

ACT AOD Sector Project eBulletin: August 2009

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 which is auspiced by the 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	In This Edition...
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Drug Action Week 2009 ACT Report
 Drug Action Week 2009 built on the success of the previous year in the ACT, with over 35 activities including forums, service and information stalls, trivia competitions, the ACT Drug Action Week Launch and the Second Annual ACT AOD Sector Conference. A report summarising events, media and promotion in the ACT has been produced by the ACT AOD Sector Project.
 Download the [Drug Action Week 2009 ACT Report](#).

August 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 27 August 2009
Time: 9.15am for arrivals. 9.30 - 11.30am for forum.
Venue: To be confirmed.
Note: This forum is for AOD workers only.
 For more information or to RSVP contact Amanda Bode, Project Officer on info@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540.

ACT AOD Minimum Qualification Strategy: Semester 2, 2009
 For Semester 2, 2009 limited funding has been allocated to support AOD workers in non-government services to undertake training and assessment opportunities through the Canberra Institute of Technology in order to meet the ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy. The ACT AOD Sector Project will administer the allocated funding with support from the ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy Steering Committee. Applications from workers closed 24 July 2009, and successful applicants will be notified shortly.
 For further information please contact Carrie Fowlie on carrie@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540.

Evaluation for participants enrolled in the AOD 4 Core Competencies with the Canberra Institute of Technology
 The Working with Clients who have AOD issues Competency was the final competency undertaken by Stream 2, and is a component of the ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy, which is overseen by the ACT AOD Sector Project. A survey has been developed to collect feedback from participating workers. Information collected will help inform the development of the competencies. The survey should take you about 5 minutes to complete and information provided will be anonymous.

Stream 2: Work with Clients Who have AOD Issues:
 To access the survey please visit www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=pYjphOmW_2fetaVAW2FW4NZw_3d_3d

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

The ACT AOD Services Directory: Version 3 May 2009
 The ACT AOD Services Directory aims to support workers to make referrals to AOD services in the ACT, increase cross and intra-sectoral knowledge and foster collaborations. It also aims to better communicate the diverse range of services and programs in the ACT AOD Sector. Version 3 of the Directory has been released and profiles 37 programs including new information about services provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse people in the ACT. The Directory is available online at www.aodsector.org.au/public/activities/directory.htm and hard copies can be ordered on a cost recovery basis from the ACT AOD Sector Project Team on info@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540.

About the ACT AOD Sector Project
 The ACT AOD Sector Project, auspiced by the Youth Coalition of the ACT, is a capacity building Project that began in July 2007, and is funded by ACT Health. The Project provides support to ACT AOD workers to conduct activities. 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 info@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540.

See also:

[Training and Professional Development](#) section for the 'ACT Training and Professional Development Calendar'

- 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.
- Interstate Conferences and Symposia
- Information on interstate conferences relevant to the AOD sector.
- Policy, Reports and Research
- New research, reports, inquiry findings, and any key policy activities affecting the AOD sector.
- Media
- Media releases and news items relevant to the ACT AOD Sector.
- 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.

ACT AOD Sector Forum Update

This section reports on information shared by services, programs and workers who attend the ACT AOD Sector Forum. As there was not a Forum in July 2009 due to the ACT AOD Sector Strategic Directions and Governance Workshop the sector forum update will return in the September 2009 eBulletin.

Sector Activities and Events

Coffee / Playgroups for Parents with AOD Issues
DIRECTIONS ACT
 This group for parents or carers of young children, provides a place to relax and enjoy the company of other parents in a friendly atmosphere. Children can play, socialize and have fun in a safe environment.
Date: Wednesdays from 29 July 2009 (6 weeks)
Time: 10am - 12pm
Venue: DIRECTIONS ACT, 1 Bradley St, Woden
 For more information, or to book contact Ineke on (02) 6122 8038
 Download the [playgroup flyer](#).

Parent Support Group
DIRECTIONS ACT and Parentline
 This group provides support to mothers with AOD issues to increase their confidence and skills as parents. Childcare is provided on site at no cost.

Date: Thursdays from 13 August 2009 (10 weeks)

Time: 10am - 12pm

Venue: DIRECTIONS ACT, 1 Bradley St, Woden

For more information, or to book contact Ineke on (02) 6122 8038

Download the [Parent Support Group flyer](#).

Social Justice Forum: "Caring or carking it: Why we can and must build a more caring economy".

St Ninian's Uniting Church Social Action Group

This forum will present new and challenging ideas, providing an opportunity for questions and discussion. Guest speakers include:

- . Emeritus Professor Bob Douglas, Chair of the Board of Australia 21, Chair, See Change ACT
- . Professor Richard Denniss, Executive Director, Australia Institute, Associate Professor, Crawford School of Economics and Government, ANU. Co-Author of "Affluenza: when too much is never enough"
- . Professor Geoff Davies, Senior Fellow, Institute for Advanced Study, ANU

Date: Tuesday 18th August 2009

Time: 7.30pm

Venue: St Ninian's Uniting Church, Cnr Mouat and Brigalow Streets, Lyneham

For more information contact Marion McConnell on (02) 6254 2961

Nominations Invited: 2009 ACT Chief Minister Inclusion Awards

Chief Minister's Department, ACT Government

Individuals are invited to nominate individuals, businesses or services for the 2009 ACT Chief Minister Inclusion Awards. The ACT Chief Minister Inclusion Awards acknowledge the outstanding achievements of business, organisations and individuals who have clearly demonstrated their commitment to encourage, welcome and support people with a disability in their workplace, business and community. The 2009 ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards will be held on Thursday 22 October, in the Great Hall at Parliament House, Canberra.

