

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and region.

We recognise and continue to learn from the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector.







# Positive experiences despite barriers to accessing services— results from an alcohol and other drug service users survey in the ACT

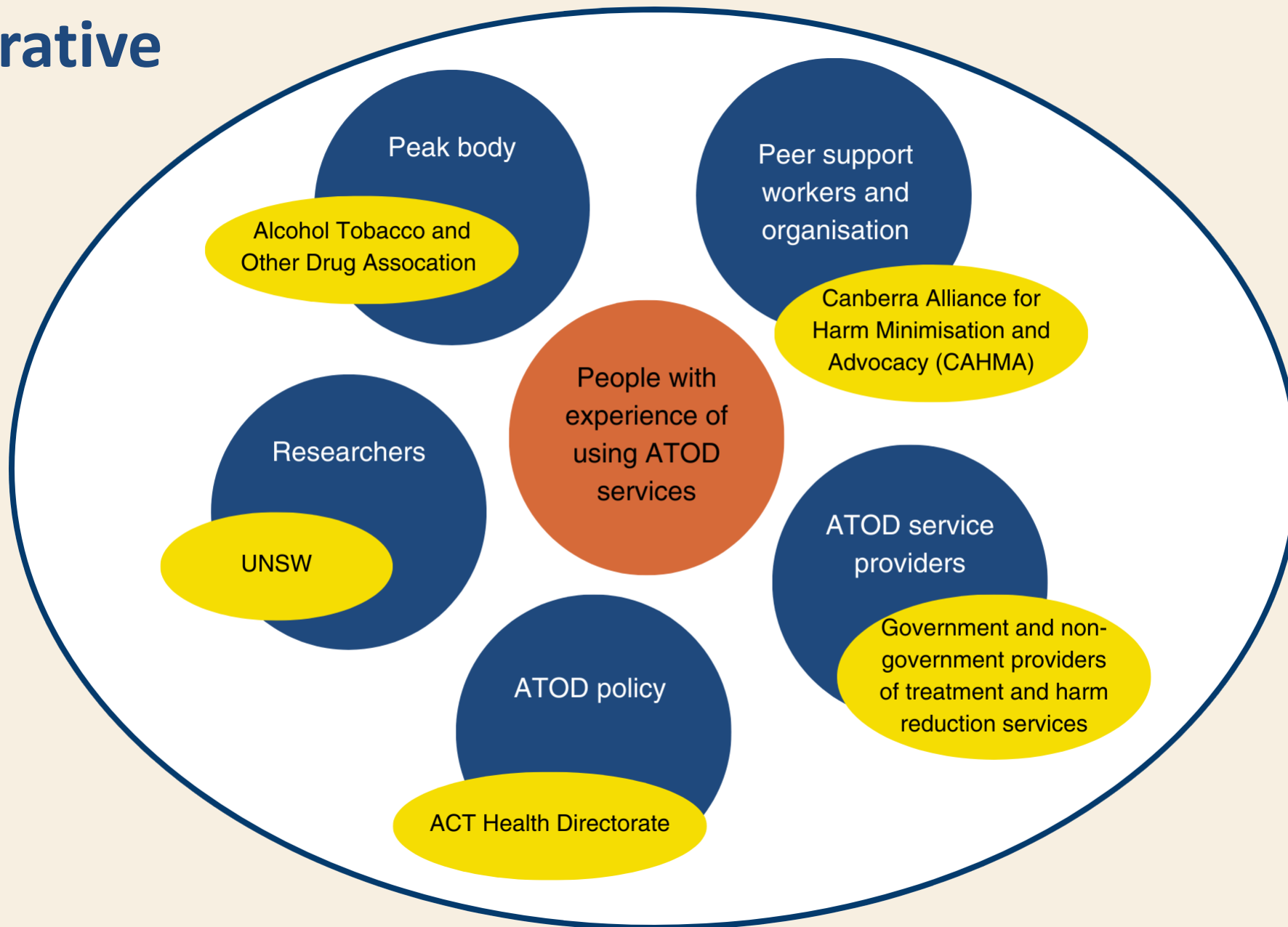
Anke van der Sterren, Elisabeth Yar, Chris Gough, Natasha Nikolic,  
Dean Wang, Karen Gorst, Taylor Munday, Amanda Bell, Elzbieta Kuc,  
James Poole, Jordan D'Silva, Nathan Guymer, Simone Politch,  
Ella Dilkes-Frayne, Sarah Robinson, Anita Mills, Patrick Rawstorne, Sally Nathan

