

ATCA E-news April 2024

Executive Officer Update



Dear Colleagues,

This month the ATCA has been busy working on various initiatives, with a focus on workforce development activities. The ATCA TC training was delivered in Melbourne, with twenty-four staff from member services attending. The feedback was very positive with 100% of evaluation respondents reporting that their confidence in working in a TC after the training was good or very good. The ATCA will be facilitating more TC training next month in Alice Springs and at Perth in June. We've also been busy finalising arrangements for the Alcohol and Other Drugs Skill Set (CHCSS00093) training, in which we will be offering funded placements for TC frontline staff in ATCA member organisations. We're excited to announce Odyssey Institute will be delivering this training. The AOD skill set is crucial foundational training for those in frontline roles within the AOD sector, offering nationally recognized credentials. Information and the Expression of Interest link for those interested in undertaking the Skill Set will be distributed to each ATCA member delegate this week. Given the limited funded positions available, priority will be given to individuals in TC frontline client support roles, with equitable allocation across member organisations.

In addition to these activities, we are excited to announce that preparations are in progress for the biannual ATCA symposium, scheduled to be held in Melbourne later this year. We'll be collaborating with an advisory group comprising staff from Odyssey House Victoria and Windana for this event. We hope to see as many members as possible join us for what promises to be an informative program. Lastly, if you have any feedback, or queries about the AOD skill set or other projects, or if you'd like to share any news items with the ATCA membership, please don't hesitate to contact me at atca@atca.com.au.

Warm regards,
Michelle Ridley
Executive Officer

TC and member news



WFTC TCs world services survey 2024

Your feedback is important to the WFTC and will contribute to the data collected, which will be analysed, compared and published in the 3rd WFTC Annual Report, 2024. Click on the link to complete the survey [WFTC TCs world services survey 2024 \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com)

19th EFTC Conference

September 24 - 26th 2024 at the European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk, Poland

The EFTC conference this year is organised by the Polish Federation of Therapeutic Communities and the European Federation of Therapeutic Communities. The theme of the conference is "Shaping the Future Together", promoting international collaboration, exchanging experiences and research to develop knowledge, understanding, and skills in the field of therapeutic communities. For more details visit their official website www.eftconference2024

Odyssey House NSW Autumn 2024 News

Odyssey House Autumn Newsletter has been launched and available online. To read more click on the link www.odysseyhouse.com.au/odyssey-news-launched-autumn-2024

Research and reports

Trends in cannabis availability, use, and treatment in Australia, 2013–14 to 2021–22

Cannabis is the most widely used illegal drug in Australia, with 2.5 million people in 2022–2023 having used it in the previous 12 months. Between 2013–14 and 2021–22, 221,000 clients received treatment for their cannabis use from publicly-funded drug treatment agencies. This report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare uses data from multiple sources to describe trends in cannabis availability, use and treatment in Australia, including the characteristics of people who use or receive treatment for cannabis. Click on the link to [read the report](#)

Co-occurring psychological distress and risky AOD use

Researchers from the University of Newcastle and colleagues have identified a range of potential risk and protective factors for co-occurring psychological distress, risky alcohol and/or substance use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The study used data from the 2018-19 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) and was published in the Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry. Click on the link to read [Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet](#).

Link between childhood maltreatment and adult substance use issues

University of Queensland researchers have found people maltreated as children are 3 times more likely to be admitted to hospital for alcohol and substance use by the time they're 40. Click on the link to read more [research details](#).

AIHW - National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2022-23

The Australian Institute for Health and Welfare National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2022-23 report provides insights into the use of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, and illicit drugs in Australia in 2022 and 2023. To learn more about the findings click on the link - www.aihw.gov.au/reports.

Professional development online - eLearning and webinars

Loneliness amongst people accessing treatment for alcohol and other drug use

Wed 29 May 2024, 10:00-11:00 am AEST (QLD time)

Insight - Dr Isabella Ingram -

This webinar will focus on a program of research surrounding loneliness for people who are accessing treatment for alcohol and other drug use. The webinar will cover a series of studies, both qualitative and quantitative, that have explored the prevalence and experience of loneliness for people accessing AOD treatment. A novel loneliness intervention, Groups for Belonging, will also be discussed. Click on the link to register insight.loneliness-amongst-people-accessing-treatment-for-alcohol-and-other-drug-use

Alcohol use in older adulthood: Physiological impacts and effective treatment options

Tuesday 28 May, 1:30 -2:30 PM (AEST)

Associate Professor Louise Mewton from The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use, The University of Sydney. To register click on the link <https://bit.ly/3xBsGIZ>. The Matilda Centre has been funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care to develop a series of on-demand webinars on evidence-based practice. These webinars are freely available and focus on building capacity in relation to evidence-based practice approaches to the management and treatment of co-occurring alcohol and other drug (AOD) and mental health conditions. Click on the link to register for upcoming webinars and all previous webinars are freely available via the [Comorbidity Project webinar library](#).

