

ACT AOD Sector Project eBulletin: May 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

May 2009 ACT AOD Sector Forum: Discussing ACT Drug Trends

The ACT AOD sector forum is for AOD workers and is hosted by a different service each month. The guest speaker at the May forum will be Joanne Cassar, ACT Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) & Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS) Coordinator, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC). Joanne will present findings from the 2008 ACT IDRS and EDRS, providing an opportunity for workers to engage with these key research documents. The IDRS and EDRS provide an evidence base for policy by detecting patterns of drug use and harm; documenting the price, purity and availability of illicit drugs; and monitoring patterns, trends and harms over time.

Date: Thursday 28 May 2009

Time: 9.15am for arrivals. 9.30 - 10.30 forum, 10.30 - 11.30 guest presentation.

Venue: Youth Coalition of the ACT, 46 Clianthus St. O'Connor

RSVP: Essential to amanda@aodsector.org.au

Note: The presentation part of the forum will be open to workers from allied services.

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

ACT AOD Workforce Qualification and Remuneration Profiling Project

In recent years, there has been a national movement towards developing more accurate profiles of the AOD workforce, in particular, identifying some of the key issues such as qualifications and remuneration that impact on the workforce and its long term viability. Given this, the ACT AOD Sector wanted to build on its knowledge base about the sector, and the information that was collected for the *Profile of the ACT AOD Workforce: April 2006*. In March 2009, the ACT AOD Executive Directors agreed that a mapping of qualifications and remuneration should be undertaken across all ACT Health funded AOD services. It was also agreed that the ACT AOD Sector Project should undertake the work, due to its role in the implementation of the ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy.

To undertake the work, the Project is currently implementing a survey of qualification and remunerations levels across the ACT Health funded AOD workforce with the support of each organisation's Executive Director. It is expected that all workers will have completed the survey by Wednesday 6 May. A report will then be developed that outlines and examines the qualification and remuneration levels in AOD services. The Project is due for completion in mid-2009.

For more information including the objectives visit

www.aodsector.org.au/public/activities/AODWorkforceQualificationandRemunerationProject.htm or contact the ACT AOD Sector Project Team on (02) 6247 3540 or info@aodsector.org.au

Review of AOD Written Materials for Young People in the ACT

The Review of AOD Written Materials for Young People in the ACT will seek to:

- Identify target groups for written information for young people;
- Identify different purposes of providing information to these different groups;
- Assess the current status of materials disseminated; and,
- Improve materials.

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Update on activities related to Drug Action Week 2009 in the ACT.

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Information from services that attended the AOD sector monthly forum.

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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.

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Training and Professional Development

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

Policy, Reports and Research

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

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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.

A subcommittee of the ACT AOD Workers Group will take the lead in progressing the Review in the new financial year. For more information contact the ACT AOD Sector Project Team on (02) 6247 3540 or info@aodsector.org.au

ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy: Upcoming Class Dates

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 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. 40 applications to register for the AOD 4 Core Competencies (Semester 1, 2009) were successful. The following classes will be held shortly for participants enrolled in each Stream of the 4 Core Competencies:

Class dates for Stream 1:

May 4, 5, 6 CHCAOD8C: Assess the Needs of Clients who have AOD issues
June 1, 2, 3 CHCAOD10A: Work with Clients who have AOD issues

Class dates for Stream 2:

May 11, 12, 13 CHCAOD6B: Working with Clients who are Intoxicated
June 15, 16, 17 CHCAOD8C: Assess the Needs of Clients who have AOD issues
July 20, 21, 22 CHCAOD10A: Work with Clients who have AOD issues

If you have any questions, or for more information please visit www.aodsector.org.au/MQS.htm or contact the ACT AOD Sector Project on (02) 6247 3540 or info@aodsector.org.au

Evaluation of the 'Working with Clients who are Intoxicated' Competency, for participants enrolled with the Canberra Institute of Technology

The *Working with Clients who are Intoxicated* Competency 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. A similar survey will be conducted with participants, following the completion of each competency in Semester 1, 2009.

Stream 1: To access the survey please visit

www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yqoZO4i9ZSwINLEmBrQaBw_3d_3d

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

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'

ACT Drug Action Week 2009

Drug Action Week (DAW) is a national week of activities to raise awareness about AOD issues and to promote the achievements of those who work to reduce drug related harm. DAW will be held from 21 - 27 June 2009.

Nationally, DAW is coordinated by the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia. More information on DAW nationally is available from www.drugactionweek.org.au

ACT Drug Action Week Planning Group

The ACT Drug Action Week Planning Group is involved in the development of activities for Drug Action Week and

Employment Opportunities

Employment opportunities in the ACT AOD and allied sectors.

Grants and Funding Opportunities

Upcoming grants, funding opportunities and tenders.

is open to all workers from AOD and allied services. The key agenda item for this meeting will be the collection of information from services regarding planned activities.

Date: Thursday 14 May 2009

Time: 2 - 3pm

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

RSVP: To daw@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540

Launch of Drug Action Week in the ACT

Drug Action Week (DAW) in the ACT will be launched by the Minister for Health, Ms Katy Gallagher MLA, at the ACT Legislative Assembly on Friday 19 June 2009. The Launch will also feature service stalls by AOD services to profile their programs and provide information about their services.

Date: Friday 19 June 2009

Time: To be confirmed

Venue: ACT Legislative Assembly

For more information about the Launch of Drug Action Week in the ACT, email daw@aodsector.org.au or call (02) 6247 3540.

