



June/July 09

AOD Forensic Treatment Services

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Including People with a DD & Their Families

Rehab Services for Young Adults  
Recommence

## AOD Forensic Treatment Services



Over the past few months a number of matters impacting on forensic treatment services delivery by Victorian AOD agencies have been brought to the attention of the Department of Human Services. Further to a meeting organised by VAADA with Victorian agencies in late 2008 a co-signed letter of some eighteen agencies was forwarded to DHS seeking an urgent meeting to discuss a range of issues impacting on the viability of the forensic service delivery system. Some of the issues included: 'the cost of service delivery and capacity issues', 'payment issues', 'the impact of forensic services on generalists AOD services and voluntary waiting lists', 'complexity of the brokerage model', 'clinical decision making and agency autonomy', 'CCCC targets', 'referral processes', and the 'tendering of the Victorian Justice Health system' to name a few.

Since then VAADA and agency representatives have had 3 joint meetings with departmental staff, a review into AOD Forensic services was announced and there has been an opportunity to discuss issues with Minister Neville. Presently the DHS Forensic AOD Treatment System Review reference group has been established and is about to have it's second meeting. Ironically, some of the key issues raised with the Department such as 'cost of service' and 'payment issues' and others remain outside the scope of the terms of reference. Even though there has been opportunity to raise and discuss other matters within the gambit of the review, obvious limitations both in terms of focus and potential for change remain.

Inevitably if Government is looking for quality service delivery it will sooner or later need to address the resources required to deal with the growing number of forensic clients referred to AOD treatment services. While it might be appropriate to undertake a review the existing model of service, the prospects for change will necessarily be limited if current issues as identified by agencies and the stagnant levels of funding for this vital service are ignored.

## VAADA CEO Network Update

VAADA held its most recent CEO meeting on 17th July at the Mary of the Cross Centre.

The main agenda item was a presentation by VCOSS CEO, Cath Smith, discussing the proposed Portability of Long Service Leave for the Victorian Community Sector, its current status and issues that may arise out of its implementation.

Ms Smith outlined VCOSS' participation in a reference group alongside other peaks and government representatives, the purpose of which is to examine the proposed models and issues that may arise out of their implementation. VCOSS has been consulting with its members and other stakeholders. The consultations are due to finish toward the end of 2009 and the scheme is expected to be implemented by mid-2010.

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Currently there are three main models under consideration.

### 1 – "Fund Model"

This is the current model proposed by government and is similar to a portable long service scheme that exists for contract cleaners. It involves employers paying long service leave into an independent fund from the day that employees commence working. The fund would be managed by an independent board which would manage and invest funds – hopefully leading to the fund becoming self-funding.

This would have the advantage of lessening the administrative burden for organisations and securing the funds for employees to access when needed.

The major criticism of the scheme is that it would make a considerable "dent" in the balance sheets of community organisations and remove those funds from investment opportunities - opportunities which organisations have used to enhance service delivery or maintain solvency.

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ISSN: 1835-8292

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## 2 – “No Fund Model”

The second model under consideration is the “No Fund Model” which involves long funds remaining with the employer until an employee moves. Upon reemployment, funds are transferred to the balance sheet of the new employer.

This has the advantage of keeping funds within the balance sheets of employers, allowing employers to invest funds while an employee remains with an organisation.

The disadvantage of this scheme is that it relies on the good-will of the original employer; there is a risk that the new employer won’t receive the retained funds of a worker moving from a community service organisation. Potentially, new employers could bear the full impost of long service leave for someone they may have employed for only a matter of months.

## 3 – “Mini Fund Model”

This model allows employers to retain funds until an employee moves on, whereupon they are paid into a mini-fund.

This allows employers to keep the funds on their balance sheets and exploit investment opportunities.

The major disadvantage of this system is that it lacks the size to become self-sustaining.

Some of the concerns raised by those organisations surveyed by VCOSS included:

- That costing for the implementation of portable long service is unclear
- The impact on an employer if multiple employees simultaneously take long service leave
- That the scope of the scheme captures organisations through the definition of their non-government or notfor-profit status rather than their service type.

Some of the issues raised by network members included:

- That should the scheme transfer time rather than dollars on behalf of employees, it would be administratively nightmarish and inherently unfair on the organisation making a long service leave payout
- That government costing of the scheme hasn’t been made available to services

- That 40% of AOD employees work in health networks – with the current proposed scope of the scheme not including portability between NGOs and health networks
- That organisations would need to drastically review their risk management if such a scheme was introduced.

Ms Smith finished her presentation noting that despite the lack of clarity around the implementation of a scheme, and the difficulties that it may create for the Victorian NGO sector, there is in principle support from the NGO sector for the introduction of portable long service leave.

To assist the development of a sustainable model, VCOSS is hosting a forum to explore how portable long service schemes operate in other sectors, the cost and benefits of these schemes and the impact of portable long service leave on employers and employees. This will also be an opportunity to hear an update on progress in Victoria and to consider the model/s proposed by government.

VAADA will keep the sector apprised of developments in the scheme as they become available.

The meeting finished with VAADA Executive Officer Sam Biondo updating the meeting on the following VAADA projects:

- The Cost of Service Project
- VAADA Membership Survey
- Forensic Unit Costs
- VAADA 2009/2010 State Budget Submission
- The VAADA Blueprint/Sector Development project

## Including People with a DD & Their Families Together In Treatment: From Policy to Practice

by David Hartmann, Program Coordinator, Family Eclipse Program, Odyssey House Victoria

A new awareness is growing in the alcohol and other drug treatment field. Though it has long been recognised that the majority of individuals accessing drug treatment services have co-occurring mental health and drug abuse conditions, it has recently been acknowledged that families play a significant role in people's recovery, in addition to needing assistance in their own right.

