

Victorian AOD Service Providers Conference

From Policy to People: Centring Communities in Our Response

Catholic Leadership Centre | Friday 20 June 2025

Registration	Registration, Tea and Coffee	8.30 – 9.30
Welcome	Welcome to Country Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Tony Garvey	9.30 – 9.35
	MC Welcome Dr Tamsin Short, Executive Lead of Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Services, Access Health and Community	9.35 – 9.40
	Communities at the centre of AOD policy change Chris Christoforou, Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA)	9.40 – 9.45
Updates	Minister's Address Hon. Ingrid Stitt, Minister for Mental Health, Ageing & Multicultural Affairs	9.45 – 10.00
	Days of future past: How drug policy then impacts us now Dr Paul MacCartney, Victorian Chief Addiction Medicine Adviser	10.00 – 10.20
	Morning Tea (Celtic Hall / Exhibitor Space)	10.20 – 10.50
Plenaries	Justice and self-determination for Aboriginal people in Victoria: a vision for our future Marie Mitchell, Director of Community Justice Programs, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS)	10.50 – 11.15
	Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation De-Joel Upkett, CEO Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation	11.15 – 11.35
	Public Intoxication Response Melissa Donovan, Manager Centralised Services, Public Intoxication Reform, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service Danny Jeffcote, Cluster Lead, Cohealth Daniel Yakopo, Program Manager PIR Gippsland, Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation	11.35 – 11.55
	Stretch Break	11.55 – 12.00
Panel	Centring Communities in Alcohol Policy This panel brings together leaders from the AOD service sector, regulatory authorities and lived and living experience perspectives to explore the complex challenges of alcohol policy and the impact on Victorian communities. Drawing on diverse expertise, the panellists will examine tensions between harm reduction, regulatory frameworks, and health outcomes. Facilitator: Amy Herbert, Manager of Policy and Engagement, Alcohol and Drug Foundation Panel: Chris Carter, Chief Operating Officer, Liquor Control Victoria Clare Davies, Chief Executive Officer, Self Help Addiction Resource Centre (SHARC) Dr Benjamin Riordan, Research Fellow, Centre for Alcohol Policy Research, La Trobe University Dr Francis Acquah, AM, Executive Director, Positive Wellness Recovery Centre and President of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Foundation	12.00 – 12.50
	Lunch (Celtic Hall / Exhibitor Space)	12.50 – 1.40
Plenaries	Evolution of Lived and Living Experience Workforces in AOD and Harm Reduction practice Oscar Grano, SHARC & Amelia Berg, Harm Reduction Victoria	1.40 – 2.00
	Victorian Drug Checking: Learnings from the Summer Season Implementation Sarah Hiley, Drug Checking Director	2.00 – 2.20
	Stretch Break	2.20 – 2.25
Plenaries	Suzetrigine: New FDA approved non opioid analgesia and its potential impact on patients who use substances Dr Eric Hadinata, Specialist General Practitioner, Co-Chair of the RACGP Victoria Alcohol and Other Drugs Committee, RACGP Victoria Council Member	2.25 – 2.55
	The Kaleidoscope of Psychedelics in Treatment Dr Emily Tunks, Health Psychologist and Somatic Psychotherapist, Research Psychedelic-Assisted Psychotherapist	2.55 – 3.25
Event Close	Wrap Up and Thank You	3.20 – 3.30