

## VICTORIAN ALCOHOL & DRUG ASSOCIATION

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

35 Smith Street Fitzroy VIC 3065

Phone: 03 9416 0899 Fax: 03 9416 2085

[vaada@infoxchange.net.au](mailto:vaada@infoxchange.net.au)

[www.vaada.org.au](http://www.vaada.org.au)

### WADAC Conference

The 2005 Annual Rural Victorian Alcohol and Drugs Conference (RVADC), *A Time for Change* (an initiative of the Warrnambool Alcohol and Drug Advisory Committee WADAC) was held on 10 & 11 August 2005, in Warrnambool.

The conference provided delegates with an opportunity to hear presentations by noted keynote presenters and also to interact with the presenters throughout the two days.

Opening session keynote presenters included:

- Professor David Fergusson on Cannabis & Mental Health
- Dr Sohail Inayatullah on A Long Term View of the Futures of AOD
- Professor Steve Allsop on Developing an Alcohol Strategy

Opening session keynote presenters on the second day included:

- John Dowling and Senior Constable Ross Fifoot on Drug Services, Police and Community
- Professor Nick Crofts on the Future of Harm Reduction Policy

A highlight of the conference is the RVADC 'Awards for Excellence'.

These awards recognise outstanding work that takes place in rural and regional settings within the Victorian alcohol and drugs sector. Presentations took place at the conference dinner. This year's winners included:

- Hall of Fame - Dr David Richards;
- Outstanding Rural Health Promotion contribution - The WRAD Centre
- Outstanding Rural Treatment Contribution - Mark Powell (South West Healthcare Psychiatric Services);
- Outstanding Rural Scientific Contribution - Centre for Health & Society (University of Melbourne);

- Making a Difference - BAYSA Youth Services in partnership with WRAD; and
- Outstanding Media Contribution - Danny Lannen (Geelong Advertiser)

The RVADC Organising Committee has instigated (as part of the conference process) the development of 'Key Recommendations', which will be used to help inform an advocacy strategy, aimed at enhancing outcomes in key areas for the alcohol and other drug sector (AOD).

The 'Key Recommendations' were conceptualised in individual professional workshops, on the second day of the conference. The workshops looked at a number of areas including: the impact of expectations placed on Koori Courts; techniques that can enhance Needle & Syringe Programs (NSPs) in rural areas; exploring what role families play in the recovery process; accessing the community and promoting partnerships; and using the media to present a positive profile of AOD services and consumers.

The final session of the conference saw the assembled conference goers discuss the proposed 'Key Recommendations' that were developed in each of the professional workshops.

The Conference Committee will work with the recommendations over the coming weeks, which will be sent to Conference delegates for feedback. The final part of the process will see the final recommendations sent to government, politicians and peak bodies.



Guests at the RVADC "Awards for Excellence"

## Month in Review

### Yarra Drug and Health Forum

On Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> August VAADA Project Officer, Chris McDonnell attended the Yarra Drug and Health Forum (YHDF).

The aim of the meeting was to discuss the issues and strategies identified at the five community forums conducted in Yarra by the YHDF.

It is intended that these findings will contribute to the development of the City of Yarra Drug Action Plan and assist in future planning for the Yarra Drug and Health Forum. To facilitate this process the meeting considered four themes that emerged from the forums: Amenity, Access, Education and Equity. The findings from the community forums were evaluated and will be developed into a cohesive format.

The information will be collated into a draft document to be distributed to YHDF members for their comments.

### VAADA Annual General Meeting

VAADA will be hosting its 2005 Annual General Meeting this year from 1.00pm to 3.00pm on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> September, at the North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne.

Five board positions will fall vacant. These positions will be available for nomination by VAADA members.

Professor Robert Power (the new Director of the Centre for Harm Reduction, Burnet Institute) will speak at the AGM on the issue of harm reduction in the current context.

RSVPs for the AGM can be directed to Sarah on 9416 0866.

### State and National Peaks Agreement

A recent meeting between the State and Federal AOD peaks has led to agreement to form a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The purpose of this understanding is to strengthen the relationship between the peaks and to provide greater potential for representing the sector with a unified voice on key issues.

