

## ACT AOD Sector Project eBulletin: February 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, Youth Coalition of the ACT. To subscribe, submit an item or to provide feedback email [ebulletin@aodsector.org.au](mailto:ebulletin@aodsector.org.au).

News from the ACT AOD Sector Project	In This Edition...
<p><b>ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy</b></p> <p>The ACT is currently in the process of implementing a Minimum Qualification Strategy (MQS) for the AOD sector. Under the MQS, all workers of ACT Health funded non government AOD services should either possess the specified minimum qualification or have an agreed plan and timeline with their organisation, to meet the minimum qualification. In October 2008, ACT Health contracted the ACT AOD Sector Project, which is auspiced by the Youth Coalition of the ACT, to administer \$150 000 in funding to support workers to participate in the MQS. This funding is to be expended by June 2009.</p> <p>Attached is an information pack which provides more information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy and Project</li> <li>• Funding available through the ACT Minimum Qualification Project</li> <li>• Recognition of Prior Learning</li> <li>• Information for Government Workers</li> <li>• Funded Training and Assessment Opportunities for Semester 1, 2009</li> <li>• Information on Staff Backfill</li> <li>• Courses undertaken in Semester 2, 2008</li> <li>• Relevant Application Forms</li> </ul> <p>To download the Information Pack in pdf <a href="#">click here</a>, or in word version <a href="#">here</a>. If you have any further questions, please contact the ACT AOD Sector Project, on (02) 6247 3540 or <a href="mailto:info@aodsector.org.au">info@aodsector.org.au</a></p>	<p><b>News from the ACT AOD Sector Project</b></p> <p>Update on Project activities.</p> <p><b>ACT AOD Sector Forum Update</b></p> <p>Information from services that attended the AOD sector monthly forum.</p> <p><b>Sector Activities and Events</b></p> <p>Launches, key weeks, international days and program and service activities.</p> <p><b>News from the Executive Directors' Group</b></p> <p>Information from the EDs' group that is relevant to the AOD sector and workers.</p>
<p><b>ACT Minimum Qualification Project: Information Session</b></p> <p>This information session is for workers in ACT AOD services who will be undertaking study to meet the ACT Minimum Qualification (see above). It will provide background on the Minimum Qualification Strategy and Project. Representatives from the Canberra Institute of Technology will also provide information for workers interested in undertaking the 4 core competencies in Semester 1, 2009.</p> <p><i>Date:</i> Monday 9 February 2009</p> <p><i>Time:</i> 4 - 5pm</p> <p><i>Venue:</i> Youth Coalition Office, 46 Clianthus Street, O'Connor.</p> <p><i>RSVP:</i> By Friday 6 February 2009. Contact Erin Barry on (02) 6247 3540 or <a href="mailto:erin@youthcoalition.net">erin@youthcoalition.net</a></p> <p>Click <a href="#">here</a> to view the flyer for this information session.</p>	<p><b>Sector Development</b></p> <p>Information on networks, resources, websites, factsheets and tools for workers.</p> <p><b>Training and Professional Development</b></p> <p>Training for the AOD and allied sectors, including upcoming seminars, conferences, bus tours, courses and other professional development opportunities.</p>

### **ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy Project Committee**

The ACT AOD Sector Project is inviting expressions of interest from individuals interested in participating in the ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy Project Committee. The Committee will meet at least twice in Semester 1, to provide support to the implementation of, and oversee applications for funding received through the Project (See above).

For more information contact the ACT AOD Sector Project, on (02) 6247 3540 or

[info@aodsector.org.au](mailto:info@aodsector.org.au)

### **February 2009 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 26 February 2009

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

*Guest Speaker:* To be confirmed.

*Venue:* Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation, Grattan Cct, Wanniasa (behind the PCYC).

*Note:* This forum is for AOD workers only.

For more information or to RSVP contact Amanda Bode, Project Officer on [info@aodsector.org.au](mailto:info@aodsector.org.au) or (02) 6247 3540.

### **ACT Drug Action Week Planning Group**

Drug Action Week (DAW) is a national week of activities to raise awareness about alcohol and other drug issues and to promote the achievements of those who work to reduce drug related harm. Following the success of Drug Action Week in the ACT in 2008, the ACT AOD Sector Project will again be coordinating an ACT Drug Action Week Planning Group. The Planning Group will be involved in the development of activities for Drug Action Week and is open to anyone in the sector.

*Date:* Thursday 5 February 2009

*Time:* 4.30pm - 5pm

*Location:* Youth Coalition Office, 46 Clianthus St, O'Connor.

*RSVP:* To Amanda Bode, Project Officer on [info@aodsector.org.au](mailto:info@aodsector.org.au) or (02) 6247 3540

### **ACT AOD Services Directory, Version 2**

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 2 of the ACT AOD Services Directory contains over 34 program profiles, and includes information on services delivered to people experiencing comorbid AOD and mental health issue. The Directory is available electronically and in a downloadable pdf from

[www.aodsector.org.au](http://www.aodsector.org.au)

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

### **ACT AOD Sector Project**

The ACT AOD Sector Project, auspiced 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

#### **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.

AOD.

For more information visit [www.aodsector.org.au](http://www.aodsector.org.au) or [info@aodsector.org.au](mailto:info@aodsector.org.au) or (02) 6247 3540.

See also:

*Training and Professional Development* section for the 'ACT Training and Professional 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. As there was not a Forum in January 2009, the sector forum update will return in the March 2009 eBulletin.

