



AOD eNews Nov 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 end of Mental Health month. The 2025 theme, "Taking Steps on Your Wellbeing Journey", reminds us that wellbeing is not a final destination but a continuous process, where even small steps count. This is relevant for everyone, whether you work in the AOD sector or access services. We hope that you got to attend an event, do some training or connect with your community during October, but given that wellbeing is a continuous process every month is a good time to do something positive.

The CESPHN [annual report](#) for 2024-25 was launched recently, highlighting some of the great work happening across the region both in the AOD space and other areas.

As we move towards the end of the year, we hope that you can take some time to rest and rejuvenate while acknowledging that this can be a challenging time for many people and the support that services are providing is as ever vital for many members of our community.

2. Community Restorative Centre

Author: David Chivers (AOD Transition Programs Manager) summarising original article by Alison Churchill (CEO), Angus Mason (ARPU Research Officer) and Dr Rory Gillard (ARPU Manager)

Beyond the Drug Summit: CRC's Call for Fair and Inclusive AOD Reform

What CRC Advocated for at the Drug Summit

CRC championed better AOD legislation, policy, and practice for incarcerated people. We pushed for the removal of discriminatory barriers limiting their access to AOD services.

Gaps in the Drug Summit Consultation

CRC welcomed the opportunity to attend but was disappointed by the exclusion of minoritised communities. First Nations people, despite making up 25% of AOD service users and over 40% of the NSW prison population, were overlooked. Trans and gender diverse people, those with lived experience, and culturally diverse communities were also neglected. Attendees had to demand inclusion in decision-making.

Incarcerated people were largely ignored, with little focus on AOD support and harm reduction in prisons. Discriminatory practices continue to block formerly incarcerated people from accessing community treatment.

Little Has Changed Since the Last NSW Drug Summit

AOD policy discussions at the 2024 Drug Summit mirrored those from 1999 and the 2018 Ice Inquiry. Governments must act to treat drug use as a health issue, not a legal one.

CRC urges the NSW Government to:

- Act on the joint call from NUAA, ACON, NADA, and ADARRN to appoint a taskforce to implement Summit recommendations and co-design a NSW AOD Strategy with lived-experience representation.
- Ensure priority populations in the National Drug Strategy 2017-2026 are meaningfully included in AOD policy consultation.
- Provide equivalent access to AOD treatment in prisons as in the community.
- Decriminalise personal drug possession in NSW.
- Increase funding for evidence-based AOD services inclusive of formerly incarcerated people.
- Expand safe injecting rooms where needed.
- Ditch drug dogs.
- Ensure access to free drug-checking services in NSW.

As a leading organisation supporting people at the intersection of AOD dependence and the carceral system, CRC stands ready to work with the government to implement these urgent reforms.

Read the [full article](#).



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 Sat & Sun from 7:30 am to 2:00 pm.

We provide breakfast and lunch every day, as well as showers, laundry facilities, tea & 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 08.00 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 11am-1pm. Referrals are also on a walk-in basis.

The service has also had upgrades to the two-way radios 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 the 9th of 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 the 30th of April and 7th of 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 10.00am – 11.00am 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 or come down to 82 Erskine Street, Sydney.



4. WHOS (We Help Ourselves)

Author: Carolyn Stuble Nurse Manager and Enhancement Team Manager WHOS
WHOS (We Help Ourselves) Update

WHOS has welcomed Ky Ryan to the role of Aboriginal Engagement Worker (CESPHN funded) to their Lilyfield campus enhancing our cultural program across the 4 residential services and day program. Ky has taken up this role left vacant when our previous worker relocated to work in our WHOS Hunter residential program.

Ky comes to us from Western Australia, is a proud Nhanda man from Guthaaranguda (Shark Bay) with qualifications and extensive experience in Aboriginal mental health, alcohol and other drugs (AOD), and youth wellbeing, Ky is passionate about delivering culturally secure programs that uplift and empower mob.

Ky's professional journey has taken him from frontline roles supporting young Aboriginal clients at Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in WA, to strategic program development at the WA Mental Health Commission's Strong Spirit Strong Mind Aboriginal Programs. In his previous role as Senior Project Officer, Ky led and co-developed culturally secure public education campaigns such as "Stronger You, Stronger Mob" and "Stay Strong Look After You and Your Mob", which promote social and emotional wellbeing and AOD harm reduction among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. Ky has also developed and delivered cultural awareness training for AOD and mental health professionals, coordinated community grants, and consulted extensively with internal and external stakeholders to ensure culturally safe and effective service delivery.

Ky is deeply committed to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and is excited as we are at WHOS about the opportunity to contribute his skills and cultural knowledge to WHOS Lilyfield services.