The MOU includes: the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA), the NSW Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (NADA), the South Australian Network of Drug and Alcohol Services (SANDAS), the Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug

Agencies (WANADA), the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Council Tasmania (ATDC), and the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA).

### Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative Workshop

The Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative National Workshop was held in Sydney from the 3-4 August. The workshop aimed to further best practice and to look at ways to improve the initiative by bringing all jurisdictions involved in the program together.

Some of the issues considered for the future of the initiative included: reviewing eligibility of those entering the initiative; funding models; cross border diversions; and including those using licit substances into the initiative.

An evaluation report and findings were presented by Dr Toni Makkai, Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology.

### VAADA Strategic Directions

Recent planning and consultations have clarified VAADA's role to ensure that the issues for people experiencing harms associated with alcohol and other drug use and the organisations that support them are well represented in policy and program development and public discussion.

VAADA has developed a new consultative framework which aims to enable the peak to more effectively understand the breadth of issues in the AOD sector.

These consultations will also provide a space for its members and key stakeholders to collaborate and exchange innovative ideas, and includes:

- Quarterly VAADA Members Network Forums
- Quarterly consultations with service providers through the AOD Service Provider Conferences
- Policy Sub-committee – small advisory body
- Practice Sub-committee – small advisory body
- Annual regional consultations (rural / metro)
- Conference in February
- Facilitate politician visits to AOD services in Drug Action Week

**YOUR SAY**  
**DISPERSAL POWERS: GOOD SENSE BRUSHED ASIDE**  
**Will Crawford, Drug Outreach Lawyer, Fitzroy Legal Service**

A regressive and highly discriminatory recommendation was put forward in a recent Crime Prevention Victoria discussion paper *A Good Night for All – Options for Improving Safety and Amenity in Inner City Entertainment Precincts*.

The proposal of chief concern provides that police be given dispersal or ‘move on’ powers similar to those that exist in the United Kingdom, New South Wales and Queensland.

The proposal would allow police to direct individuals to move on where “the police officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the person’s conduct or presence is causing or is likely to cause fear to another person or persons.” Under the proposal it would also be a crime to disobey a command to move on.

This is a highly flawed recommendation on a number of grounds. Firstly, it is likely to discriminate against people who by virtue of their disadvantage use public space more regularly and will interfere with these community members’ legitimate enjoyment of public space. This would appear to be inconsistent with the interests of creating a safe, non-discriminatory environment for all members of the public.

The fact that the police on the basis of a subjective notion of fear can activate the dispersal command means that such a power will most certainly be targeted towards marginalised and indigenous persons.

Given that move on powers may be exercised in areas where many support service are located, this raises the concern that dispersal power may

affect many marginalized groups access of support services.

The efficacy of such an initiative is also questionable. Dispersal powers are likely to increase social tensions between commercial interests and community members. It is conceivable that traders may use these powers in a vindictive fashion to discriminate against undesirable individuals. In the same way, the subjective nature of the power also may give rise to abuse by individuals who have ongoing disputes.

We would note at the outset that the law already provides adequate police powers and sanctions to deal with behavioural offences and disturbances of the peace.

In addition to the discriminatory elements of the power, this proposal is also contrary to fundamental notions of natural justice in that it fails to distinguish between innocent conduct and conduct intentionally causing harassment or fear.

All people should be entitled to enjoy public space. In a world where public space is diminishing, shopping strips are being replaced to privately owned malls, it is important to preserve the rights and dignity of all Victorians.

If anyone would like to oppose this recommendation, we encourage you to right to the Inner City Entertainment Precinct Taskforce c/o Crime Prevention Victoria, GPO Box 5223 Melbourne 3000. Will Crawford, Drug Outreach Lawyer, Fitzroy Legal Service [wcrawford@fitzroy-legal.org.au](mailto:wcrawford@fitzroy-legal.org.au) Phone 9411 1302

---

**Victorian Charter of Rights Consultation**

VAADA recently supported a consumer consultation on the issue of a Victorian Charter of Rights. The consultation was co-hosted by the Association of Participating Service Users (APSU) and VCOSS. The session was held on 18 August and is part of a process of community consultation being undertaken by the Victorian Government and Parliament. The consultations aim is to help determine the appropriateness of enacting a Charter of Rights for Victoria, as a means of upholding Victoria’s existing obligations under international human rights treaties and conventions.