Visit www.inclusionsawards.com.au for more information or contact manager@blits.org.au. Nominations are due Monday 3 August 2009.

Overdose Awareness Day: August 31 2009

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is inviting services and individuals to participate in Overdose Awareness Day 2009 to remember those who have died from having suffered overdose as well as those who live with permanent injuries from overdose. This year The Salvation Army would like to encourage people to post a tribute to someone lost from an overdose on their website from the beginning of August. The website will also offer space for particulars of events that are being conducted on the day.

Visit The Overdose Awareness Day website at www.salvationarmy.org.au/crisisservices

News from the Executive Directors' Group

This section reports on information from the Executive Directors (ED's) group that is relevant to the AOD sector and workers. The minutes from the July ED's meeting are yet to be circulated, and information from that meeting will be provided in the September 2009 eBulletin.

For further information about the ACT AOD Executive Directors Group visit www.aodsector.org.au/public/about/actedg.htm

Sector Development

Where can AOD practitioners and students obtain help in developing their research skills?

The Alcohol and other Drug Council of Australia's National Drugs Sector Information Service (NDSIS)

The NDSIS has created an AOD Research Skills webpage to assist people with limited research experience. The page is designed to help new researchers to develop effective and successful ways of conducting research and evaluating their search results. It contains tools and resources under the headings of search skills, evidence based approaches, citation guides, how to write a research paper, how to read a research paper, and publishing.

For more information, visit <http://ndsis.adca.org.au/researchskills>.

Updated AOD Resources

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) Education Trust

The NDARC Education Trust has recently updated some of their booklets, including:

- . Drugs and Bugs
- . Club Drugs
- . A Users' Guide to Speed
- . Double Trouble
- . Ecstasy: Facts and Fiction

Visit <http://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/NDARCWeb.nsf/page/Resources> for more information or download an [order form](#).

The Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) and Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS) July Bulletins

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)

Separate bulletins for the IDRS and EDRS projects are produced throughout the year as a means of providing information on interesting aspects of project results in a more accessible format. They also contain more detailed analyses and information on a particular topic of interest.

The July 2009 Bulletins topics are:

- . IDRS: Drug injection trends among participants in the Australian Needle and Syringe Program Survey, 2004–2008
- . EDRS: Methamphetamine Use and Associated Risks amongst Regular Ecstasy Users in the Australian Capital Territory and nationally

Visit <http://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/NDARCWeb.nsf/page/Bulletins> to download the bulletins.

Training and Professional Development

ACT Training and Professional Development Calendar (July - August 2009)

ACT AOD Sector Project and the Drugs in the Family 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 Drugs in the Family Project, Youth Coalition of the ACT. The calendar compiles training and professional development opportunities available for workers from the AOD and allied sectors.

Download the current [Training and Professional Development Calendar](#) or visit www.aodsector.org.au

For more information contact the ACT AOD Sector Project Team on (02) 6247 3540 or info@aodsector.org.au

Working with Interpreters

ACT Health

This workshop is for individuals who work with multicultural clients, use accredited interpreters or want to learn new skills. With presenters from ACT Health's Migrant Health Unit and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, this is a unique opportunity for you to learn about how to access interpreters skills and tips on using professional interpreters.

Date: Wednesday 5 August 2009

Time: 9.30am - 12.30pm

Venue: Level 5 Conference Room, ACT Health Building, 1 Moore St, Canberra City

RSVP: Bookings are essential as places are strictly limited to 2 people per organisation. Registrations close Wednesday 2 July 2009.

For more information or to register contact Anna John on (02) 6205 9499 or ACTHealthMHLO@act.gov.au

Aboriginal Culture, History and Heritage Training: Part 1

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

ACTCOSS is hosting a one-day workshop for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers which 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: Thursday 6 August 2009

Time: 9.30pm - 4.30pm

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

Cost: \$48 per person for SAAP Services; \$157 for Members; \$197.50 per person for non-Members; \$237 per person for Corporate/Government.

Food: Morning Tea, lunch and afternoon tea are provided.

Registration: To register, send completed [registration form](#) to julie@actcoss.org.au or fax to (02) 6281 4192.

Evidence and Evaluation Conference

The Australasian Evaluation Society

This annual international conference will bring together people and organisations with an interest in the theory and practice of evaluation. The conference theme, Evidence and Evaluation will explore the centrality of evidence to evaluation.

Date: Pre Conference Workshops, 31 August - 1 September 2009. Conference, 2 - 4 September 2009.

Venue: National Convention Centre, Canberra

Cost: Full registration member \$850, non-member \$993

Visit www.aesconference2009.com.au for more information.

