

ACT AOD Sector Project eBulletin: November 2008

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

News from the ACT AOD Sector Project	In This Edition...
<p>ACT AOD Sector Project The ACT AOD Sector Project is a capacity building Project that began in July 2007, and is funded by ACT Health. The Youth Coalition of the ACT provides support to ACT AOD workers to conduct the Project. The Project aims to build the capacity and identity of the ACT AOD sector, foster intra and cross-sectoral relationships, and improve outcomes while maintaining respect for the diversity of services and for people who are affected by AOD. For more information visit www.aodsector.org.au or contact Amanda Bode, ACT AOD Sector Project Officer, Youth Coalition of the ACT on info@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540.</p> <p>November ACT AOD Sector Forum The ACT AOD sector forum is for AOD workers and is hosted by a different AOD service each month. The November forum will be the last for 2008. <i>Date:</i> Thursday 20 November 2008 <i>Time:</i> 9.15am for arrivals. 9.30 - 11.30am for forum. <i>Guest Speaker:</i> Beverley McKinlay, Senior Social Worker and David Rothschild, Community Unit, Centrelink <i>Venue:</i> Karralika Program, Alcohol and Drug Foundation ACT (ADFACT), 155 Keeverstone Circ, Isabella Plains <i>Note:</i> This forum is for AOD workers only. For more information or to RSVP contact Amanda Bode, ACT AOD Sector Project Officer, Youth Coalition of the ACT on info@aodsector.org.au or (02) 6247 3540.</p> <p>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. The Directory is produced as a partnership between the ACT AOD Sector Project and the ACT AOD Workers' Group. 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. Limited hard copies are available at the Youth Coalition of the ACT Office. The Directory is available electronically and in a downloadable pdf from 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 or (02) 6247 3540.</p> <p>See also: <i>Training and Professional Development</i> section for the 'ACT Training and Professional Development Calendar' <i>Sector Activities and Events</i> section for the 'Centacare Comorbidity Interagency Day'.</p>	<p>News from the ACT AOD Sector Project Update on Project activities.</p> <p>Biannual Comorbidity Forum Update Information from services that attended First Biannual Comorbidity Forum.</p> <p>Sector Activities and Events Launches, key weeks, international days and program and service activities.</p> <p>News from the Executive Directors' Group Information from the EDs' group that is relevant to the AOD sector and workers.</p> <p>Sector Development Information on networks, resources, websites, factsheets and tools for workers.</p> <p>Training and Professional Development Training for the AOD and allied sectors, including upcoming seminars, conferences, bus tours, courses and other professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Policy, Reports and Research New research, reports, inquiry findings, and any key policy activities effecting the AOD sector.</p> <p>Media Media releases and news items relevant to the ACT AOD Sector.</p> <p>Consumer Participation Information items about consumer participation that are relevant to the AOD sector and workers.</p> <p>Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors</p>
<p>Biannual Comorbidity Forum Update</p> <p>This section reports on information shared by services, programs and workers who attend the First Biannual Comorbidity Forum on 17 October 2008. Over 30 workers from the AOD and mental health sectors attended the Forum. For further information visit www.aodsector.org.au</p> <p>Alcohol and Drug Foundation ACT (ADFACT) <i>Service spokesperson:</i> Vanessa Dumbrell <i>Phone:</i> 6292 2733, <i>Email:</i> vanessa.d@adfact.org Some programs currently being offered by ADFACT include:</p> <p>Karralika Program (Adult and Family): Provides up to 12 months of residential rehabilitative care for adults with alcohol and other drug dependencies and accompanying children, using the Therapeutic Community approach to treatment.</p>	

Early Birds Program:

Provides outreach, case management, referral and support to people on the Karralika waiting list.

Therapeutic Community in the Alexander Maconochie Centre (currently being developed):

ADFACT will be establishing a therapeutic community in the Alexander Maconochie Centre in partnership with Corrective Services and Corrections Health. The program will aim to reduce relapse, and recidivism post release.

For more information on ADFACT programs visit www.adfact.org

Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP), ACT Health

Service spokesperson: Janet Smith

Phone: 6244 2741, Email: janet.smith@act.gov.au

Diversion Service:

The Diversion Service is an assessment, referral and support service for people referred by the Australian and ACT Courts. Services provided include:

- Police Early Diversion (PED) Program: provides for those who have been apprehended by the police for possession of a small amount of illicit drugs (or licit drugs used illicitly). Rather than charge them, the police divert them to the health sector.
- Court Alcohol and Drug Assessment Service (CADAS): a pre-sentencing treatment option for court-ordered AOD related offences.
- Treatment Referral Program: is a post sentencing option, for clients who have either committed an offence or money for drugs, or while under the influence of drugs. The Magistrate or judge may, as part of the sentence imposed, instruct a client to undergo a treatment order rather than receive a custodial sentence to reduce their custodial time.
- Aboriginal Liaison Officer (ALO): provides support to Indigenous clients accessing ADP and NODAS. Organisations, support to Ngambra Court and information to other service providers.

Comorbidity Officer:

The Comorbidity Officer within the ADP provides community liaison and development, clinical work for clients, education and training.

Consultation Liaison Psychiatry Service, Mental Health ACT

Service spokesperson: Kerry Crawford

Phone: 6244 3204, Email: kerry.crawford@act.gov.au

The Consultation Liaison Psychiatry Service is based at the Canberra Hospital and provides assessment, diagnosis, issues and referrals; including referrals to alcohol and other drug services for people experiencing comorbidity.

Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy (CAHMA) Connection Program

Service spokesperson: Nicole Wiggins

Phone: 6279 1670, Email: nicolew@aivl.org.au

CAHMA:

- CAHMA now provides a Treatment Support Service that provides information on treatment options and referrals.
- A new comorbidity position will be commencing shortly and will focus on providing comorbidity support to staff to better support people experiencing comorbidity.
- CAHMA currently has 1 full time, and 3 part time staff.

