric taxation, advertising bans, increase in minimum legal drinking age to 21 years, brief intervention, licensing controls, drink driving mass media campaign, random breath testing and then residential treatment + naltrexone...

The key findings from [the study] suggest that all the prevention interventions modelled are more cost-effective in reducing alcohol-related harm than those that treat alcohol dependence. When taken as a package of interventions, all interventions modelled with the exception of residential treatment would result in a cost-effective investment portfolio... Changes to volumetric taxation and banning of alcohol advertising should be a high priority for investment due to the high probability of cost-savings. Increasing the minimum legal drinking age to 21 years, brief interventions in general practice, increased licensing controls, drink driving [mass media] campaigns and random breath testing are also likely to be cost-effective... Only residential treatment for alcohol dependence (with or without naltrexone) is not cost-effective by this standard...

The results suggest that although random breath testing is cost-effective and is already being implemented in Australia, the same amount of \$71 million that is currently spent on random breath testing would, if invested in more cost-effective interventions, achieve over ten times the amount of health gain.

Doran, C, Vos, T, Cobiac, L, Hall, W, Asamoah, I, Wallace, A, Naidoo, S, Byrnes, J, Fowler, G & Arnett, K 2008, *Identifying cost-effective interventions to reduce the burden of harm associated with alcohol misuse in Australia* Alcohol Education Rehabilitation Foundation, Canberra, <http://www.aerf.com.au/showcase/releases.aspx>

Sustaining grassroots community-based programs: a toolkit for community- and faith-based service providers

The USA Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration recently published this toolkit. Its aim is to help community organisations develop sustainable organisations and program services. Its contents include samples of tools, fill-in-the-blanks planning templates, and worksheets. It has six 'how-to' components: Introduction, Organizational Assessment and Readiness, Effective Marketing Strategies, Financial Management, Sustainability Strategies: Fund Development and Fund Raising, and Results-Oriented Evaluations.

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment 2008, *Sustaining grassroots community-based programs: a toolkit for community- and faith-based service providers*, HHS Publication no. (SMA) 08-4340, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Rockville, MD, USA. Available online in full text at

<http://ncadistore.samhsa.gov/catalog/productDetails.aspx?ProductID=17868> large file warning: 2.6 MB.

What do we know about tackling illicit drug markets and distribution networks?

The UK Drug Policy Commission describes itself as 'an independent body providing objective analysis of evidence related to UK drug policy'. It has recently published a thorough review of the recent literature on the

topic of *Tackling drug markets and distribution networks in the UK*. Its findings are summarised as follows:

- Latest figures (for 2003/04) estimate the size of the UK illicit drug market to be £5.3 billion and is considered to pose the single greatest organised crime threat to the UK.
- About one-quarter of the total cost of delivering the drug strategy has been dedicated to reducing supply (£380 million in 2005/06).
- Drug markets have proven to be extremely resilient. They are highly fluid and adapt to law enforcement interventions.
- While the availability of controlled drugs is restricted by definition, it appears that additional enforcement efforts had had little adverse effect on the availability of illicit drugs in the UK.
- The available evidence suggests that street-level drug law enforcement should focus on forging productive local partnerships and not rely solely on police crackdowns.
- The authors were unable to locate any comprehensive published UK evidence of the relative effectiveness of different enforcement approaches. They were also not able to identify any published comparative cost-benefit or value-for-money analysis for different interventions within the UK.
- Enforcement can have a significant and unintended negative impact on the nature and extent of harms associated with drugs and this should be recognised and minimised.

McSweeney, T, Turnbull, PJ & Hough, M 2008, *Tackling drug markets and distribution networks in the UK: a review of the recent literature*, The UK Drug Policy Commission, London,

<http://www.ukdpc.org.uk/Publications.shtml>

Is there a case for the plain packaging of tobacco products?

Tobacco control advocates point out that, in the context of the UN Framework Convention On Tobacco Control (FCTC) and Australia's domestic legislation prohibiting most forms of tobacco advertising, the promotion of tobacco through attractive package labelling remains one of the areas of tobacco control still needing attention. They have reviewed the existing evidence about the likely impacts of mandatory plain packaging of tobacco products, drawing heavily on the tobacco industry's own internal statements about the matter. It also addresses legal objections to this initiative that have been raised by the tobacco industry, such as creating impediments to trade. The review concludes that:

Plain packaging of all tobacco products would remove a key remaining means for the industry to promote its products to billions of the world's smokers and future smokers. Governments have required large surface areas of tobacco packs to be used exclusively for health warnings without legal impediment or need to compensate tobacco companies... Requiring plain packaging is consistent with the intention to ban all tobacco promotions. There is no impediment in the FCTC to interpreting tobacco advertising and promotion to include tobacco packs.