APSAD Conference Canberra, Friday 1 November 2024



# Conflicts of interest

# Collaborative process







**Demographics**

## **Service Users Survey of Outcomes Satisfaction and Experience (SUSOSE)**



**Service access**



**Outcomes**

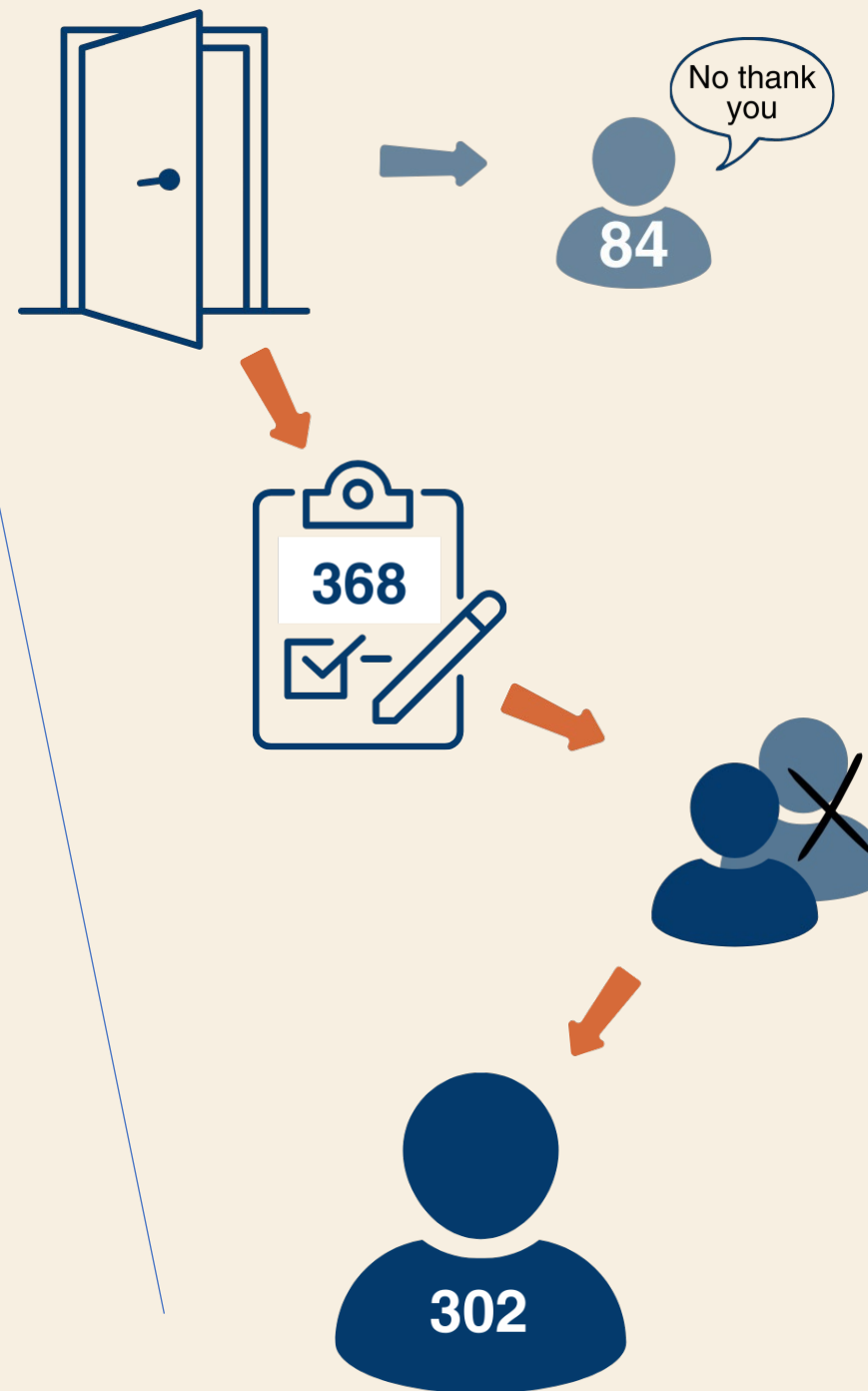
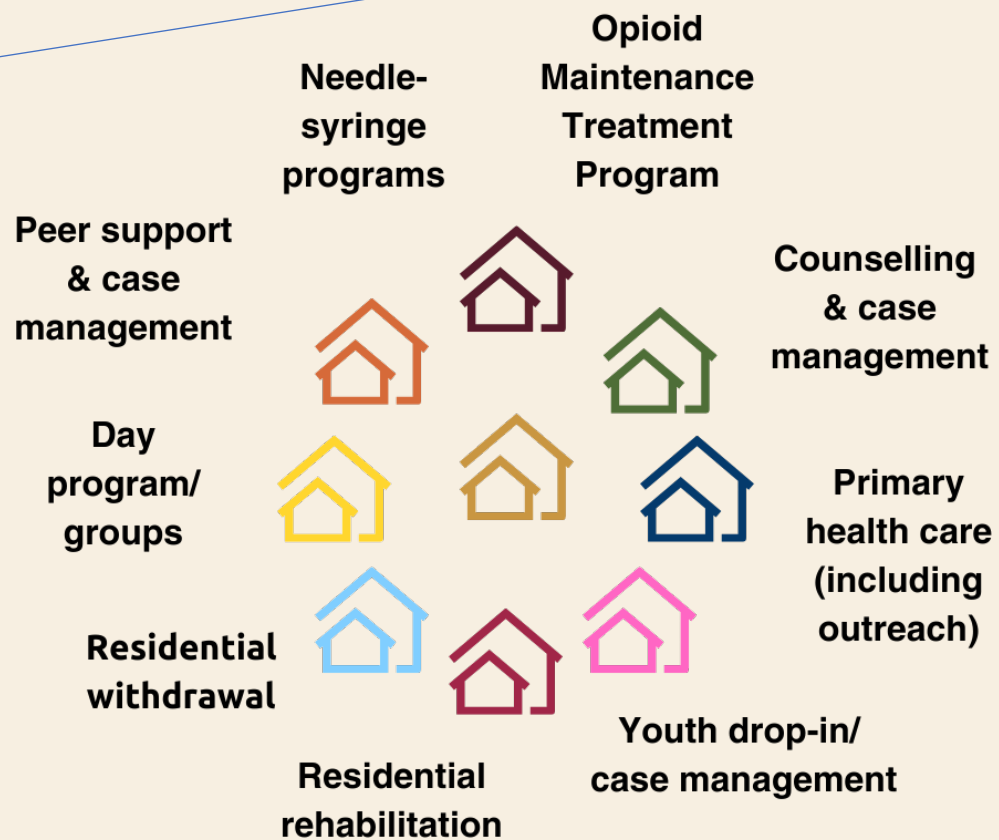
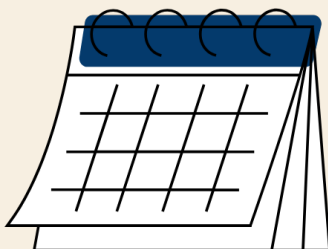