The Forum was attended by the families of drug users, AOD clients and mental health consumers. Those attending the consultation explored the issues around a Charter of Rights and gave feedback to help clarify what issues should be considered in drafting such a charter, when examined from an AOD perspective. A report will be compiled from the consultation and made available on the VAADA website.

## Calendar of Events

September 6	<p><b>Parenting Program - For parents or care givers of people 14 – 25yrs with a drug/alcohol problem Anglicare Knox Family Services</b> The 8 Week program will run on Tuesday 6th Sept from 5.30 – 7.30pm at Anglicare Knox Family Services, 666 Mountain Highway, Bayswater 3153. No Cost - for details and registration, please 'phone Margot at Anglicare 9721 3622</p>
September 7	<p><b>Mass media campaigns: how effective are they as a prevention strategy?</b> This short seminar is designed to complement the publication of the DrugInfo Clearinghouse's quarterly publications on social marketing and prevention (1 September 2005). It aims to raise awareness and provide a forum for discussion of social marketing and what makes mass media campaigns effective. To be held on Wednesday 7 September 2005 from 9:30am - 12:30pm at St James Court Conference Centre, 12 Batman Street, West Melbourne. The seminar is free to attend, but bookings are essential as places are strictly limited. Please RSVP to DrugInfo [druginfo@adf.org.au] or tel. 1300 85 85 84 to reserve</p>
September 8	<p><b>Working with older women responding to past or current violence CASA House</b> This one day workshop will be co-facilitated by DVIRC and CASA House and will focus on older women's experience of violence and barriers to disclosure and reporting. The workshop will be held at the Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Queen Victoria Women's Centre, 210 Lonsdale Street Melbourne. Cost is \$50.00 and attendance is by booking only and limited to 20 places. Registration forms are available by contacting CASA House on 9347 3066</p>
September 9	<p><b>"Logistical and ethical dilemmas in researching drug and alcohol use among refugees and asylum seekers in Australia"</b> Turning Point Talking Point Series Presented by Prof Sandy Gifford, Director, Refugee Health Research Centre, La Trobe University', at 1-2 pm, Training Room, 142 Gertrude St Fitzroy, bookings essential. Call Turning Point on 8413 8413</p>
September 14	<p><b>Benzodiazepines and antidepressant. What are they, and how do they work, and what are the risks? TRANX/PADA</b> To be held between 9.30am-12.30pm at Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre. Costs for workshops are: \$88 inc GST for a half day workshops; full day workshops \$192.50 inc GST. Workshops will include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. TRANX/PADA members will receive a 10% discount as will agencies enrolling more than three staff members. For further information call TRANX on 9886 0955</p>
September 14	<p><b>Benzodiazepines and antidepressants TRANX/PADA</b> To be held between 1.30pm-4.30pm at Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre. Costs for workshops are: \$88 inc GST for a half day workshops; full day workshops \$192.50 inc GST. Workshops will include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. TRANX/PADA members will receive a 10% discount as will agencies enrolling more than three staff members. For further information call TRANX on 9886 0955</p>
September 30	<p><b>VAADA Annual General Meeting</b> VAADA will be hosting its 2005 Annual General Meeting this year from 1.00pm to 3.00pm on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> September, at the North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne. A guest presentation will be delivered by Prof Robert Power (the new Director of the Centre for Harm Reduction, Burnet Institute). RSVP's for the AGM can be directed to Sarah on 9416 0866.</p>

### Apology

VAADA would like to offer an apology to Moreland Hall, for an error printed in the August Calendar of Events, which incorrectly listed the date of the August Presentation of Moreland Hall's Lunchtime Seminar series.