



Women in the sector **snapshot**

In 2023 VAADA received nearly 400 responses in its biennial Victorian Alcohol and other Drugs Workforce Development survey. A detailed report was produced exploring the high-level findings and offering a handful of recommendations on workforce capacity, capability and wellbeing. This is document forms part of a series of snapshots which focus exclusively on a segment of that data.

Demographics

- **257 survey participants identified as women** when asked about their gender identity (inclusive of trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming identities). Women therefore contributed to **65% of the total AOD workforce**.
- **Women in the sector were more likely to identify as having a family member or partner who has experienced alcohol or drug (AOD) problems.** 51% reported that they did, compared to 34% of the broader workforce. However, women were **less likely to identify as having a personal experience of AOD.** 35% identified, compared with 50% of the rest of the workforce.
- Women in the sector were more likely to **provide unpaid care to child(ren)** outside of work. **42%** reported that they did, compared to 30% of the rest of the workforce.
- Differences were also found in **annual income.** **32% of women earn below 65k**, compared to only 17% of the broader workforce. When exploring higher income levels, only **18% of women earn over 91k**, compared with 37% of the broader workforce who also earn as much.
- This disparity cannot be explained through job function/level, as no differences were found between gender and working in management/leadership positions.
- The disparity in annual incoming earning might be partially explained by differences in **employment terms**, where **50% of women are working in part-time roles**, compared to 31% of the broader workforce.

Capacity

- **Women were less likely to think about leaving the AOD sector or actively looking for new roles.** They indicated a **higher intention of staying in a clinical role for the next 2 years.**
- **Women were less likely to say that “salary/employment benefits” keeps them working in the AOD sector.** Only 12% selected this as a top reason, compared to 21% of the broader workforce.
- **Women in the sector were less likely to work extra hours or overtime** - 45% indicated that they never, or almost never do, compared with 39% of the broader workforce. Only 7% of women reported working overtime most days, compared with 14% of the broader workforce.

Capability

- No substantive differences were observed when exploring capability measures between gender. However, **women expressed less confidence in their ability to “de-escalate conflict that arises with an aggressive or violence client,”** and had **higher scores knowing “the appropriate referral pathways”** for clients with other treatment needs.

Wellbeing

- No differences were found on measures of **physical, mental health and quality of life.**
- **Women were more likely to find their workloads manageable.** 70% of women agreed or strongly agreed with that their workloads were manageable, compared to just under 60% of the broader workforce.