Freeman, B, Chapman, S & Rimmer, M 2008, 'The case for the plain packaging of tobacco products', *Addiction*, vol. 103, no. 4, pp. 580-90.

Do graphic health warning labels have an impact on adolescents' smoking-related beliefs and behaviours?

Given that we do not yet require tobacco products to be sold in plain packaging, the Commonwealth Government has legislated to require graphic health warnings to be included on tobacco products sold in this country. Australian researchers have evaluated the impact of the health warnings on adolescents at various stages in their smoking careers. School-based surveys were conducted before and after the introduction of the graphic health warnings to assess this. The findings of the study were positive: 'Graphic warning labels on cigarette

packs are noticed by the majority of adolescents, increase adolescents' cognitive processing of these messages and have the potential to lower smoking intentions. Our findings suggest that the introduction of graphic warning labels may help to reduce smoking among adolescents.'

White, V, Webster, B & Wakefield, M 2008, 'Do graphic health warning labels have an impact on adolescents' smoking-related beliefs and behaviours?' *Addiction*, vol. 103, no. 9, pp. 1562–71.

Are needlestick injuries an important OH&S issue for the staff of correctional services?

With the imminent opening of the Alexander Maconochie Centre, Canberra's new prison, it is timely that Australian researchers have published an assessment of the extent of needlestick injuries among correctional officers. The study was conducted in two Australian states in 2006 using a self report questionnaire. Two-thirds of the 246 prison officers who completed the survey reported that they had found needles and syringes in their prison workplaces and 10% of them (7% of the total sample) had experienced at least one needlestick injury during their prison officer career. Most of these injuries occurred during searches. Fortunately, serological testing for blood-borne viral infections (BBVI's) following injury was common, but less than half the injured officers accessed support services. The authors point out that 'There have been no published reports of prison officers acquiring BBVI's via accidental needlestick injuries' (p. 165) and that 'A pragmatic, inexpensive intervention for reducing the risk of needlestick injuries is the introduction of needle and syringe programs (NSP) in prisons. Prisons in at least six countries, including Spain, Switzerland and Germany, offer sterile equipment to drug injecting inmates. Needles and syringes held by the inmate must be stored in a rigid container in a designated area of the inmate's cell, reducing the risk that an officer may receive a needlestick injury' (p. 167). They concluded that 'Needlestick injuries appear to be a relatively rare occurrence, but may be further reduced by improving search techniques and equipment and regulating needles and syringes in prisons'.

Larney, S & Dolan, K 2008, 'An exploratory study of needlestick injuries among Australian prison officers', *International Journal of Prison Health*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 164-8.

What are the numbers and characteristics of methamphetamine-related deaths in Australia?

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) researchers have investigated the demographic characteristics, circumstances of death, toxicological results and major organ pathology of methamphetamine-related deaths in Australia as documented in the National Coronial Information System. It covered deaths that occurred in the five year period to 30 June 2005 where methamphetamine was listed as a cause of death. In all, 371 cases were identified (a mean of 74 per annum) with the mean age of those who died being 33 years. Injection was the dominant route of administration of the drug (89% of cases), and drugs other than methamphetamine were detected in 89% of cases, most commonly benzodiazepines (41%) and morphine (36%). Most deaths were accidental, with 14% determined by coroners to be suicides, and most (71%) occurred in private homes. Cardiovascular pathology (generally coronary artery atherosclerosis) was detected in 54% of cases and cerebrovascular pathology (generally cerebral haemorrhage and hypoxia) was present in 20% of cases. These epidemiological findings led the research to conclude that: 'Methamphetamine has contributed to a substantial number of deaths in Australia. Users need to be informed of the potential harms of methamphetamine use, particularly those associated with the cardiotoxicity of methamphetamine and the use of methamphetamine in conjunction with other drugs'.

Kaye, S, Darke, S, Dufflou, J & McKetin, R 2008, 'Methamphetamine-related fatalities in Australia: demographics, circumstances, toxicology and major organ pathology', *Addiction*, vol. 103, no. 8, pp. 1353-60.

Media

Report Highlights Harm Caused by Ice

ACT Government

Released 28 August 2008

Opportunities to strengthen efforts to prevent and reduce the harm caused by the use of crystal methamphetamine, 'ice', to individuals and the wider community were highlighted in today's release of the ACT Government's response to the 'Ice Inquiry'.

ACT Minister for Health Ms Katy Gallagher MLA said the report issued earlier in the year by the Standing Committee on Health and Disability Inquiry into the Use of Crystal Methamphetamine 'ice' in the ACT, had made a number of recommendations.

" The Government has agreed to five of the Committee's recommendations," she said.

