

## ACT AOD Sector Project eBulletin: October 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](mailto:ebulletin@aodsector.org.au).

News from the ACT AOD Sector Project	In This Edition...
<p><b>ACT AOD Sector Project</b></p> <p>The ACT AOD Sector Project is a capacity building Project that began in July 2007, and is funded by ACT Health. The Youth Coalition of the ACT provides support to ACT AOD Workers to conduct the AOD Sector Project. The Project aims to build the capacity and identity of the ACT AOD sector, foster intra and cross-sectoral relationships, and improve outcomes while maintaining respect for the diversity of services and for people who are affected by AOD.</p> <p>For more information visit <a href="http://www.aodsector.org.au">www.aodsector.org.au</a> or contact Amanda Bode, ACT AOD Sector Project Officer, Youth Coalition of the ACT on <a href="mailto:info@aodsector.org.au">info@aodsector.org.au</a> or (02) 6247 3540.</p>	<p><b>News from the ACT AOD Sector Project</b></p> <p>Update on Project activities.</p> <p><b>ACT AOD Sector Forum Update</b></p> <p>Information from services that attended the AOD Sector monthly forum.</p>
<p><b>Launch of the ACT AOD Services Directory, Version 2</b></p> <p><i>ACT AOD Sector Project and the Comorbidity Project, Youth Coalition of the ACT</i></p> <p>The updated ACT AOD Services Directory will be launched by the ACT AOD Sector Workers' Group, in collaboration with the ACT Comorbidity Strategic Working Group. The updated ACT AOD Services Directory will include a new comorbidity aspect to the 30+ AOD programs profiled.</p> <p><i>When:</i> Wednesday 8 October, 10.30am - 11am</p> <p><i>Where:</i> ACT Health Building, 1 Moore Street, Canberra City</p> <p>For more information contact Erin Barry on (02) 6247 3540 or <a href="mailto:erin@youthcoalition.net">erin@youthcoalition.net</a></p>	<p><b>Sector Activities and Events</b></p> <p>Launches, key weeks, international days and program and service activities.</p> <p><b>Lead Up to Mental Health Week: 5 - 11 October 2008</b></p> <p>Provides information on Mental Health Week in the ACT.</p>
<p><b>The First Biannual Comorbidity Forum</b></p> <p><i>The ACT AOD Sector Project, ACT AOD Workers' Group and ACT Comorbidity Strategic Working Group</i></p> <p>The Biannual Comorbidity Forum aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an opportunity for ACT AOD and mental health workers to network and share information;</li> <li>• Learn about developments in, and relevant to, comorbidity and the sector;</li> <li>• Access professional development opportunities, information and resources;</li> <li>• Support professional peer networks;</li> <li>• Improve referrals and service knowledge, and;                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information about, and give workers an opportunity to have input into, the ACT AOD Sector Project and the ACT Comorbidity Project.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The guest speaker will be <b>Professor Michael Levy, Medical Director, Corrections Health, ACT Health</b>. Professor Levy will discuss health information, with a focus on comorbidity, about the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) including information on services and case planning, how community based services will work with the AMC and information on throughcare.</p> <p><i>Date:</i> Friday 17 October 2008</p> <p><i>Time:</i> 9.15am for arrivals. 9.30 - 11.30am for forum.</p> <p><i>Venue:</i> Youth Coalition of the ACT Office, 46 Clianthus St, O'Connor</p> <p><i>Food:</i> Morning tea will be provided.</p> <p><i>RSVP:</i> Essential by Wednesday 15 October. Contact Amanda on (02) 6247 3540 or <a href="mailto:info@aodsector.org.au">info@aodsector.org.au</a></p>	<p><b>News from the Executive Directors' Group</b></p> <p>Information from the EDs' group that is relevant to the AOD sector and workers.</p> <p><b>Sector Development</b></p> <p>Information on networks, resources, websites, factsheets and tools for workers.</p> <p><b>Training and Professional Development</b></p> <p>Training for the AOD and allied sectors, including upcoming seminars, conferences, bus tours, courses and other professional development opportunities.</p> <p><b>Policy, Reports and Research</b></p> <p>New research, reports, inquiry findings, and any key policy activities effecting the AOD sector.</p>

*Note:* This forum is for AOD and Mental Health Workers only. Only 30 places are available, and space may have to be limited to one representative per service.

