



February 09

VAADA Conference

VAADA CEO Meeting

Alcohol and violence project

Windana day program

VAADA 2009 Conference Direction in a time of change

The 2009 VAADA Conference Direction in a Time of Change was held at the Jasper Hotel in Melbourne on 19-20 February 2009. The Conference explored current changes and challenges facing the AOD field including shifting drug trends, changing policy environments, evolving service user needs and community attitudes and expectations.

Approximately 260 delegates attended the conference over the two days. The program was informative and current, delivering 40 presentations and offering local and international keynote presentations. The Conference also boasted an expert panel discussion featuring Dr. Jon Currie, St Vincent's Hospital; A/Prof. Murat Yucel, Melbourne Neuropsychology & Orygen Youth; Dr. Craig Fry, Murdoch Children's Research Centre and was chaired by A/Prof. John Fitzgerald from the Centre for Population Health at the University of Melbourne.

The international perspective given by the two keynote speakers (Neil Hunt- Director of Research KCA and Dr. Fraser Todd - Director of Teaching, National Addiction Centre, University of Otago NZ) provided an interesting contrast to the Victorian treatment system.

Neil's presentation noted that the UK is seeing change in four critical areas related to drug treatment and policy - providing both opportunities and threats to effective treatment options for drug users, including: welfare reform; a shift towards a focus on families and the children of drug users; performance management; and a refocus on recovery and becoming drug free.



Delegates during a lunch break

Fraser's presentation noted that over the last two decades a number of high quality guidelines have been released around the world. The guidelines emphasise the need for enhanced detection of coexisting disorders and the integration of Alcohol AOD and mental health treatment.

One of the strengths of the New Zealand service system according to Fraser, is its emphasis on, and capacity to work sympathetically in a multicultural context.

Professor Rob Moodie, gave a thoughtful keynote on the lessons to be learned from successful public health campaigns such as road trauma and tobacco, when thinking of strategies for preventing harmful alcohol consumption within the community.

VAADA would like to thank all those who presented and attended. Presentations from the conference can be found at the VAADA website; www.vaada.org.au.



VAADA Executive Officer Sam Biondo and Prof Rob Moodie



Associate Prof. Murat Yucel

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VAADA CEO/Managers Network meeting

The most recent VAADA CEO/Managers Network meeting was held on the 20 March at the Mary of the Cross Centre.

Some of the main issues discussed were:

Forensics

VAADA Executive Officer, Sam Biondo reported back to the network that a delegation of sector representatives had been meeting with DHS to discuss issues that have been arising for the sector in relation to the delivery of forensic services. Sam noted that the meetings had been positive and that a formal review of the Victorian forensics system was in the wings. Since the meeting, DHS has released a Discussion Paper on the Forensic Drug Treatment Service System as part of its forensic review, and has called for written responses by Friday 8th May 2009. Copies can be downloaded at: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/drugservices/pubs/forensic.htm>

VAADA will be providing a submission and invites AOD agencies to attend our forum on Monday 20 April between 9.30am-1pm to discuss forensics issues. Further details will be circulated over the coming weeks. In the meantime, if you would like to share your views on the DHS discussion paper or other forensic issues, please email VAADA's policy officer Chantel Churchus at cchurchus@vaada.org.au

DHS Sector Committee

VAADA President Simon Ruth reported that the DHS Sector Committee had met twice to discuss and confirm its terms of reference. Once confirmed, the terms of reference will be disseminated to the sector via ENEWS. He added that the Quality Framework was the main agenda item to be discussed at the next meeting.

Pharmacotherapy

There were reports from those attending the meeting that a number of issues are still outstanding with the pharmacotherapy system, particularly in rural and regional Victoria.

It was noted at the meeting that changes to the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 ("the Act"), now allow practitioners to treat hospital in-patients with a Schedule 8 poison (such as morphine, methadone, pethidine, fentanyl and dexamphetamine). Those attending the meeting raised concerns that this may have some implication for the continuity of care for clients.

