



## VICTORIAN ALCOHOL & DRUG ASSOCIATION

ENEWS – daily electronic news, views and drug information  
email [vaada@infoxchange.net.au](mailto:vaada@infoxchange.net.au) to register

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### VAADA Annual Conference

VAADA's annual conference *'Are we doing a good job?: Exploring the public image and quality of services for people with alcohol and drug problems'* will be held on Monday the 6<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2004 at the William Angliss Conference Centre, 555 Latrobe Street, Melbourne.

The conference is promising to be one of the best yet, with the Honourable Bronwyn Pike MP, Minister for Health opening the conference. Following this, retired AFL footballer, Mr Jim Stynes (CEO of the REACH Foundation) will present a keynote address outlining the issues faced by agencies in community services sectors.

Other keynote presenters will include, Ms Cheryl Wilson, CEO, Australian Drug Council of Australia (ADCA), Major Brian Watters, Chairman, Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD), Mr Daryl Smeaton, CEO, AER Foundation and Ms Jelena Popovich (Deputy Chief Magistrate, Melbourne Magistrates Court).

The first day of the conference will also include a panel of presenters consisting of Cath Smith, CEO VCOSS, Inspector Steve James, Victoria Police, Andrew Miller, journalist with the Preston Leader, Georgie Ferrari, CEO YACVic, Deb Tsobaris, CEO Homeless Persons Victoria, Dr Frank Imeneo, GP Liaison Officer PenDAP, and Margaret Goddard, Manager, Mental Health Services at St Vincent's Hospital.

The second day of the conference will focus on the VicRoads Drugs Driving Campaign and will include a number of presentation and workshop streams in relation to the conference theme.

The program and registration form is available on the VAADA website and details the range and quality of the presentations and workshops. Please complete and forward the registration form as soon

as possible to ensure that you gain places in the workshops and presentations that interest you.

### VicRoads Drug Driving Campaign

VAADA has undertaken to help disseminate information around the new VicRoads drug driving campaign. The legislative changes will take place on 1 December 2004 as the information campaign will swing into action both before and following this date.

VAADA will conduct three regional forums early in 2005 with the AOD sector in order to provide an avenue for information and discussion on the issue and how this will affect both those working in the AOD sector and their clients. In addition to the regional forums, VAADA will hold one metropolitan forum which will be held on the second day of the VAADA conference (please refer to details on the VAADA website).

All forums will include representatives from Victoria Police, who will explain the testing process and how the testing procedure will take place. Phillip Swann from VicRoads will also be present at the forums to discuss the legislation used to enable drug driver testing, and the ramifications of the legislation to the community. Claire Martin from VicRoads will discuss what material and resources are available as testing is implemented.

A VAADA representative will be on hand at all forums to discuss the drug driving campaign and VAADA's role in the campaign. The VAADA representative will also facilitate a lengthy discussion between the VicRoads and Victoria Police representatives and the forum audience.

The issues surrounding drug driver testing have generated intense interest throughout the sector with many questions left unanswered. This forum aims to discuss this legislation and answer many of these questions. VAADA encourages those interested in attending and wishing to be well informed on the issue to book early for the forums.

To register your interest, or for further information, please contact Litsa Kane at VAADA on 9416 0899 or [lkane@vaada.org.au](mailto:lkane@vaada.org.au).

## Month in Review

A draft copy of the report will be available to the sector by February 2005. For further information please contact VAADA on 9416 0899 or visit the VAADA website at [www.vaada.org.au](http://www.vaada.org.au).

### Consultation of Youth and Rural and Regional Service System Reviews

Department of Human Services (DHS) Drugs Policy and Services Branch (DPSB) has asked VAADA to conduct a series of consultations on the Youth Service System Review (YSSR) and the Rural and Regional Service System Review (RRSSR).

Rather than consult on the documents as a whole, DPSB has asked VAADA to consult on specific areas in each review that are of interest to the Department.

In relation to the RRSSR, VAADA will explore the development of the nurse practitioner model and how this model could be incorporated into the service system as well as its applicability within regional and rural drug treatment services.

Within the YSSR, VAADA's consultation will surround prevention activities. Specifically, the YSSR concluded that prevention activities should be the focus of the Youth Alcohol and Drug Service System. In particular, the review focused on indicated prevention or activities that target young people who are using drugs heavily, but have not developed drug dependence.

Both VAADA and the Department are interested in further exploration of this area and how the concepts and activities surrounding the notion of prevention could be incorporated into the service system.

As part of the consultation on the YSSR and RRSSR, VAADA has agreed that each of the consultation process will include:

- Five key informant interviews
- Two focus groups
- Invitation for written submissions through list-servs
- The development and administration of a survey for each of the reviews.