## Sector Activities and Events

### Women's Relapse Prevention Group

*Womens Information, Resources and Education on Drugs and Dependency (WIREDD), Toora Women Inc*

The Women's Relapse Prevention Group covers topics such as:

- Practical strategies
- Self-esteem
- Stress management
- Anger
- Support systems
- Body Image, Relationships, art projects and more...

*Date:* Begins Tuesday, 2 February 2008. (To be held on Tuesdays from 10.30am - 12.30pm)

*Time:* 10.30am - 12.30pm

*Venue:* WIREDD, Room G03, Griffin Centre, Genge St, Civic

*Food:* Lunch is provided

*Registration:* The group is open (no bookings required)

For more information contact WIREDD on (02) 6248 8600.

### Maysoon: For Women with Young Children

*DIRECTIONS ACT*

The Maysoon program is available for women, with young children who are using alcohol and other drugs or who are in recovery. Pregnant women or women who have children with Care and Protection orders are also welcome. The program provides:

- Free and confidential support
- Friendly professional workers
- Opportunity to meet other mothers
- Access to services including a Registered Nurse and AOD Counsellors
- Opportunities to learn new skills
- Access to other community services
- Fun activities

- Healthy lunch and food
- Helpful Information
- Pampering
- Free childcare for women attending the Program

*Date:* Thursdays (during the school term)

*Venue:* DIRECTIONS ACT, 1 Bradley Street, Woden

*Bookings:* Contact DIRECTIONS ACT on (02) 6122 8000

[Click here](#) to download a flyer.

### **Launch of the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling report for the ACT Council of Social Service: Expenditure of Low Income Households in the ACT**

*National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling and ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)*

ACTCOSS invites you to attend the launch of a new research report providing important information about the expenditure patterns of low income households in the ACT. The report will be launched by Dr. Helen Watchirs, ACT Human Rights and Discrimination Commissioner. It follows the 2007 launch of Characteristics of Low Income Households in the ACT which showed that some groups are at greater risk of living on low incomes.

*Date:* Wednesday 4 February 2009

*Time:* 10am - 11am

*Venue:* Gungahlin Community Resource Centre, Cnr Ernest Cavanagh St & Gungahlin Place

*RSVP:* Brooke McKail on (02) 6202 7222 or [brooke.mckail@actcoss.org.au](mailto:brooke.mckail@actcoss.org.au).

### **ACT Budget: Close 10 February 2009**

*ACT Treasury*

ACT Treasury is now accepting Submissions for the development of the 2009-10 ACT Government Budget. The Budget sets out the fiscal and economic outlook for the ACT, outlines the Government's key priorities and plans for the coming year in relation to service delivery and infrastructure provision, and details how these will be achieved within available resources. Submissions from community stakeholders help Government identify new and emerging needs and determine where money should be spent.

To make a submission, email [budgetconsultation@act.gov.au](mailto:budgetconsultation@act.gov.au).

Visit [www.treasury.act.gov.au/](http://www.treasury.act.gov.au/) for more information.

The consultation deadline is Tuesday 10 February 2009.

### **Young People and Alcohol: An investigation of the cultural drivers of alcohol use among young Australians**

*National Centre for Education on Training and Addiction (NCETA)*

NCETA has recently commenced a 2-year project to examine the wide array of cultural factors that influence drinking among young Australians (14-24 years).

The Project objectives are to explore the:

- cultural drivers that underlie risk-taking behaviours particularly drinking alcohol at risky levels
- perceptions, motivations, attitudes and behaviours towards risky alcohol use
- differences in gender-related attitudes to drinking alcohol

- perceptions of consumerism and individualism and how they influence risk-taking and drinking patterns among young Australians aged 14-24 years.

NCETA is currently seeking to interview young people aged 14 - 24 regarding their experiences and opinions on alcohol. The interview usually takes about 45 minutes and all information is strictly confidential. All young people will be reimbursed for their time.

[Click here](#) for more information or contact Ange Scarfe, NCETA on [anie.scarfe@flinders.edu.au](mailto:anie.scarfe@flinders.edu.au) or (08) 8201 7545

### **Smoking in cars when children are present: Community consultation**

*ACT Health*

The Minister for Health, Katy Gallagher MLA, has released a consultation paper canvassing options for prohibiting smoking in motor vehicles when children are present.

Minimising the public's exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) is an integral part of ACT tobacco regulation. The ACT Government is concerned about smoking in cars where children are present, and it's a high priority for this Government to protect our children from exposure to ETS.

The consultation paper canvasses a number of options to address smoking in motor vehicles when children are present. The purpose of the paper is two-fold to raise awareness about the health risks of ETS exposure and to seek the community's views on this important issue.

To view the consultation paper visit

[www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=da&did=10010771&pid=1230850379](http://www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=da&did=10010771&pid=1230850379)

Submissions close 5pm, 27 February 2009.

### **Smoking in Cars - What do young people think?**

*Children and Young People Commissioner, ACT Human Rights Commission*

ACT Health has invited public comment on a discussion paper about 'options for managing smoking in motor vehicles when children are present' (see item above). The Children & Young People Commissioner would like to find out what children and young people think about the issue.

They are circulating a survey to organisations, asking people if they can spare some time to support young people in completing the questions.

[Click here](#) to download the survey.

For more information contact Brianna McGill, Children and Young People Advisor on [brianna.mcgill@act.gov.au](mailto:brianna.mcgill@act.gov.au).

### **Update to the Australian (illicit) drug policy timeline: 1985-2008**

*Drug Policy Modelling Program (DPMP), National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)*

The DPMP Australian (illicit) drug policy timeline: 1985-2008 has been updated for the period July-December 2008. The timeline provides a list of key events that have occurred in Australia between 1985 and December 2008. Events are listed by jurisdiction, at the national and state/territory level.