Second Annual ACT AOD Sector Conference

Following on from the success of the First Annual ACT AOD Sector Conference in 2008, ACT Drug Action Week 2009 will see the Second Annual ACT AOD Sector Conference, held on Wednesday 24 June 2009. The Conference will be launched by the Minister for Corrections, Mr John Hargreaves MLA. The Conference will focus on the relationship between ACT AOD Services, and the ACT's new correctional facilities; and will feature both local and national speakers. The Conference program and registration information will be available in May.

Date: Wednesday 24 June 2009

Time: To be confirmed

Venue: National Library of Australia.

For more information, email conference@aodsector.org.au or call (02) 6247 3540.

Call for Contributions: ACT Drug Action Week Calendar of Events

To promote activities that will be held in the ACT during Drug Action Week 2009, the ACT AOD Sector Project will be collating and distributing a calendar of local events. Over 400 hard copies of the Calendar will be printed and distributed to services, MLAs and other key stakeholders in the ACT. To include your events on the ACT Drug Action Week Calendar of Events, please contact the ACT AOD Sector Project Team on daw@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540 with the following details:

- Title of event
- Time and location
- Contact details

Contributions for the ACT Drug Action Week Calendar of Events are due by Friday 15 May 2009.

ACT AOD Sector Forum Update

This section reports on information shared by services, programs and workers who attend the monthly ACT AOD Sector Forum.

Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP), ACT Health

Aboriginal Liaison Officer:

Service spokesperson: Gabrielle Sledge

Phone: (02) 6205 8387, *Email:* gabrielle.sledge@act.gov.au

- Provides support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access and participate in all AOD services, whether they be mainstream or Indigenous services.

Comorbidity Officer:

Service spokesperson: Janet Smith

Phone: (02) 6244 2591, Email: janet.smith@act.gov.au

- Provides consultation, liaison and clinical work for people experiencing comorbid AOD and mental health issues.
- Provides the Coming Off Pills Effectively (COPE) Group for people who use benzodiazepines and other prescription medication.

Canberra Recovery Services, Salvation Army

Service spokesperson: David McIntyre

Phone: (02) 6295 1256, Email: david.mcintyre@ae.salvationarmy.org

- Provides a 10 month residential rehabilitation program for men experiencing AOD or gambling dependencies.

DIRECTIONS ACT

Service spokesperson: Paul Crowe

Phone: (02) 6122 8000, Email: paulc@directionsact.com

Some new programs currently being offered by DIRECTIONS ACT include:

- Althea Wellness Centre which provides health clinics for people with past or current AOD issues.
- Party Safe Project which provides information, resources and referrals to people aged 15 - 25 years about alcohol and associated issues through the purple party bus.
- Maysoon course for women with AOD issues who have young children. It will be held 10am - 1pm on eight Thursdays commencing May 7 and finishing 25 June 2009. Maysoon provides knowledge, support and skills for women to help gain confidence in parenting, strengthen self esteem and build resilience in themselves and their children.

For more information on DIRECTIONS ACT programs visit www.directionsact.com

Women's Information, Resources and Education on Drugs and Dependency (WIREDD), Toora Women Inc

Service spokesperson: Dara Luzaic

Phone: (02) 6248 8600, Email: wiredd@toora.org.au

WIREDD currently provides:

- Information and support for women about drugs
- Support for women with dependency issues
- Free confidential counselling
- AOD assessments and referrals
- Groups including the Family of Origin Group and Relapse Prevention Group (starting again in April from 10.30am - 12.30pm each Tuesday)
- Advocacy
- Education and training to the community
- Outreach support to the Alcohol and Drug Program Withdrawal Unit, Arcadia House, the Psychiatric Services Unit, and Belconnen and Symonston Remand Centres.
- Drop In, available 11am – 4pm, Mondays, Thursday and Fridays; and 2pm – 4pm on Tuesdays for women and accompanying children.

Sector Activities and Events**Participating in the Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS)**

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)

The EDRS monitors the price, purity and availability and patterns of use of illicit drugs as well as acting as an

early warning system for emerging markets. Currently, researchers from NDARC would like to talk to people who use ecstasy in the ACT. Interviews take about an hour and are strictly confidential and anonymous. Participants will be reimbursed up to \$40 for their time and expenses.

For more information download the [ACT EDRS flyer](#) or contact Jo on (02) 9385 0397 or actedrs@med.unsw.edu.au

Throughcare and Aftercare: “Encouraging and supporting offenders to plan for their future”

ACT Corrective Services, The Community Inclusion Board and Chief Minister's Department

This forum seeks to update the ACT and region Throughcare Community about providing support, interventions and advocacy for ACT prisoners and offenders who are subject to court ordered involvement with ACT Corrective Services. The forum will also discuss Aftercare, or the transition to identified support for prisoners and offenders who are no longer subject to court orders. The Minister for Corrections, Mr John Hargreaves MLA, has a special interest in rehabilitation and restorative justice and will address the forum.

Date: 14 May 2009

Time: 9am - 12.45pm

Venue: The Theo Notaras Centre, 2nd Floor, North Building, 180 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City

RSVP: To assist with catering and seating, please register your intention to attend to brian.dunn@act.gov.au by Monday 4 May 2009.

World Hepatitis Day and Australian National Hepatitis Week

Hepatitis Australia

World Hepatitis Day to be held on 19 May 2009 will be focusing on, and raising awareness of viral hepatitis for the more than 500 million people worldwide – that's one in every 12 people on the planet - affected by viral hepatitis B or C. World Hepatitis Day coincides with Australia's National Hepatitis Week which will be held from 19 to 23 May 2009.

Visit www.hepatitisaustralia.com/events_projects/WorldHepatitisDay09.htm for more information.

Why are the Rates of Hepatitis Higher in Aboriginal Communities?: National Forum

The Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug User League (AIVL)

Hepatitis C rates are extremely high among all people with a history of injecting drug use, with 80% of all current infections and 90% of all new infections transmitted through injecting drug use. The rate among Indigenous injecting drug users is disproportionately and unacceptably high. Again Indigenous people appear to be bearing the brunt of this epidemic. The outcome of this forum will assist in providing relevant and poignant information to support the policy work of AIVL's Indigenous Education Program. This forum is being held in conjunction with World Hepatitis Day and National Hepatitis Awareness Week.

Date: Friday 22 May

Time: 11am - 1.30pm

Venue: The Mantra, Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City

RSVP: To fayei@aivl.org.au or (02) 6279 1600

For more information visit www.aivl.org.au/files/aivlforumflyer.pdf

ACT 2009-10 Budget Forum for the Community Sector

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

The ACT Budget for 2009 -10 will be announced on the first Tuesday in May. ACTCOSS will hold its annual post-budget briefing the following day. The Forum will outline the impact of the Budget on the community sector. ACT Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, and Deputy Chief Minister and Treasurer, Katy Gallagher, will address the forum. ACTCOSS Director, Roslyn Dundas, and other community representatives will provide an overview of the 2009-10 Budget impact on the sector.

Date: Wednesday 6 May 2009

Time: 12-2pm

Venue: Function Room, Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre

RSVP: By Monday 4 May 2009 to Caterina Giorgi on (02) 6202 7230 or caterina.giorgi@actcross.org.au

Is the Price Right? The Cost of Delivering Community Services in the ACT

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

This forum will focus on determining the real cost of providing services in the ACT community sector. The meeting will offer information on pricing principles and provide an opportunity to put questions to highly experienced community sector leaders on program costing against the background of contract negotiations with government. The forum will be valuable for CEOs, Executive Officers, Program Managers and submission writers in all parts of the community sector.

Date: Friday 15 May 2009

Time: 9.30am - 1pm

Venue: Griffin Centre, Genge Street, Civic

RSVP: By Wednesday 13 May 2009 to actcoss@actcoss.org.au

National Human Rights Consultation

Australian Government

The Australian Government has announced a National Human Rights Consultation, being conducted by an independent committee during the first half of 2009. This is a great opportunity for all people in Australia to have their say about human rights and how they should be protected.

You can share your views about human rights with the Committee in a number of ways including:

- You can make a submission on through the website:
https://www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au/www/nhrcc/nhrcc.nsf/Page/HaveYourSay_SubmissionForm
- You can send your written submission to:
National Human Rights Consultation Secretariat
Attorney-General's Department
Central Office
Robert Garran Offices
National Circuit
BARTON ACT 2600
- Organise your own Community Roundtable

The deadline for submissions is 15 June 2009. For further information, or to order an information pack, please call the National Human Rights Consultation Secretariat on 1800 086 134 or email

humanrightsconsultation@ag.gov.au or visit www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au

News from the Executive Directors Group

This section highlights information from the Executive Directors/Chief Executive Officers Group that is relevant to the AOD sector and workers.

In April 2009, the Executive Directors/Chief Executive Officers Group:

- received an update from the ACT AOD Sector Project regarding recent activities;
- provided an update on individual agency developments and activities;
- discussed the Second Annual ACT AOD Sector Conference and other activities/planning for Drug Action Week in the ACT;
- discussed ACT AOD governance and the future development of the sector;
- discussed strategies to clarify the work between the sector, the Alexander Maconochie Centre and services for prisoners and their families more broadly;
- discussed strategies to engage the sector once the ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Strategy is released; and
- discussed the implementation of the ACT AOD Sector Remuneration and Conditions Project.

Sector Development

Free Mail-Based Counselling Treatment for Cannabis Use

National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC)

NCPIC is trialing an intervention offering psychological treatment via mail. One of NCPIC's initiatives is to offer alternative modalities for treatment, and mail delivery has been successful in the fields of physical and mental health, tobacco cessation and alcohol misuse. Advantages of mail delivery include the low cost (including no pre-existing technology) and its accessibility to anyone with a fixed address. The modalities used in the treatment are cognitive behavioural therapy, motivational interviewing and adherence strategies. There are six treatment modules and three personalised feedback components. People are eligible for the study if they are over 18, English literate and want to quit or reduce their cannabis use. Participants will be reimbursed \$30 for costs incurred. Health workers can access NCPIC flyers that advertise the project. To find out more or to find out about referral pathways, please contact Desiree on (02) 9385 0449 or d.boughtwood@unsw.edu.au.

Making Sense of Australia's Alcohol Guidelines

National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA)

NCETA has produced a new resource to assist workers to understand and apply the new National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Alcohol Guidelines.

The new NCETA resource is a 4 page A4 flier that outlines the guidelines and the 6 key areas in which the 2009 alcohol guidelines differ from their predecessor. These 6 areas are:

1. Risk
2. Gender
3. Age
4. Pregnancy
5. Terminology
6. Health Benefits

For a concise, user-friendly overview of the new alcohol guidelines visit the NCETA website

www.nceta.flinders.edu.au

A copy of this resource can be downloaded from the website or hard copies are available on request.