Portability of Long Service Leave

Sam Biondo noted that the Portability of Long Service Leave would be implemented within the community sector within the near future. Network members were supportive of the measure as a way of improving conditions and retention of workers within the Alcohol and Other Drug sector. Issues for the sector related to whether up front funding would be provided to kick the scheme off, and the lack of portability between health services (which employ 40% of AOD workers) and the community sector.

Alcohol and violence project: Responding to clients impacted by alcohol-related violence, an integrated approach

Are you interested in the relationship between alcohol use and violence and its impact on your clients? What about tailored strategies you can use to respond?

The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association in collaboration with Odyssey House and UnitingCare Moreland Hall is running a one-day workshop on this issue. The workshop will be offered across four locations in metropolitan Melbourne and rural and regional Victoria. Participants will also be asked to attend a follow-up masterclass (involving key experts from allied fields of practice).

During the workshop you will be introduced to a number of practice tools tailored to meet the specific needs of AOD practitioners working with clients who have either used or been subjected to alcohol-related violence. These tools will assist you to:

- Identify the warning signs and raise the topic without eliciting shame or defensiveness in the client
- Increase clients' awareness of the different forms of violence and their links to alcohol use
- Help people who use alcohol and violence better manage their emotions and change their behaviour
- Work with people who are at risk by implementing safety plans (with particular reference to intimate partner violence and violence directed towards children)

A key objective of the project is to provide you with the opportunity to review and road-test these tools. To this end, you will be asked to provide feedback while applying them to real-life case examples.

Please note that each workshop will be limited to 20 places.

Workshop Locations:

22 April Melbourne
 21 May Morwell
 26 May Ballarat
 12 June Colac
 Masterclass – (Date to be Advised)

For more information or to download a registration form go to www.vaada.org.au or contact Chris McDonnell on 9416 0899 or cmcdonnell@vaada.org.au

Windana's new adult day program Steve Watson Team Leader Day Program

Windana's new adult Day Program is an innovative and exciting opportunity which addresses some of the shortfalls that have long existed in the alcohol and other drug treatment sector.

Having worked as a counsellor in Windana's Drug Withdrawal Unit for the past 5 to 6 years, I understand the frustration experienced when linking clients into post withdrawal support services.

The options for alcohol and other drug rehabilitation services are particularly limited for clients who are on some prescribed pain or anxiety medications, pharmacotherapies or even for substance dependant parents who have children in their care.

Amongst the key benefits of the Windana Day Program are:

- client work is focused on establishing and maintaining healthy lifestyle choices whilst living in the community
- it is a rehab service that is available to clients who are taking benzodiazepines as prescribed
- healthy community connections aren't broken whilst in treatment
- treatment is available for clients taking pharmacotherapies
- clients don't have to relinquish their accommodation to attend
- and parents can address their substance use issues in the community while children are in their care.

Utilising evidence based practices, alongside Windana's holistic approach; the Day Program draws on the most up to date treatment experiences and research from around the world to assist clients in addressing the negative effects of alcohol and other drug use.

Rather than being removed from the community, clients attending the program are supported in the healthy structuring of their lives, whilst still being exposed to their triggers in their community.

The Day Program is structured as a twelve-week program that operates five days a week. Sessions included in the main program are; Relapse Prevention, Triggers and Cravings, Art Therapy, Mindfulness, Auricular Therapy, Early Recovery Skills and many others. All activities in the program aim to assist clients in designing a healthy schedule, inside and outside of the program, that is conducive to recovery.

The program promotes a peer based model with 'Checking In' and 'Checking Out' Groups at the beginning and end of each day. Senior peers are provided with the opportunity to facilitate some of the structured groups.

Because Windana is holistic in its approach, one of the questions we ask our clients is "Who is the person or people most interested in you being in treatment?".

We ask this because we recognize family members and significant others can play a very important role in their loved ones recovery and are encouraged to attending weekly educational groups with clients.

We are currently three months into the 12-month pilot program which has been funded by the Department of Health and Ageing and is being rigorously evaluated by Turning Point. Clients can begin at any time during the 12 week program, which offers individual phase reviews at the one week mark, the four week mark and at the eight week mark.

The first week is the 'try before you buy' phase in which clients can attend for a week to see if they think the program will be able to assist them. So far every client who has completed phase one, remains committed to the program.