Visit [www.dpmp.unsw.edu.au/dpmpweb.nsf/page/Drug+Policy+Timeline](http://www.dpmp.unsw.edu.au/dpmpweb.nsf/page/Drug+Policy+Timeline) to view the timeline.

**News from the Executive Directors Group**

This section highlights information from the Executive Directors' Group that is relevant to the AOD sector and workers. As there was not an ED's meeting in January, News from the Executive Directors' Group will return in the March 2009 eBulletin.

## Sector Development

### **The National Inhalants Information Service (NIIS)**

*Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA)*

The National Inhalants Information Service (NIIS) is a unique service providing the Australian community with information and resources regarding inhalant misuse. Launched in June 2008, the NIIS consists of a website, a database of resources and a traditional library service. For more information visit [www.inhalantsinfo.org.au](http://www.inhalantsinfo.org.au)

### **Of Substance - January 2009 issue out now**

*Australian National Council on Drugs*

The January issue of Of Substance includes the following articles:

- Local Government: cleaning up alcohol's mess
- Families: are they getting help?
- No home, no hope? Making a difference
- Drug mules: a risky business
- Boom towns, drug towns?
- Opal update
- Drug use snapshot

For more details regarding Of Substance, including how to subscribe to the magazine, visit [www.ofsubstance.org.au](http://www.ofsubstance.org.au)

## Training and Professional Development

See the '*News from the ACT AOD Sector Project*' Section for information on:

- ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy
- ACT Minimum Qualification Project: Information Session

### **ACT Training and Professional Development Calendar (January - February 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 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](http://www.aodsector.org.au)

For more information contact Erin Barry, Youth Coalition of the ACT on (02) 6247 3540 or [info@aodsector.org.au](mailto:info@aodsector.org.au)

## **Post-graduate Research Studies in Drug Policy: PhD Scholarships, Masters Research Projects**

*Drug Policy Modelling Program (DPMP), National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)*

Applications are invited to undertake post-graduate studies (PhD, Masters) with the DPMP.

The DPMP is a multi-disciplinary team of scholars studying drug policy – including generating new evidence to inform drug policy, translating evidence into relevant information for policy makers and studying the policy process. Further information about the DPMP research program can be found at [www.dpmp.unsw.edu.au](http://www.dpmp.unsw.edu.au)

The DPMP provides a team environment for a PhD candidate – with students forming part of the larger DPMP team, participating in additional research and policy opportunities, and being provided with employment opportunities as a research assistant. Potential supervisors, along with their areas of interest are listed on the website.

The PhD stipend is \$30,000 per annum payable over three years. Applicants should possess an Honours degree, preferably first class, in an appropriate discipline.

Enquiries should be directed to Associate Professor Alison Ritter on

[Alison.ritter@unsw.edu.au](mailto:Alison.ritter@unsw.edu.au)

## **Workshop on Nutrition, Hepatitis C and Injecting Drug Use**

*ACT Hepatitis Resource Centre in partnership with Albion Street Centre*

The aim of this one-day course is to enable participants to incorporate brief nutrition interventions into their daily work. The workshop will provide an overview of the impact of injecting drug use and related diseases on nutritional status. Practical strategies for enhancing nutritional status, including healthy eating and symptom management, will be discussed, and complementary therapies reviewed.

The workshop is suitable for Needle and Syringe Program workers, nurses, social workers, alcohol and other drug workers and those who work in liver and infectious disease clinics.

*Date:* Friday 6 February 2009

*Time:* 9am-5pm

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

*Cost:* \$110 including handouts and all food.

[Click here](#) to download a flyer.

For more information contact Vaughan Winter, ACT Hepatitis Resource Centre on (02) 6282 2611 or [project@hepatitisresourcecentre.com.au](mailto:project@hepatitisresourcecentre.com.au)

## **National Amphetamine Type Stimulants Training**

*ANEX*

Free National Training in amphetamine type stimulants (ATS) is available for workers from:

- Needle & Syringe Programs
- Alcohol & Other Drug Services
- Mental Health Services
- Social Work
- Youth Services
- Indigenous Organisations

- Housing or emergency accommodation
- Or any other services that work with this client group.

The training will:

- Build and improve your knowledge and confidence in relation to ATS
- Improve your brief intervention and referral skills to work effectively with people who use ATS
- Improve your knowledge and understanding of the potential harms associated with ATS use
- Improve your knowledge regarding strategies to work effectively with clients to prevent and reduce harms

*Date:* 1 April 2009

*Venue:* Level 5, Civic Community Health Building, Conference Room, 1 Moore St (Cnr Moore and Alinga Sts), Canberra City

*Cost:* Free

*Registration:* To register your interest go to [www.amphetamines.org.au](http://www.amphetamines.org.au) or phone Anex on (03) 9486 6399 or email [info@amphetamines.org.au](mailto:info@amphetamines.org.au)

### **Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Workshops**

*Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS)*

The one-day workshop will include information on relevant legislation, expand on understandings of child abuse and neglect, provide an opportunity to discuss responses to a disclosure of abuse, reflect on dilemmas in making a report, reflect on what it means to be child focused and provide information on making and receiving a report.

*Dates:* Monday 9 February 2009, Wednesday 18 March 2009, Thursday 2 April 2009, Wednesday 13 May 2009 and Wednesday 17 June 2009

*Time:* 9am – 4pm

*Venue:* Beaufort Room, Level 1, Nature Conservation House, Cnr Benjamin Way and Emu Bank, Belconnen

*Cost:* Free

*RSVP:* To register email [DHCSLearning.Development@act.gov.au](mailto:DHCSLearning.Development@act.gov.au) with your name, organisation and phone number.