The Connection (now a program of CAHMA):

- The Connection will now be hosting a Family BBQ and 'Art Attack' Program at Boomerang Centre on the third Thursday of each month.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Mental Health ACT

Service spokesperson: Deb Smith

Phone: 6205 1128, Email: debbie.smith@act.gov.au

CAMHS provides assessment and treatment for young people under 18 years of age who are experiencing a mental health disorder or illness. Some other programs currently being offered by CAMHS include:

- The Cottage: An adolescent day program for young people experiencing mental health issues.

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.

- Youth Comorbidity Outreach Services: Provided in partnership with The Junction, Ted Noffs Foundation and headspace ACT.

Comorbidity Project, ACT AOD Sector Project, Youth Coalition of the ACT

Service spokesperson: Erin Barry

Phone: 6247 3540, Email: erin@youthcoalition.net

The aim of the Comorbidity Project is to assist and support non-government ACT AOD services to undertake service improvement processes to better identify and manage clients experiencing comorbid AOD and mental health issues. Some current activities of the Project include:

- Monthly Comorbidity Strategic Working Group Meetings
- Progressing a mapping of existing comorbidity resources in the ACT
- Progressing a needs analysis of Improved Services Grant Recipients
- Progressing the collection of comorbidity information for Version 2 of the ACT AOD Services Directory
- Monthly Improved Services Grant Recipient Network Meetings
- Fortnightly AOD Peaks teleconferences

DIRECTIONS ACT

Service spokesperson: Jason Morrissey and Fiona Day

Phone: 6122 8000, Email: jasonm@directionsact.com or fionad@directionsact.com

Some programs currently being offered by DIRECTIONS ACT include:

- Althea Wellness Centre
- Comorbidity Program
- Counselling Services
- Needle and Syringe Program
- Community Education
- Counselling Services
- Arcadia House Detox and Withdrawal Services
- Treatment Support Service

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

Dual Diagnosis / Comorbidity Worker, Mental Health ACT

Service Spokesperson: Steve Hartnett

Phone: 6205 2777, Email: steve.hartnett@act.gov.au

A single person team that provides assistance within Mental Health ACT for workers and their clients where there is a problematic substance use issue. This assistance can involve joint assessments, counselling and referral. Education to Mental Health ACT and community sector staff can also be provided.

headspace ACT

Service Spokesperson: Seija Gordon

Phone: 6201 5343, Email: headspaceACT@canberra.edu.au

headspace ACT opened in September and welcomes new referrals. Set up as a one-stop shop, young people aged 12-25 and their families can receive early intervention with mental health and substance use issues. Approximately 75% of serious mental health problems emerge before the age of 25 and only one in four young people receive professional help. Seeking help for some young people can be quite daunting and friends and family are not always equipped to know how to best deal with these issues. Through headspace ACT young people can receive support from a range of professionals including psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, alcohol and other drug workers, youth workers and vocational support workers.

Young people can self-refer or teachers, youth workers, GPs, family or carers can refer with consent from the young person.

Hours of opening: 10am - 5pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday (Closed Wednesdays)

Phone: 6201 5343

Email: headspaceACT@canberra.edu.au

Web: www.headspace.org.au/act

Address: Building 12, Level B, Room 40, University of Canberra, Bruce

Offender Intervention Program (OIP), ACT Corrective Services

Service Spokesperson: Shelley Cox

Phone: 6207 0862, Email: shelley-ann.cox@act.gov.au

The OIP provides a range of offence related educational and therapeutic group work and counselling programs for people subject to supervision by ACT Corrective Services or who are in an ACT custodial setting including in the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC). Some programs facilitated by the OIP include:

- Partnering to coordinate the Therapeutic Community in the AMC
- Sex Offender Program
- Cognitive Behaviour Skill Programs
- Family Violence Program
- Violent Offender Programs
- AOD Educational Programs

Psychiatric Services Unit (PSU), Mental Health ACT

Service Spokesperson: Sheree Dimitrescu

Phone: 6244 3210, Email: sheree.dimitrescu@act.gov.au

An Outreach Support Program has recently been funded as a permanent program being delivered by the PSU. The Program will support clients for 3 weeks post discharge.

STEPS, Centacare Canberra

Service Spokesperson: Ashley Gardner

Phone: 6262 3453, Email: ashley.gardner@act.gov.au

STEPS is a residential support program for adolescents aged 14 - 18 years who are experiencing moderate to severe mental health issues.

The Sobering Up Shelter, Centacare Canberra

Service Spokesperson: Anne Kirwan

Phone: 6163 3711 or 0406 377 623, Email: soberingupshelter@centacare-canberra.org

Provides a safe place for intoxicated persons to recover from alcohol or other drug use. The shelter is a free and confidential service. Open 11pm - 11am, Thursday, Friday & Saturday nights.

Sector Activities and Events

Centacare Comorbidity Interagency Day

Centacare Canberra and the ACT AOD Sector Project, Youth Coalition of the ACT

AOD and mental health services in Canberra are invited to attend a Comorbidity Interagency Day and hold a stall to promote their services to the sector. Workers are invited to attend the day and meet other providers, learn about new and existing services and build networks.

Date: Wednesday 3 December 2008

Time: 12pm - 2pm

Venue: Centacare Blackfriars Fountain Garden, 127 Phillip Avenue, Watson

RSVP: By 31 October to Emma Clarke on 6163 7600 or Emma.Clarke@centacare-canberra.org

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

ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Strategy 2009 - 2013

Alcohol and Other Drug Policy Unit, ACT Health

The current ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Strategy is expiring and the strategy is currently being updated. Annual evaluation reports on progress made towards the implementation of the current strategy are available from

www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=da&did=10133064&pid=1156381026

Community Consultations for the 2009-10 ACT Budget

ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

Due to the timing of the ACT Election it is not certain when calls will be made for public submissions to the 2009-10 ACT Budget development. To ensure there is sufficient time for community input into the budget submissions of ACTCOSS and other community sector peak bodies, ACTCOSS are calling a series of budget consultation forums. They invite community sector workers, management, carers and consumers to attend these forums. You are welcome to attend more than one forum. If you are not able to attend the relevant forum, or wish to raise an issue not covered by these topics, ACTCOSS welcome written input by email, received by no later than 14 November 2008.

