

MEDIA RELEASE – 13 November 2025

Nurse-led home visits support reduction in alcohol or other drugs

As a first in the ACT, a service has successfully supported people in the comfort of their own home to safely cease or reduce alcohol or other drugs, through home visits from nurses.

Capital Health Network (CHN) CEO Stacy Leavens said they commissioned Karralika Programs to run the Non-Residential Withdrawal Support Service (NRWSS). Methamphetamine (40%) and alcohol (38.9%) use were the most common primary substances used by clients.

“Clients face complex social and health challenges, with over 2 in 3 clients experiencing a mental health condition, and almost 1 in 3 reporting a physical health condition. This accessible withdrawal service has been successful as it’s delivered by nurses in client’s homes, allowing clients to maintain their routines and access care in familiar environments,” said Ms Leavens.

An independent evaluation by 360Edge indicates the service is highly valued and effective service. Clients consistently praised the professionalism, responsiveness and compassion of the nursing staff, who play a crucial dual role in clinical and therapeutic support.

Karralika Programs CEO, Sharon Tuffin said they established the nurse-led NRWSS in 2018 in response to a need for increased and alternative service delivery options.

“Our exceptional nurses provide support to people over the age of 12 years to withdraw or reduce substance use with professionalism and care, in their own homes surrounded by family. Working with GPs and other allied health professionals, government and community services, our team offer a safe, supported and integrated service that has become an essential program in the ACT. The evaluation confirms the impacts and outcomes our program delivers. We look forward to continuing to serve the community through this program in the years ahead,” said Ms Tuffin.

360Edge Principal Consultant, Dr Katinka van de Ven said they worked in close collaboration with Karralika Programs, CHN and sector partners to design and deliver the NRWSS evaluation.

“Collaboratively designing the methodology helped ensure that the evaluation was practical, workable and could deliver meaningful insights. We delivered positive findings about the program’s governance, person-centred care and outcomes for clients,” said Dr van de Ven.

NRWSS is supported by funding from the ACT PHN through the Australian Government’s PHN Program. The independent evaluation report of the service is available at www.chnact.org.au/about-us/publications/evaluations/

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