'Treating Personality Disordered Clients with Mindfulness Based Interventions' by Dr Bruce Stevens

VYNE @ OzHelp

This four hour workshop explores the using of mindfulness techniques to enable clients with personality disorder (or traits of) to develop needed psychological skills. Dr Stevens, Associate Professor in Clinical and Forensic Psychology, University of Canberra will discuss the underlying psychological dynamics of personality disorder in terms of the primitive or grandiose self. He will suggest ways to use mindfulness techniques in service of self-regulation and values clarification to assist with antisocial attitudes. There will be opportunity for small group discussion and creative thinking about how to solve common clinical problems associated with personality disorder. Participants are expected to have some familiarity with mindfulness techniques since this is not an introductory workshop.

Date: 14 August 2009

Time: 9am - 1pm

Venue: Venue details provided on receipt of registration - All workshops are held in the ACT

Cost: \$85

Registrations: Close 7 August 2009. If you wish to register please contact irmgard@ozhelp.org.au or visit www.ozhelp.org.au

Aboriginal Culture, History and Heritage Training: Part 2

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

This one-day follow-up workshop is for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers who have attended the initial Aboriginal Culture, History and Heritage Training Part I program. The workshop provides an opportunity to further advance skills when working with Aboriginal people and community. It builds on the initial training by incorporating group work and case studies relating to workplace skills, communication and protocols, and allows people to put into practice their existing knowledge and expertise.

Date: Thursday 20 August 2009

Time: 9.30pm - 4.30pm

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

Cost: \$48 per person for SAAP Services; \$157 for Members; \$197.50 per person for non-Members; \$237 per person for Corporate/Government.

Food: Morning Tea, lunch and afternoon tea are provided.

Registration: To register, send completed [registration form](#) to julie@actcoss.org.au or fax to (02) 6281 4192.

Raising the Standard

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

Many organisations now have a requirement to use Raising the Standard as part of their funding agreement. This one-day workshop is for people wanting to learn about:

- service standards developed for ACT community;
- organisations that meets ACT Government funding requirements;
- the self-assessment process and tools;
- how to use the standards in a quality improvement process; and,
- how to write a quality improvement workplan.

A manual and tool kit is provided as part of the training. Organisations are encouraged to send staff teams with a limit of 6 people per organisation (this is negotiable).

Date: Friday, 28 August 2009

Time: 10am - 3.30pm

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

Cost: \$48 Members, \$60 Non-members, \$72 Corporate/Government

Registration: To register, send completed [registration form](#) to or fax to (02) 6281 4192.

Therapeutic Communities (TC) : Getting better all the time - Partnership, practice and collaboration

Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association

The focus of the 2009 Conference is on Evidence-Based Practice within the TC and other settings in which we work. The Conference will attract delegates from TCs, other AOD, Mental Health, Youth and Family sectors. It will particularly address the populations with whom we work & focus on the Conference themes of Comorbidity, Indigenous Cultural Issues, Families –including discussion of childcare programs, Youth and Correctional settings.

Date: 14 - 17 September

Venue: The Rydges Hotel, Capital Hill, Canberra

Cost: Full registration \$550, Day Registration \$185.

Registration: Visit www.atca.com.au/home.htm for information on registration.

National Indigenous Studies Conference 2009

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

The Conference titled *Perspectives on Urban Life: Connections and Reconnections* will consider a range of questions for Indigenous people living in urban and semi-urban/regional areas. The Conference provides an opportunity for a diverse range of people to discuss issues of relevance for today's urban Indigenous population, including community members and organisations, Traditional Owners, policy makers, service and industry providers, government agencies, consultants, academics and researchers.

Date: 29 September - 1 October 2009

Venue: The Manning Clark Centre, Australian National University, Canberra

Cost: Full fee \$340, Concession \$140.

For more information visit www.aiatsis.gov.au/research_program/events2/conference_2009

Interstate Conferences and Symposiums

Thinking Drinking 3: Action for Change

Australian Drug Foundation

This Conference will build on the outcomes of Thinking Drinking 1 (2005) and 2 (2007) and will provide a valuable opportunity to review, examine and debate the current evidence and best practice on addressing the drivers of drinking culture. The key outcome sought is an agreed Agenda for Action to unite, support and guide all our efforts to reduce alcohol related harm. This conference will be relevant and useful for those concerned with policy change; health, welfare, liquor licensing and enforcement, community education and development, and more.

Date: 5 - 7 August 2009

Venue: Brisbane Hilton, 190 Elizabeth St, Brisbane, Queensland

Cost: Full Registration \$790, Day Registration \$330, Concession Full Registration \$440.

Registration: Information available at www.adf.org.au/browse.asp?ContainerID=thinkingdrinking3

Indigenous Young People, Crime and Justice Conference

Australian Institute of Criminology in partnership with the NSW Commission for Children and Young People, the NSW Attorney-General's Department and the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The overrepresentation of Indigenous young people in the criminal justice system has been identified as one of Australia's most significant social problems (Snowball 2008). This conference aims to identify and share the research and practice most relevant to addressing this problem. It has a major focus on Indigenous children and young people who interact with the criminal justice system early and/or repeatedly, who are likely to have complex needs and require highly targeted and joined up responses across the justice and other interrelated systems such as education, child protection, family support, and cultural services.