Health Service Users (Health Care Consumers Association and ACTCOSS)

Date: Thursday 6 November 2008

Time: 12.30pm - 2.30pm

Venue: ACTCOSS Meeting Room, Level 1, 67 Townshend St, Phillip

People with Disabilities (ACTCOSS)

Date: Thursday 6 November 2008

Time: 3.30pm - 5.30pm

Venue: ACTCOSS Meeting Room, Level 1, 67 Townshend St, Phillip

Mental Health Service Users and people with Alcohol and other Drug Issues (ACT Mental Health Consumer Network, Mental Health Community Coalition and ACTCOSS)

Date: Monday 10 November 2008

Time: 5pm - 7.30pm

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

People Experiencing Homelessness and Hardship (ACT Shelter and ACTCOSS)

Date: Thursday 13 November 2008

Time: 9.30am - 11.30am

Venue: ACTCOSS Meeting Room, Level 1, 67 Townshend St, Phillip

Families and Children (Families ACT and ACTCOSS)

Date: Thursday 13 November 2008

Time: 12.30pm - 2.30pm

Venue: ACTCOSS Meeting Room, Level 1, 67 Townshend St, Phillip

Women (ACTCOSS)

Date: Thursday 13 November 2008

Time: 3:30 - 5:30pm

Venue: ACTCOSS Meeting Room, Level 1, 67 Townshend St, Phillip

Older People (Council on the Ageing and ACTCOSS)

Date: Tuesday 18 November 2008

Time: 2pm - 4pm

Venue: COTA Hall, Hughes Community Centre, Wisdom St, Hughes

People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (Canberra Multicultural Community Forum and ACTCOSS)

Date: Tuesday 18 November 2008

Time: 6pm - 8pm

Venue: Meeting Room, Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre, Civic Square

For more information or to RSVP contact Brooke McKail on 6202 7222 or brooke.mckail@actcoss.org.au

Youth Coalition Budget Consultation

Youth Coalition of the ACT

Each year, the Youth Coalition of the ACT makes a submission to the ACT Government Budget outlining what it believes are the key issues facing young people and the youth sector. This year, the Youth Coalition would like members and stakeholders to identify what the issues are and suggest what should be done about them. The Youth Coalition of the ACT would like to invite you to attend a consultation on the 2009/2010 Budget. The consultation is an opportunity to chat to the Youth Coalition on the gaps that exist and the improvements that could be made to the youth sector in the ACT. The information will feed into the Youth Coalition's budget submission that will be lodged with the ACT Government in the coming months.

Date: Thursday 20 November, 2008

Time: 11am (Following the Youth Coalition monthly forum)

Cost: Free

Where: 46 Clianthus St, O'Connor (Youth Coalition Office)

Food: Light refreshments will be provided

If you have any questions or if you would like more information, please contact Maiy Azize, Policy Officer at the Youth Coalition on (02) 6247 3540 or at maiy@youthcoalition.net

Mobile Needle and Syringe Program (NSP)

DIRECTIONS ACT

The mobile NSP will distribute information and free injecting equipment and disposal facilities in the ACT. The service is available at the locations and times listed below:

- 9am - 11am, Tuesdays, Gungahlin - Carpark on the corner of Ernest Cavanagh & Gozzard Streets
- 9am - 11am, Wednesdays, Tuggeranong - Carpark on the corner of Pitman and Anketell Streets (Next to the Tuggeranong Health Centre)
- 4pm - 6pm, Thursdays, Fyshwick - Carpark on the corner of Wollongong & Maryborough Streets
- 2pm - 3.30pm, Fridays, Dickson - Carpark on the corner of Badham & Antill Streets

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

Quit Smoking: for people with a mental health issue

Mental Health Foundation ACT and The Cancer Council ACT

This group will meet for 7 weeks and is facilitated by the Cancer Council ACT and the Mental Health Foundation ACT.

Participants will be given information, subsidised nicotine patches and support.

Date: Thursdays, 6 November - 18 December

Time: 11am - 12.15pm

Venue: The Rainbow, H Block, Canberra Technology Park, Phillip Avenue, Watson

[Click here](#) to download information for participants.

For more information contact Jenni on 6162 2088 or jenni.dall@mhf.org.au

2008 Early Intervention Awards

Support Link, Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) and Parentline

The Early Intervention Awards are designed to highlight the significance of early intervention services in the prevention of (including but not exclusive to) child and elder abuse, family violence, substance abuse, suicide and mental illness, crime, social isolation, preventable family breakdown and homelessness. The awards also aim to promote "best practice" and excellence in community service delivery in particular, the willingness to collaborate with other agencies and deliver flexible and responsive services to clients.

Date: Thursday 11 December 2008

Time: 9.30 - 11.30am

To register email awards@supportlink.com.au

Applications will be received until 21 November 2008.

Application forms and more information available at www.earlyinterventionawards.com.au

News from the Executive Directors' Group

In November 2008 the Executive Directors (EDs) will be reviewing progress made within the ACT AOD sector in key areas throughout 2008 such as:

- Implementing supported recommendations from the February 2008 Review of Detox Service by Dr Winstock (led by Directions and the Alcohol and Drug Program)
- Improving access to services for those under 18 years (led by Ted Noffs)
- Review of AOD Written Materials for Young People (led by the AOD Workers' Group and Youth Coalition)
- Evaluation of the ACT AOD Sector Project (completed by David McDonald)

- Responding to the findings from the ACT Ombudsman's report concerning the Australian Federal Police's exercise of responsibilities under the Intoxicated People (Care and Protection) Act 1994 released on 22/10/2008 (Centacare and Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation)
- We anticipate circulating a report summarising the progress made in these areas in December 2008.

Sector Development

New Online Support for University Students

Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre

The 'Just Ask Us' website is aimed at university students who are seeking information or help in relation to a wide range of health issues, including alcohol, drugs, mental health and well-being. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, the website provides information on a variety of health topics and links to support services offered by university campus counselling services and key treatment and support services nationally.