Australian Statistics on Alcohol and Other Drugs

National Drug Sector Information Service (NDSIS)

A listing of current statistics and guidelines relating to AOD in Australia has recently been added to the NDSIS website. National and state and territory statistics and guidelines from 2005 onwards are available.

For more information visit http://ndsis.adca.org.au/page_details.php?page_id=55

Training and Professional Development

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

- ACT Minimum Qualification Strategy
- May 2009 AOD Sector Forum

ACT Training and Professional Development Calendar (May - June 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.

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

The Treatment of Opioid Dependence: Training and Refresher Course for GPs, Pharmacists and Health Professionals

Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP), ACT Health

This 1 day training and refresher course will provide information on:

- Principles of harm minimisation

- Pharmacology of Buprenorphine, Buprenorphine plus Naloxone, and Methadone
- Clinical use of Buprenorphine, Buprenorphine plus Naloxone, and Methadone
- Allied health interventions
- Jurisdictional guidelines for GPs and Pharmacists
- Harm minimisation in community pharmacy

Date: Sunday 24 May

Time: 8.30am - 3.30pm

Venue: The Auditorium, The Canberra Hospital

Registration: Contact 0408 960 087 or kevin.foreman@act.gov.au

Download the [training flyer](#).

Workshop to Explore Evidence-based Evaluation in the Community

Community Development Network (CDNet)

This CDNet workshop is aimed at people whose work involves evaluating community programs or projects. The forum aims to provide an opportunity for dialogue between stakeholders about evidence-based evaluation. The forum is designed to enable participants to:

- gain a snapshot of current government evaluation models and requirements in community sector funding agreements: what evidence are they looking for?
- discuss their experiences and issues of undertaking evaluation to meet government funding requirements: what evidence are they currently collecting?
- explore models of evaluation: what works in evaluation in community and health settings?
- explore implications for evaluation practice.

Date: Thursday 7 May 2009

Time: 9.30am - 1.30pm

Venue: Pearce Community Centre, Collett Place, Pearce

RSVP: By Wednesday 5 May 2009 to Barbara Chevalier on barbchev@netspeed.com.au

Cost: Free

'One Shot' Workshop

Prevention of Transition to Injecting Project, Kirketon Road Centre

The 'One Shot' Educators Kit and Workshops are part of the Kirketon Road Centre's "Prevention of Transmission to Injecting Project" (POTTI) that aims to reduce the incidence of Hepatitis C in young people by preventing the transition to injecting as a mode of drug administration. This project also aims to increase knowledge of safer injecting practice, blood borne virus prevention and drug overdose management among new and existing injecting drug users. To achieve this the 'One Shot' DVD and Educators Kit has been developed. The DVD and Educators Kit are designed to be used by agencies that have contact with existing injectors as this group is most likely to be present or involved in the initiation of non-injectors.

Date: Thursday 4 June 2009

Time: 9.30am - 3.30pm

Venue: Greater Southern Area Health Service Office, Queanbeyan

RSVP: By 15 May 2009 to simone.tynan@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au or (02) 6080 8914

Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect Workshops

Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing 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: 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 with your name, organisation and phone

number.

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

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

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

VYNE @ OzHelp

ASIST is a two-day skills-based workshop that helps equip people for suicide first-aid. Emphasis is on increasing caregivers' ability to promote the immediate safety of someone who may be at risk of suicide and provide links to further help. Participants will reflect on their attitudes and beliefs about suicide, alongside how these may affect their intervention role. They will also learn how to notice invitations for help and ask directly about suicide. An intervention model is provided, and demonstrated, followed by extensive opportunities to practice the skills needed to implement the model.

Date: 21 & 22 May 2009

Time: 8.45am - 4.30pm

Venue: Details provided on receipt of registration

Cost: \$240 - \$260

Registration: By 14 May to vyne@ozhelp.org.au or (02) 6251 4166

Aboriginal Culture, History & Heritage Training

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

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

Date: Friday 22 May 2009

Time: 9.30am-4.30pm

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

Cost: Members \$154, Non-members \$192 and Corporate/Government \$231.

RSVP: Contact George or Julie at george.wilson@actcoss.org.au or julie@actcoss.org.au or call (02) 6202 7200.

Managing Challenging Behaviours Seminar

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

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

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

Date: Friday 29 May 2009

Time: 9am-4:30pm

Venue: ACTCOSS, Level 1, 67 Townshend Street, Phillip

Cost: Members \$154, Non-Members \$192.50, Corporate/Government \$231.

Food: Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea provided.

RSVP: To lisa@actcoss.org.au at least a week prior to the date of the seminar.

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>

Should organisations that support people with mental

illnesses assist them to quit smoking?

The Cancer Council NSW commissioned a literature review to 'examine the underlying evidence for many of the contentious issues around smoking and mental illness' as part of the Council's Tackling Tobacco Program. The reviewers, Dr Tanya Ahmad and Dr Mark Ragg, were asked 'to examine the evidence in an attempt to answer the most pressing question: Is there any reason why all the efforts put into reducing smoking should not be applied equally to people with a mental illness?'