Vape chemistry: Decoding the cloud

Wed. 8 May 2024 10:00-11:00 am AEST (QLD time)

In this presentation Dr Jody Moller will examine the evolving chemistry of e-cigarettes (vapes) available on the Australian market, including shifts in their chemical composition over time. This year brought with it significant change to e-cigarette policy, so we will also delve into the regulatory landscape of 2024 and examine how these shifting policies have altered the e-cigarette market. Click on the link to register insight.training/vape-chemistry-decoding-the-cloud/detail

Resources and practice tools

Engaging men who perpetrate domestic and family violence in the alcohol and other drugs treatment context

This resource with accompanying role play videos aims to support AOD practitioners to work safely and effectively with clients who perpetrate DFV and to become familiar with suitable pathways for specialist support. It is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to addressing behaviour change with people who perpetrate DFV, as it is acknowledged that this is a specialist area of work. However this practical resource and videos aim to enhance your skills in this area. Click on the link to access the resource and videos www.nada.org.au/resources/engaging-men-who-perpetrate-DFV-in-the-AOD-treatment-context

Focus on Nitazenes

Nitazenes (also called 2-benzyl-benzimidazoles) are a class of synthetic opioids which are highly potent opioid receptor agonists. Nitazenes range in their potency up to 1000 times (etonitazene) that of morphine with new forms continuing to be identified. There is growing evidence of harms due to nitazenes in Australia. As with other opioids, naloxone is effective at reversing nitazene toxicity in cases of overdose, although higher and/or repeated doses of naloxone may be required. The National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED) has produced a briefing on nitazenes and has a recorded webinar available. To find out more click on the links - [Increasing reports of nitazene toxicity - Emerging drug briefing](#) and [Responding to emerging drugs of concern: nitazenes \(Recorded Webinar\)](#)

Conferences and other events

Evidence for smarter drug policy - Drug Policy Modelling Program symposium

4 June, hybrid

This symposium will open with the launch of the new report The Australian Drug Budget 2021-2022 detailing government investment across drug prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and law enforcement. There will also be sessions exploring: the benefits and challenges of drug law reform; drug treatment and unmet demand for treatment; representation and participation in policy processes; small 'snapshots' of other AOD policy research.

It promises to be a thought-provoking day to consider how we can make AOD policy better. The full program will be available shortly. Click on the link to either register for the full day (in-person 9.30-3.30pm) or only for the morning Australian Drug Budget session (in-person or virtual 9.30-10.30am). [Register now](#)

Australian Winter School

21-23 August 2024, Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, Brisbane

Australian Winter School is an opportunity to catch up with colleagues from across the alcohol and other drugs and related sectors. You'll be part of the conversation about innovations in evidence informed treatment, policy, and system reform and expert speakers, presentations, and workshops will provide delegates with the knowledge, tools, and solutions to implement in the real world. Check the [Australian Winter School website](#) for keynote speakers and registration details.

APSAD 2024

30 October to Friday 1 November 2024, Ngunnawal Country (Canberra, ACT)

The Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs (APSAD) is dedicated to promoting improved standards in clinical practice for medical practitioners and other health professionals who deal with alcohol and other drug-related problems in the course of their work. To

find out more click on the link www.apsad.com.au

29th WFTC World Conference

13-15 December 2024, Brazil.

For more information, including a short video about the upcoming conference click on the link here www.wftc.org

Job opportunities

To view positions available at ATCA member services click on the link to the ATCA website www.atca.com.au/job-opportunities. If you're a member and would like to advertise a job on our website please email me the details of the position.

Contact us to contribute to the ATCA E-News

The ATCA E-News is a way for members, key stakeholders and the wider sector to share news, events and resources. If you have an item you'd like to be included in the E-News, please provide it to atca@atca.com.au.

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.

ATCA acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of this country and its waters. We wish to pay our respects to Elders past and present, to all emerging community leaders and to all First Nations people reading this message.

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