[Click here](#) for the workshop flyer.

For more information contact Robyn on (02) 6205 3839.

### **Aboriginal Culture, History & Heritage Training**

*ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)*

Facilitated by Kerry Reed-Gilbert, 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 13 February 2009

*Time:* 9.30am - 4.30pm

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

*Cost:* Prices range from \$44 to \$231, and invoices for payment are sent after each seminar.

To register for this seminar phone Julie on (02) 6202 7200 or [julie@actcoss.org.au](mailto:julie@actcoss.org.au)

### **The ACT Human Rights Act: What do recent changes mean for ACT Community Organisations?**

*ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)*

In 2009 amendments made to the ACT Human Rights Act come into effect, that specify that "public authorities" must act in a way that is compatible with and gives proper consideration to human rights. There is a right to bring a complaint against public authorities if they fail to do so.

ACTCOSS is co-ordinating an information forum for ACT community organisations on these changes to the ACT Human Rights Act, and what they may mean for community organisations. The ACT Human Rights Commission will provide an overview of the changes, and other speakers will deliver information about possible impacts on your organisation.

*Date:* Tuesday, 17 February 2009

*Time:* 10am - 12pm

*Venue:* Room 6, Griffin Centre, Genge St Canberra City

*RSVP:* To Brooke McKail on (02) 6202 7222 or [brooke.mckail@actcoss.org.au](mailto:brooke.mckail@actcoss.org.au)

### **Health Promotion Short Course**

*ACT Health*

This 5 day Core Health Promotion Short Course is a practical introduction to the principles and practice of health promotion for those without any formal qualifications in health promotion. The course content reflects the latest developments in health promotion and applies these to the current health policy environment.

Registration will be by expression of interest. Course participants will be expected to be working with the ACT community, or be studying in the ACT.

*Date:* February 17,18,19 and March 3 & 5, 2009

*Time:* 9.30am - 5pm

*Venue:* National Botanic Gardens, Clunies Ross Street, Acton

*Cost:* \$300 per person, limited to 25 places

Registration forms are available at [www.healthpromotion.act.gov.au](http://www.healthpromotion.act.gov.au). For course enquiries please contact Cheryl Hutchins at [cheryl.hutchins@act.gov.au](mailto:cheryl.hutchins@act.gov.au) or (02) 6205 1215.

### **Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) Tune-Up Workshops**

*VYNE @ OzHelp*

VYNE @ OzHelp will be running ASIST Tune-Up workshops in 2009. The workshops are for those who have completed a two day ASIST course in the past four years. ASIST Tune-Up provides participants with an opportunity to refresh ASIST skills and talk with other ASIST trained caregivers about applying the ASIST model in the real world.

*Date:* 19 February 2009

*Time:* 9.30am – 1pm

*Venue:* Confirmed upon registration

*Cost:* \$65 Concession Rate (for volunteers, students and pensioners), \$85 Regular Rate.

Registrations close 12 February 2009. For an ASIST Tune-Up flyer and registration form contact the VYNE @ OzHelp team on [vyne@ozhelp.org.au](mailto:vyne@ozhelp.org.au) or on (02) 6251 4166.

### **Performance Management**

*ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)*

Facilitated by Biff Ward, the aim of this seminar is to provide managers and supervisors with innovative ways to enhance the effectiveness of service delivery through the development of their staff.

*Date:* Friday, 20 February 2009

*Time:* 9am - 4.30pm

*Venue:* ACTCOSS, Level 1, 67 Townshend St, Phillip

*Cost:* Prices range from \$135 to \$270, and invoices for payment are sent after each seminar.

To register for this seminar, please phone Lisa on (02) 6202 7200 or [lisa@actcoss.org.au](mailto:lisa@actcoss.org.au)

### **Introduction to the Discrimination Act**

*ACT Human Rights Commission*

This workshop will provide participants with a general understanding of the purpose, scope and operation of the *Discrimination Act 1991*, including the difference between direct and indirect discrimination, grounds and areas that are covered. It will cover how the Human Rights Commission deals with discrimination complaints and provide an overview of other work done by the Commission.

*Date:* Friday, 20 February 2009.

*Time:* 9.30am - 1pm

*Venue:* Details of the venue will be sent out with your confirmation.

To register for this seminar, please phone (02) 6207 1034 or email [human.rights@act.gov.au](mailto:human.rights@act.gov.au)

### **Responding to Suicide & Self Harm**

*Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT*

This training will be provided by the Mental Health Community Coalition NSW. This course is valuable to anyone who works with people at risk of self harm or suicide and encompasses:

- Definitions of suicide in everyday workplace situations
- Warning signs that an individual is at increased risk of self-harm or suicide and assess the level of risk
- How to recognise and respond to cues, triggers and risk factors which may indicate an individual is considering suicide or self-harm
- How to gain information about an individual's thoughts of suicide or self-harm and undertake action required to promote safety for individuals at risk of self-harm and suicide
- Recognise where and when to arrange assistance from available local resources.

*Date:* Thursday 5 - Friday 6 March 2009

*Time:* 9am - 5pm (both days)

*Venue:* Room 7, Level 1, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Canberra City

To RSVP or for more information please phone (02) 6249 7756 or email

[admin@mhccact.org.au](mailto:admin@mhccact.org.au)

## **Lifeline National Conference: Working Towards Best Practice in Accessible Care**

### *Lifeline*

Join Lifeline for a two day conference open to delegates from the mental health sector and those who have a particular interest in the role of telephone and web based support services, and consumer engagement in service delivery. The program includes:

- Day 1: Will be focused on “Innovations in telephone and web support services” and will address the role of telephone and web based support services as a necessary piece in the mental health spectrum of care.
- Day 2: Will profile stories of hope, resilience and recovery, from individuals who have experienced a personal crisis or challenge, and identify services and strategies that connect people with care, with the theme “The Consumer Voice.” This day will include facilitated interactive plenary sessions that will engage delegates in a dialogue about how service providers can improve the consumer experience.