In their report, *Smoke and Mirrors: a review of the literature on smoking and mental illness*, the reviewers state, 'We can find no evidence to support the notion that any person with mental illness should not be encouraged to quit smoking, or should be advised not to quit'. They found that, 'Many of the common beliefs of smoking and mental illness—that smoking is the norm, that people with mental illness smoke to self-medicate, that people with a history of depression find it harder to quit smoking—are not supported by evidence'. In fact, 'Smoking causes, rather than relieves, stress...Many people who quit find their mood improves'.

The findings of the review are 'There is strong evidence that the majority of people with mental illness, when asked, want to give up smoking. There is evidence that people with mental illness can give up smoking. The idea that people with depression find it hard to give up smoking is not supported by evidence. For people with other mental illnesses, the evidence is sparse. There is also evidence that people with substance abuse disorders want to give up smoking, can give up smoking and that quitting smoking benefits other substance abuse problems. There appears to be a synergism between substance abuse disorders and smoking—giving up one substance aids in giving up other substances. The risks of smoking to people with mental illness far outweigh any possible benefits, should there be any. The benefits of quitting for people with mental illness far outweigh the risks of quitting, should there be any'.

Ragg, M, Ahmed, T 2008, *Smoke and mirrors: a review of the literature on smoking and mental illness*, Tackling Tobacco Program Research Series, No. 1, Cancer Council NSW, Sydney.

Does acupuncture reduce opioid withdrawal symptoms?

A study conducted at Wickham Park House, a drug dependence inpatient detoxification unit located in the grounds of Bethlehem Royal Hospital in South London, involved a sample of 82 patients who had been referred for detoxification therapy. The researchers used 'a randomized, placebo-controlled study design to investigate the effectiveness of auricular acupuncture [to the ear] during the treatment of opiate withdrawal symptoms'. The researchers explain that 'Acupuncture is frequently used to treat drug dependence, and the procedure receives considerable support from many drug users and clinicians', however they cite several studies which failed to find the treatment is effective. This study demonstrated that auricular acupuncture 'was not found to affect withdrawal responses during opiate detoxification'. In fact, 'auricular acupuncture had no effect upon severity of opiate withdrawal symptoms or craving responses when provided as an adjunct to a standard methadone detoxification treatment'. The researchers conclude that 'The failure to find any clinical gains from the adjunctive use of auricular acupuncture during detoxification from opiates raises concerns about the widespread acceptance of this intervention'.

Bearn, J, Swami, A, Stewart, D, Atnas, C, Giotto, L & Gossop, M 2009, 'Auricular acupuncture as an adjunct to opiate detoxification treatment: effects on withdrawal symptoms', *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 345-9.

What is 'workforce development', and how is it different from training?

The National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) has produced a 4 page checklist that summarises some of the main issues in workforce development (WFD) 'that every organisation should address as part of a systematic WFD response'. It includes a list of 40 questions ranging from 'Do you regularly undertake training/professional development needs analyses?' to 'Do you monitor levels of staff job satisfaction?' to 'Do you regularly undertake training/professional development needs analyses?' Copies of the checklist are available from the NCETA website or in printed format upon request to NCETA.

Roche, AM & Pidd, K 2009, *Workforce development checklist for the AOD field*, NCETA, Adelaide,

www.nceta.flinders.edu.au/documents/WFDChecklistBooklet-3.pdf

How can seriously ill people be helped to give up smoking?

Researchers from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, USA, conducted a randomised

controlled clinical trial involving 127 smokers with serious medical illnesses, for example, cancer, cardiovascular disease or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, to 'evaluate extended duration of a triple-medication combination versus standard-duration therapy with the nicotine patch alone'. The triple-medication combination was nicotine patches, nicotine inhalers and the anti-depressant medication bupropion. They concluded that 'Flexibly dosed triple-combination pharmacotherapy for up to 6 months was more effective than standard-duration nicotine patch therapy for outpatient smokers with medical illnesses'. Steinberg, MB, Greenhaus, S, Schmelzer, AC, Bover, MT, Foulds, J, Hoover, DR & Carson, JL 2009, 'Triple-Combination Pharmacotherapy for Medically Ill Smokers: A Randomized Trial', *Annals of Internal Medicine*, vol. 150, no. 7, pp. 447-54.

What types of interventions for drug-using offenders are most likely to reduce the risk of future offending?

The journal *Substance Use and Misuse* includes a new review of 24 randomised controlled trials conducted between 1980 and 2004 of interventions for drug-using offenders to reduce subsequent drug use and criminal behaviour. The researchers report that 'Pretrial release with drugs testing and intensive supervision were shown to have limited success when compared to routine parole and probation, with effect sizes favoring routine parole and probation. Therapeutic community interventions showed promising results when compared to dispensation of treatment to individuals as usual, reducing risk of future offending behavior. A few studies evaluated the effectiveness of assertive case management and other community-based programs, but due to the paucity of information few inferences could be drawn from these studies. Little is known about the cost and cost effectiveness of such interventions, and the development of established protocols is required'. Perry, AE, Darwin, Z, Godfrey, C, McDougall, C, Lunn, J, Glanville, J & Coulton, S 2009, 'The effectiveness of interventions for drug-using offenders in the courts, secure establishments and the community: a systematic review', *Substance Use and Misuse*, vol. 44, no. 3, pp. 374-400.

How can we lessen the risk of young people who inject drugs becoming infected with hepatitis B or C or HIV?