University students are a section of the community who face a range of risks in relation to alcohol and drug issues. According to the 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey, about 32% of people in the 20-29 age group have used an illicit drug, 59% are drinking alcohol at risky levels for short-term harm and 16% are drinking at levels that risk long-term harm.

In addition to alcohol and drug topics, the Just Ask Us website provides information on many issues of particular significance for young people such as depression, anxiety, grief and loss and suicide. The site also includes a number of new online tools and resources, including a self-assessment tool for students to determine the risks associated with their alcohol consumption.

"Just Ask Us is an important new resource for students," says Project Leader Eric Tyssen, "It offers a wide range of information and flexible access to telephone and online supports over the 24/7 period, when few resources are available."

To find out more, visit www.justaskus.org.au

New website to help AOD workers identify and manage mental health issues

Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre

Turning Point recently launched a new website to support AOD workers in identifying and managing the mental health issues of their clients. www.Psychcheck.org.au provides information on the development of the PsyCheck package. This includes a mental health screening tool designed and validated for use in AOD settings, clinical treatment guidelines, clinical supervisor guidelines and program implementation guidelines. All of these resources are freely downloadable from this site.

The website hosts a range of other features including a frequently asked questions section, together with up to date information on research and training activities. An online learning tool is also freely available. This provides an audio visual tutorial on how to use the screening tool and incorporates a self directed interactive component which provides you with individual feedback on how effectively you are using the PsyCheck resources.

For more information visit www.Psychcheck.org.au

New alcohol brochure for young people

Australian Drug Foundation

The Australian Drug Foundation has recently released the following two foldout brochures that provide alcohol information to young people:

- A young lady's guide to alcohol
- A young gentleman's guide to alcohol

The brochures include eye-catching illustrations and straight-forward harm reduction information about binge drinking and the different risks of drinking for young women and men. A single free copy of these brochures are available to all DrugInfo Clearinghouse members located within Australia. To request your free copy, email your name, organisation and postal address to druginfo@adf.org.au or phone 1300 85 85 84.

Subsequent copies can be ordered through the Australian Drug Foundation resource catalogue or online at

www.bookshop.adf.org.au

The National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC): New Website

National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee

The new NIDAC website has been designed for sharing and bringing people together to address Indigenous AOD misuse.

Over the next few weeks additional information and regular updates will be added for your information. Visit

www.nidac.org.au for information about NIDAC and where to find Indigenous alcohol and other drug information.

Of Substance: October 2008

The October 2008 issue of Of Substance is now out and is packed with the latest news in alcohol and other drug related research and events.

Features include:

- No home, no hope?
- Drugs and life on the streets
- Does substance misuse cause homelessness or does homelessness cause substance misuse?

Subscribing to Of Substance is free by visiting www.ofsubstance.org.au

Changes to the Alcohol and other Drug Council of Australia

Alcohol and other Drug Council of Australia (ADCA)

ADCA's National Resource Centre has changed its name to the National Drug Sector Information Service (NDSIS).

Services include:

- Drug Database
- Ask a Librarian
- Today's Drug News
- Remote access to over 40 electronic journals plus
- Borrowing rights to a collection of over 70,000 books, journals, articles, reports and videos addressing AOD issues

A new switchboard telephone number has also been allocated to ADCA as part of a telephone system upgrade. The number is 6215 9800, and during the initial transition period, this new number will run in conjunction with the former number until September 2009 to ensure past regular clients of ADCA's services are not disadvantaged.

For more information on ADCA visit <http://adca.org.au>

Training and Professional Development

ACT Training and Professional Development Calendar (November - December 2008)

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

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

Delivering Party Safe Activities in Schools: A refresher session for youth workers

Youth Coalition of the ACT and Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP), ACT Health

This refresher session has been specifically designed for youth workers who will be delivering party safe / alcohol and other drug activities (information, education, groups, expos, health fairs etc) in schools.

Date: Tuesday 11 November 2008

Time: 9.30am - 11am

Cost: Free

Venue: 46 Clianthus St, O'Connor (Youth Coalition of the ACT Office)

RSVP: Essential by Friday 7 November to Amanda on amanda@youthcoalition.net or 6247 3540

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

Prisoners Aid Orientation Workshop

Prisoners Aid ACT

The Prisoners Aid Orientation Worksop is designed for:

- Prospective volunteer members of Prisoners Aid (ACT) who will work at the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) or make home visits to prisoners' families or who may wish to contribute other skills such as researching relevant issues or web design and maintenance
- Members of other organisations who may be involved in working with prisoners or prisoners' families and who wish to familiarise themselves with some of the issues that may arise.

The Workshop includes:

- An introduction to the activities of Prisoners Aid (ACT)
- A brief look at operations in the AMC
- An overview of factors contributing to crime in the community
- Some skills to support clients who are facing difficulties as a result of crime
- Some practical matters in dealing with clients connected with the justice system in any way.

Date: Saturday 22 November 2008

Time: 8.30am - 1.30pm

Venue: Volunteering ACT, Chandler Street, Belconnen

For further details and application forms please phone 6257 4866 (weekday mornings) or email prisonersaid@bigpond.com

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 5 December 2008

Time: 9.30am - 4.30pm

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

Cost: \$44 - \$231. Invoices for payment are sent following the training.

To register for this seminar, Please phone Julie on (02) 6202 7200 or email julie@actcoss.org.au for bookings or further information.

2008 National Drug Trends Conference

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)

The National Drug Trends Conference is being held in collaboration with the 2008 Australian Professional Society on Alcohol and Other Drugs (APSAD) Conference. It will present recent findings in illicit drug use, markets and related harms across Australia. Convened by Australia's largest drug monitoring systems, the Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) and the Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS), the one day conference will include the first release of the 2008 findings, in addition to discussion of emerging trends in illicit drug use and related issues in Australia.