Date: 31 August - 1 September 2009

Venue: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Parramatta, New South Wales

Cost: Day Registration \$360, Concession \$310.

Registration: Register online at https://communicationlink.com.au/AIC_Conflink/Common/Registration.aspx?ConferenceID=3

For more information visit www.aic.gov.au/conferences/2009-indigenousyouth/

1st National Cannabis Conference

The National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC)

NCPIC is pleased to announce that the Centre will be convening the first National Cannabis Conference in 2009. Full details of the conference program, including workshop sessions, and registration details are available online at <http://ncpic.org.au/workforce/cannabis-conference/>

Date: 7 - 8 September 2009

Venue: Coles Theatre, Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris St, Ultimo, Sydney, New South Wales

Cost: Early Bird Full Registration: \$425

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre Annual Symposium & Drug Trends Conference 2009

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)

2009 Annual Symposium:

The 2009 Annual Symposium will again highlight research projects undertaken at NDARC and will be of interest to policy makers; clinicians and other health professionals working in the AOD field including front-line workers; researchers; community organisations and leaders. Invited speakers will update the field on the activities of the National Preventative Health Task Force as it relates to the AOD sector and responses to alcohol related issues across levels of government.

National Drug Trends Conference: What's new in illicit drug use in Australia?

The National Drug Trends Conference will present recent findings in illicit drug use, markets and related harms across Australia. Convened by Australia's largest drug monitoring systems, the Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) and the Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS), the one day conference will include the first release of the 2009 findings, in addition to discussion of emerging trends in illicit drug use and what these mean for policy as well as other related issues (risk taking, health issues, alcohol, aggression and gambling) in Australia.

Date: 28 & 29 September 2009

Venue: Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris St, Ultimo, New South Wales

Registration: Closes 24 September 2009.

Cost: Annual Symposium \$210, Drug Trends Conference \$210 or both \$250.

For more information visit <http://quest.cvent.com/EVENTS/info/Summary.aspx?e=3964b11c-9f48-44c1-8ef8-49313128de97>

Australian Drugs Conference – Drugs in Hard Times

Anex

When social disadvantage, drugs and tough economic conditions converge they can create the perfect storm. Such a maelstrom puts individuals, families, communities and services under intense pressure. These changed times mean an increasing number of Australians may not have the support, skills and other means to stay afloat. Frontline workers deal with the day-to-day reality of hard times – a reality that is often complex and extends beyond issues of drug use.

This conference will look at the effects of tough times and our ability to save lives and build resilience and will focus on improving the ability of frontline services to respond to the complex issues that affect people who use drugs illicitly.

Date: 1 - 2 October 2009

Venue: RACV Club, Bourke Street, Melbourne, Victoria

Cost: Standard registrations \$420, Single day registrations \$252.

Other: Anex has secured two separate scholarship opportunities to assist frontline workers attend the Conference and the pre-Conference training sessions. For more information about these scholarships please go to www.australiandrugsconference.org.au/scholarships.htm

Visit the www.australiandrugsconference.org.au for more information.

Oceania Tobacco Control Conference: Reducing inequality through tobacco control

The Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Tobacco Control (CEITC)

This conference is held every 2 years and is the peak conference for Tobacco Control in our region, attracting delegates from Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. This is an exciting time for Indigenous tobacco control, given the recent funding commitment by Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments to reduce the 17 year life expectancy gap for Indigenous people. Reducing smoking prevalence is now understood to be a critical part of reducing this gap.

CEITC is currently calling for abstracts to be submitted by 19 June 2009. CEITC would like to encourage as much Indigenous participation as possible, particularly oral presentations about Indigenous projects, so that news of all the great work going on in projects around Australia can be showcased

Further information on Indigenous scholarships to attend the Conference will be available shortly.

Date: 7 - 9 October 2009

Venue: TBC, Darwin

Cost: Full registration: \$550

More information is available at www.oceaniatc2009.org

2009 National Hepatitis Health Promotion Conference

Hepatitis Australia

The conference will feature plenary addresses from health promotion experts, health promotion skills workshops and presentations on viral hepatitis prevention, education, health maintenance and support projects. The theme of the conference is 'Grass Roots to National Action.' The conference will demonstrate effective grass roots health promotion projects and explore issues of working collaboratively to effect change at a national level.

Abstracts are currently being sought for submission by 31 July 2009.

Date: 29 - 30 October 2009

Venue: Grand Chancellor Hotel, 1 Davey St, Hobart, Tasmania

Cost: Free

Registration: Available online at www.hepatitisaustralia.com/events_projects/Registration.html

Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs 2009 Conference

Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs (APSAD)

This conference will feature an exciting program which includes international and national speakers, focussing on new treatment, prevention and policy in the areas of drug and alcohol research. Featuring original work from this field, the conference program will, for the first time, encourage alternative presentation styles such film, yarning circles and artwork whilst maintaining conventional modes of presentation such as oral and poster presentations, participatory workshops and debates/discussions.

Date: 1 - 4 November

Venue: Darwin Convention Centre, Northern Territory

Cost: Early member full \$720, Early non-member full \$820.

Registration: Early bird registration closes 11 September 2009. Information on registration is available at www.apsadconference.com.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 Drugs Sector Information Service (NDSIS) <http://ndsis.adca.org.au>.