**Satisfaction**



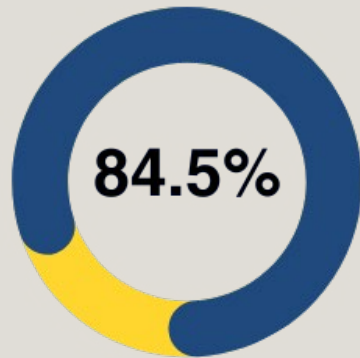
**Experience measure**

**End May to  
Mid-August 2023**





## Service access



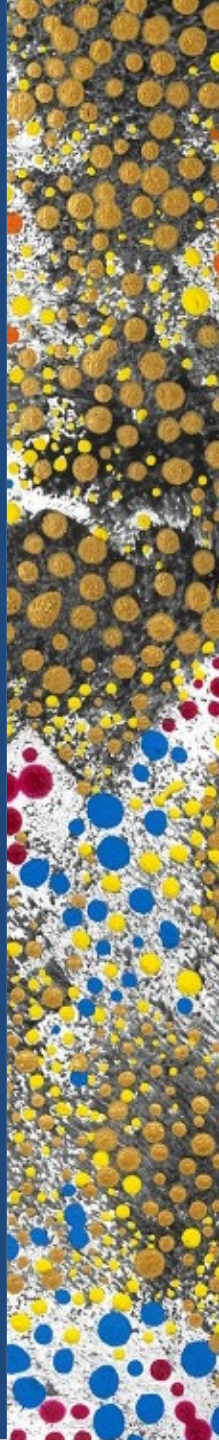
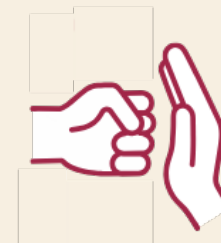
of service users were using non-residential services



