



## AOD eNews June 2025

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### 1. Central and Eastern Sydney PHN

**Author: Paul Hardy, AOD Manager**  
*Update from CESPHN*

Welcome to this edition of CESPHN's AOD eNews.

At the time of writing, we're coming to the close of [National Reconciliation Week](#). The theme for 2025, Bridging Now to Next reflects the ongoing connection between past, present and future, and calls on all Australians to step forward together, to look ahead and continue the push forward as past lessons guide us.

Across all the AOD services that CESPHN commissions, over 20% of people supported identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. This shows the great progress the sector is making on the journey towards providing culturally safe services for First Nations people, supported by resources such as the [AOD Treatment Guidelines for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People](#). There is still however plenty of work to do and CESPHN remains committed to working with the sector to keep improving.

June is also PRIDE month. The theme this year for [Sydney PRIDE Festival](#) is Love, Respect, Empower.

This month commemorates the global liberation movement for LGBTQIA+ equality and the pride marches that sprung up in the wake of the 1969 Stonewall riots. This month-long event aims to raise awareness, educate and support LGBTQIA+ charities, organisations, and businesses, while fostering compassion and courage within the community and beyond.

Pride Month is a time for us to come together as a community, to celebrate our diversity, and to advocate for the rights and acceptance of all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, through compassion and courage, we can create a more inclusive and supportive society for everyone.

CESPHN worked with ACON and other stakeholders to update the [LGBTQ+ Inclusive and Affirming Practice Guidelines](#) and PRIDE month is a great time to review those guidelines and ensure your service is providing the best possible care for members of LGBTQ+ communities.

## 2. Community Restorative Centre

*Author: Angus Jack Mason, Aboriginal Research Officer, Community Restorative Centre  
[Implementation of the AOD Care Charter at Community Restorative Centre \(CRC\) through a dedicated action plan](#)*

Since signing up as a signatory to the AOD Care Charter, CRC has taken its commitment to providing best practice care to people who use drugs very seriously. By implementing an action plan throughout the organisation, they aim to achieve the standards set out in the AOD Care Charter across the service in a meaningful (and not tokenistic) way.

The action plan working group, led by Aboriginal Research Officer Angus Jack Mason, meets every two months to discuss progress towards implementing the Charter. Champions have been identified from each program in the organisation, with the expectation that they model the behaviours set out in the Charter, raise awareness and report back to their respective team on the progress of the action plan.

At CRC, it's recognised that ALL programs are working directly with people who use or are impacted by drugs, not just the AOD Transition Program; thus, the implementation of the Charter has been extended across the whole organisation.

Implementation of the Charter has led to real changes in the organisation, including changes to internal policies to better align with the Charter, the incorporation of reflective practices into team meetings, posters of the Charter being visible at all CRC sites, and the addition of specific training around stigma and discrimination to the list of mandatory trainings.

The action plan is still ongoing, and the working group continues to meet every second month. Some of the early feedback from staff has been very positive, with staff reporting greater confidence when working with people who use drugs and being grateful to have a space to reflect on their practice. CRC continues to work towards breaking down the stigma and discrimination against people who use drugs, which so often prevents people from seeking help.

[Read more here.](#)

### 3. The Station Ltd. Drop-in Centre

*Author: Mathew Morrow, Acting Operations Manager  
The Station Ltd. Drop-in Centre*

The Station Ltd is a small 'drop-in' service that is walking distance from Wynard station. We operate seven days a week from 7.30 am to 3.30 pm Monday to Friday and Saturday and Sunday from 7.30 am to 2.00 pm.

We provide breakfast and lunch every day, as well as showers, laundry facilities, tea and coffee, computers, Wi-Fi, Foxtel, and a relaxing atmosphere. We have a team of housing support workers who provide housing support, this includes, but is not limited to; advocacy, housing applications, co-ordination with 'Homes' and guidance around the private rental market. As well AOD support for client seeking support in this space

Since the last newsletter we have three new casual staff members join The Station team. Will Williams and Nicole Shanahan both joined March as casual welfare workers. Both staff members come with years of experience in the homeless services and the AOD space and have been great additions to the team. We also have a new weekend casual chef Stefan Milhuisen joined at the end of February and is assisting on the weekends in the kitchen.

We are continuing with our partnership with Homeless Health. They have changed their days of attendance from Wednesday to Friday and attend between 8.00 am - 10.00 am. The medical team includes a GP, a registered nurse and a mental health clinician. They can also provide referrals to the psychiatrist if required. The service is free of charge and is done on a walk-in basis. A Medicare card is not required. We also have the Homeless Persons' Legal Services attend The Station every fortnight on Tuesday between 11.00 am - 1.00 pm. Referral are also on a walk-in basis.