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

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

## ACT AOD Sector Forum Update

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

### Alcohol and Drug Foundation ACT (ADFACT)

*Service spokesperson: Tim Green*

*Phone: 6291 9591, Email: [timothy.g@adfact.org](mailto:timothy.g@adfact.org)*

Some programs currently being offered by ADFACT include:

#### **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.

#### **Sober Driver Program:**

Provides a 9 week course for people who have been convicted or are facing charges for drink driving offences.

#### **Nexus Program:**

Provides the Men's Halfway House Program and the Aftercare Program that offer a community based treatment program for people with alcohol and other drug issues.

ADFACT will also be providing a new Therapeutic Community Program in the Alexander Machonochie Centre (AMC). For more information on ADFACT programs visit [www.adfact.org](http://www.adfact.org)

### Alcohol and Drug Program (ADP)

*Service spokesperson: Clare Purcell*

*Phone: 6205 8384, Email: [clare.purcell@act.gov.au](mailto:clare.purcell@act.gov.au)*

#### **Diversion Service:**

The Diversion Service is an assessment, referral and support service for people referred by the Australian Federal Police 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 the client, Police can divert them to the health sector.
- Court Alcohol and Drug Assessment Service (CADAS): a pre-sentencing treatment option for clients charged with AOD related offences.
- Treatment Referral Program: is a post sentencing option, for clients who have either committed a crime to get drugs, 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 or as an option to reduce their custodial time.
- Aboriginal Liaison Officer (ALO): provides support to Indigenous clients accessing ADP and Non

#### Media

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

#### Consumer Participation

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

#### Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors

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

#### Employment Opportunities

Employment opportunities in the ACT AOD and allied sectors.

#### Grants and Funding Opportunities

Upcoming grants, funding opportunities and tenders.

Government Organisations, support to Ngambra Court and information to other service providers.

**Group Programs:**

The ADP provide the following groups:

- Effective Weed Control
- Relapse Prevention Program
- Controlling Your Drinking
- Mindfulness, Mediation & Stress Management
- The Stepping Stones Course

[Click here](#) to download the Groups Program for 2008. For more information contact the ADP on 6205 4515.

**Withdrawal Unit:**

- Dr Phillip George, Senior Staff Specialist Psychiatrist has commenced work part time with the ADP.
- The Opioid Treatment Service will be piloting a case management program in November. The program will initially involve 50 Opioid Treatment Service clients, but will hopefully expand in the future.

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

Service spokesperson: Nicole Wiggins

Phone: 6279 1600, Email: [nicolew@aivl.org.au](mailto:nicolew@aivl.org.au)

- From 11.30am - 2.30pm on 16 October 2008 The Connection will be holding a Family BBQ including art & crafts for adults and kids. These will continue to be held every month during summer. For further information please contact Aimee, Connections Peer Worker on 6279 1670.
- CAHMA & The Connection will also be hosting the Methadone and Buprenorphine Consumers Group from 12pm - 1.30pm, 9 October 2008 at the CAHMA/Connection office at 112-116 Sydney Building Allinga St. Lunch will be provided. All methadone/Buprenorphine consumers are welcome. For more information contact CAHMA/Connection on 6279 1670.

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

Service spokesperson: Erin Barry

Phone: 6247 3540, Email: [erin@youthcoalition.net](mailto: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

**Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation**

Service spokesperson: Selina Walker

Phone: 6231 9555, Email: [selina@gugan-gulwan.com.au](mailto:selina@gugan-gulwan.com.au)

Some programs currently provided by Gugan Gulwan include information, support, advocacy, case management and court support to young people aged 12 - 25 years experiencing AOD and/or mental health related issues. They have an Outreach Worker, Detox Support Worker, Dual Diagnosis Worker and Coordinator.

### **The Sobering Up Shelter, Centacare**

*Service Spokesperson: Lisa Goodisson*

Phone: 6163 3711 or 0406 377 623, Email: [soberingupshelter@centacare-canberra.org](mailto:soberingupshelter@centacare-canberra.org)

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

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

*Service spokesperson: Paulina Hellec*

Phone: 6248 8600, Email: [wired@toora.org.au](mailto:wired@toora.org.au)

WIREDDD will have 2 full time workers commencing in mid October. Some programs currently being offered by WIREDDD include:

- Information and support for women about drugs.
- Confidential, free one-to-one counselling.
- Drop-in (Monday 11am-4pm, Tuesday 2pm -4pm, Thursday 11am-4pm, and Friday 11am-4pm).
- Family of Origin Group: an open group that is run for 6 weeks .
- Beautiful Me Group: an open group that is run for 6 weeks.
- Relapse Prevention Group: to be run on 21 October 2008.
- A focus group for women who use amphetamines will be run in October to feed into the development of amphetamine training.
- Note: Childcare can be organised if you call in advance.