These recommendations relate to:

- identifying and planning to address the gaps in family-inclusive service delivery;
- special needs of grandchildren and grandparents as primary carers as a result of parental substance abuse;
- a community education program addressing the dangers of methamphetamines, specifically for homosexually active men;
- highlighting the dangers of polydrug use in future community education campaigns; and
- monitoring interstate trials of psychostimulant services to inform any decision regarding specialist ACT psychostimulant services.

Ms Gallagher said seven recommendations had been agreed to 'in principle' and eleven recommendations 'noted'.

Ms Gallagher said that nationally there had been a significant fall in illicit drug use and a fall in the use of methamphetamines, between 2004 and 2007.

" During the same period, the number of people 14 years or older, who identified methamphetamines as a 'problem' drug, trebled from 5.5% to 16.4%."

She said the ACT Government had significantly increased funding in this area over the past four years.

" In December 2007, the ACT Government committed \$10.8 million to the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Residential Alcohol and Other Drug Rehabilitation Facility, which will provide a culturally appropriate service for the Indigenous community to participate in the rehabilitation and recovery process," she said.

" Other new ACT Government recurrent funding announced over the past four years includes:

- \$50,000 to enable Directions ACT to offer a dedicated detoxification program for women and women with children on dedicated weeks throughout the year;
- \$60,000 for establishing a trial of vending machines for dispensing needles and syringes in the ACT to give the community 24 hour access to sterile injecting equipment;
- \$100,000 to create 100 additional subsidised places in the methadone and buprenorphine program for heroin dependent people
- \$150,000 for a peer education program for school age children and young people;
- \$75,000 for expanding support for peer based models of service delivery, support and advocacy, and community development;
- \$15,000 for monitoring and evaluating the ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy 2004-2008; and
- \$148,810 and \$190,264 to employ comorbidity and detoxification support workers at Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation and Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service.

" Given the ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Strategy 2004-2008 ends this year, work has already commenced on the development of the next strategy in consultation with both the community sector and government agencies."

Visit <http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7333&m=52> to view the full media release.

Prison Search Powers Confirmed

ACT Government

Released 27 August 2008

The Legislative Assembly has today passed an amendment to prison laws to augment strip searching powers in ACT corrections facilities, Attorney General Simon Corbell said.

" This Bill amends the Corrections Management Act 2007 by expanding the current power of the chief executive of my department to direct ACT Corrective Services officers to strip search a detainee in the absence of the foreshadowed SOTER X-ray body scanner," Mr Corbell said.

" The Government treats the security of its Corrective Services facilities and staff very seriously and has moved quickly to address the absence of the SOTER X-ray body scanner," Mr Corbell said.

" The Bill ensures the ongoing safety and security of detainees, corrections officers and visitors at correctional centres in the Territory, by resolving any doubt about when strip searches can be conducted, and clarifies the situations where strip searches are appropriate."

Examples of when strip searches of detainees are appropriate include:

- Where the detainee is returning from community service outside the corrections centre;
- Where the detainee is returning from police or court cells;
- Following an unsupervised contact visit; and
- Where the detainee is returning from leave granted by prison administration.

" Strip searches of detainees are just one method of searching that Corrective Services officers use to prevent contraband, such as drugs, from entering into the Territory's correctional centres," Mr Corbell said.

" Other methods include the use of drug detection dogs, random cell and area searches, routine frisk searching, metal detection scanners, routine supervision and camera observation, and urinalysis."

Visit <http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7327&m=53> to view the full media release.

Consumer Participation

Consumer Representative Training

Health Care Consumers Association (HCCA)

It's not too late to participate in the Health Consumer Representative Training. Please spread the word to staff, clients, and friends and distribute as widely as possible. If you, or someone you know, would like to enrol in the HCCA training please phone as soon as possible to reserve a spot.

The training is conducted over 4 weeks in September 2008.

- Session 1: Friday 5 September, 10.00am-12.30pm
What does it mean to be a consumer representative?
- Session 2: Friday 12 September, 10.00am-12.30pm
Overview of the ACT Health System and how consumer representatives are working to put forward the consumer perspective.
- Session 3: Friday 19 September, 10.00am-12.30pm

How to be an effective consumer representative – including how committees work, negotiation skills, speaking persuasively, top tips on how to get your message across.

- Session 4: Friday 26 September, 10.00am-12.30pm

How to build your understanding of the consumer perspective: tools you can use to enhance your representative role.

Morning tea / light refreshments will be provided at each session.

Date: Please see information above for details on dates and times.

Where: Building 1, Pearce Community Centre, Hodgson Cres, Pearce.

To reserve a sport contact HCCA on adminofficer@hcca.org.au or 6290 1660.

Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors

AOD and Young People: a platform for action

The Youth Coalition of the ACT

The Youth Coalition of the ACT invites you to be part of the next stage of its Policy Platform Review.