The service has also had upgrades to the wall-talkies system with new units purchased to help with communications and efficiency.

We also recently had a few activities at The Station including Hep C testing on 9 May conducted by Hepatitis NSW. We had a large turnout for the testing, and we are thankful for Grace and her team for coming down and providing the essential service.

We also had AIME mentoring attend our `` service for two days of hoodie workshops on 30 April and 7 May. The clients were able to paint and design their own hoodies and then keep the hoodies they have designed. This was a great experience for clients and staff alike and created a great atmosphere in the service. We are very grateful to AIME and YCK for attending the service.

We also had our regular activities of Bingo on 25th of March at 10.00 am – 11.00 am conducted by Tara and Luke. With prizes for those involved and snacks and small food provided. We are currently looking at creating more partnerships and hope to set up regular activities at the service.

Please feel free to reach out on (02) 9299 2252 or [dropin@thestationltd.org](mailto:dropin@thestationltd.org) or come down to 82 Erskine Street, Sydney.



## 4. Kirketon Road Centre

*Author: Julie Dubuc, Counselling Unit Manager, KRC  
Kirketon Road Center Update (KRC)*

Nitazenes continue to be used by clients highlighting the importance of administering Naloxone. Naloxone is also being administered to clients who are prescribed opiates due to young people accessing parent's scripts. Same as Vapes, educating clients on safely storing of Vapes to reduce access and risks to their children. KRC continues to provide Naloxone training to other services, please contact Julie if your service is interested.

Requests for Buprenorphine continue (the primary opioid agonist treatment at KRC). Recently three KRC staff completed the Involuntary Drug and Alcohol Treatment training and are now registered. Outreach in Maroubra and Sutherland continues weekly delivering to homes of NSP and collection of used needles by KRC peers (see attachment).

KRC in partnership with ACON and Guthrie House recently provided Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) training about emerging trends and associated risks.

## 5. The Salvation Army

*Author: Corey Wright, AOD Community Services Manager  
The Salvation Army's Foundations Services*

The Salvation Army's Foundations Services supports individuals over 18 who are struggling with alcohol and drug use. With locations in Miranda and Maroubra, the program provides flexible, community-based support to help individuals work toward recovery.

### Our Services

Foundations Services offers:

- Comprehensive assessments to identify individual needs and goals.
- Personalized treatment planning to guide recovery.
- Professional case management for ongoing support and referrals.

Following the National AOD Model of Care, we create a safe, supportive, and empowering environment where individuals can build skills and make meaningful progress. Our approach includes:

- Harm reduction strategies to promote safer substance use choices.
- Overdose prevention education to reduce risks.
- Relapse prevention to develop long-term coping skills.
- Community integration to strengthen social connections and support networks.

### **The Foundations Group Program**

The Foundations Group Program is a 12-week, in-person program at Maroubra, structured around three key modules:

- Connect – Building relationships, motivation, and support.
- Grow – Developing emotional regulation and coping strategies.
- Live – Applying learned skills to daily life and long-term recovery.

Grounded in international best practices, the program is engaging, evidence-based, and aligned with our residential services. Sessions run Monday to Friday, with an online relapse prevention group available twice a week for ongoing support.

### **Who Can Access Our Services?**

Eligibility is based on two criteria:

- Substance misuse or dependency – Individuals experiencing challenges with alcohol and/or drug use.
- Willingness to engage in AOD Recovery Groups – Active participation in group sessions is required.

### **How to Get in Touch**

For more information or to start your recovery journey, contact:

✉ Pathways Maroubra: [foundationsmaroubra@salvationarmy.org.au](mailto:foundationsmaroubra@salvationarmy.org.au) or call 0429 390 456.

## **6. TRP**

***Author: Mohamad Fenj CALD AOD Counsellor and Program Manager, The Rehabilitation Project Creating Safe Spaces***

The Rehabilitation Project is a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse AOD community-based Therapeutic Community for the Muslim and Arabic speaking community. We strive to provide a safe and flexible environment for people experiencing AOD use while taking into consideration people's faith and diverse backgrounds.

During the month of Ramadan (month of fasting and reflection through prayer), we intentionally tailored our Wednesday night program's start and finish times to allow clients to have enough time to break their fast at home with family then attend program. We also provided the option to attend program early to breakfast, as a group, at the centre and got catering for Iftar (breakfast) as well as sweets.



Moreso, we understood that during this month, Muslim clients have higher faith practice needs, so we provided a space for people to practice their faith at the facility after program. This increased service access and motivated clients to engage with AOD treatment.