## Sector Activities and Events

### **13th Annual Remembrance Ceremony: 'for those who lose their life to illicit drugs'**

*Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform*

The ceremony will take place at the dedicated memorial, located on the right of Weston Park Road, opposite the Prescott Lane junction.

Speakers include:

- Senator the Hon Jan McLucas, Parliamentary Secretary to the Hon Nicola Roxon, Minister for Health and Ageing
- Reverend John Brown
- A family member

There will also be a performance by the choir "In the Mood"

*Date:* Monday 20 October 2008

*Time:* 12.30pm - 1.30pm

*Where:* Weston Park, Yarralumla

Refreshments will be served following the ceremony.

Everyone is welcome. We appreciate the attendance of those who have not necessarily been directly affected

but come to show support to those who have.

If you have a family member or friend who has lost their life to illicit drugs and would like them remembered by name at the ceremony please phone Marion on (02) 6254 2961 or [mcconnell@ffdlr.org.au](mailto:mcconnell@ffdlr.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](mailto:awards@supportlink.com.au)

Applications will be received until 21 November 2008.

Application forms and more information available at [www.earlyinterventionawards.com.au](http://www.earlyinterventionawards.com.au)

### **New Contact Details for the ACT Hepatitis Resource Centre**

*ACT Hepatitis Resource Centre*

The ACT Hepatitis Resource Centre provides information and health promotion activities to raise awareness about Hepatitis to people in the Canberra community.

*Phone:* (02) 6282 2611

*Fax:* (02) 6285 1833

*Mailing Address:* PO Box 50, Woden ACT 2615

*Location:* Suite 8, 18 Corrinna Street, Woden ACT

*Website:* [www.hepatitisresourcecentre.com.au](http://www.hepatitisresourcecentre.com.au)

## **Lead Up to Mental Health Week: 5 - 11 October 2008**

### **Mental Health Week 2008 in the ACT**

*Mental Health ACT, ACT Health*

Mental Health Week 2008 runs from Sunday 5 October - Saturday 11 October. The theme for Mental Health Week this year is 'Participate'. In the ACT, events are being coordinated by a community partnership with support from the Mental Health Council of Australia, Mental Health Community Coalition of the ACT, and ACT Health. A range of events are being hosted across the ACT throughout the week to celebrate and bring awareness to mental wellbeing. Activities range from dramatic, musical, and visual presentations, lifestyle and recreational activities and informative displays.

Download a full calendar of Mental Health Week events in the ACT [here](#).

### **Mental Health Week Launch**

*Mental Health ACT, ACT Health*

The Chief Minister will officially launch Mental Health Week in the ACT.

*Date:* Tuesday 7 October 2008

*Time:* 10am

*Where:* Legislative Assembly, London Circuit, Civic Square, Canberra City.

For further information about the launch [click here](#) or contact Mark Bartlett, on 6207 1783 or

[mark.bartlett@act.gov.au](mailto:mark.bartlett@act.gov.au)

See also the *News from the ACT AOD Sector Project* section for the Launch of the ACT AOD Services

Directory, Version 2'.

## News from the Executive Directors' Group

The non-government Executive Directors' are currently finalising their response to the Siggins Miller External Review of the ACT Alcohol and Drug Service System.

Work is also continuing on the development of the next ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Strategy.

Anyone wishing to comment on the strategic priorities needs to have their comments to their Executive Directors' so that he/she can forward comments to the Alcohol and Other Drug Policy Unit by Friday 10 October 2008.

[Click here](#) to download the latest version of the strategic priorities.

## Sector Development

### Update of The RACK

*Youth Coalition of the ACT*

The RACK aims to provide an up-to-date resource of current network and committees within the ACT, that workers can either attend or link to. The updated version of The RACK is now available, with information correct as of August 2008. View or download The RACK at [www.youthcoalition.net](http://www.youthcoalition.net). For more information, contact James on (02) 6247 3540 or [james@youthcoalition.net](mailto:james@youthcoalition.net)

### National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre e-Zine

*National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC), University of New South Wales*

NCPIC produces a monthly e-Zine which examines a range of cannabis-related issues. As well as highlighting relevant research publications that have been recently published, it examines some of the cannabis-related media stories that have attracted attention each month, as well as providing some information on 'hot topics'.