The Youth Coalition's new Policy Platform will inform its work for the next two years and the Youth Coalition would like to thank everyone who attended the Policy Forum in July. The comments from the Forum are currently being incorporated into the AOD, Comorbidity, Hepatitis C and Mental Health policy positions and the next stage of the review will involve shaping the Youth Coalition's commitments in these areas. The Alcohol and Other Drug Policy is a new policy of the Youth Coalition and we would appreciate your input into it and the other policy areas.

If you would like to be involved, please email Maiy Azize, Policy Officer at the Youth Coalition on (02) 6247 3540 or by email maiya@youthcoalition.net expressing your interest.

Launch of the National Homelessness Information Clearinghouse

National Homelessness Information Clearinghouse

Housing Minister Tanya Plibersek has launched the National Homelessness Information Clearinghouse to help the homelessness sector to work together and share ideas.

Visit the new Clearinghouse at <http://www.homelessnessinfo.net.au>

Mental Health Services in Australia 2005-06

Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (AIHW)

This report is the ninth in the series of AIHW's comprehensive annual reports on the characteristics and activity of Australia's mental health services. Details from a wide range of data sources for the 2005-06 period are presented, together with changes over time. Information on mental health care provided by a range of services is detailed. In addition, information is provided on mental health-related prescriptions and mental health resources such as facilities, workforce and expenditure. Where possible, comprehensive data are provided for each state and territory, and comparisons are made between population groups (including Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, and overseas-born and Australian-born people). This report is a useful resource for health planners, policy makers, administrators, practitioners, researchers and others with an interest in mental health in Australia.

Visit <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10594> to download a copy of the report.

Employment Opportunities

Arcadia House Manager – Full Time

Arcadia House Withdrawal and Detoxification Centre, Directions ACT

Arcadia House is a well respected detoxification and withdrawal service which offers a non- medicated approach to detoxification. The Manager provides support, human resource management, supervision and

training opportunities to the staff and ensures that the clients fulfil their goals in a safe, professional and holistic service.

[Click here](#) to download a position description.

Applications close: 5pm, 3 September 2008

For more information contact Carol Mead on carolm@directionsact.com or 6122 8024 (leave a message)

Alcohol & Other Drug Admissions Officer – Full Time

Arcadia House Withdrawal and Detoxification Centre, Directions ACT

The Admission Officer is an important position in Arcadia House Withdrawal and Detoxification Service with a varied and challenging role in the assessment and admission of clients to the program, administration duties, statistics entry and liaison between the client, their family and the workers.

[Click here](#) to download a position description.

Applications close: 5pm, 8 September 2008

For more information contact Robin Duncan on robind@directionsact.com or 6122 8000

Alcohol & Other Drug Night Shift Worker – Part Time

Arcadia House Withdrawal and Detoxification Centre, Directions ACT

This position is vital for smooth day to day running of the Arcadia House program, case management, counseling and supervision of the clients.

[Click here](#) to download a position description.

Please note that application deadline has been extended to 5pm, 9 September 2008.

For more information contact Patrick Sketchly on patrick@directionsact.com or 6253 3055

Grants and Funding Opportunities

Capacity Building Grants for Domestic and/or Family Violence Projects

Women's Services Network (WESNET)

WESNET is undertaking a capacity building grants program for eligible community and non-government organisations to undertake projects that build the capacity of organisations to support victims of domestic or family violence through early intervention and prevention approaches. The WESNET Capacity Building Grants project has been funded by the Australian Government's Women's Safety Agenda through the Office for Women.

Two levels of grants will be available:

- Grants of up to \$50,000 (GST excl) for community-based projects, and
- Grants of between \$1,000 and \$2,000 (GST excl) for small intervention projects.

Projects must be completed by 31 May 2009.

Applications close: 3pm Friday 19 September 2008

Community and other eligible organisations interested in applying for grant funding under the program may now access the application kit on the WESNET website at www.wesnet.org.au

Linking Research to Real Life

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)

Organisations and researchers now have access to over \$100m for research to improve health programs. The new NHMRC Partnerships scheme aims to build direct relationships between health providers and researchers, to strengthen the evidence base that decision makers work from. The scheme is ongoing, with the initial funding of over \$100m available in the first two years. Health providers and researchers will be able to form partnerships to apply for a grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) for any research project that has the potential to improve the health of Australians. Partner organisations are

expected to provide funding or in kind support to the value of the NHMRC grant, however a group of partners can get together to make this easier for smaller organisations.

The NHMRC is Australia's peak body for supporting health and medical research, developing health advice and health ethics. Grant applications will be subject to the NHMRC's rigorous peer evaluation process to ensure funded research produces applied science of the highest quality.

Interested organisations and researchers can find more information on the scheme at www.nhmrc.gov.au

Applications close on Friday December 19 2008.