

**RELEASE DATE:
30 OCTOBER 2025**

PRESS RELEASE

[starts]

No right door: AOD treatment system overwhelmed by chronic demand

The Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA) 2025 Sector Demand Survey has revealed that on any day during September, there were 4550 Victorians on waitlists for various forms of funded alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment. This is the second-highest figure recorded across the eight surveys conducted from 2020, just below the 2024 peak of 4,615 people. The survey also revealed an increase in youth-specific AOD treatment demand, with 415 young people waiting for treatment on any day during September, increasing by just under 100 young people from 2023.

Additionally, 1858 people were waiting to be admitted to treatment via the intake and assessment processes. This is more than double the 2020 figure of 902 people.

Mr Scott Drummond, Acting CEO of VAADA, says, 'The 2025 VAADA Demand Survey shows a 90% increase in the number of people waiting for AOD treatment since 2020. This increase reflects a combination of factors, including insufficient resourcing to meet demand, an evolving drug market, systemic barriers that make it difficult to access treatment and a funding system which is not tailored to meet the needs of Victorians seeking help.'

'In particular, the enduring challenges with the intake and assessment are not surprising, with this survey recording a record 1858 people caught up at the front end of the system. The government has indicated an appetite for reform in this area, and we look forward to supporting this process.'

'It is particularly concerning to see this survey also reveal the largest number of young people waiting for support. The youth AOD treatment sector has largely remained unchanged since its inception over 25 years ago. An uplift in capacity is necessary not only to meet this demand but also to provide young people with the opportunities they deserve. A suitably resourced youth AOD sector would address some of the contemporary concerns currently facing Victoria.'

'We are encouraged by the Victorian Government's commitment to develop an AOD Strategy for Victoria and remain optimistic that this key reform will provide some timely solutions to this crisis.'

[Click here for infographic](#)

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact David Taylor on 0413 914 206.

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Media stories on alcohol and other drugs may be traumatic for some people. Support is available, and we ask that media agencies consider publishing the details below:

If this story has raised issues about your or others' drug and alcohol use, contact the national hotline for confidential counselling and referral on 1800 250 015

VAADA is the peak body that represents over 80 Alcohol and other Drug services across Victoria. Daily, these services deal with the effects of harmful alcohol and other drug consumption.