**55.8%** had been coming to the service for more than 1 year

**48.7%** were coming to the service weekly or more often

## Ancillary health and social supports







## Service access

50.0%

Financial situation



21.4%

Caring or other responsibilities



34.9%



Fear of being stigmatised or judged

Lack of support from family or friends

Someone I know might find out

26.4%



Couldn't smoke at the service



Couldn't get to the service

### What makes it hard to access ATOD services



The service or other people told me the waiting list was too long

32.0%

30.4%

31.2%

27.0%

24.6%

23.9%





## Service access

### Waiting times

#### Residential ATOD services

**79.5%** had to wait



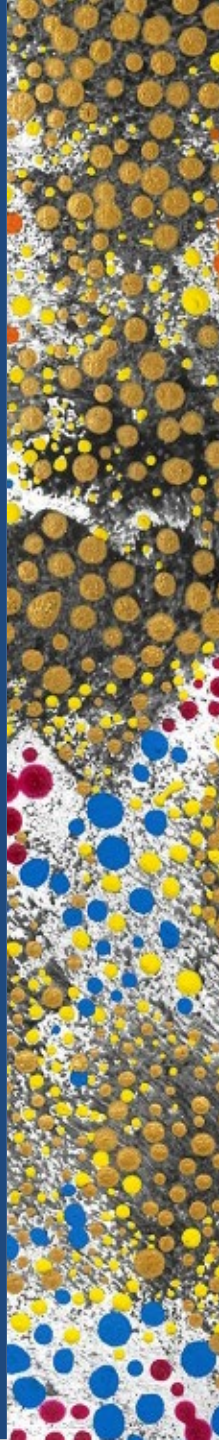
56 days  
average  
waiting time

#### Non-residential ATOD services

**19.2%** had to wait



26 days  
average  
waiting time



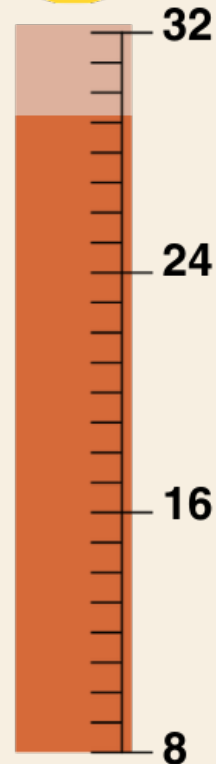


# Satisfaction

Service users  
average  
satisfaction score  
(CSQ-8)

28

(out of 32)







# Experience measure

We asked service users how much they agreed with 50 statements about their experiences of using ATOD services in the ACT



We asked service users about their experiences with services, including:

- I feel physically safe at this service
- I feel emotionally safe at this service
- Services support me to reach my wellbeing goals
- At this service I'm treated like a person, not like 'a problem'
- My family/ significant others can be involved in my care and support if I want
- At this service I can say 'no' to any care or support that I don't want
- Services meet my mental health needs
- At this service my feedback is acted on
- This service is well run



We asked service users about their experiences with workers, including:

- The workers are caring and supportive
- The workers understand what it's like to be a person who uses alcohol or other drugs
- Workers follow through with what they say they'll do
- I can access a worker with lived experience of alcohol and other drugs, if I want
- The workers tell me what's going on before things change in my treatment or support