The August edition of the e-Zine is now available to download from

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

### The Establishment of the National Indigenous Law and Justice Advisory Body: Call for Submissions

*Attorney Generals Department, Australian Government*

A new national Indigenous law and justice advisory body is being established to provide high level Indigenous law and justice policy advice to the Australian Government. It is anticipated the advisory body will include representation from non government service providers such as Indigenous legal services and family violence support services, key justice sectors, such as police, corrections and the courts, as well as specialists in areas such as law reform, human rights and juvenile justice.

The Government is proposing that the body be appointed from nominations received after a national consultation process. The Government will be inviting Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders with the relevant expertise and experience to put themselves forward.

To assist with the development of the advisory body, the Attorney-General's Department is inviting written submissions from stakeholders. In particular, the Department seeks your views on the proposed model of the advisory body, the role and responsibilities it could assume, critical issues it could address at a national level and ideas on how the selection process could occur.

Written submissions can be made by completing the Submission Form and returning it to the Attorney-General's Department by 31 October 2008. For more information, including a submission form visit [www.ag.gov.au/indigenousadvisorybody](http://www.ag.gov.au/indigenousadvisorybody)

## **DrugInfo Newsletter: Prevention and early intervention of amphetamine-related harm**

*DrugInfo Clearinghouse*

This issue of DrugInfo Newsletter identifies some local and national programs and projects that are based on some of the key principles for the prevention of amphetamine use.

Visit [www.druginfo.adf.org.au/newsletter.asp?ContainerID=methamphetamine](http://www.druginfo.adf.org.au/newsletter.asp?ContainerID=methamphetamine) to download the newsletter.

## **CentreLines Newsletter**

*National Drug Research Institute (NDRI)*

CentreLines is a joint publication from the National Drug Research Institute (NDRI), Perth and the National Drug and Alcohol Research Institute (NDARC), Sydney. It is published bi-monthly and produced alternately by each centre, with the aim of increasing communication with other researchers and workers in the alcohol and other drugs field. The main theme of the current issue of CentreLines is Indigenous Australian research.

The current issue of CentreLines newsletter is now available on the National Drug Research Institute website at [www.ndri.curtin.edu.au/pdfs/centrelines/ndri025.pdf](http://www.ndri.curtin.edu.au/pdfs/centrelines/ndri025.pdf)

## **Finding Solutions to Sector Viability: ACTCOSS REPORT**

*ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)*

ACTCOSS has released the final report of its sector viability project titled Finding Solutions. The project explored options for securing the long-term future of the community sector in the ACT, particularly focussing on sharing services, funding and workforce development.

You can download the report from the ACTCOSS website at

[www.actcoss.org.au/publications/Publications\\_2008/2108REP.pdf](http://www.actcoss.org.au/publications/Publications_2008/2108REP.pdf)

## **Training and Professional Development**

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

For more information contact Erin Barry, Youth Coalition of the ACT on (02) 6247 3540 or

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

### **Mental Health First Aid**

*Lifeline Canberra*

This 2 day course has been designed to increase the mental health literacy of individuals and communities and focuses on helping people in mental health crisis situations or the early stages of mental health problems.

*Date:* 9 & 10 October 2008

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

For more information or to register please contact Lifeline Canberra on (02) 6204 6405,

[www.act.lifeline.org.au](http://www.act.lifeline.org.au) or [training@act.lifeline.org.au](mailto:training@act.lifeline.org.au)

### **Brief Interventions & Working with Intoxicated Users**

*Vyne@OzHelp*

This one-day course will present two sessions relating to issues within the Alcohol and Other Drug field. Session one explores the use of brief interventions, specifically within Needle & Syringe Programs (NSP's), focuses on the 'stages of change' model, motivational interviewing principles and skills training for service users. Session two recognises that the provision of NSP services to people presenting as intoxicated is an issue that may cause workers concern. This session provides participants with the knowledge and skills to recognise the signs and symptoms of intoxication and implement strategies to manage the client in a safe and effective manner.

*Time:* 10am - 5pm

*Date:* Thursday 23 October 2008

*Where:* Conference Room, Quality Hotel Dickson, Cnr Badham Street & Cape Street, Dickson, ACT

*Cost:* \$130 (\$110 for concession)

*Registration:* Essential by Thursday 16 October. Contact Irmgard on (02) 6251 4166 or [vyne@ozhelp.org.au](mailto:vyne@ozhelp.org.au)

For more information visit [www.ozhelp.org.au](http://www.ozhelp.org.au)

## **Understanding & Responding to Self Harm**

*Lifeline Canberra*

This half day training program will look at what constitutes self harm, why people engage in self harm and how best to respond and reduce the incidence of self harm.