The current issue of *The Journal of Infection* contains an article on results of a longitudinal study on blood borne viruses involving young people in Melbourne who inject drugs. The study investigated risk factors for hepatitis C virus (HCV), hepatitis B virus (HBV) and HIV infection. 382 young people completed questionnaires on their drug use and risk behaviours, and provided blood samples for serology testing. The researchers found 'the overall prevalence of exposure to HCV, HBV and HIV was estimated at 70%, 34% and <1%, respectively'. Factors that were independent predictors of HCV exposure were a history of imprisonment, use of someone else's needle or syringe, greater than 7.6 years length of time injecting, and originating from Vietnam. Independent predictors of HBV exposure were HCV exposure, greater than 7.6 years length of time injecting, and originating from outside Australia. The researchers found that 'Neither prison- nor community-applied tattoos predicted HCV or HBV exposure'. 31% of young people who had injected for 1 year or less were HCV antibody positive, as were 53% of those who had injected for 2 years or less.

The researchers conclude that ongoing engagement with young people who inject drugs, through the provision of harm reduction education and resources, 'is critical if we are to address blood borne viral infections and other health and social harms associated with injecting drug use'.

Miller, ER, Hellard, ME, Bowden, S, Bharadwaj, M & Aitken, CK 2009, 'Markers and risk factors for HCV, HBV and HIV in a network of injecting drug users in Melbourne, Australia', *The Journal of Infection*, Mar 26 [Epub ahead of print].

Will the provision of stable housing for chronically homeless people with alcohol problems save taxpayers' money?

A recent issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* contains a report of a study of a program that gives shelter to homeless alcohol-dependent people but allows them to keep drinking. 95 participants in the Housing First (HF) program in Seattle, USA, over the period November 2005 to March 2007 were compared with a control group of 39 people on the waiting list for the program. The use and costs of services – 'jail bookings, days incarcerated, shelter and sobering center use, hospital-based medical services, publicly funded alcohol and drug detoxification and treatment, emergency medical services, and Medicaid-funded services' – were calculated for each group.

The report states 'The project demonstrated significant cost savings and reductions in alcohol use for housed individuals over the course of the first year. Cost offsets for HF participants at 6 months, in comparison with wait-list controls and accounting for the cost of housing, averaged \$2449* per person per month. At 12 months, the 95 housed individuals had reduced their total costs by more than \$4.0 million compared with the year prior to enrollment, or \$42 964 per person per year, as compared with a cost of \$13 440 per person per year to administer the housing program. Finally, length of time in housing was significantly related to reductions in use and cost of services, with those housed for the longest period of time experiencing the greatest reductions'.

Further the researchers state that 'The study also demonstrated that individuals in the housed group experienced reductions in their alcohol use and likelihood of drinking to intoxication over time. The HF intervention was associated with substantial declines in drinking despite no requirement to abstain from or reduce drinking to remain housed'.

*Costs are in US\$.

Larimer, ME, Malone, DK, Garner, MD, Atkins, DC, Burlingham, B, Lonczak, HS, Tanzer, K, Ginzler, J, Clifasefi, SL, Hobson, WG, Marlatt, GA 2009, 'Health care and public service use and costs before and after provision of housing for chronically homeless persons with severe alcohol problems', *Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 301, no. 13, pp. 1349-1357.

Does smoking both tobacco and marijuana increase the risk of lung disease?

Recent research has investigated 'the combined and independent effects of tobacco and marijuana smoking on respiratory symptoms and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in the general population'. This involved surveying a random sample of 878 people aged 40 years or older living in Vancouver, Canada, about their history of tobacco and marijuana smoking and their respiratory history.

The researchers found that 'Smoking only tobacco was associated with an increased risk of COPD... Smokers who reported using both marijuana and tobacco were almost 2.5 times more likely than nonsmokers to have respiratory symptoms and nearly 3 times more likely than nonsmokers to have COPD as defined by spirometric testing. These effects persisted even after we adjusted for potential confounders, such as age, sex, asthma and other comorbidities, and comparable tobacco exposure (in pack-years)'.

The researchers report that 'A dose-related effect of marijuana was suggested by our finding that a self-reported lifetime exposure to marijuana of at least 50 marijuana cigarettes was strongly associated with an increased risk of COPD. The significant interaction term suggested that the effects of marijuana and cigarette smoking were synergistic'.

While acknowledging that their research had several limitations, they concluded that 'we were able to detect a significant synergistic effect between marijuana smoking and tobacco smoking. This effect suggests that smoking marijuana (at least in relatively low doses) may act as a primer, or sensitizer, in the airways to amplify the adverse effects of tobacco on respiratory health'.

Tan, WC, Lo, C, Jong, A, Xing, L, et al. 2009, 'Marijuana and chronic obstructive lung disease: a population-based study', *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, vol. 180, no. 8, pp. 814-820.

Does raising the price of alcohol reduce drinking?

The December 2008 issue of the *ACT AOD Sector eBulletin* reported on an evaluation by Wagenaar et al. of the effects of tax increases on alcoholic beverages in Alaska on alcohol-related disease mortality. The evaluation identified significant reductions on the numbers and rates of deaths caused by alcohol-related disease. Now Wagenaar and colleagues from the College of Medicine at the University of Florida have reported on a review of studies 'examining relationships between measures of beverage alcohol tax or price levels and alcohol sales or self-reported drinking'. They located 112 studies of alcohol tax or price effects, with 1,003 estimates of the relationship between tax or price and consumption. Their meta-analysis identified highly significant relationships between alcohol tax or price measures and measures of sales or consumption of alcohol. They found that price and/or tax 'also affects heavy drinking significantly', however 'the magnitude of effect is smaller than effects on overall drinking'. Their conclusion is that 'A large literature establishes that beverage alcohol prices and taxes are related inversely to drinking. Effects are large compared to other prevention policies and programs. Public

policies that raise prices of alcohol are an effective means to reduce drinking'.