We believe creating a safe space is just the beginning of a therapeutic environment. While in that safe environment we adopt a safe approach, hold a safe space and try to maintain it every single time clients attend program.

A little more about what we do:

- Group counselling
- Relapse prevention group
- Online support
- Workshops
- Psychosocial programs
- Community awareness and development
- Referral pathways
- Continuing care

With a strong focus on lived experience peer work, The Rehabilitation Project has been run by volunteers, however, thanks to recent funding from Central Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network we now have fulltime employment.

We support men to overcome addiction and minimize harm through the Connect-Discover-Recover program. A 2-hour weekly program, Wednesday nights, in Riverwood. The program provides psychosocial and psycho-spiritual support, drug addiction support, psychoeducation and awareness workshops, group counselling, recovery meetings, relapse prevention activities, social/recreational events as well as online support platform. Every 6 weeks we provide social and recreational activities and events include hiking, bushwalks, fishing, BBQs and more.



## 7. Monash Addiction Research Centre (Monash University)

### *Access the new Opioid Safety Toolkit – a resource for you and your patients*

Opioids remain important for severe pain, but for chronic pain, their benefits are limited and the risks—including dependence,<sup>1,2</sup> overdose,<sup>3</sup> hospitalisation and death<sup>4</sup>—are well known. GPs are encouraged to regularly review patients on long-term opioids, especially as PBS requirements now call for a second opinion if opioid therapy continues beyond 12 months.<sup>5</sup>

The **Routine Opioid Outcome Monitoring (ROOM) Tool** is a quick and validated way to support these reviews. It helps you assess pain, function, dependence risk, mood, and other key outcomes in under five minutes.<sup>6,7</sup> Patients can complete it in the waiting room or during the consult, and it's been found useful and acceptable by GPs, including in rural settings.<sup>4</sup>

You can download a free paper version [here](#). Or better yet, direct patients to the **Opioid Safety Toolkit** - a new, interactive website funded by the Commonwealth. It includes the ROOM Tool for [self-completion](#) (complete with scoring and patient advice based on scores). The Toolkit also helps patients build a personalised [safety plan](#) to understand their risks, recognise signs of overdose, and know how to respond.<sup>8</sup>

The Toolkit also educates patients about [naloxone](#), a life-saving medicine recommended for everyone on long-term opioids. It's now free, easy to use (as nasal spray or injection), and shown to reduce harm.<sup>9,10</sup> Patients with chronic pain are open to receiving it<sup>9</sup> when it is offered as something to keep themselves or their family safe, like a fire extinguisher that we hope they never need to use.

These resources are **evidence-based, patient-approved**,<sup>6,7,11</sup> and designed to make your opioid reviews easier and more effective.

**Download the ROOM Tool or explore the Opioid Safety Toolkit** at <https://saferopioiduse.com.au>

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## 8. SESLHD Drug & Alcohol Services

*Author: Paul Robinson, Viral Hepatitis Clinical Nurse Consultant, SESLHD Drug & Alcohol Services*

*Development of clinical practice in the management of blood-borne viruses and sexual health in SESLHD Drug & Alcohol Services*

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) Drug & Alcohol Services has strengthened its response to blood-borne viruses (BBVs), with a particular focus on Hepatitis C through the implementation of integrated and accessible models of care. These efforts directly contribute to the broader statewide goal of eliminating Hepatitis C by 2028, as outlined in the NSW Hepatitis C Strategy 2022–2025.

BBV and sexual health clinics have been established across all SESLHD Drug & Alcohol sites, providing comprehensive, client-centred care. Recognising the barriers many clients face in accessing mainstream services, care is also being delivered in high-need settings through targeted outreach. Outreach clinics have been established at William Booth House and Wesley Edward Eager Lodge in inner Sydney. Outreach services deliver on-site Hepatitis C point-of-care testing using the GeneXpert platform, FibroScan liver assessments, and direct linkage to treatment. Delivered in collaboration with peer workers from Hepatitis NSW, these initiatives have effectively engaged marginalised populations, particularly those experiencing homelessness or unstable housing.

In addition to Hepatitis C care, SESLHD Drug & Alcohol Services has broadened its service delivery to encompass a comprehensive range of sexual and reproductive health interventions. Recognising the interconnected health needs of its clients, the service offers testing for sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) assessments for individuals at risk of HIV. These services are delivered using a trauma-informed and non-judgmental approach that prioritises dignity, reduces stigma and supports engagement with care.

Contraception care has been integrated to provide clients with access to a full range of options and support for reproductive choice, including long-acting reversible contraception (LARC), emergency contraception, and where appropriate, referral pathways to abortion services. Care is delivered with a strong emphasis on informed decision-making tailored to individual needs. This holistic and person-centred approach ensures that reproductive health is recognised as an essential component of comprehensive health care.