*Date:* 27 October 2008

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

For more information or to register please contact Lifeline Canberra on (02) 6204 6405,

[www.act.lifeline.org.au](http://www.act.lifeline.org.au) or [training@act.lifeline.org.au](mailto:training@act.lifeline.org.au)

## **Critical Incident Stress Management**

This two day course is designed and accredited by both the International and the Australian Critical Incident Stress Foundation Inc. This workshop will present the core elements of a comprehensive, systematic and multi-component crisis intervention program including education, individual support, small group defusings and debriefings, and crisis management briefings. Workshop content includes incident assessment, how teams function in the workplace and the role of peer support.

*Time:* 9.30am - 4.30pm

*Date:* 30 & 31 October 2008

*Where:* Conference Room, Quality Hotel Dickson, Cnr Badham Street & Cape Street, Dickson, ACT

*Cost:* \$240 (\$220 for concession)

*Registration:* Essential by Thursday 16 October. Contact Irmgard on (02) 6251 4166 or [vyne@ozhelp.org.au](mailto:vyne@ozhelp.org.au)

For more information visit [www.ozhelp.org.au](http://www.ozhelp.org.au)

## **Masters and PhD Scholarships Available at Monash University**

Scholarships are available for people interested in doing a Masters or PhD in the social aspects of drug use, drug treatment or blood-borne viruses.

Scholarships are now available for study commencing in 2009 in the School of Political and Social Inquiry, Centre for Women's Studies and Gender Research, Monash University, Melbourne. Projects can focus on issues of gender and sexuality in relation to these areas, but this is not essential.

Possible research areas include:

- Hepatitis C and migration
- Alcohol consumption and gender
- Opioid pharmacotherapy treatment and reproduction
- Popular culture and drug use

- Harm reduction and citizenship
- Hepatitis C and the clinical encounter

Candidates must hold a first class honours in their Bachelors degree (or equivalent e.g. Masters level qualification with a significant thesis component graded at first class honours) to be eligible to apply for a scholarship. Scholarship forms are available on-line at

[www.arts.monash.edu.au/womens-studies/staff/sfraser.php](http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/womens-studies/staff/sfraser.php)

#### **Applications close 21 October 2008.**

Applicants are advised to contact staff in the Centre prior to submitting an application. For more information contact Dr Suzanne Fraser on (03) 9902 0322 or [suzanne.fraser@arts.monash.edu.au](mailto:suzanne.fraser@arts.monash.edu.au)

### **Accredited Mental Health Training Opportunity**

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

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

*Date:* 11 - 12 November 2008

*Cost:* \$300 per two-day unit. The Mental Health Community Coalition ACT is offering a \$50 subsidy to the first 15 registrants from their member organisations.

For further information or to register please visit [www.mhccnsw.org.au](http://www.mhccnsw.org.au)

## **Policy, Reports and Research**

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

### **Release of the National Amphetamine-Type Stimulant Strategy 2008-2011**

The National Amphetamine-Type Stimulant Strategy 2008-2011, endorsed by the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy earlier this year, has now been released. The National Drug Strategy advises that 'It has been developed within the existing legislative framework and focuses on prevention, supply reduction and treatment in a partnership framework...The overall goal of the Strategy is to guide all levels of government in Australia to work collaboratively to reduce the availability and demand for illicit amphetamine-type stimulants and prevent use and harms across the Australian community...The Strategy has been developed following an extensive review of the literature and research to date, and through consultations undertaken in every jurisdiction of Australia in capital cities and regional areas between March and June 2007.'

The Strategy is online at

<http://nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/internet/drugstrategy/publishing.nsf/Content/ATS-strategy-08>

and the accompanying Monograph providing background information (National Drug Research Institute & Australian Institute of Criminology 2008, *National Amphetamine-Type Stimulant Strategy background paper*, National Drug Strategy Monograph Series no. 69, Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra), is online at <http://nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/internet/drugstrategy/publishing.nsf/Content/mono69>.

### **Substance abuse and marginalised and isolated women in the Australian Capital Territory**

Sarah Maslen has prepared a valuable report for the ACT Women's Centre for Health Matters on the nature of women's marginalisation and isolation in the ACT. It examines the concepts of marginalisation and isolation, identifies the risk factors found among marginalised and isolated ACT women and provides estimates of the number of ACT women who are at risk of, or are experiencing, marginalisation and isolation. Substance abuse is one of the risk factors identified. The report also provides an overview of services for marginalised and isolated ACT women.