Are people who are disadvantaged as children more likely to use drugs as adults?

British researchers conducted 'a systematic review of longitudinal studies that examined the association between childhood socioeconomic status and illegal drug use in later life. They examined eleven papers (several from North America, two from New Zealand) most of which examined cannabis use 'rather than cannabis dependence, or often more problematic forms of illicit drug use such as heroin, cocaine or injecting drug use'. They found 'consistent, though weak, evidence to support the assumption that childhood disadvantage is associated with later cannabis use'. Little evidence was found that childhood disadvantage is associated with later alcohol use/abuse.

Daniel, JZ, Hickman, M, Macleod, J, Wiles, N, Lingford-Hughes, A, Farrell, M, Araya, R, Skapinakis, P, Haynes, J & Lewis, G 2009, 'Is socioeconomic status in early life associated with drug use? A systematic review of the evidence', *Drug and Alcohol Review*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 142-53.

What are the effects of driving while under the influence of marijuana compared with driving while intoxicated with alcohol?

Researchers in the United States have examined studies on the effects on driving while intoxicated with marijuana and with alcohol, and compared the effects. They found that 'the effects of cannabis vary more between individuals than they do with alcohol because of tolerance, differences in smoking technique, and different absorptions of Delta(9)-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the active ingredient in marijuana. Detrimental effects of cannabis use vary in a dose-related fashion, and are more pronounced with highly automatic driving functions than with more complex tasks that require conscious control, whereas alcohol produces an opposite pattern of impairment. Because of both this and an increased awareness that they are impaired, marijuana smokers tend to compensate effectively while driving by utilizing a variety of behavioral strategies. Combining marijuana with alcohol eliminates the ability to use such strategies effectively, however, and results in impairment even at doses which would be insignificant were they of either drug alone'. Therefore 'the risk from driving under the influence of both alcohol and cannabis is greater than the risk of driving under the influence of either alone. Future research should focus on resolving contradictions posed by previous studies, and patients who smoke cannabis should be counseled to wait several hours before driving, and avoid combining the two drugs'.

Sewell, RA, Poling, J & Sofuoglu, M 2009, 'The effect of cannabis compared with alcohol on driving', *American Journal on Addictions*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 185-93.

Does online counselling improve services for people with AOD problems?

Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre, Victoria, launched www.CounsellingOnline.org.au, a 24/7 pilot web-based counselling program, in 2006. An evaluation in 2007 looked at 'whether CounsellingOnline enhanced AOD service accessibility for clients'. The findings were that 'Service responses, such as fast counsellor connection speed, low client attrition and anonymous login, contributed to good service accessibility. CounsellingOnline clients differed from conventional and telephone counselling clients, representing much higher proportions of young, employed and female clients. Notably, the majority of CounsellingOnline sessions occurred outside standard business hours'. The evaluators concluded that these features of CounsellingOnline 'appeal to a client group that differs from those seen in conventional and telephone AOD counselling services. The capacity of Web-based services such as CounsellingOnline to enhance service accessibility is significant, particularly for clients whose access to conventional treatment services is limited'.

Swan, AJ & Tyssen, EG 2009, 'Enhancing treatment access: evaluation of an Australian Web-based alcohol and drug counselling initiative', *Drug and Alcohol Review*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 48-53.

Does appearing in court increase the chance that a young offender will reoffend?

For many years, some young drug offenders have been diverted away from the criminal justice system (e.g. through the use of Simple Cannabis Offence Notices and ACT Policing's Early Intervention and Diversion Initiative) owing to concerns that a court appearance and criminal conviction could have unintended negative consequences. These concerns have been assessed through a study conducted in the NSW Children's Court, 206 young offenders were interviewed after their sentencing hearing 'using a questionnaire designed to measure the extent to which they perceived the court hearing to be a deterrent, and the extent to which they felt either stigmatised or reintegrated by the experience of being sentenced'. The research findings were that 'Participants with previous convictions and who felt stigmatised by the hearing were more likely to reoffend, while participants rating their likelihood of arrest in the event of future offending as high, and who reported that the sentence they received would prevent future offending, were less likely to reoffend'. The researchers conclude that 'while a court appearance does appear to have some deterrent effect, it also has the potential to exacerbate subsequent offending by stigmatising individual offenders', however, 'it is clear that the magistrates of the Children's Court do not set out to stigmatise the young people appearing before them'.

McGrath, A 2009, 'Offenders' perceptions of the sentencing process: a study of deterrence and stigmatisation in the New South Wales Children's Court', *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, vol. 42, no. 1, pp. 24-46.

Should governments introduce more non-custodial options for illicit drug offences?

In 2005, the Beckley Foundation Drug Policy Programme (BFDPP), based in Oxford, UK, published *Incarceration of drug offenders: costs and impacts* in which they argued that 'most governments make strong statements about the need to maintain, and often increase, police activity and penal sanctions for drug users...[claiming that] strong enforcement, and widespread incarceration, will deter potential users and dealers from becoming involved in the illegal drug market'. However, 'arrest and incarceration rates for drug users are comparatively low in many countries in relation to the total number of users, and the often quoted maximum sentences are rarely, if ever, used. Nonetheless, penal institutions around the world are becoming increasingly populated by drug offenders. The fact that this has had only a marginal and/or temporary impact upon the scale of the illicit drug market, and also generates many significant financial and collateral costs, has led increasing numbers of observers to regard the situation as constituting a global prison crisis'.