Date: Sunday 23 November 2008

Time: 9am - 3.30pm

Venue: Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre

Cost: \$180 (adult) / \$115 (student or user organisation representative)

Information on presentations and registration forms are available on the APSAD conference website at www.apsad2008.com (you do not have to register for the APSAD Conference to attend the Drug Trends Conference).

Double Trouble Workshop

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)

Comorbidity between drug and alcohol and mental health continues to be one of the greatest challenges facing our treatment services. Mental

health and drug and alcohol services are struggling to find adequate resources and effective treatments. The Double Trouble Workshop is being held in collaboration with the 2008 Australian Professional Society on Alcohol and Other Drugs (APSAD) Conference. It will bring together experts to interactively discuss the latest challenges and responses to these issues. The speakers will focus on the latest research, updates on drug use trends, updates on best practice in service provision, new treatments, perspectives on how national and local policies and strategies can make a difference. The

program will be of particular interest to policy makers, clinicians, and researchers. You will receive many useful ideas to improve your service for this target group.

Date: Sunday 23 November 2008

Time: 9am - 3.30pm

Venue: Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre

Cost: \$275

Information on presentations and registration forms are available on the APSAD conference website at

www.apsad2008.com (you do not have to register for the APSAD Conference to attend the Drug Trends Conference).

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) www.adca.org.au/content/view/19/57/

The Commonwealth Minister for Health, Nicola Roxon, states that she has a passion for prevention and is committed to reducing health inequality

On 20 September 2008, the Hon. Nicola Roxon MP gave a speech at the annual Ben Chifley Memorial Dinner in Bathurst NSW entitled 'The Light on the Hill: History Repeating'. Quoting from the famous speech that Chifley, then Prime Minister, made at the NSW ALP Conference in 1949, she stated that she believes that good health policy is at the heart of Chifley's vision of 'bringing something better to the people'. She then explained how the health reforms that the ALP Government is pursuing will strengthen Australia's health system.

Ms Roxon said that health status is still one of the greatest markers of inequality in our society, citing the example of the vast differences in mortality from cardiovascular disease across socio-economic groups, and the higher death rates from chronic disease in rural and remote areas compared with urban areas. She is passionate about prevention, believing that not only is it a 'key weapon in the arsenal of health', but it must also be at the forefront of reform to redress inequality. The reform program she is promoting focuses on three areas: providing incentives for individuals to engage in prevention; using the health workforce effectively; and reform in our hospitals.

The text of the speech is online at

www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/sp-yr08-nr-nrsp200908.htm?OpenDocument&yr=2008&nth=9

The challenge: to make Australia the healthiest nation by 2020

In April 2008, Minister Nicola Roxon established the National Preventative Health Taskforce with responsibility to develop a Preventative Health Strategy by mid 2009. The Taskforce released a discussion paper in October which explains why prevention is a great investment.

The paper proposes actions to halt and reverse the rise in overweight and obesity; reduce the prevalence of daily smoking to 9% or less; and reduce the prevalence of harmful drinking for all Australians by 30%. With relation to tobacco, actions include ensuring that cigarettes become significantly more expensive, ending all forms of tobacco promotion, and giving strong and effective encouragement and support for smokers to quit. With relation to alcohol, actions include reshaping consumer demand towards safer drinking through managing access and price; reshaping supply towards lower-risk products, and strengthening primary health care to help people make healthy choices.

The Taskforce invites submissions by 2 January 2009 on how Australia can be made the healthiest country by 2020. The form for submissions is at the website below.

National Preventative Health Taskforce 2008, *Australia: the healthiest country by 2020. A discussion paper prepared by the National Preventative Health Taskforce*, [Department of Health and Ageing], Canberra; and three technical papers, *Obesity in Australia: a need for urgent action*, *Tobacco control in Australia: making smoking history*, and *Preventing alcohol-related harm in Australia: a window of opportunity* available at the Taskforce website

www.preventativehealth.org.au

How many Australians suffer from mental disorders associated with substance use?

According to the summary of results of the National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in October, 20% (3.2 million people) had a 12 month mental disorder. Of these, 5.1% (819,800) had a 12-month Substance Use disorder. Men had twice the rate of Substance Use Disorders (7.0%) than women (3.3%). Harmful Alcohol Use was the most prevalent Substance Use Disorder (2.9%), followed by Alcohol Dependence (1.4%) and Drug

Use Disorder (1.4%).

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008, *National survey of mental health and wellbeing: summary of results*, Catalogue no. 4326.0, ABS, Canberra, www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/4326.0

Does changing the way alcohol is served help to reduce injuries?

Alcohol intoxication is a risk factor for injuries. Various interventions are being made to modify the conditions in which alcohol is served and consumed to facilitate sensible alcohol consumption and reduce the occurrence of alcohol related harm. A number of studies listed in the Cochrane Database have looked at the effectiveness of these types of interventions.

Ker and Chinnock reviewed these studies with the objective of quantifying the effectiveness of interventions in the server setting for reducing injuries. They found that there is no reliable evidence that interventions in the alcohol server setting are effective in reducing injury. Because compliance with interventions appeared to be a problem, mandated interventions may be more likely to show an effect than voluntary ones. They concluded that randomised controlled trials, with adequate allocation concealment and blinding, are required to improve the evidence base. Further well-conducted non-randomised trials are also needed, when random allocation is not feasible.

Ker, K & Chinnock, P 2008, 'Interventions in the alcohol server setting for preventing injuries', *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*, no. 3, p. CD005244.

Do Australian police drug diversion programs reduce offending rates?

In 1999 the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy developed a national framework for the Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative (IDDI) to divert illicit drug users from the criminal justice system to education or assessment with a view to treatment. Each state and territory has now implemented at least one police-based diversion program targeted at the use or possession of cannabis. The majority also have a component designed to respond to the use of other illicit drugs, while a small number include the illicit use of prescription drugs.

The Australian Institute of Criminology has examined the criminal justice outcomes of IDDI programs, to assess their effectiveness in reducing the level of contact that diverted participants have with the criminal justice system. The findings were generally very positive: the majority of people who were referred to a police-based IDDI program did not reoffend in the 12 to 18 month period after their diversion. However, there were marked differences in post-program reoffending levels from one program to another.