Maslen, S 2008, *Marginalised and isolated women in the Australian Capital Territory: risk, prevalence, and service provision*, Women's Centre for Health Matters, Canberra, online at [www.wchm.org.au/library.html](http://www.wchm.org.au/library.html).

### **What policies are needed to reduce the social costs of alcohol in Australia?**

David Collins and Helen Lapsley, whose work on estimating the social costs of drugs in Australia is well known, have now looked specifically at alcohol policies. This monograph provides their estimates of the proportion of Australian social costs of alcohol abuse which are potentially avoidable as a result of implementing key public policy interventions, and the values of the potential benefits of the identified interventions. The interventions assessed as being effective and the benefits of which are quantifiable are higher alcohol taxation, including differential tax rates on the forms of alcohol which are particularly subject to abuse; partial or complete bans on the advertising and promotion of alcohol; measures to reduce drink driving (more intensive enforcement of random breath testing and lowering the legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level); and brief interventions by primary care physicians to reduce hazardous alcohol consumption. It finds that up to one-half of the social costs of alcohol abuse is potentially avoidable through implementing these evidence-based interventions.

Collins, DJ & Lapsley, HM 2008, *The avoidable costs of alcohol abuse in Australia and the potential benefits of effective policies to reduce the social costs of alcohol*, National Drug Strategy Monograph Series no. 70, Department of Health and Ageing, Canberra, online at <http://nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/internet/drugstrategy/publishing.nsf/Content/mono70>.

### **What do we know about the prevalence of blood-borne viruses and risk factors for their transmission among prison entrants?**

The National Prison Entrants' Bloodborne Virus and Risk Behaviour Survey has been conducted in 2004 and 2007. It investigates the prevalence of HIV, HBV, HCV, and risk behaviours among Australian prison entrants. It reveals that, among prison entrants, HIV prevalence is less than 1% and hepatitis C prevalence 35% (60% among detainees with a history of injecting drug use compared with 4% among others; women who have injected drugs 78% compared with male injectors 58%). 55% had ever injected and 60% of them had done so in the past month. 'Over 90% of injecting drug users had injected for more than 3 years suggesting that the prisoner population is characterised by more serious and longer term drug use.' 'Half of those screened in 2007 showed no evidence of immunity against hepatitis B infection.' 85% were current tobacco smokers: 'Incarceration is an important, but underutilised, public health opportunity to initiate quit smoking programs among this group.'

Butler, T & Papanastasiou, C 2008, *National Prison Entrants' Bloodborne Virus and Risk Behaviour Survey 2004 & 2007*, National Drug Research Centre (Curtin University) & National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (University of New South Wales), Sydney.

### **Does Commonwealth health policy discriminate against drug users?**

A report prepared earlier this year by Dr James Rowe of RMIT University, in partnership with the Salvation Army's Research and Advocacy Unit, has found that Commonwealth health policy discriminates against many drug users because it fails to subsidise the dispensing fees they are required to pay in order to receive opioid substitution treatment. They point out that:

Every government in Australia acknowledges that opioid addiction – typically heroin addiction – is a health problem. Those who suffer from other health problems – including problems that may be attributed to their past lifestyles (e.g. type-2 Diabetes, high cholesterol, alcoholism) – have the cost of their medication, and the dispensing fees charged by pharmacists, subsidised under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). Not so for chronic drug users trying to beat the habit, and the unfairness of this needs to be rectified...

This report calls on the Commonwealth Government to act to ensure that individuals who are on opioid maintenance programs are treated no differently than any other individual receiving prescribed medication. Federal discrimination in the form of PBS arrangements that place the burden of dispensing fees on consumers is not justifiable from a human rights perspective. We call for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme to include methadone, buprenorphine and buprenorphine/naloxone combinations alongside other medications in Section 85 of the National Health Act 1953. As is explained in great detail within the report, the cost represented by this amendment would be easily outweighed by the savings to the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments across Australia.

Rowe, J 2008, *A raw deal: impact on the health of consumers relative to the cost of pharmacotherapy*, Salvation Army, Melbourne, online at [www.salvationarmy.org.au/SALV/NEWSRELEASE/PC\\_62401.html](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/SALV/NEWSRELEASE/PC_62401.html)

### **How can we close the gap between the health status of the poor and the wealthy?**

'Inequities are killing people on a "grand scale"' is the conclusion of a long-awaited, landmark report from World Health Organization's Commission on Social Determinants of Health, released last month. The Commission is chaired by Sir Michael Marmott, and Australian public health academic Professor Frances Baum is a member. Prominent contributions to its evidence base and strategy developments were made by researchers from the ANU's National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health. It finds that '[The] toxic combination of bad policies, economics, and politics is, in large measure, responsible for the fact that a majority of people in the world do not enjoy the good health that is biologically possible' and details the steps needed to remedy the situation. Its scope includes both global disparities in health (tobacco is heavily implicated here) and the internal disparities seen in wealthy countries such as Australia.