The BFDPP publication provides incarceration data from around the world and contemporary research on the topic. The authors suggest that 'the results of policy [on incarceration as a drug prevention measure] within the United States should be used as evidence to encourage other member states not to follow this route', and they call for 'an adjustment of the UN system to make it easier for them to find other ways of managing the problem'.

Bewley-Taylor, D, Hallam, C & Allen, R 2009, *The incarceration of drug offenders: an overview*, The Beckley Foundation Drug Policy Programme, Report 16, The Beckley Foundation, Oxford, www.idpc.net/php-bin/documents/Beckley_Report_16_2_FINAL_EN.pdf.

Are people with opioid dependence likely to benefit from watching an educational DVD?

In their report of a pilot evaluation of an educational DVD for people with opioid dependence, Winstock et al. point out that 'There are currently 39,000 people on methadone or buprenorphine treatment in Australia, representing approximately one third of the opioid-dependent population'. The DVD, entitled *Access All Areas*, was developed 'to inform, attract and engage opioid-dependent drug users into treatment, with a view to increasing users' understanding of the benefits and risks of treatment and factors impacting the way treatment is delivered'. 99 opioid users from two public opioid treatment clinics in Sydney and four needle syringe programs in NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria were involved in the evaluation. After viewing the DVD, the majority of participants had a 'better understanding of the benefits of treatment' and were 'more likely to ask about hepatitis C treatment'. Of those not currently on opioid treatment, '37% were more interested in the idea of treatment'. The researchers conclude that the study 'provides preliminary evidence of the benefits of this educational resource to people with opioid dependence'.

Winstock, AR, Lea, T, Fettel, A 2009, 'Pilot evaluation of an educational DVD for people with opioid dependence', *Drugs: Education, prevention and policy*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 182-192.

Do cigarette packet health warnings influence smokers to cease smoking?

A survey of the impact of health warnings on quitting activity was carried out over the period 2002 to 2006 in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. The researchers state that their data 'provide the strongest evidence to date that health warnings stimulate reactions that are predictable antecedents of quitting attempts'. They conclude that 'the stronger the warnings the greater the reactions, and thus the greater the quitting activity they evoke'. Furthermore, they state that 'Health policy makers should be seeking to implement strong, large, graphic warnings to maximize their effectiveness in achieving their goal of warning people off continuing to smoke'.

Borland, R, Yong, HH, Wilson, N, Fong, GT, Hammond, D, Cummings, KM, Hosking, W & McNeill, A 2009, 'How reactions to cigarette packet health warnings influence quitting: findings from the ITC Four-Country survey', *Addiction*, vol. 104, no. 4, pp. 669-75.

How can mental health and substance abuse services better meet the needs of Indigenous Australians?

Researchers from the Illawarra Institute for Mental Health, University of Wollongong, have examined 'the difficulties inherent in treating mental health and substance abuse within Indigenous populations'. They point out that 'Indigenous Australians are more likely than non-Indigenous Australians to experience the adverse effects of alcohol consumption, and that mental health disorders are more prevalent in Indigenous communities than non-Indigenous communities. Indigenous Australians currently do not access mental health and substance abuse services at a level which is consistent with their level of need, and this is largely due to inconsistent or insufficient culturally respectful mental health services'.

After reviewing relevant literature, the researchers conclude there is 'an increasing need for mental health and substance abuse services that are sensitive to the needs of Indigenous Australians'. They discuss 'engagement challenges and what is needed to increase engagement and improve outcomes for these clients' in particular the need 'to identify which approaches to mental health and substance abuse service provision are associated with better outcomes for Indigenous clients, and ways of increasing the cultural respectfulness of these services'.

Berry, SL and Crowe, TP 2009, 'A review of Indigenous Australians within mental health and substance abuse services', *Australian e-Journal for the Advancement of Mental Health*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 1-12. <http://auseinet.flinders.edu.au/journal/vol8iss1/berry.pdf>

How important is awareness of one's HCV status, compared with access to sterile injecting equipment, as a strategy for HCV prevention?

Researchers in Montreal, Canada, interviewed NSP and methadone clinic clients on their drug use and hepatitis C virus (HCV) testing 'to address the ongoing debate regarding the potential impact of knowing one's HCV status on injection risk behaviors. In particular, [they examined]...the relative contribution of HCV infection status and other factors associated with borrowing drug injection equipment'. While 'over three quarters of participants reported receiving an HCV screening test in the year before study enrolment', the study showed that the effectiveness of HCV screening on behavioural change was 'uncertain'. The researchers found that 'issues related to poor access to sterile injecting equipment, the composition of an IDU's social network, and personal health status rather than HCV infection status, were associated with risky injecting behavior. Access to clean equipment and supportive social networks are likely to create an environment which encourages safer injection and deters equipment sharing'. Furthermore, 'personal infection status may be less important than other factors for risk reduction'.