In the study period in the ACT, 174 individuals were diverted for either cannabis or illicit drug use, of whom 81% were male. Overall compliance levels were very high (91%), but females were more than 4 times more likely to not comply with the requirements of their diversion. Of all the people diverted in the ACT, 33 % had reoffended within 18 months. Of these, 57% had committed only one criminal incident during this period.

Payne, J, Kwiatkowski, M, Wundersitz, J 2008, *Police drug diversion: a study of criminal offending outcomes*, Research and Public Policy Series, no. 97, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, <http://aic.gov.au/publications/rpp/97/>

What types of school-based drug prevention programs are most effective?

Australian Drug Policy Modelling Program researchers Soole, Mazerolle and Rombouts reviewed the evaluation literature to answer three questions: (1) do school-based drug prevention programs reduce rates of illicit drug use? (2) what features are characteristic of effective programs? and (3) do these effective program characteristics differ from those identified as effective in reviews of school-based drug prevention of licit substance use (such as alcohol and tobacco)?

They found that successful intervention programs typically involve high levels of interactivity, time-intensity, and universal approaches that are delivered in the middle school years. Interactive programs adopting either social influence or competency enhancement components appear to be the most effective approach. More intensive programs appear to increase program effectiveness, and universal programs may be slightly more effective. These program characteristics aligned with many of the effective program elements found in previous reviews exploring the impact of school-based drug prevention on licit drug use. Their analysis suggests that the inclusion of booster sessions and multifaceted drug prevention programs have little impact on preventing illicit drug use among school-aged children. However, this research does little to resolve the debate regarding the most appropriate program provider.

They recommend that policy makers should focus their school-based drug prevention initiatives around interactive programs that are delivered during the middle school years. They suggest that there is probably no additional benefit in funding multifaceted programs or booster sessions. These two strategies may be more effective for preventing licit drug

use, but may be of limited benefit in preventing illicit drug use. Their findings suggest that school-based drug prevention programs that lack interactivity and are aimed at children outside of the middle school years are unlikely to yield many benefits. They conclude that policy makers should take general note of the ongoing importance of funding scientifically rigorous evaluations of drug prevention programs.

Soole, DW, Mazerolle, L & Rombouts, S 2008, 'School-based drug prevention programs: a review of what works', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 259-86.

What does the data tell us about alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia?

The Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set (AODTS NMDS) helps monitor and evaluate the objectives of the National Drug Strategy 2004-2009. It also helps to plan, manage and improve the quality of alcohol and other drug treatment services. The bulletins on AOD treatment services in Australia 2006-07, and AOD treatment services in the ACT 2006-07, were released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in October.

In 2006-07 633 government-funded AOD treatment agencies provided 147,325 closed treatment episodes across Australia. The median age of persons receiving treatment was 31 years, with males accounting for two thirds of episodes. Alcohol was the most common principal drug of concern in closed treatment episodes (42%), followed by cannabis (23%), opioids (14%), and amphetamines (12%). In 10% of episodes the clients were of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. Most treatment episodes ended either because treatment was completed (54%) or because the client ceased to participate without notice to the treatment provider (17%).

In the ACT, 10 government-funded AOD treatment agencies provided 4,504 closed treatment episodes. The median age of persons receiving treatment for their own drug use was 32 years. Alcohol was the most common principal drug of concern in closed treatment episodes (55%), followed by opioids (22%), cannabis (12%), and amphetamines (9%). More than one third (36%) of treatment episodes were for assessment only as the main treatment type, a quarter (27%) for counselling and 16% for withdrawal management.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2008, *Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia 2006-07: findings from the National Minimum Data Set*, Bulletin 65, AIHW, Canberra and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2008, *Alcohol and other drug treatment services in the Australian Capital Territory 2006-07: findings from the National Minimum Data Set (NMDS)*, Cat. no. HSE 60, AIHW, Canberra, www.aihw.gov.au/mediacentre/2008/mr20081017.cfm

Does drug use affect women differently from men?

In a Victorian-based study which is relevant to the ACT situation, Rebecca Yeats, Health Promotion Officer with Women's Health Victoria, examined the health implications of women's use of illicit drugs. This study is part of Women's Health Victoria's gender impact assessment initiatives within the context of a gendered policy framework which makes it possible to anticipate and take account of the differing impacts of policy and planning decisions on women and men.

Drug use among women appears to be on the rise both in Australia and around the world. The number of women in Victoria that misuse drugs is small with 10% of women using illicit drugs in the past 12 months but the health and social implications for these women and their families are serious and wide ranging.

Exposure to significant illness and disease, including hepatitis C and HIV to which women are biologically more vulnerable than men, can dramatically reduce quality of life. Falls and other injuries sustained while under the influence of prescription drugs used for illicit purposes is of concern for women, many of who are also using alcohol in a harmful manner. Maintaining employment can be difficult for women using drugs further exacerbating the lack of financial security women experience compared to men. The social stigma associated with drug use can prevent women from accessing health services which can be especially harmful for women who are pregnant. Women with dependent children experience particular difficulties associated with their drug use, and with accessing drug treatment services. Women are more likely to be incarcerated for non-violent drug offences than men which can result in separation from dependent children.

Yeats recommends that effective and coordinated strategies be adopted to ensure that the number of women abusing drugs is reduced and that treatment options are appropriate and accessible. Collaboration is needed between organisations involved in domestic violence, drug treatment and mental health services to improve assistance for women. Collaboration between the Victorian Departments of Human Services and Justice is required to provide access to better treatment services for women in prisons. Improved monitoring of provision of prescription drugs through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme will identify women who obtain large quantities of these drugs and enable their referral to drug treatment.

Yeats, R 2008, *Gender impact assessment: drugs and dependence*, Women's Health Victoria, Melbourne, www.whv.org.au/health_policy/gia.htm

What are the most effective population-level interventions to reduce the prevalence of cigarette smoking?