*Date:* Wednesday 11 - Thursday 12 March

*Venue:* The Rydges Lakeside Hotel, London Circuit, Canberra

For more information on registration, sponsorship opportunities or holding an exhibition booth at this event visit [www.lifeline.org.au/conference09](http://www.lifeline.org.au/conference09)

## **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>

### **How has the dramatic fall in tobacco smoking prevalence in Australia been achieved?**

The third edition of *Tobacco in Australia: Facts and Issues*, compiled by the Cancer Council of Victoria, comprehensively reviews the major issues in tobacco smoking and health in Australia. It reveals that fewer than one in five Australians now smoke, with adult smoking prevalence having dropped from 34% in 1980 to 19% in 2007. This is now paying huge dividends in reduced rates of lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. However, the report states that in the next decade a lot of careful and creative thought is needed on how to continually refresh media, political and public interest in tobacco control. ‘Finishing the job’ and giving greater attention to hard-to-reach groups, especially the Indigenous community, will be the organising concepts. The importance of this endeavour should not be underestimated, the report’s authors argue, for nothing could have a greater impact on public health in Australia than ‘making smoking history’.

Scollo, MM & Winstanley, MH (eds) 2008, *Tobacco in Australia: facts and issues*, 3rd edn, Cancer Council Victoria, Melbourne, [www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au](http://www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au)

### **What can we learn from the National Drug Strategy Household survey?**

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has extended the analysis presented in its

*2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: first results* by providing more detailed information on drug use prevalence, drug-related behaviours and incidents, and support for drug-related policy and legislation. This report, along with others in the Drug Statistics Series, is a useful resource for policy-makers, planners and researchers interested in drug-related matters.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2008, *2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: detailed findings*, Drug Statistics Series no. 22, cat. no. PHE 107, AIHW, Canberra, [www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10674](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10674)

### **Do drug companies' promotion and marketing of prescription drugs contribute to drug abuse and addiction?**

An article in the latest issue of the American Journal of Public Health examines issues surrounding the promotion and marketing of prescription opioids and their regulatory oversight in the USA. The author states that prescribed drugs pose different public health risks from uncontrolled (illicit) drugs when they are over-promoted and highly prescribed, owing to their potential for abuse and diversion. He analyses the promotion and marketing by Purdue Pharma of the opioid analgesic OxyContin, a sustained release oxycodone preparation, to illustrate these issues.

When Purdue Pharma introduced OxyContin in 1996 it was aggressively marketed and highly promoted in the non-malignant pain market. Sophisticated marketing data were used to influence physicians' prescribing, with those who were the highest prescribers of opioids targeted. Purdue used a patient starter coupon program for Oxycontin that provided patients with a free limited-time prescription for a 7- to 30-day supply. Although research demonstrated that OxyContin was not superior in efficacy and safety to other available opioids, sales rose from \$44 million in 1996 to a 2001 and 2002 combined sales of nearly \$3 billion.

In the promotion and marketing of OxyContin the risk of addiction in the use of opioids for the treatment of non-cancer-related pain was minimised. The commercial success of OxyContin was accompanied by increasing rates of abuse and addiction. Drug users learned how to simply crush the controlled-release tablet and swallow, inhale, or inject the high-potency opioid for an intense morphine-like high.

The author concludes that the public interest and public health would be better served by a redefinition of acceptable and allowable marketing practices for opioids and other prescription drugs.

Van Zee, A 2009, 'The promotion and marketing of OxyContin: commercial triumph, public health tragedy', American Journal of Public Health, vol. 99, no. 2, pp. 221-7.

### **Does seeing smoking in movies cause teenagers to take up smoking?**

Research undertaken by the National Cancer Institute in the USA has found that tobacco promotions and depictions of smoking in movies cause teenagers to start smoking. Their study, which examines over 1,000 scientific studies on how the media influences tobacco use, found that even brief exposure to advertising influences adolescent attitudes.

Three-quarters or more of hit movies depict cigarette smoking, and specific brands can be identified in about one third. However, the research found that mass media campaigns aimed at reducing smoking do work, especially if combined with other tobacco-control strategies.

National Cancer Institute (USA) 2008, *The role of the media in promoting and reducing*

*tobacco use*, Tobacco Control Monograph 19, NIH Pub. No. 07-6242, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD. [www.cancercontrol.cancer.gov/tcrb/monographs/19/index.html](http://www.cancercontrol.cancer.gov/tcrb/monographs/19/index.html)

### **How can mass media campaigns be used effectively in the area of public health?**

Mass media interventions that target individuals in relation to a particular public health problem have a long basis in public health history. Abroms and Maibach state that media campaigns aimed at individual behaviour can achieve at best modest outcomes but that mass media interventions that seek to influence people indirectly, by creating beneficial changes in the places (or environments) in which people live and work, have equal if not greater potential to promote beneficial changes in population health. They propose that attention be given to media campaigns aimed at social networks, for example, parents, friends, teachers and mentors, who provide social support, guidance and modelling, to encourage individuals to adopt various health behaviours. Media campaigns could also aim to influence community-level factors, for instance, alcohol consumption among college students. The authors state that 'By harnessing the mass media to change social support, community norms, the availability of products and services, and other factors from nonindividual fields of influence, we should be able to greatly improve the likelihood of achieving large-scale changes in public behaviour' (p. 228).