Cox, J, Morissette, C, De, P, Tremblay, C, Allard, R, Graves, L, Stephenson, R & Roy, E 2009, 'Access to sterile injecting equipment is more important than awareness of HCV

status for injection risk behaviors among drug users', *Substance Use and Misuse*, vol. 44, no. 4, pp. 548-68.

How much do Australians smoke and drink?

The Australian Bureau of Statistics National Health Survey (NHS) for 2007-08 covered health status (most Australians consider themselves to be in 'very good or excellent health'), long term conditions ('77% of the population reported having at least one long term medical condition', e.g. cancer or diabetes), private health insurance ('over half of those aged 15 and over have private health insurance') and lifestyle behaviours and related characteristics which are recognised as risks to health: smoking; alcohol consumption; exercise, body mass and some dietary habits.

In relation to smoking tobacco, 'One in five adults (20%) were current smokers in 2007-08 down from 23% in 2004-05; 18% were regular daily smokers and 2% smoked less often than once a day, while 52% reported that they had never smoked regularly, and the remaining 29% reported they were ex-smokers. More males than females were current smokers (22% and 18% respectively), and for both males and females the prevalence of smoking was highest for those aged 25-34 years: 33% of males and 22% of females'. However 'Smoking rates for the 2007-08 NHS are lower than those reported in the 2004-05 NHS'.

With regard to alcohol consumption, 'Persons were classified to a health risk level (low risk, risky, or high risk) based on their estimated average daily consumption of alcohol during the previous week. Of those males and females who drank alcohol in the previous week (59% of the total population), 21% did so at a level which would pose a risk to their health. Males aged 25-34 reported the highest proportion of drinking at the risky and high risk levels (17%). However for females the proportions drinking at risky and high risk levels were highest in the middle age groups, with 13% of females aged 45-64 years reporting consumption which would place them in the risky or high risk groups'.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2009, *2007-08 National Health Survey: summary of results*, Australia, catalogue no. 4364.0, ABS, Canberra, www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nst/mf/4364.0?OpenDocument.

The information collected in the NHS is available in data cubes from the ABS website. Readers can access detailed ACT data at *4362.0 National Health Survey: Summary of Results; State Tables, 2007-08*, www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nst/mf/4362.0?OpenDocument.

Media

Hume Health Centre

10 July 2009

John Hargreaves, MLA

The Minister for Corrections John Hargreaves and Joy Burch MLA (representing the Minister for Health) today launched the Hume Health Centre at the Alexander Maconochie Centre.

"The Hume Health Centre provides primary healthcare services to prisoners including pharmacy, nursing, dental, mental health, optical and specialist medical," Minister Hargreaves said.

"Prisoners often have complex health needs. Providing these health services at the AMC means that the standard of health care for prisoners is comparable to that available to the general community ensuring that prisoners' human rights are upheld.

"ACT Corrective Services and ACT Health have worked very closely to develop a best practice healthcare service," Minister Hargreaves said.

"I am also proud to announce that it is 10 years since ACT Health began providing healthcare services to ACT prisoners at the now closed Belconnen Remand Centre (BRC).

"The services and facilities at the Hume Health Centre are a vast improvement on what was available at BRC," said Minister Hargreaves

Ms Burch said the delivery of effective health care to prisoners is dependent upon the successful partnership between health and corrections.

"I am pleased to say that the launch of the Hume Health Centre and the delivery of an excellent service prove this relationship is working well," said Ms Burch.

"The aim is to improve health outcomes for the prisoners and their families.

"I would like to commend all the ACT Health and ACT Corrective Services staff who work tirelessly to ensure the success of the AMC" concluded Ms Burch.

Visit www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=8223&m=50 to view the full media release.

New Framework for ACT Government Concessions

15 July 2009

Katy Gallagher, MLA

The ACT Government has developed an online resource to help Canberrans access information about the range of concessions that is available, ACT Minister for Community Services, Katy Gallagher MLA announced today.

The dedicated web portal is part of the new direction for ACT Government concessions, which includes a new policy framework for the delivery of concessions.

The new framework was developed after a review of concessions across the ACT Government last year, which looked at how access to concessions was promoted, how concessions were accessed, and the different needs of individuals in the community.

Information on the range of concessions is available at www.concessions.act.gov.au.

Visit www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=8232 to view the full media release.

New ACT Foundation Underpins Wellness

17 July 2009

Katy Gallagher, MLA

A new fundraising body to be launched in Canberra tonight will support the provision of healthcare services and facilities for the people of the ACT and surrounding region, ACT Health Minister, Katy Gallagher MLA said today.

The Health Minister will launch the new ACT fundraising body called 'Our Wellness Foundation' at the Members Dining Room, Old Parliament House tonight.

"There is always a need for fundraising, particularly in the area of health and medical research, and these funds will be used to support health services, equipment and facilities, and research that will benefit the ACT community," Ms Gallagher said.

Visit www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=8235 to view the full media release.

Consumer Participation

Australian Council of Health care Standards Newsletter

Australian Council of Healthcare Standards (ACHS)

The ACHS is an independent, not-for-profit organisation whose goal is improving quality in health care. They are a leading health care assessment and accreditation provider in Australia. ACHS News is the official quarterly newsletter of the ACHS. It is distributed via email to Federal, State and Territory health ministers, ACHS surveyors, ACHS member organisations and other stakeholders including consumers and carers.