A ground-breaking international study led by researchers from the Cancer Council Victoria found that raising cigarette prices and exposing people to anti-smoking advertisements are the most effective ways to persuade people to give up smoking. The researchers assessed the impact of several tobacco control policies and televised antismoking advertising on adult smoking prevalence. They used a population survey conducted in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney in which smoking prevalence was measured each month from 1995 to 2006. Time-series analysis assessed the effect on smoking prevalence of televised antismoking advertising, cigarette costliness, monthly sales of nicotine replacement therapy and bupropion, and smoke-free restaurant laws.

They found that increases in cigarette costliness and exposure to tobacco control media campaigns significantly reduced smoking prevalence. Specifically, a 0.3% reduction in smoking prevalence was attained by either exposing the population to televised anti-smoking advertisements an average of around four times per month or by increasing the price of a pack of cigarettes by 0.03% of gross average weekly earnings. While these percentages may seem small, they represent large impacts at the population level: according to an accompanying media release, 'Converted to today's values, this means that increasing the television exposure to this level or increasing the price of each cigarette stick by between 1 and 2.5 cents would result in an additional 60,000-95,000 fewer smokers in Australia, up to half of whom would die prematurely if they continued smoking.' Monthly sales of NRT and bupropion, exposure to NRT advertising, and smoke-free restaurant laws had no detectable impact on smoking prevalence.

They concluded that increases in the real price of cigarettes and tobacco control mass media campaigns broadcast at sufficient exposure levels and at regular intervals are critical for reducing population smoking prevalence.

Wakefield, MA, Durkin, S, Spittal, MJ, Siahpush, M, Scollo, M, Simpson, JA, Chapman, S, White, V & Hill, D 2008, 'Impact of tobacco control policies and mass media campaigns on monthly adult smoking prevalence', *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 98, no. 8, pp. 1443-50, <http://tinyurl.com/5u84cz>

October Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) and Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS) bulletins

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)

The October IDRS and EDRS bulletins are now available for download online:

- IDRS: Drug injection trends among participants in the Australian Needle and Syringe Program Survey, 2003-2007. Available online at [http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/NDARCWeb.nsf/resources/Bulletins_IDRS_2008/\\$file/IDRS+Bulletin+Oct08.pdf](http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/NDARCWeb.nsf/resources/Bulletins_IDRS_2008/$file/IDRS+Bulletin+Oct08.pdf)
- EDRS: Age-related differences in patterns of drug use and risk behaviour among regular ecstasy users Available online at [http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/NDARCWeb.nsf/resources/Bulletins_EDRS_2008/\\$file/EDRS+Bulletin+Oct08.pdf](http://notes.med.unsw.edu.au/NDARCWeb.nsf/resources/Bulletins_EDRS_2008/$file/EDRS+Bulletin+Oct08.pdf)

Media

Ombudsman releases third report on how ACT police deal with intoxicated people

Commonwealth Ombudsman

22 October 2008

More needs to be done to keep intoxicated people out of police custody in Canberra according to a report by the Commonwealth Ombudsman released today.

'Police have a range of powers to deal with intoxicated people,' Prof. McMillan said. 'If a person has committed an offence, they can be arrested and charged. My investigation looked at how police use their powers under the Intoxicated People (Care and Protection) Act 1994. The legislation provides options for dealing with the care and protection of intoxicated people who haven't committed any offence. I have recommended that the police should do more to divert those people from being held in the Regional Watchhouse.'

This investigation has come at a time of increasing focus, both nationally and in the ACT, on problems arising from alcohol sale and consumption, particularly relating to hazardous drinking among young people. Since 2003, 60% of the people who ended up in custody for intoxication in the ACT were aged under 30, and more than 40% were young men aged 18 to 25.

The Ombudsman said that dealing with intoxicated people was often a difficult and demanding job that took up a lot of

police time. 'Police are at the front line of addressing problems such as violence and anti-social behaviour caused by abuse of alcohol and other drugs,' Prof. McMillan said. 'I hope that when the ACT Government looks at liquor licensing laws, it will consider the difficulties police face.'

This is the Ombudsman's third report on how the Australian Federal Police deal with intoxicated people. Since the last report in 2001, a purpose-built shelter has been opened near Ainslie Village to look after people who need a safe place to sober up. While police are taking some people to the shelter, the numbers have dropped and many more still end up in the Watchhouse—more than 1,400 people in 2007. As well, police records show that some people are held for longer than the legislation allows.

The Ombudsman has recommended that the AFP work more closely with ACT Health, which funds the sobering up shelter run by Centacare. 'I understand the two agencies are already meeting to discuss some of the key issues my investigation has raised,' Prof. McMillan said. The report also recommends some changes to police training. Prof. McMillan said that 'Being drunk in a public place has not been an offence in the ACT since 1983, yet police training still refers to the intoxication detention provisions as "street offences". The law gives power to police to care for and protect intoxicated people, and that needs to be emphasised.'

Download the report at www.ombudsman.gov.au/commonwealth/publish.nsf/Content/publications_investigationreports

Australian National Council on Drugs Media Release

Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD)

Friday 31 October 2008

Australian National Council on Drugs says it's time for a much bigger focus on helping people experiencing homelessness with alcohol and drug problems – some reports are highlighting that a person experiencing homelessness is 33 times more likely to have an opiate problem, 6 times more likely to have a drug use disorder and for those 'sleeping rough' over half are dependent on alcohol. Dr John Herron says there are opportunities for doing good work to help people experiencing homelessness but many services need additional resources and support to deal with the high levels of drug and alcohol problems amongst their clients

A major new website has been designed to support homelessness services helping their clients with drug and alcohol problems and will be launched today (Friday October 31st) at the Matthew Talbot Hostel in Sydney...

The new website launched today – located at www.hip.org.au – offers a range of fact sheets for homeless service providers on addressing drug and alcohol problems with people experiencing homelessness. It also offers an extensive database of services that could work with the homeless services/sector to help people with drug and alcohol misuse problems. It's been specifically designed to be used by people who work in the homeless sector, shelters and organisations who have face to face interaction with people experiencing homelessness.