Wagenaar, AC, Salois, MJ & Komro, KA 2009, 'Effects of beverage alcohol price and tax levels on drinking: a meta-analysis of 1003 estimates from 112 studies', *Addiction*, vol.104, no.2, pp. 179-90.

The Council of Australian Governments' National Mental Health Policy

Australian Health Ministers launched the *National Mental Health Policy 2008* at their meeting in March 2009. The vision of the policy is for a mental health system that enables recovery, prevents and detects mental illness early, and ensures that all Australians with a mental illness can access effective and appropriate treatment and community support to enable them to participate fully in the community.

The *National Mental Health Policy 2008* is available from the website of the Department of Health and Ageing at www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-pubs-n-pol08

Smoking in Cars: What do the Children and Young People of Canberra Think?

In January 2009, the Minister for Health, Katy Gallagher MLA, released a consultation paper canvassing options for prohibiting smoking in motor vehicles when children and young people are present. In February the ACT Children & Young People Commissioner invited children and young people to participate in a survey about smoking in cars and produced a report with the findings.

The full report is available online at the ACT Human Rights Commission website at www.hrc.act.gov.au/index.cfm?MasterTypeID=5&SectionTypeID=55&MainTypeID=55

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victims of Crime

This community report is based on a larger study looking at the experience of family violence of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander victims, and their access to justice and to services. 15 Aboriginal women told their stories and nearly 20 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals who work in the justice and service sectors in the ACT were approached to offer their thoughts on what can be done to help victims of family violence access justice and get help. Recommendations to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples access to services are outlined.

ACT Victims of Crime Coordinator, 2009, *'We Don't Shoot Our Wounded: What Aboriginal Victims of Family Violence say about the violence, their access to justice and access to services in the ACT*, ACT Government, www.victimsupport.act.gov.au/res/File/Community%20Report.pdf

Media

ACT Health Facilities Now Smoke Free

Katy Gallagher, MLA

1 May, 2009

All ACT Health facilities will be smoke free from today, marking another step in the ACT Government's program to reduce the harmful effects of tobacco smoke.

ACT Health Minister, Katy Gallagher MLA, said smoking would now only be permitted in approved designated outdoor smoking areas.

" Each ACT Health worksite has only one designated outdoor smoking area for staff, as well as a separate area for visitors and healthcare consumers," Ms Gallagher said.

The Minister said support had been provided to staff through free nicotine replacement therapy while patients admitted to Canberra Hospital would be assisted to manage their nicotine dependence while in hospital.

" We expect staff to adhere to the policy and we ask that all healthcare consumers and visitors respect our policy of smoke free premises and grounds, and to smoke only in designated outdoor smoking areas," she said.

The move to go smoke free follows the introduction of measures earlier this year banning split packets and flavoured cigarettes, and customer loyalty programs tied to tobacco purchases. From next year shop tobacco displays will also go out of sight.

The Government is also currently considering options for reducing children's exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke in cars.

Information on the location of designated outdoor smoking areas for staff and healthcare consumers/visitors are available through brochures and posters at all sites and posted on www.health.act.gov.au/

New Bus Services to Alexander Maconochie Centre

Jon Stanhope, MLA

7 April, 2009

Chief Minister and Minister for Transport Jon Stanhope today announced the commencement of new ACTION bus services to the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC).

" Staff and visitors will benefit from new ACTION bus services to the AMC departing daily from the Woden Bus Interchange including weekends and public holidays," Mr Stanhope said.

" The new bus services are part of the ACT Labor Government's ongoing commitment to provide a quality public transport system that meets the community's needs."

Route 88 departs from platform four at the Woden Bus Interchange at 8:26am, 12:40pm and 5:10pm. Return services depart from the AMC at 1.50am, 4.50pm, and 8.05pm.

On weekends and public holidays Route 988 departs from platform four at 8.40am, 12.25pm and 5.10pm and returns at 11.35am, 4.35pm and 7.35pm.

To find out more visit www.action.act.gov.au/

National Campaign Targets Illicit Drugs

The Hon Nicola Roxon MP, Minister for Health and Ageing

19 April, 2009

Hard-hitting ads targeting ice, ecstasy and marijuana will be rolled out from today, as part of an \$18 million national campaign.

The ads confront young people with the dangers posed by these harmful drugs, and will include print, television, cinema, outdoor advertising and internet ads...

This campaign particularly targets young methamphetamine users by portraying in stark and confronting terms the real harms and risks associated with drugs like ice and ecstasy.

The ads use slightly revised versions of earlier ads, in order to reinforce the message that these drugs are dangerous...

This campaign is one part of more than \$800 million the Government is investing over five years in tackling the scourge of drug abuse.