Research supports that an integrated approach to both conditions is the most effective, and policy and funding are now reflecting this new thinking by also supporting family inclusive practice.

Odyssey House Victoria's new Family Eclipse Program is moving from policy into practice. The Family Eclipse Program is a partnership between Odyssey House Victoria, Taskforce Inc. and Interact Australia.

It is an exciting community based service responding to families, inclusive of the person with the co-occurring condition. The program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, to work with young adults between 16-24 years of age with a dual diagnosis and their families. Additional training and support for the project has come in partnership with The Bouverie Centre, through the DHS funded Lighting Beacons Project which is aimed at the implementation of family inclusive practices in the alcohol and other drugs sector.

The Family Eclipse Program uses a family therapy approach through individual family sessions and multi-family-therapy groups. The aim is to increase positive outcomes for the whole family and includes psycho-education to understand the two conditions and management strategies. Interventions aim to reduce stress, improve family communication and problem solving skills and to generally reduce the negative influence of mental health and drug abuse on individual and family life. An outcome evaluation will provide valuable results of the program's success.

The Family Eclipse Program operates across multiple systems working collaboratively with services, alongside dually diagnosed young adults and/or their families.

The aim of the project is to work closely with these services, to enhance current treatment by offering the Family Eclipse Program to run parallel with existing treatment.

The Family Eclipse Program team have collaborated with the AOD and mental health sectors to promote systemic change, from a traditional individual approach to a more family inclusive model. Agencies from both systems are involved with the Family

Eclipse Program in a shared treatment delivery for clients. By including the family in the treatment process they can become

a team working toward a common goal; to help their family member recover.

**For more information or to make a referral please contact Odyssey House Victoria Family Eclipse Program: David Hartmann, Program Coordinator, Odyssey House Victoria, 660 Bridge Road Richmond. VIC. 3121**

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## Salvos Recommence Rehab Services for Young Adults After Overdale Fire

by Carl Saes - Salvation Army

Due to the loss of the Overdale complex in the Kilmore East fire on February 7th 2009, the Alcohol and Other Drug residential rehabilitation service offered to young adults requires relocation. To create a service that is able to deliver the quality required in such a short time and with limited accommodation prospects, it is proposed to change the treatment delivery model of residential rehabilitation to an interim day program, until such time as the residential program can be re-established. In the first instance the program will be targeted at young adults, between the ages of 18-30 as per the arrangements of the previous program, Overdale.

The anticipated commencement date of the interim program is scheduled for July/August 2009. There will be a maximum of 15 clients during the proposed program of a 6-week cycle. The Salvation Army has some accommodation available for those outside the Bendigo region. The Bendigo Bridge Day Program is a Monday to Friday program for all participants, regardless of whether they are provided with accommodation during the week or live within the Bendigo region.

The Bendigo Bridge Day Program will offer several therapeutic treatment options. It will be a closed group program that requires a thorough assessment process for the intake of participants based on a set 6-week structure. The first 2 weeks will be focussed on intense harm reduction and relapse prevention classes and interventions, designed to address the potential high rate of participant drop out in the early stages of any AOD treatment program.

**Contact manager Carl Saes on 5442 7699 for further information or Erica Ginn for intake inquiries on 5442 7699**

DATE	EVENT
August 18	<b>Turning Point Symposium</b> Find out what's going on in the Victorian drug and alcohol sector at the Turning Point Symposium. Date: Tuesday 18th August, 2009 Time: 8.45am (registration) - 3.30pm (lunch, morning and afternoon tea provided) Venue: Vic Health, Ground Floor, 15-31 Pelham Street, Carlton South Find out more about the program and how to register for this event by visiting: <a href="http://www.turningpoint.org.au">www.turningpoint.org.au</a>
August 20-21	<b>Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs: Nursing, Midwifery &amp; Aboriginal Health Worker Practicum</b> Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs: Nursing, Midwifery & Aboriginal Health Worker Practicum 2009 will be held at Grand Chifley Hotel South Terrace Adelaide August 20th and 21st 2009 to increase the confidence, knowledge and clinical skills of general and specialist nurses, midwives and Aboriginal health workers in recognising and addressing alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) related health problems in their practice setting. For more information contact charlotte.decrespigny@adelaide.edu.au
October 1-2	<b>Anex '09 – Australian Drugs Conference – Drugs in Hard Times</b> – 1st & 2nd October, Melbourne. The Australian Drugs Conference – Drugs in Hard Times will look at the effects of tough times and our ability to save lives and build resilience. The Australian Drugs Conference – Drugs in Hard Times will focus on improving the ability of frontline services to respond to the complex issues that affect people who use drugs illicitly. Visit the <a href="http://www.australiandrugsconference.org.au">www.australiandrugsconference.org.au</a> now for more information and how to submit an abstract.
October 29-30	<b>2009 National Hepatitis Health Promotion Conference, Hobart, October 29-30</b> Hepatitis Australia is hosting a free two day conference for health and community workers with an interest in viral hepatitis prevention and support. The theme of the conference is 'Grass Roots to National Action.' The 2009 National Hepatitis Health Promotion Conference will be held In Hobart, Tasmania on the 29 & 30 October. To register, visit: <a href="http://www.ors.net.au/HepatitisAustralia.html">www.ors.net.au/HepatitisAustralia.html</a>
November 1-4	<b>Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and Other Drugs (APSAD) 2009 Conference Living on the Edge</b> The APSAD Conference will be from 1 – 4 November 2009 at the Darwin Convention Centre Northern Territory, Australia Website. <a href="http://www.apsadconference.com.au">www.apsadconference.com.au</a>