Further information regarding consultation dates and times along with information regarding written submissions will be available in the coming weeks on VAADA's ENEWS service, the VAADA website and in the December VAADA News.

### Sector Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) Update

Following VAADA's EBA forum in September, forum participants decided that VAADA undertake a scoping exercise with a view to informing a possible EBA.

The VAADA Board has decided that a scoping survey will be distributed to the sector early in the New Year to gauge how work duties and position descriptions correlate within the current AOD sector. Further information will be available early in 2005.

### North and West AOD Providers' Forum

The merger of the Northern and Western regions has been an ongoing process since 1 March 2004. The first North and West service providers' forum was held in October.

The merger has been a complex process and has seen programs and budgets integrated in the combined regions.

Mr. Andy Bevan, Manager of Primary and Complex Care from DHS, noted that the combined region encompasses 30 funded agencies with a budget of \$21 million which comprises 30 percent of the state's AOD resources.

Mr. Bevan added that the region forms half of the metropolitan area; has significant numbers of people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background; the growth corridors of the region have a high number of young people who are under fourteen; and has significant numbers of people who are indigenous. Mr. Bevan noted that with such significant numbers of these groups in the new combined region that they will become important in informing regional objectives

Agency liaison officers as well as senior managers including Andy Bevan and Danny O'Kelly will be sited the Smith Street, Fitzroy office.

### YacVic Conference Presentation

VAADA Project Officer, Chris McDonnell co-presented at the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria conference, '*Fringe Benefits? Young People on the Edge of Policy and Place*' with YacVic Senior Policy Officer, Paula Grogan.

Paula and Chris presented *'Is getting pissed getting pathetic?'* based on the findings from the forum of the same name which VAADA held in conjunction with YacVic during 2004 Drug Action Week®.

## YOUR SAY

### *“My journey through the drug and alcohol field”*

**A personal reflection by Professor Greg Whelan, Professor Addiction Medicine  
University of Melbourne.**

On retirement from public hospital work I am pleased to respond to this invitation to write this brief reflection.

My first recollection of individuals with addictive disorders was as a medical student. I was puzzled that patients continued to drink, despite emergency treatment for a life threatening variceal bleed clearly related to their excessive alcohol intake. Such was my ignorance of addictions! Undergraduate lectures mentioned AA and antabuse but otherwise we treated the complications of use.

During my gastroenterology fellowship at the University of Texas, I first met an injecting drug user – he had been shot while trying to rob a store for money to purchase heroin. I was introduced to the world of Hepatitis B, and words such as smack, weed, joints and roach holders.

In Victoria, the 1960s saw the opening of St.Vincent’s Hospital Alcoholism Clinic under the leadership of Dr Jim Rankin.

Dr Rankin also commenced the Summer Schools (later moved to Autumn because of the lack of air-conditioning at the venue) that for many years served as a forum for education and delivery of research findings to workers in the field.

The 1970s saw an expansion of government services – Pleasant View joined Smith Street Clinic and Gresswell. In addition to the 50 bed unit and an outpatient clinic, a large methadone clinic supported the expansion of methadone maintenance in Victoria. Training and research in the field began to increase.

The 1980s saw a resurgence of interest when research evidence supported the use of brief interventions and cognitive behavioural therapy.

Nicotine replacement therapy arrived and the recognition of the association of injecting drug use and spread of more blood borne viruses – first HIV then Hep C- led to the development of harm reduction as a government policy and expanded needle and syringe exchanges.

I formally entered the field in the late 80s with my appointment at St Vincent’s. Medical schools commenced to seriously develop undergraduate education programs in addictions.

The 1990s gave us buprenorphine, naltrexone and acamprosate. The government’s decision to stop involvement in direct service delivery led to the beginning of Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre that delivered a unique mixture of clinical services, training and research.

The first “Pennington” enquiry resulted in a series of far reaching recommendations most of which have gradually been implemented. This included the birth of YSAS (Youth Substance Abuse Service) – the first of its kind for young people.

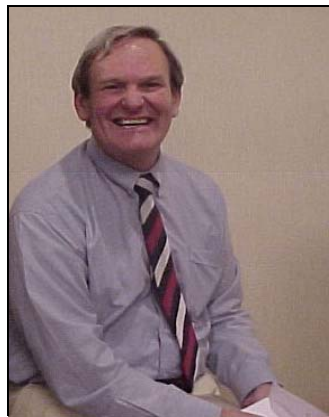
I am grateful to have been involved in some of the above developments. In addition, I congratulate the RACP (Royal Australasian College of Physicians) for developing the Chapter of Addiction Medicine (2002). This has served as a focus for specialist recognition and training of future specialists in this field. I am proud to have been elected as their inaugural chairman. Likewise the Victorian

Department of Human Services has supported this initiative by funding training posts in this field.