To download a copy of the newsletter visit www.achs.org.au/ACHSnews/

Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors

Consultation on the next ACT Women's Plan

Office for Women, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, (DHCS)

The ACT Women's Plan (2004-2009) is due to expire in September 2009. It provides a strategic policy framework for working with the community to improve the status of all women and girls. It was developed in response to a recommendation from the Legislative Assembly's Select Committee on the Status of Women in the ACT Report, and identified as a strategic action under Building Our Community - The Canberra Social Plan.

The discussion paper Looking Forward – informing a new plan for ACT women and girls has been prepared to commence the consultation phase of the development of the next iteration of the ACT Women's Plan and will provide an avenue for the community, individuals and organisations to provide feedback on the current Plan. A companion paper, Taking Stock: reporting on the ACT Women's Plan (2004-09) Indicators of Success provides a more extensive detail on progress against the Plan's Indicators of Success.

Written responses close on 30 September 2009.

Visit www.dhcs.act.gov.au/women for more information or contact Fiona Barker on (02) 6207 2552 or fiona.baker@act.gov.au.

Employment Opportunities

Alcohol and Other Drug Counsellor (Part Time 6 Month Contract)

DIRECTIONS ACT

The AOD Counsellor provides counselling and support to alcohol and other drug clients who access DIRECTIONS ACT services. The Counsellor provides support on housing, relationships, financial concerns, payments and other issues for our clients. The successful applicant will be able to effectively engage with clients from all walks of life, have excellent professional boundaries, understand the systems, organisations and supports for people with alcohol and other drug issues and be able to work with a small team.

The tenure for this position will be for an initial 6 month period, with the opportunity to extend if funding is available and the applicant is found to be satisfactory in the position.

For the job descriptions, pay rates, selection criteria and closing dates, visit www.directionsact.com/employment or contact Diedre Hobson on (02) 61228015.

Grants and Funding Opportunities

Community Support and Infrastructure Grants

ACT Government

The ACT Government has established the Community Support and Infrastructure Grants to continue its commitment to supporting the development of community organisations in the ACT. The Community Support and Infrastructure Grants will fund one-off community based projects, fixed and non-fixed infrastructure for community facilities and organisations. Applications are sought from community groups and non profit organisations for funding through three different categories:

- . Community Support and Capacity (up to \$30,000 per project)
- . Non Fixed Infrastructure and Equipment (up to \$30,000 per project)
- . Capital Works and Fixed Infrastructure (up to \$50,000 per project)

Details about the Grants and Application Packs are available from the ACT Government Grant Portal at www.grants.act.gov.au

To obtain further information please email communitypolicy@act.gov.au or call (02) 6205 0531 or (02) 6205 1308.

Applications close 5 pm, **Monday 24 August 2009**

Endeavour Executive Awards for Professional Development

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government

The Endeavour Awards is an internationally competitive, merit-based scholarship program providing opportunities to undertake short or long term study, research and professional development in a broad range of disciplines across the Asia-Pacific region. An Endeavour Executive Award will provide you with an opportunity to broaden your horizons and take that next step. Professionals from the community sector are encouraged to apply!

This unique award provides the flexibility to design a one to four month program that advances both your professional and personal goals. Your home and host organisations will also benefit from the collaboration, establishing or enhancing existing regional linkages and providing opportunities for longer term cooperation.

Australian organisations are also able to host international Endeavour Executive Award holders, a fantastic way to create new international linkages and to deepen ties with existing global colleagues.

The Endeavour Awards team can assist you in promoting these fantastic opportunities throughout your organisation through provision of brochures, editorial for staff newsletters or targeted presentations. If you would like to find out more about promotional opportunities, please contact endeavour.events@deewr.gov.au

For more information visit the Endeavour Awards website at www.endeavour.dest.gov.au

Applications for the first round of the 2010 Endeavour Executive Awards closed on **31 July 2009**. However, a second round will be offered later in the year.

Mental Health Conference Funding Now Available

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA)

The MHCA is pleased to announce that it will be continuing to provide limited financial assistance to support conferences that have a theme on mental health or suicide prevention under its new Mental Health Conference Funding Program. This program has been made possible through the funding provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

There will be five funding rounds held over the next two years for organisations looking for financial assistance to run relevantly themed conferences. Specifically, the conference funds have been designed to ensure a strong consumer/carer presence and voice at these conferences and events.

Information including application forms can be found at www.mhca.org.au/mental-health-conference-funding

For further details, the Program Manager, Rachelle Irving, can be contacted directly through email at rachelle.irving@mhca.org.au or on 02 6285 3100.

Up To \$4000 Funding Available For Children Of Drug And Alcohol Clients

Counting the Kids Program Brokerage Fund, Odyssey House Victoria

The Counting the Kids Brokerage Fund aims to enable drug and alcohol workers to pay for activities and services that will enhance children's health, connectedness to family, community, education and employment prospects, and self-esteem and well-being. A range of opportunities have been previously funded, such as music lessons, dental work, counselling, sports equipment and tutoring.

Visit www.odyssey.org.au/brokerage/content/index.asp for more information or contact Jordan Trew on (03) 9420 7626 or email jtrew@odyssey.org.au