The final phase is the action phase, in which clients action items in their Individual Treatment Plan. This phase has facilitated clients return to part time work and full time study.

The program is provided free of charge to clients and offers some incentives such as lunch, public transport vouchers and child care assistance.

The program is not a 'drop-in' centre and 90% attendance is expected, with the exception of those in the final phase who are actioning their vocational plans.

Potential clients can request an assessment for the Day Program through the Windana Duty Worker on (03) 9529 7955. In order for clients to participate in the program they need to have a stable Accommodation Plan for the 12 week period of the program, as well as the ability to travel to Ormond five days a week.

It is also a requirement that all new clients will have completed a withdrawal program or provided 2 clean urine drug screen results in the week prior to entry.

DATE	EVENT
April 22	Workshop for AOD workers on the frontline Alcohol and violence project: Responding to clients impacted by alcohol-related violence, an integrated approach Are you interested in the relationship between alcohol use and violence and its impact on your clients? What about tailored strategies you can use to respond? The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association in collaboration with Odyssey House and UnitingCare Moreland Hall is running a one-day workshop on this issue. To be held at Melbourne UnitingCare Moreland Hall 26 Jessie Street, Moreland. Cost \$50. RSVP by 17 April. For more information or to register go to www.vaada.org.au or contact Chris McDonnell. Ph. 9416 0899 Email cmcdonnell@vaada.org.au
April 20 - 23	Harm Reduction 2009 – Thailand The conference will be held at the Imperial Queen’s Park Hotel over four full days - Monday 20th April –Thursday 23rd April. More information is contained in Professor Stimson’s letter. Please visit www.ihra.net/Thailand/News to view the open letter from Professor Gerry Stimson.
May 21	Workshop for AOD workers on the frontline Alcohol and violence project: Responding to clients impacted by alcohol-related violence, an integrated approach Are you interested in the relationship between alcohol use and violence and its impact on your clients? What about tailored strategies you can use to respond? The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association in collaboration with Odyssey House and UnitingCare Moreland Hall is running a one-day workshop on this issue. To be held at Latrobe Community Health Service 81-83 Buckley Street, Morwell. Cost \$50 RSVP by 19 May For more information or to register go to www.vaada.org.au or contact Chris McDonnell. Ph. 9416 0899 Email cmcdonnell@vaada.org.au
May 26	Workshop for AOD workers on the frontline Alcohol and violence project: Responding to clients impacted by alcohol-related violence, an integrated approach Are you interested in the relationship between alcohol use and violence and its impact on your clients? What about tailored strategies you can use to respond? The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association in collaboration with Odyssey House and UnitingCare Moreland Hall is running a one-day workshop on this issue. To be held at 26 May UnitingCare Ballarat (Peart Wing) 103 Lydiard Street South, Ballarat. Cost: \$50. RSVP by 22 May. For more information or to register go to www.vaada.org.au or contact Chris McDonnell. Ph. 9416 0899 Email cmcdonnell@vaada.org.au
Advance Notice May 27 - 28	Reconnexion National Conference 2009 Following on from the overwhelming success of Reconnexion’s 2008 conference the 4th National Conference on Anxiety & Depression is scheduled for Wednesday 27 May and Thursday 28 May 2009 at the Melbourne Exhibition & Convention Centre. A workshop conducted by Associate Professor James Bennett-Levy will be held on Friday 29 May 2009 at the same location. Cost of registration \$440 with a reduction for early bird registration. For more information contact Education & Training Manager janet@reconnexion.org.au /phone 03 9886 9400.
June 12	Workshop for AOD workers on the frontline Alcohol and violence project: Responding to clients impacted by alcohol-related violence, an integrated approach Are you interested in the relationship between alcohol use and violence and its impact on your clients? What about tailored strategies you can use to respond? The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association in collaboration with Odyssey House and UnitingCare Moreland Hall is running a one-day workshop on this issue. Colac Area Health, - Otway Blue Room, 2-28 Connor St, Colac. Cost: \$50. RSVP by 16 June. For more information or to register go to www.vaada.org.au or contact Chris McDonnell Ph. 9416 0899 Email cmcdonnell@vaada.org.au