As I leave the field I am pleased to see that the notion that addiction is a chronic relapsing disorder similar to asthma and diabetes, and is gaining acceptance, that there is room for interventions such as abstinence based therapies as well as harm reduction approaches, for “talking” therapies as well as pharmacotherapies.

I believe that discoveries in psychology and neurosciences – molecular biology, biochemistry, imaging etc – will enhance our field and lead to more effective therapies for those who seek our care.

My journey has been most enjoyable due mainly to the wonderful people with whom it has been a privilege to work. At times it has been challenging and frustrating similar to the journey through life.



## Calendar of Events

5 November	<p><b><i>Alcohol And Drug Treatment Service Providers' Conference-Therapeutic Interventions In A Community Setting</i></b>            To be held on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November the Corner Bell Street and St Georges Rd, Preston 3072 between 9:00am to 3:30pm            For further details email <a href="mailto:Elma.Rabago@dhs.vic.gov.au">Elma.Rabago@dhs.vic.gov.au</a></p>
9 November	<p><b><i>Course for parents of young people experiencing A&amp;D problems – AGENDAS</i></b>            AGENDAS is running a series of free, structured group courses for parents of young people 14-25 yrs who have problematic alcohol or drug use. The 8 week courses run for 2 hours per week in Mount Evelyn. For information about starting time of the next course, for further information or to register your interest please phone Margo on 9721 3688.</p>
14-17 November	<p><b><i>Beyond the Drug – APSAD 2004 National Conference</i></b>            To be held at the Esplanade Hotel in Fremantle, Western Australia, this conference will include a number of high calibre national and international keynote speakers. The aim of the conference is to explore the individual, political, social and other contexts critical to effective prevention and treatment. For further information visit the APSAD website at <a href="http://www.apsadconference.com.au">www.apsadconference.com.au</a>.</p>
19 November	<p><b><i>It Might Be a Scummy-Arsed Drug but it's a Sick Buzz; Chroming and Pleasure-Southern Health Addiction Seminars</i></b>            Presented by Sarah MacLean, PHD candidate, Youth Research Centre, The University of Melbourne. Held from 2-3pm at Monash Medical Centre, 246 Clayton Road, Clayton, in Lecture Theatre 2. For further information contact the SEADS AOD Hospital Liaison Team at Dandenong Hospital or MMC Clayton</p>
19 November	<p><b><i>Fluidity In A Street-Based Drug market - Turning Point Talking Point Seminar Series</i></b>            To be presented by Robyn Dwyer Held at 142 Gertrude Street Fitzroy. Bookings essential – call Turning Point on 8413 8413.</p>
24 November	<p><b><i>Therapeutic planning for 1:1 counselling, Improve your counselling skills, techniques and approaches</i></b>            Presented by Cath Walker. To be held at the Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre, Cnr Bell St and St Georges Rd, Preston. Wednesday 24th November 9:30am – 4:00pm. Call TRANX on 03 9886 0955 with enquiries or to book a training or education session.</p>
26 November	<p><b><i>'Gestalt Therapy in the AOD Context'</i></b>            Presented by Sally Coates Senior Education and Training Officer UC Moreland Hall who will discuss how the principles of Gestalt apply to working with clients with substance abuse issues. Held from 12.30-1.30pm at Moreland Hall, 26 Jessie St, Moreland. For information phone 9386 2876.</p>
<b>Advanced Notice</b> 6-7 December	<p><b><i>'Are we doing a good job? Exploring the public image and quality of services for people with alcohol and drug problems' - 2004 VAADA Annual Conference</i></b>            VAADA will be hosting its annual conference to be held over two days on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> of December, at the William Angliss Conference Centre, 555 LaTrobe Street, Melbourne. To register or for more information please call Litsa on 9416 0899.</p>
<b>Advanced Notice</b> 7 December	<p><b><i>VicRoads Drug Driving Campaign Forum-have your say. What are your views on the new drug driving legislation?</i></b>            To be held on the second day of the 2004 VAADA conference and hosted by VAADA on behalf of VicRoads, this forum will provide the sector with further information and the opportunity to ask about the new drug driving legislation. To be held at the William Angliss Conference Centre, 555 LaTrobe Street, Melbourne. To register for the conference please contact Litsa at VAADA on 9416 0899 or <a href="mailto:lkane@vaada.org.au">lkane@vaada.org.au</a>.</p>