This resource is designed to provide information about ways of working and opportunities that exist to work in partnership with other organisations either directly through referral pathways or indirectly through accessing secondary consultation and other ways of ensuring that one of the contributors to or causes of a person's experience of homelessness is addressed - their risky and harmful alcohol, tobacco and drug use.

To view the full media release visit www.ancd.org.au

Consumer Participation

See the *Sector Activities and Events* section for the 'Mental Health Services users and people with AOD issues budget consultation' under the 'Community Consultations for the 2009 - 10 ACT Budget' item.

Consumer Forum on the ACT Health and Human Rights Commission Joint Review of the Psychiatric Services Unit (PSU)

The ACT Mental Health Consumer Network

The joint review of ACT Health's PSU will inform the construction and operations of a new facility due for completion in 2010. The review, which commenced on 18 August 2008 will examine the current PSU facility, and policies, practices and procedures.

Consumer input is sought into the review to make sure that the new psychiatric facility will be the best possible facility and provide the best care and environment for consumers.

Date: Wednesday 5 November

Time: 4pm - 6pm

Venue: Room 10, Griffin Centre, Genge Street, Canberra City

RSVP: By Monday 3 November, to Simon Viereck, ACT Mental health Consumer Network on 6230 5796 or

actmhcncn@actmhcncn.org.au

Consumer and Carer Quarterly Forum

Mental Health Community Coalition ACT

The upcoming Consumer and Carer Quarterly Forum will focus on the ACT Mental Health Services Plan and is an opportunity for consumers, carers and service providers to provide input into the Coalition's responses to the draft plan and the ACT Budget Submission. The Mental Health Consumers Network & ACTCOSS will also be in attendance to co-facilitate the forum.

Date: 10 November 2008

Time: 5pm - 7.30pm

Venue: Room 6, Griffin Centre, Genge Street, Canberra City

For more information contact the Mental Health Community Coalition ACT on 6249 7756

Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors

Bring It! The 2008 Young Carers Forum

Carers Australia

Carers Australia would like you to attend Bring it!: The 2008 Young Carers Forum. This major event will feature internationally renowned academics joined by representatives from commonwealth and state government departments, key youth focused organisations, service providers, health professionals and young carers to discuss the latest research and develop strategies to support young carers in the future. This will be the most important forum for Australian young carers ever and we want you to be part of it.

Date: Wednesday 26 & Thursday 27 November 2008

Venue: Parliament House, Canberra

Visit www.bringit2008.com.au for more information.

Annual Yogie Awards Nominations Due: Friday, 7 November 2008

Youth Coalition of the ACT

The Yogie Awards recognise, celebrate, promote and reward outstanding practice in working with young people in the ACT and surrounding area. Nominations are currently being sought from:

- Any organisation or individual who works with and / or for young people in the ACT and surrounding region.
- Young people are encouraged to submit nominations about themselves, their peers, a worker and / or an organisation.
- Organisations or individuals may nominate themselves or another organisation or individual.
- An organisation or individual can submit multiple nominations.

For more information, contact the Youth Coalition on (02) 6247 3540 or email info@youthcoalition.net

AOD and Young People: A Platform for Action

The Youth Coalition of the ACT

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

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

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

Consultation on Mental Health Services Plan

ACT Government

The draft ACT Mental Health Services Plan 2008-2013 has been released for community consultation. The Plan is a strategic level document that gives broad direction for the future development of public mental health services in the ACT.

It has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders over the past two years. This draft plan has been released to seek feedback from the broader ACT community. The Mental Health Services Plan covers the period 2008-2013 but conveys a vision for how mental health services will be delivered in the ACT in 20 years' time. A separate Implementation Plan will be developed.

Consultation will close on 20 November 2008. You may choose to use the set of questions provided to assist you to give your feedback, or to provide your feedback in some other format. All feedback received will be acknowledged by return email or mail.

Visit www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=sp&pid=1221000313&sid=50C46B33E9B0F8AD755D869A2081FB85 for more information.

Employment Opportunities

Clinical Nurse, Althea Wellness Centre

DIRECTIONS ACT

Althea Wellness Centre will aim to be a centre of excellence in the primary care treatment of clients with alcohol and drug use issues, and a model for learning for outside professionals and students entering the mainstream health system in any capacity.

Clinical Nurse – 6 months initial contract

The Althea Wellness Centre seeks a Clinical Nurse who enjoys a varied and challenging primary health care setting and outreach environment. The Clinical Nurse will actively engage with, and provide excellence in clinical care to, people with alcohol and other drug issues and their families. The role supports other clinical and non-clinical personnel and provides practice nurse support within the Althea Team. The position is a flexible part-time or full-time 6 month position in the first instance. 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.

For the job description, pay rates and selection criteria visit www.directionsact.com/employment or contact 6122 8000 and ask for Gen Lai.

Grants and Funding Opportunities

Innovative Project Grants: October 2008 - 1 June 2009

Alcohol and Education 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 innovation 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.

To apply for this grant visit www.aerf.com.au/community/about.aspx to download the application form.

Conference Attendance Grants

Alcohol and Education Rehabilitation Foundation (AER)

Conference Attendance Grants are available for organisations that pursue best-practice goals by developing the knowledge and expertise of staff that work in the alcohol and other drug sector. The grants are capped at \$5000 per conference, with a maximum of 2 persons per organisation receiving assistance.

To apply for this grant visit www.aerf.com.au/community/about.aspx to download the application form.

Linking Research to Real Life

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)

Organisations and researchers now have access to over \$100m for research to improve health programs. The new NHMRC Partnerships scheme aims to build direct relationships between health providers and researchers, to strengthen the

evidence base that decision makers work from. The scheme is ongoing, with the initial funding of over \$100m available in the first two years. Health providers and researchers will be able to form partnerships to apply for a grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) for any research project that has the potential to improve the health of Australians. Partner organisations are expected to provide funding or in kind support to the value of the NHMRC grant, however a group of partners can get together to make this easier for smaller organisations.

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

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

Applications close on Friday December 19 2008.