Abroms, LC & Maibach, EW 2008, 'The effectiveness of mass communication to change public behavior', *Annual Review of Public Health*, vol. 29, pp. 219-34.

### **Is there a link between domestic violence and the availability of alcohol?**

Researchers from the University of Texas Houston School of Public Health examined the relationship between alcohol outlet density (the number of alcohol outlets per capita by postal/zip code) and male-to-female partner violence (MFPV) or female-to-male partner violence (FMPV). They also investigated whether binge drinking or the presence of alcohol-related problems altered the relationship between alcohol outlet density and MFPV or FMPV.

They found that an increase of 10 alcohol outlets per 10,000 persons was associated with 34% increased risk of MFPV and 12% increased risk of FMPV. The relationship between alcohol outlet density and MFPV was stronger among couples reporting alcohol-related problems than those reporting no problems.

They concluded that as alcohol outlet density increases so does the risk of MFPV and that this relationship may differ for couples who do and do not report alcohol-related problems. Given that MFPV accounts for the majority of injuries related to intimate partner violence, the researchers suggest that limiting alcohol outlet density could help to reduce MFPV and its adverse consequences.

McKinney, CM, Caetano, R, Harris, TR & Ebama, MS 2008, 'Alcohol availability and intimate partner violence among US couples', *Alcoholism, Clinical and Experimental Research*.

### **What do clients on methadone and buprenorphine think about their treatment?**

The Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users' League (AIVL) and academic colleagues conducted a consumer satisfaction survey among clients receiving methadone or buprenorphine treatment for opioid dependence. The survey aimed to assess client perceptions across a number of treatment domains, including the clinic environment, service

provision, clinical relationships, medication and treatment outcomes. Participants were 432 clients receiving treatment at nine public clinics in NSW. Seventy-eight per cent of participants were on methadone treatment.

Overall, participants were mainly satisfied with the services provided by the clinic, although they had concerns over the inflexibility associated with the clinic atmosphere, frequency of clinic attendance, dosing hours and lack of takeaway doses. Some participants wanted to see their prescriber and case manager more often, and over half reported that they did not have input into their care plan. The consumers found the clinics somewhat helpful in assisting them with issues relating to the core service delivery priorities of drug use and mental health, but aspects such as physical health, employment, financial support and parenting were evaluated less highly.

Madden, A, Lea, T, Bath, N & Winstock, AR 2008, 'Satisfaction guaranteed? What clients on methadone and buprenorphine think about their treatment', *Drug and Alcohol Review*, vol. 27, no. 6, pp. 671-8.

### **Can residential therapeutic communities be modified to accommodate opioid-dependent clients on methadone maintenance?**

Residential therapeutic communities (TCs) have demonstrated effectiveness, yet for the most part they adhere to a drug-free ideology that is incompatible with the use of methadone. Researchers explored the consequences of admitting opioid-dependent clients currently on methadone maintenance treatment (MMT) into a TC in San Francisco. The study compared 24-month outcomes between 125 MMT patients and 106 opioid-dependent drug-free clients with similar psychiatric history, criminal justice pressure and expected length of stay who were all enrolled in a TC. At each assessment, the proportion of the MMT group testing positive for illicit opioids was indistinguishable from the proportion in the comparison group. This was also the case for stimulant and alcohol use. The groups were statistically equivalent for benzodiazepine use at all assessments except at 24 months where 7% of the MMT group and none in the comparison group tested positive. Regarding injection- and sex-risk behaviours the groups were equivalent at all observation points. The researchers concluded that methadone patients fared as well as other opioid users in TC treatment. The authors conclude that 'These findings provide additional evidence that TCs can be successfully modified to accommodate MMT patients'.

Sorensen, JL, Andrews, S, Delucchi, KL, Greenberg, B, Guydish, J, Masson, CL & Shopshire, M 2009, 'Methadone patients in the therapeutic community: a test of equivalency', *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, vol. 100, no. 1-2, pp. 100-6.

### **Is it possible for a prison to be restorative and therapeutic?**

Restorative justice approaches have been adopted in many communities over recent decades. In broad terms, 'restorative justice is a process that involves active victim participation, requires offenders to take responsibility for the harm they have done and to make apology and amends to their victims'. It is based on the concept of re-integrative shaming which stands in sharp contrast to the notion of stigmatising which is prevalent within current criminal justice systems.

Goulding, Hall and Steels argue that the current operation of prisons offers very little to the community. Victims of crime are not recompensed for their losses. The community is not safer. Prisons do not reduce crime but, conversely, are themselves criminogenic. The

community gains little benefit but faces increasingly high costs with increasing imprisonment rates.

The researchers examine restorative justice practices in prisons in Belgium, England and Wales, and in the recently established Acacia prison in Western Australia. They propose processes for the effective working of restorative justice in Australian prisons. Their contention is that prisoners who have served their time within restorative and therapeutic custodial settings would be returned to the wider community with a vastly better chance of successful reintegration as law abiding, valued citizens. This paper is timely considering that Canberra's Alexander Maconochie Centre is intended to reflect a rehabilitative, rather than punitive, philosophy.

Goulding, D, Hall, G & Steels, B 2008, 'Restorative prisons: towards radical prison reform', *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 231-42.