WHOS cultural program has continued to build over the years thanks to this position, with a structured program for both First Nations and non-Indigenous clients. With the aim of cultural inclusivity, weekly yarning circles and reconciliation groups some around our fire pit of an evening, focus on cultural learnings for all clients.

A new "Songlines" cultural care plan has been introduced with input from our First Nations clients and WHOS Innovate Reconciliation Plan current from 2024 to 2026 will commence review with our RAP working group for the next plan due in 2026. With between 25% to 30% of clients annually being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, WHOS is committed to embedding culture within the organisation and all services.

You can also find the WHOS stand at the yearly Yabun Festival so stop by and meet with the team!



5. The Salvation Army

Author: Claire Clifton, The Salvation Army
Withdrawal Management Support in Central Sydney

It's been two months since we moved into our temporary home at 5-19 Mary Street, Surry Hills. We will be in our new home for up to two years, while William Booth House on Albion Street is refurbished. On Mary Street we are collocated with The Salvation Army's Inner City Homelessness Services and a brand new AOD Day Program, Foundations Central.

What do we provide to our community

William Booth House operates a 10-bed withdrawal unit for people over the age of 18 seeking support for mild-to-moderate substance withdrawal in a 24-hour supported residential setting. Participants generally stay for five to seven days.

The Withdrawal Unit is supported by South-Eastern Sydney Local Health District who provide a medical clinic onsite two days per week and put together a treatment plan for every client who enters the unit. Support through the withdrawal episode is provided by a nursing team and AOD support workers.

We would love to support other local AOD services

We know access to timely withdrawal management support can be challenging, which is where we want to help! While we can't support everyone, especially those with a history of complex withdrawal, William Booth House is an excellent option for people who may not have a supportive home environment or stable accommodation to do an ambulatory withdrawal, but don't need the level of care that is offered within a hospital environment.

We offer seamless transition for people through their withdrawal and into residential rehabilitation services across the Central and Eastern Sydney region and beyond.

Contact us

Email: wbhwithdrawalunit@salvationarmy.org.au
Phone: 02 8644 0201

6. Hello Sunday Morning

Author: Kate Whitney, Philanthropy and Partnerships Manager
Hello Sunday Morning: Changing the world's relationship with alcohol

Drink Less. Do More: Supporting Mental Health by Changing the Role of Alcohol

Alcohol and mental health are deeply connected. Research shows that around 30% of people living with depression experience alcohol-related problems, and alcohol is implicated in over a quarter of

suicides in Australia. These statistics highlight a critical truth: when we address alcohol use, we also open the door to better mental health outcomes.

Hello Sunday Morning, is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to helping people change their relationship with alcohol without shame, stigma, or judgment. Our digital health services are free, evidence-based, and available 24/7, offering people practical tools and support wherever they are in their journey. By empowering people to drink less, we enable them to do more: more for their health, their families, their communities, and their futures.

Free & Confidential Tools for Behaviour Change

- **Daybreak:** A 24/7 anonymous peer support community where more than 5,000 people each month share their experiences, encouragement, and strategies for reducing or quitting alcohol.
- **Care Navigator:** One-on-one guidance from a qualified professional who helps individuals set goals, explore options, and connect with the right services for their needs.
- **Drink Tracker:** A digital tool that allows people to monitor their alcohol use, set goals, and receive personalised feedback to stay on track.
- **My Drink Check:** A quick self-assessment that helps people better understand their drinking patterns, mental health, and readiness for change.
- **Hello Change:** A structured, self-directed program based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), offering six evidence-based sessions to support meaningful and lasting behaviour change.

Why Refer Clients to Hello Sunday Morning?

- **Free, Confidential Support:** Our services are anonymous and accessible at any time, reducing barriers to help-seeking.
- **Tailored Guidance:** From self-assessment to one-on-one navigation, individuals receive support that matches their stage of readiness.
- **Proven Impact:** Grounded in clinical expertise and supported by research, our tools are designed to deliver long-term improvements in health and wellbeing.

At Hello Sunday Morning, we believe change is possible for everyone. By combining science, technology, and community, we create safe spaces where people can reflect, connect, and act. Together, we can help more Australians drink less and do more.

For more information, visit Hello Sunday Morning's [website](#).



7. Family Drug Support

Author: Lucinda Slevin (Acting NSW/ACT State Manager) Family Drug Support
Supporting Someone with Substance Use Issues

Someone you care about is drinking or using drugs, they are your partner, child, sibling or friend and it pains you to watch the struggle. Fear, guilt, sadness, grief and anger all appear at different times or all at once.

You may have left them, kicked him/her out (or considered it) begged, pleaded, bargained, been tough, been soft. You are still here because you love this person, fear for them, feel sorry for them or all of the above. But you feel defeated and weak. You experience profound helplessness, frustration, anger and fear. Today's optimism induced by a new promise of never again is replaced by tomorrow's disappointment when promises are broken. You end up with questions about loyalty, love, support and limits.

