

WHY IS THIS A HEALTH PRIORITY?

There are

concerning trends in the use of alcohol and other drugs

in Australia, with one in 20 deaths attributed to this every year (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2018). The rapid change in ACT alcohol and drug trends are consistent with national trends and

the burden on the ACT health system has a large impact.

PHNs have a critical role in planning and commissioning drug and alcohol treatment services, with the aim of reducing the harms associated with drugs and alcohol in the community.

WHAT ISSUES HAVE WE IDENTIFIED?

Key issues identified through engagement with the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA) and other local stakeholders include:



timely access to AOD services to enable more effective treatment

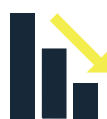


high rates of AOD related issues amongst Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander persons



support for GPs and other primary care professionals in the management of patients presenting with AOD misuse.

TARGET OUTCOMES



To reduce the harms associated with drugs and alcohol in our community, health services and stakeholders in the ACT should focus on:



improving access to AOD services, including culturally appropriate services, and working to improve the consumer experience of these services.



Further **support primary health care professionals to identify, manage and refer patients with AOD concerns** and build capacity of the primary care workforce to respond to these issues appropriately.

References

- ACT Primary Health Network. (2018). ACT Needs Assessment. Canberra: Capital Health Network.
- Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug Association ACT. (2015). Service Users' Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey 2015: A census of people accessing specialist alcohol and other drug services in the ACT. Canberra: Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug Association ACT.
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2018). Impact of alcohol and illicit drug use on the burden of disease and injury in Australia. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

WHAT HAS THE DATA TOLD US?



Harm rates are almost doubling for people who are dependent drug users over a relatively short period (ACT Primary Health Network, 2018).



ACT opioid rates are highest in 10 years (ACT Primary Health Network, 2018).



36% increase in demand for specialist AOD non-government services from 2010-2014 (ACT Primary Health Network, 2018).



Current ACT AOD treatment population experience significant social complexity (Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug Association ACT, 2015).



25% of the current AOD treatment population identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug Association ACT, 2015).



ACT Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) reported **that over the last two years there has been a significant increase in the use of methamphetamine** (ACT Primary Health Network, 2018).

WHAT HAVE STAKEHOLDERS TOLD US?



There is a lack of dosing pharmacists in the ACT.



There is a lack of culturally appropriate methamphetamine and broader AOD related resources for clients.



There is need for education, support and resources relating to assessment and management of drug and alcohol use within primary care.



Tobacco remains a persistent community health issue particularly for new arrivals, refugees and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups.