

ATCA E-News

Executive Officer Update



Welcome to a new year. I hope you had a restful and enjoyable break, and for those who worked over the holiday season, thank you for continuing to support people over this time.

The ATCA has lots scheduled for 2024, and one of our key goals is connecting with members and facilitating opportunities for you to connect with each other. We are currently scoping the development of Community of Practices for both frontline staff and managers. The Community of Practices will provide a forum for connecting with fellow colleagues, sharing insights and practice experiences, and collectively enhancing skills and knowledge. Your input is crucial to the success of these initiatives and to ensure they best serve all ATCA members and I invite you to contact me and provide your ideas and thoughts via email atca@atca.com.au or 0403 630 716.

Another exciting activity the ATCA is working on, is facilitating the opportunity for members to participate in the Alcohol and Other Drugs Skill Set (CHCSS00093). The AOD skill set is considered foundational training for those in frontline support roles in the AOD field and provides nationally recognised credentials. ATCA will be funding a set number of places for people in the AOD Skill Set which will be offered through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process. More details will be provided soon.

During the past month, I had the privilege of visiting Odyssey House Victoria and Windana, where I had the opportunity to meet with staff and see and hear about the excellent services they are providing. I look forward to visiting more member services and meeting staff throughout the year and collaborating with you all to support the growth of the TC model of treatment. If you have any questions or suggestions for the ATCA please feel free to contact me on 0403 630 716 or via atca@atca.com.au.

Warm regards,

Michelle Ridley
ATCA EO

Monthly ATCA E-News

The ATCA E-news will be distributed each month, featuring news and updates from members, resources, research, and events and highlighting issues relevant to the AOD sector. We'd really like the bulletin to be about members and would like the bulletin to include the following from our members and stakeholders:

- Member updates
- Practice resources and tools
- Research and reports
- Event and training opportunities
- Job advertisements and other relevant updates

If you have an item, you'd like to be included in the E-News, please provide it to atca@atca.com.au by the 22nd of each month, for inclusion in the bulletin.

Sector Update

ATCA Annual Report 2022-2023

The ATCA Annual Report 2022-2023 details the activities of ATCA and its members over the past year. To read the ATCA Annual Report 2022-2023, click [here](#).

TC research

Duration of stay and rate of subsequent criminal conviction and hospitalisation for substance use among young people admitted to a short-term residential program, Whitten T, Cale J, Nathan S, Hayen A, Williams M, Shanahan M & Ferry M 2023, Drug and Alcohol Review. This study examined the effect of a residential AOD therapeutic community program on criminal convictions among young people who had different trajectories of conviction prior to referral. The reduction in the number of convictions for the high incline group was substantial corresponding to 4.36 fewer convictions over five years post referral. Residential therapeutic communities may be an effective intervention to reduce future convictions among young people with AOD issues who have a high number of convictions prior to referral. For more details click [here](#)

Effectiveness of Therapeutic Community Program on Resilience and Change in Lifestyle in People With Alcohol Use Disorder, Song EA, Kim HK & Lee M J, 2022, *Journal of Addictions Nursing*. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a therapeutic community program on resilience and positive change of lifestyle in people with alcohol use disorder. This study was conducted over 12 weeks and found the Therapeutic Community Program improved resilience and promoted global lifestyle changes in the experimental group compared with the control group. To read more click on the link [here](#)

Research and reports

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF) conducted a survey of 3,604 Australians, aged 18 and over, to understand key barriers to help seeking behaviour for people who were using alcohol and other drugs (AOD) at risky levels. AOD use was assessed using the Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test – Lite (ASSIST Lite), with moderate or high scores classified as ‘risky AOD use’. To read the survey findings and details about ways to encourage people to access AOD support and treatment click on the [link](#).

AIHW: Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs in Australia report consolidates recent information on the availability and consumption of AOD in Australia, and related impacts, harms and treatment. Click on the link to access the report [here](#).

Cancer Council Victoria presents details from the national secondary school students’ use of tobacco and e-cigarettes survey from the 2022/2023 Australian Secondary Students’ Alcohol and Drug (ASSAD) survey. The ASSAD survey is the largest national survey of adolescent substance use in Australia, and is administered on school premises (i.e., without parental involvement). For details on the survey findings click on the link [here](#).

Training and professional development

Matilda Centre: free online training for the comorbidity guidelines

This website and training aim to provide evidence-based information, training and resources to facilitate the translation and online dissemination of the “Guidelines on the management of co-occurring alcohol and other drug and mental health conditions in alcohol and other drug treatment settings (3rd edition)”. To participate in the online training click on the [link](#).

National Centre for Youth Substance Use Research Symposium 2024

The National Centre for Youth Substance Use Research is holding a Research Symposium dedicated to an evidence-based understanding of and responses to youth substance use. This symposium is a hybrid event held on Friday 1 March. For more details or to register, click [here](#).

Addiction conference

Previously called the Australian and New Zealand Addiction Conference is an annual event, encompassing the A to Z of addiction trends and treatments and brings together the AOD, mental and behavioural health sector. Click [here](#) for more details.

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre - Webinars

National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) holds evidence-based webinars on AOD issues, and on the 1 Feb at 3pm they have a webinar on Alcohol and perceptions of cancer-risk among LGBTQ+ individuals. For more information or to register click [here](#).

AOD e-learning modules from Insight

For a range of self-paced introductory to advanced level AOD e-learning modules click on the link to Insights website [here](#).

Resources and tools

Web app for First Nations people

Wada Wanti is a free and confidential resource developed for First Nations people who use methamphetamine (ice) to assist them to use less or stop using. Wada Wanti is available for people to use themselves, or with support from a health worker. To access the resource, click on the [link](#).

Understanding trauma and abuse

Blue Knot has online resources that explores complex trauma, childhood trauma and child abuse. It contains fact sheets, videos and publications. To access this resource click [here](#).

A guide to using medicines safely

ADF has developed factsheet in multiple languages to support delivering information on the management of prescribed and non-prescribed medications and substances. Click on the link to access the factsheets [here](#).

If this newsletter has been forwarded to you and you would like to receive it in your inbox please email atca@atca.com.au to subscribe.

The Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters and skies. We pay our respect to Elders, past, present and emerging in recognition of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities of the lands on which our members live and work.

Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association

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