World Health Organization, Commission on Social Determinants of Health 2008, *Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health*, online at [www.who.int/social\\_determinants/final\\_report/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/social_determinants/final_report/en/index.html).

### **What do we know about effective smoking cessation services for young people?**

A recent editorial in the BMJ: British Medical Journal concludes that we have available very little evidence of effective smoking cessation services for young smokers: the available approaches 'Have only modest effects, but respect and encouragement may help'. It concludes as follows:

What then should clinicians do? Evidence indicates that young people do quit smoking, but expectations should be modest. We are not yet in a position to deliver an evidence based service, but we know that privacy, confidentiality, respect, and an absence of pressure are vital. Young people should be supported non-judgmentally after unsuccessful attempts, and

clinicians should be willing to encourage renewed attempts. However, the over-riding problem is cannabis use. Smokers are extremely unlikely to quit using cigarettes while continuing to smoke cannabis mixed with tobacco, and for some people this may be an insurmountable barrier to quitting.

Grimshaw, GM & Stanton, A 2008, 'Smoking cessation services for young people', *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, vol. 337, p. a1394.

### **Summary justice including drug diversion is popular, but is it fair?**

Rod Morgan, Professor of Criminal Justice at the University of Bristol, has reviewed summary justice procedures such as cautions, Fixed Penalty Notices and Penalty Notices for Disorder in the UK and raises concerns '...that the trend towards pre-court summary justice for a range of offences may not be being used "fairly and effectively". [The report] says that the use of summary sanctions, by the police and prosecutors, remains outside of the official inspection regime, warning that there is "an accountability deficit" and calls for a "thoroughgoing" review of the use and impact of summary powers.'... 'Government policies aimed at diverting minor offences from court have resulted in "extensive net-widening", with individuals "being brought within the ambit of the criminal justice system who previously were ignored or dealt with informally". The approaches taken result in 'too ready criminalisation of children and young people for minor offences'.

Morgan, R 2008, *Summary justice: fast - but fair?*, Centre for Crime and Justice Studies at King's College London, London, online at [www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/summaryjusticefastbutfair.html](http://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/summaryjusticefastbutfair.html).

### **A Cannabis Reader**

This authoritative work from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) '...addresses one basic question. How can I find quality information on cannabis, amid all the bias and opinion? The monograph is divided into two volumes. The first volume centres on political, legislative, commercial and social developments relating to cannabis. Its core audience thus comprises policymakers, sociologists, historians, journalists and those involved in enforcement. The second volume is targeted at drugs professionals working in the fields of treatment, prevention and healthcare.'

Rèodner Sznitman, S, Olsson, B & Room, R (eds) 2008, *A cannabis reader: global issues and local experiences: perspectives on cannabis controversies, treatment and regulation in Europe*, EMCDDA Monographs, v. 8, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, online at [www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index53347EN.html](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index53347EN.html).

### **Does tobacco health promotion increase social inequalities?**

A long-standing criticism of health promotion as it is usually implemented is that it maintains and, indeed, increases health inequalities. This is because its benefits are more likely to be attained by people in higher socio-economic classes as they have the resources to engage in health-promoting activities. Pleasingly, a new study has demonstrated that population-level tobacco control interventions do not adversely impact on social inequalities in smoking. Specifically:

No strong evidence of differential effects was found for smoking restrictions in workplaces and public places, although those in higher occupational groups may be more likely to change their attitudes or behaviour. Smoking restrictions in schools may be more effective in girls. Restrictions on sales to minors may be more effective in girls and younger children. Increasing the price of tobacco products may be more effective in reducing smoking among lower-income adults and those in manual occupations, although there was also some evidence to suggest that adults with higher levels of education may be more price-sensitive.

Young people aged under 25 are also affected by price increases, with some evidence that boys and non-white young people may be more sensitive to price.

Thomas, S, Fayter, D, Misso, K, Ogilvie, D, Petticrew, M, Sowden, A, Whitehead, M & Worthy, G 2008, 'Population tobacco control interventions and their effects on social inequalities in smoking: systematic review', *Tobacco Control*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 230-7.