### **Has the Medically Supervised Injecting Centre affected crime in Kings Cross?**

Previous studies examining the impact of Sydney's Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) on drug-related crime in Kings Cross have found that the Centre had no adverse effects. A study was undertaken of trends in robbery, theft and drug offences in Kings Cross over a six-year period (from the commencement of MSIC in May 2001 until December 2007) and compared these to trends in the rest of Sydney. It revealed a continuation of the decline in the incidence of robbery and property crime in Kings Cross. The results for drug offences were mixed. There were increases in arrests for possession/use of cocaine and possession/use of amphetamine but decreases in arrests for dealing/trafficking in narcotics and use/possession of narcotics. There was an increase in the proportion of 'move-ons' and persons arrested for drug/use possession within 50 metres of the MSIC.

Snowball, L, Burgess, M & Price, B 2008, *Trends in property and illicit drug-related crime in Kings Cross: An update*, Crime and Justice Bulletin no. 120, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.

[www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll\\_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/CJB120.pdf/\\$file/CJB120.pdf](http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/vwFiles/CJB120.pdf/$file/CJB120.pdf)

### **Can programs in primary schools to improve students' social functioning show benefits in adult life?**

Researchers in Washington State, USA, examined the long-term effects of a six-year intervention which commenced in 1981 in fifteen elementary schools serving diverse neighbourhoods, including high-crime neighbourhoods: the Seattle Social Development Project. The intervention provided parents, teachers and students with training and guidance aimed at reducing negative outcomes such as dropping out of school, abusing drugs, being involved in crime, and practising unsafe sex. 598 participants in the intervention were surveyed at ages 24 and 27 years. The study measured the participants' reports of their functioning in school, work, and community and of mental health, sexual behaviour, substance use, and crime, as well as their court records. Effects of the intervention included significantly better educational and economic attainment, mental health, and sexual health by age 27 years. No intervention effects were found on either of the substance abuse and dependence indices, and no significant effects were observed for the specific measures of a variety of substance use or substance use interference with life. The researchers concluded that a universal intervention for urban elementary schoolchildren, which focused on classroom management and instruction, children's social competence, and parenting practices, positively affected mental health, sexual health, and educational and economic achievement 15 years

after the intervention ended.

Hawkins, JD, Kosterman, R, Catalano, RF, Hill, KG & Abbott, RD 2008, 'Effects of social development intervention in childhood 15 years later', *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, vol. 162, no. 12, pp. 1133-41.

### **Has public opinion on illicit drugs changed in Australia since 2004?**

The Drug Policy Modelling Program has released the 17th issue in its Monograph Series. It identifies trends in public opinion in relation to illicit drugs in Australia, and compares different surveys in order to understand why their results may differ. Sixteen surveys are included. Key topics covered are attitudes towards which drugs are associated with a drug problem; excessive alcohol consumption and tobacco use; legalisation of cannabis; decriminalisation of the personal use of cannabis; law enforcement responses for the 'high harm' drugs; and harm reduction initiatives.

Matthew-Simmons, F, Love, S & Ritter, A 2008, *A review of Australian public opinion surveys on illicit drugs*, DPMP Monograph Series, no. 17, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, Sydney.

### **How can Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander injecting drug users' access to needle and syringe programs be improved?**

A report for the Council of Australian Governments Multilateral Group on Needle and Syringe Programs (NSP) examines factors that either deter or support access to these programs by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander injecting drug users (IDUs). Rates of hepatitis C (which is closely associated with infection as a result of unsafe injecting) are disproportionately high among Indigenous Australians.

The researchers found that, because Indigenous communities are often small and close-knit, Indigenous IDUs are likely to be particularly concerned about privacy and anonymity. Indigenous IDUs who live in country areas are generally likely to have limited access to services and little choice as to where they seek injecting equipment. The study indicates that Indigenous IDUs are sometimes reluctant to use pharmacy and hospital outlets, and that they value mobile and outreach services where these are available. Vending machines facilitate access because of their availability at any hour and because they avoid the need for IDUs to interact with a possibly unsympathetic worker.

The researchers recommend that, at this stage, improving access to mainstream NSP services represents the most effective way of facilitating access for Indigenous IDUs. This can be done through general service improvements, and also through initiatives designed to address the needs of Indigenous IDUs in particular such as training in cultural competence and safety for mainstream NSP workers, expansion and improvement of NSP services in regional and rural areas, and the use of posters, signs and brochures which indicate that service providers are Indigenous-aware and Indigenous-friendly.

Where Indigenous organisations are willing to deliver NSP services, the researchers recommend there should be support and encouragement for them to do so. Indigenous health services which do not wish to offer NSP services directly should be encouraged to provide information to clients and refer people to NSP services in their area where appropriate.

Urbis 2008, *A review of enablers and barriers of Indigenous drug users accessing needle and syringe programs - a report for the COAG Multilateral Group on Needle and Syringe Programs*, Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra,

[www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-needle-indigenous](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-needle-indigenous)

## **The Australian Government's White Paper on Homelessness**

On 21 December 2008, the Prime Minister, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP and Minister for Housing, Tanya Plibersek MP, released the Government's White Paper on Homelessness: *The Road Home*. The paper sets the strategic agenda for reducing homelessness to 2020.

Homelessness can affect anyone and reducing it is everyone's responsibility. Working together, with national leadership and towards a common goal, homelessness can be prevented. Australia's efforts to reduce homelessness have to be urgent, as well as sustained.

Specifically, The Road Home goals by 2020 are to halve overall homelessness; and offer supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it.

Australian Government, *The Road Home: Homelessness White Paper*, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Canberra,

[www.fahcsia.gov.au/housing/homelessness\\_white\\_paper/default.htm](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/housing/homelessness_white_paper/default.htm)

### **Media**

#### **Final commissioning stage for Alexander Maconochie Centre**

*John Hargreaves, MLA*

*12 January 2009*

Following a briefing from his Department, Minister for Corrections, John Hargreaves, today provided details of further progress towards the commencement of operations of the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC).