Further information about the Government's National Drugs Campaign is available from www.drugs.health.gov.au or by calling the free national hotline 1800 250 015

Large Scale Hepatitis C Study Shows Need to Treat Sooner

Hepatitis Council of Queensland

22 April, 2009

An Australian led, international clinical trial, being presented at the European Association for the Study of the Liver Congress in Copenhagen this week has highlighted the benefits of treating hepatitis C sooner, rather than later. The study involved more than 700 Australians with hepatitis C and 33 Australian hospitals. It found people living with the most common strain of hepatitis C who receive treatment when there is minimal, or no liver damage, may double their chance of a cure, compared to those treated in the later stages, where liver damage has become more advanced.

According to the lead investigator, Associate Professor Stuart Roberts, Director of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, The Alfred Hospital, Melbourne, the study enabled a close look at treatment strategies to see when they are most effective.

" The study confirmed that the current standard of care is effective. In addition, the study demonstrated that the cure rates in this common strain of hepatitis C may be a lot higher than we previously thought," he said.

" We found that that up to seven out of ten people, with the most common strain of hepatitis C (called genotype 1), may be cured if treatment starts before liver scarring or damage has occurred."

To view the full media release visit www.hepqld.asn.au/resources/news/HCQ_CHARLOT_Media_Release.pdf

Roundtable Signals Good News for Social Housing in the ACT

John Hargreaves, MLA

16 April 2009

The ACT Minister for Housing, John Hargreaves today hosted a public information session on the Australian Government's recent social housing initiative.

The project is a key element of the second stage of the Australian Government's National Building Economic Stimulus Plan announced earlier this year.

Under the Australian Government's plan, \$6 billion over three and a half years has been provided for the construction of 20,000 new social houses across Australia. A total, \$102.7m has been allocated for social housing in the ACT.

" The Australian Government's allocation of \$102.7 million will provide a huge boost to the ACT - not only for the economy but in meeting a crucial need for social housing, said Mr Hargreaves.

Information about the Nation Building - Economic Stimulus Plan, Social Housing Initiative, can be found at www.australia.gov.au/economicstimulus or www.stimulus.act.gov.au.

Consumer Participation

Human Rights Commission Consumer Feedback

ACT Human Rights Commission

The Health Services Commissioner can address complaints about the provision of health services, particularly if approaches made directly to the service provider have not resolved the complaint. The Health Services Commissioner is part of the ACT's Human Rights Commission and their mandate is to deal with complaints about the provision of health services. The Commissioner's role is also to promote:

- improvements in the provision of health services and services for older people;
- the rights of users of health services and services for older people; and
- an awareness of the rights and responsibilities of users and providers of health services and services for older people.

Visit www.hrc.act.gov.au/index.cfm?MasterTypeID=3&SectionTypeID=25&MainTypeID=25 for more information.

Source: ACT Health

Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors

Development of the ACT Young People's Plan

Office for Children, Youth and Family Support (OCYFS), Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services

The ACT Young People's Plan is an ACT Government document that outlines the policy framework, and key priorities and strategies for young people aged 12 - 25, the community, and the ACT Government. In 2008, the ACT Young People's Plan 2004 - 2008 expired, prompting the development of a new plan for the ACT. OCYFS will be taking the lead in developing the new Plan, which is likely to cover a two-year period. OCYFS plans to engage with young people, youth services and the broader community to develop the Plan; with a view to releasing a discussion paper in September 2009 for further feedback. OCYFS hopes to finalise the Plan by December 2009.

Visit http://youth.act.gov.au/cms/index.php?page=youth_issues for information about making a submission.

Employment Opportunities

General Practitioner – 6 months initial contract

DIRECTIONS ACT

The Althea Wellness Centre seeks sessional General Practitioners who enjoy the challenges of engaging and treating people with alcohol and other drug issues and their families, in an integrated response with the range of other services available at DIRECTIONS ACT. The General Practitioners will work closely with other clinical and non-clinical personnel in the Althea Team to provide the best possible holistic health care in a primary health care setting.

The position is a flexible part-time 6 month position in the first instance, which has the option of renewal after discussion with the Executive Director. The wage offered reflects the status of the position, the tertiary qualifications that the successful applicant has obtained and the standard of the work required.

Salary Range: \$120 per hour for FRACGP/\$80 per hour for non-vocational GPs

For more information visit www.directionsact.com

Heira House Key Support Worker

Toora Women Inc

SACS Level 5 - 6 permanent position (32 hours/week) plus on call allowance and salary packaging available.

Toora Women Inc are recruiting a Key Support Worker at Heira House, a secure residential and outreach service that provides supported accommodation and transitional support to women who are affected by domestic violence and are unaccompanied by children.

A copy of the position description and selection criteria can be obtained by contacting the Service Coordinator at Heira House on (02) 6278 3544 or email heiracoord@toora.org.au.

Applications close 5pm on Thursday 7 May 2009.

Grants and Funding Opportunities

Innovative Project Grants - October 2008 to 1 June 2009

Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation (AER)

The AER objectives are to:

- prevent alcohol and other licit substance abuse, including petrol sniffing, particularly among vulnerable population groups such as indigenous Australians and you;
- support evidence-based alcohol and other licit substance abuse treatment, rehabilitation, research and prevention programs; and
- promote community education encouraging responsible consumption of alcohol and highlighting the dangers of licit substance abuse.

Innovative Project grants (capped at \$20,000 per grant) are available for organisations that pursue best-practice goals by developing innovative projects in the alcohol and other drug sector. Organisations need to demonstrate the benefits that will be gained by AER, their organisation and the broader community.

For more information or to download an application form visit www.aerf.com.au/community/about.aspx

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