The evolving model of care across SESLHD Drug & Alcohol Services reflects a commitment to flexibility, accessibility and equity. By embedding BBV and sexual health services within existing drug and alcohol frameworks and extending these services through outreach, SESLHD Drug & Alcohol Services is actively addressing health disparities and improving outcomes for some of the district's most vulnerable populations.



## 9. Sector news, additional resources, other upcoming events, training and webinars

- **NSW Health Safety Notice:** Multiple high dose MDMA (ecstasy) tablets circulating in NSW  
[Read the full notice](#)
- **FYI from Department of Health, Victoria:** White-brown powder containing metonitazene may be sold as ketamine or heroin  
[Read the full notice](#)
- **Alcohol and Other Drugs Skillset training for AOD workers**  
Expression of interest (EOI) for the 2025 Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Skillset training is now open. The course is targeted at candidates working in direct client facing roles in AOD services, and those who are new to the AOD sector. The AOD Skillset (CHCSS00093) provides foundational knowledge to assist effective assessments and interventions to meet the needs of people with AOD related needs.  
[See the Expression of Interest.](#)
- **NSW Drug Checking Trial Service at Midnight Mafia**  
Midnight Mafia on 3 May, was the second music festival to host the NSW Drug Checking Trial service. Across the event:
  - 165 people came through the service
  - 115 samples were checked,
  - 8 results were different than expected
  - 11 amnesty bin discards
  - 22 take home naloxone interventions were delivered
  - 1 public health drug warning was issued about multiple high dose MDMA tablets circulating in NSW

At the heart of this collaboration is NUAA's peer workers, who provide trusted, non-judgemental harm reduction support.

Peers guide service users through the drug checking process and provide valuable, real-time insights based on their lived experiences and collect behavioural data to help tailor health messages on the ground. Their unique insights are critical in adapting the service to shifting drug trends and festival environments.

- **Workforce development opportunities: Building capacity to respond to co-occurring mental health conditions in AOD treatment settings**  
NSW Health has partnered with the [Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use](#) to deliver a series of free skills-based training and train-the-trainer workshops, building capacity to respond to co-occurring mental health conditions in AOD treatment settings. Training programs have been developed to align with the [Guidelines on the management of co-occurring alcohol and other drug and mental health conditions in alcohol and other drug treatment settings](#).

3.5 day, in-person training, designed for professionals supporting people using AOD. This training covers what you need to know about mental health presentations in your clients, including:

- A range of co-occurring mental health conditions;
- Screening and assessment;
- Motivational enhancement, cognitive, and behavioural approaches.

30 June - 3 July 2025, Rydges Hotel, Parramatta

[Register your interest](#)

➤ **Working with families with AOD issues – Online Workshop 12 June 2025**

With this [online workshop](#), you'll learn an effective, evidence-based framework to help you engage better with families.

➤ **Exploring Training Options for the AOD Lived and Living Experience Workforce – Pilot Program**

Help shape the future of peer work in Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) services: join a new pilot program supporting the growth of the Lived and Living Experience (LLE) workforce across NSW.

People with lived and living experience of alcohol and other drugs play a vital role in improving the quality of care. Strengthening this workforce is key to delivering better health outcomes, enhancing service experiences, and reducing stigma across the sector.

Mental Health Coordinating Council, The Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies, and NSW Users and AIDS Association are collaborating on the Exploring Training Options for the AOD Lived and Living Experience Workforce – Pilot Program, a new initiative aimed at building a strong, supported and sustainable LLE workforce in AOD services.

[Register your interest](#)

➤ **Australian Guidelines for Assessment and Diagnosis of FASD**

The new Australian Guidelines for Assessment and Diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) aim to improve assessment and diagnostic services for FASD in Australia. The Guidelines were released on 13 May 2025 and build upon the previous diagnostic tool used to assess and diagnose FASD in Australia: The Australian Guide to the Diagnosis of FASD.

Developed to support Australian health practitioners involved in the assessment and diagnosis of FASD across the lifespan, the updated Guidelines have been approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council and were funded by the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care.

[View the guidelines](#)

If you would like CESPHN to meet with you to discuss these or any of our other AOD referral options with you, please contact the AOD team at [aodnewsletters@cesphn.com.au](mailto:aodnewsletters@cesphn.com.au)

For more information about our programs visit

[www.cesphn.org.au/allied-health/help-my-patients-with/drug-and-alcohol-support](http://www.cesphn.org.au/allied-health/help-my-patients-with/drug-and-alcohol-support)