" We have now entered into the final stage of the commissioning process whereby the security systems - which had been delaying progress - will be subjected to a series of rigorous testing procedures," Mr Hargreaves said.

" During this period, other associated preparations will take place such as the installation of furniture and fittings, as well as final checks of the facility

" Upon successful completion of this stage, the facility will be handed over to the Territory. At that point, Corrections officers will occupy the facility and complete their final preparations and on-site training prior to the receipt of prisoners.

" I am still hopeful that the first prisoners will arrive at the AMC in late February/early March. Obviously this is dependent upon the commissioning process being completed satisfactorily, in particular the security aspects. The fact that the final stage of commissioning has commenced gives me some confidence that these expectations can be met.

To view the full media release visit <http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7673>

### **Consumer Participation**

#### **Mental Health Quarterly Forum**

*The Mental Health Community Coalition ACT and Mental Health Consumer Network*

The topic of discussion for the next quarterly forum is a Mental Health Legal Centre.

Consumers and Carers in the ACT have long argued that a Mental Health Legal Centre (similar to those already in existence in Melbourne and Perth) would further aid their ability to receive

appropriate treatment in the mental health service system and to challenge the stigma and discrimination that many people with a mental illness face on a daily basis. This is an important topic for which input is sought and welcomed. Speakers will be announced shortly.

*Date:* Monday, 2 March 2009

*Time:* 5pm - 7.30pm

*Location:* Room 6, Level 1, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge St, Canberra City

*RSVP:* Please RSVP to assist with catering on 6249 7756 or email [admin@mhccact.org.au](mailto:admin@mhccact.org.au)

## Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors

### Official Opening of Step-Up, Step Down Facility

*ACT Government*

*8 January 2009*

ACT Health Minister Katy Gallagher MLA, officially opened a residential facility for adults with mental illness today (Thursday, 9 January 2009). The facility is based on the Step Up/Step Down model of care. Step Up Step Down provides an early intervention or early discharge option for people as an alternative to hospitalisation or after discharge from hospital. The residential facility will provide mental health care to accommodate those experiencing acute mental health symptoms and those who may not be ready to return to their homes.

Visit [www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7671&m=52](http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7671&m=52) to view the full media release.

### National Youth Week 2009

National Youth Week (NYW) 2009 runs from 28 March to 5 April and is set to go off, with the theme 'Make a Move'. Get involved in the celebrations by hosting your own NYW 2009 event. There are no licensing fees or registration costs to become an official NYW event organiser. All you need to do is cover the costs of running the event.

For more information visit [www.youthweek.com](http://www.youthweek.com)

## Employment Opportunities

### Positions Vacant at DIRECTIONS ACT

*DIRECTIONS ACT*

#### Outreach and Health Promotion Worker – Full time

The Outreach and Health Promotion Worker will provide support, referral, education and other appropriate interventions to people accessing the Outreach and Promotions activities and Needle and Syringe Programs of DIRECTIONS ACT.

Applications close 5 February 2009.

#### AOD Worker Arcadia House – Part Time

Arcadia House is a well respected detoxification and withdrawal service which offers a non-medicated approach to detoxification. The Part time AOD Worker is responsible for supervision of clients, assisting with the program, household duties and administrative support for Arcadia House. The hours of the position are 5pm to 10.30pm Monday to Friday.

Applications close 12 February 2009.

For the job description, pay rates and selection criteria visit

[www.directionsact.com/employment](http://www.directionsact.com/employment) or contact Diedre Hobson, Human Resources, DIRECTIONS ACT on 6122 8000.

## Grants and Funding Opportunities

### Indigenous Program Funding Opportunities

#### *Australian Government*

The Australian Government is providing funding to organisations to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to deliver the following programs:

- National Arts and Crafts Industry Support Program
- Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records Program
- Indigenous Culture Support Program
- Indigenous Broadcasting Program
- Indigenous Heritage Program
- Indigenous Womens Program
- Public Awareness Program
- Indigenous Sport and Recreation Program
- Prevention, Diversion, Rehabilitation and Restorative Justice Program
- Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program
- Law and Justice Advocacy Development Program
- Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) Program

Organisations that are committed to working in partnership with government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.

Funding submissions must be lodged online by 5pm, 20 February 2009.

For more information on each of these programs and how to apply visit

[www.indigenous.gov.au](http://www.indigenous.gov.au)

### ACT Health Promotion Grants Program 2009/10 Funding Rounds

#### *ACT Health*

The 2009/10 Community Funding Round is open to community-based groups, not-for-profit organisations and government agencies. Grants will be available to support activities related to the promotion of good health and the prevention and early detection of chronic disease, with particular emphasis on healthy nutrition and increased physical activity.

Applications close 5pm, Monday 9 March 2009.

Visit <http://health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=da&did=10091694> for more information or to download an application form.

### 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](http://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](mailto:jtrew@odyssey.org.au)

### **Women's Return to Work Grants**

#### *Womens Information and Referral Centre*

Women on low incomes who have been out of the workforce due to caring for a child are continuing to be invited to apply for these grants. Grants are to assist women to pay for training/education and resources that will help them get a job, and are up to \$1000 in value.

The ACT Women Returning to Work Grants Program is an ACT Government Initiative that assists women to achieve increased financial independence by helping them prepare for, obtain and maintain employment. The program is funded through the ACT Office for Women in the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services. It is administered by the Women's Information and Referral Centre.

Application forms and eligibility requirements are available online at [www.women.act.gov.au](http://www.women.act.gov.au) or by phoning Women's Information and Referral Centre on 6205 2885.