### **What are the characteristics of the young people attending specialist alcohol treatment?**

New South Wales researchers have analysed the data from their State's Minimum Data Set for Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services to gain insights into the characteristics of treatment episodes for adolescents and young adults who present to specialist alcohol treatment in that State. They found that clients less than 30 years of age were more likely to be referred into specialist treatment by a police, court or criminal justice diversion program compared with older clients, more likely to be polydrug users (especially having concerns about cannabis as well as alcohol) and they were more likely to be of Indigenous origin or seen in a rural setting.

Indig, D, Copeland, J & Conigrave, KM 2008, 'Young people who attend specialist alcohol treatment: who are they and do they need special treatment?' *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 336-40.

### **The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has released a new report today: Health expenditure Australia 2006-07**

Health expenditure Australia 2006-07 examines expenditure on health goods and services in Australia for 1996-97 to 2006-07. It shows that Australia spent over \$94.0 billion on health in 2006-07, an estimated rise of \$7.3 billion since 2005-06. This report presents expenditure estimates: at the aggregate level; as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP); on a per person basis; by state and territory; by comparison with selected Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Asia-Pacific countries; and by source of funding (Australian Government, other governments and the non-government sector). This report will be helpful to anyone interested in studying, analysing and comparing estimates of health expenditure in Australia. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2008, *Health and welfare expenditure series no. 35*, online at [www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10659](http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10659)

## **Media**

### **Over 40 New Child Protection Staff for the ACT**

*ACT Government*

Released 9 September 2008

More than 40 new child protection workers from the UK will begin work in Canberra during the next six months - with the first 10 starting before November - following a highly-successful overseas recruitment campaign, Minister for Children and Young People Katy Gallagher said today.

Advertisements were placed in British newspapers earlier this year encouraging UK-based child protection staff to consider relocating their careers and families to the territory.

Following the appointment of 10 new staff before November, more than 30 additional staff are expected to begin work in February 2009.

Visit [www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7384&m=52](http://www.chiefminister.act.gov.au/media.php?v=7384&m=52) to view the full media release.

## **Consumer Participation**

## **Treatment Service Users (TSU) Project: Final Report**

*Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL)*

AIVL have released the final report for the TSU Project that sought to describe the current arrangements for consumer participation and to determine the extent of support for consumer participation in planning and delivery of drug treatment services in Australia.

[Click here](#) to download a copy of the report. Hard copies are also available from AIVL on 6279 1600.

## **The ACT Mental Health Consumer Network**

The ACT Mental Health Consumer Network is an organisation that is run by consumers for consumers. Their aim is to bring about a higher standard of health care in the mental health sector, through representation, lobbying and active involvement in new developments in the mental health sector.

The organisation is committed to the rights of mental health consumers. They promote a respectful and accepting system that involves Consumers, Carers and Professionals listening and respecting one another in an active healthy relationship. They also promote the development of support structures for all these groups.

For more information visit [www.actmhc.org.au/cms/index.php?page=home](http://www.actmhc.org.au/cms/index.php?page=home)

## **Youth, Mental Health and Allied Sectors**

### **AOD and Young People: A Platform for Action**

*The Youth Coalition of the ACT*

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

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

If you would like to be involved, please email Maiy Azize, Policy Officer at the Youth Coalition on (02) 6247 3540 or by email [maiya@youthcoalition.net](mailto:maiya@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 21 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](http://www.health.act.gov.au/c/health?a=sp&pid=1221000313&sid=50C46B33E9B0F8AD755D869A2081FB85) for more information.

## **Employment Opportunities**

### **Peer Education Officer**

*Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy (CAHMA)*

P/Time – 30 hrs/wk. \$48,000 FTE per annum

CAHMA seeks a person committed to the principles of harm minimisation and promoting the health and human rights of people who use illicit/injecting drugs. Position involves providing peer support, education and representation. People with personal or intimate experience of illicit drug use are encouraged to apply.

Selection criteria must be addressed.

For application package or more information contact Nicole on (02) 6279 1670 (after 9.30am Monday - Friday)

Applications close Monday 6 October 2008

## Grants and Funding Opportunities

### Community Support and Infrastructure Grants

*ACT Government*

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

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

Application forms can be downloaded from the Disability Housing and Community Services (DHCS) web site at [www.dhcs.act.gov.au/wac](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/wac) or the ACT Grants Portal at [www.grants.act.gov.au](http://www.grants.act.gov.au).

For more information contact (02) 6205 1308 or (02) 6205 0531.

**Applications close Monday 20 October 2008.**

### 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](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)

**Applications close on Friday December 19 2008.**