How much help is too much? How do I best support them? How do I cope? What if they never stop? Should you give up hope of them changing, preferring family peace to fighting for change through chaos? You may have been told that you need to stop enabling, to start practising tough love. It's an overwhelming and exhausting position to be in, supporting someone with substance use issues. Family Drug Support is an organisation that supports those who are caring for someone with substance use issues, below are the services we offer with no or minimal cost:

- 24/7 Telephone Support Line - Confidential, non-judgemental support for families affected by alcohol and drug use.
- Support Groups - Therapeutic led support groups that offer shared experiences and emotional support both online and face-to-face.
- Therapeutic and psychoeducational group work called Stepping Stones - a structured, interactive and experiential course that brings people with similar challenges together
- Psychoeducational and interactive session such as Stepping Forward which helps families develop practical coping strategies, understanding the stages of change for their person and themselves, how to communicate, setting boundaries and managing conflicts.
- 1-on-1 Support Sessions - Personalised support via phone or video with trained staff.
- Bereavement Support For families who have lost a loved one due to substance use.
- Online Resources & Information Access to articles, videos, and tools to better understand substance use and family dynamics.

Further information can be found on the [website](#) or contact the 24/7 support line: [1300 368 186](tel:1300368186).

8. SESLHD Drug & Alcohol Services

Author: Dr Sandra Sunjic, Manager Community Projects and Partnerships, Drug & Alcohol Service, SESLHD

Building Connections – South Eastern Sydney Local Health District and Non-Government Organisations

On 30th September 2025, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) Drug & Alcohol Service (D&A) hosted an event at The Langton Centre, Surry Hills, for Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) who provide services to people with alcohol and other drug (AoD) conditions. An overview was provided of the different D&A treatment services provided by the Local Health District (LHD), both in the hospital setting and in the community. Some of the guests had never been to SESLHD D&A, and were not aware of all the treatment options available, and the services provided at the different locations within the LHD. It also allowed staff from the NGOs and SESLHD Drug and Alcohol, to meet and interact over afternoon tea.

Thirty-two staff from eight NGOs attended the event. This included; organisations that provide residential programs, counselling, case management, homelessness services, services specifically for women and children, and for young people with alcohol and other drug problems.

At the conclusion of the presentations a tour was conducted of The Langton Centre, which is the oldest Drug & Alcohol Treatment Centre in Australia, e.g. the opioid treatment program, ambulatory care, consumer coffee morning space, etc.

Positive feedback was received, and the event provided an opportunity to develop stronger connections. Similar events will be held annually, to continue the close working relationship between the services, and to also identify opportunities for further collaboration.

From the beginning of 2025, staff from NGOs have also been invited to attend Drug & Alcohol education workshops held several times per year in different locations across the LHD. These workshops are attended by SESLHD staff from hospital and community settings across the district, including; mental health, emergency departments, general hospital wards etc. The workshops include presentations on withdrawal management, blood-borne virus screening, opioid treatment, smoking/vaping, trauma informed care etc. To date there have been more than 50 NGO staff attend these workshops.

The current arrangements to be inclusive of NGO staff in training and education provided by SESLHD D&A Service, and the clinical and operational support provided by the LHD to NGOs during challenges times, has resulted in strong relationships being developed. SESLHD D&A Service has also developed a better understanding the critical services provided by the NGOs to our client population, and the challenges they face.

All of these experiences provide a baseline for further collaboration in providing care to people with alcohol and other drugs conditions, and to continue to achieve positive outcomes.

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

- **NSW Government delivers response to the 2024 Drug Summit Report**
The NSW Government has formally responded to the 2024 Drug Summit recommendations.
[Read more](#)
- **NADA's verdict on NSW Government response to the NSW Drug Summit Report**
The Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies (NADA) has given its verdict on the NSW Government response to the NSW Drug Summit Report.
[Read more](#)
- **NSW Health Safety Notice:** Multiple high dose MDMA (ecstasy) tablets circulating in NSW
[Read the full notice.](#)
- **FASD-Informed Practice for the Australian Alcohol and Other Drug Workforce**
This online training was developed by CanFASD alongside the guide "Moving Towards FASD-Informed Care In Substance Use Treatment". Both serve to outline current practices that can support individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) who are in treatment for substance use.
[Sign up for the course.](#)
- **Australian NSP Survey 30 year National Data Report 1995-2024**
[Read the full report](#)
- **Have your say - New model for responding to mental health emergencies in the community**
Your insights, and suggestions are important in shaping an effective, safe and inclusive emergency response for all people in the community.
[Complete survey here](#)

If you would like CESP HN 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

For more information about our programs visit

www.cesphn.org.au/allied-health/help-my-patients-with/drug-and-alcohol-support