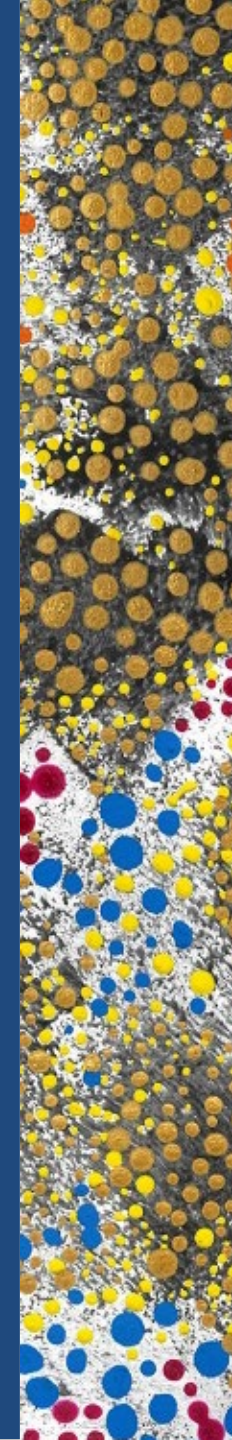
## Experience measure



**Most service users said they had positive experiences**



**For all but three statements,  
between **70.7%** and **95.8%** of service users said that  
they ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with the statements**





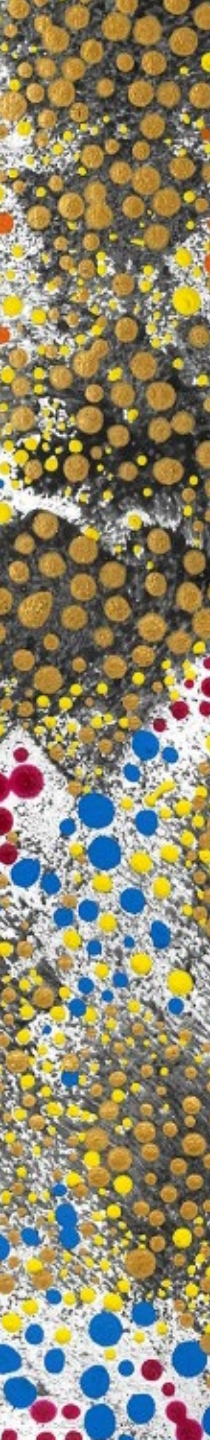


## Outcomes



# Conclusion

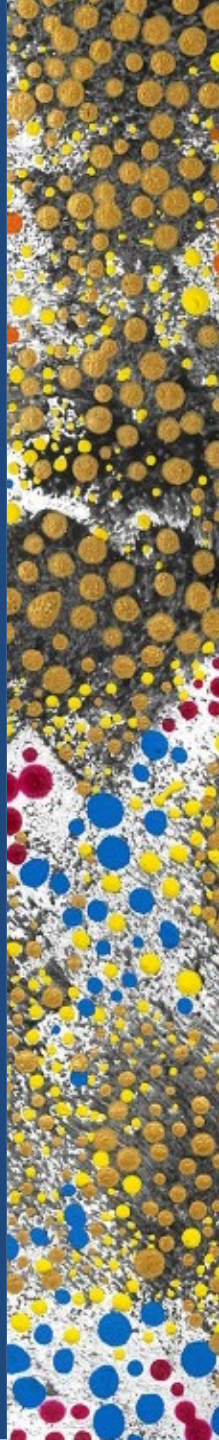
- Service users of ACT ATOD services report barriers to accessing services and long waiting times
- Despite this, once they're in services they report high satisfaction, positive experiences, and positive self-reported outcomes
- The challenge is how to respond to demand, to facilitate and support access to services, and to provide adequate resourcing to ensure that everyone who wants to access ATOD services can do so





# Acknowledgements

- 302 service users of ACT AOD treatment and support services who completed the survey and 63 service users who participated in the FGDs
- Project Advisory Group:
  - Amanda Bell, Devin Bowles (to March 2023), Ella Dilkes-Frayne, Jordan D'Silva, Amy Faden (to November 2023), Karen Gorst, Chris Gough, Nathan Guymer, Elzbieta Kuc, Anita Mills, Taylor Munday, Natasha Nikolic, Simone Politch, James Poole, Sarah Robinson, Dean Wang, Anke van der Sterren, Elisabeth Yar
- ACT ATOD services (Contact people who facilitated survey implementation)
- ACT Specialist ATOD services Executive Directors
- ACT ATOD Workers' Group
- School of Population Health, UNSW Sydney: Sally Nathan, Patrick Rawstorne
- Funding from the ACT Health Directorate; support from an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship





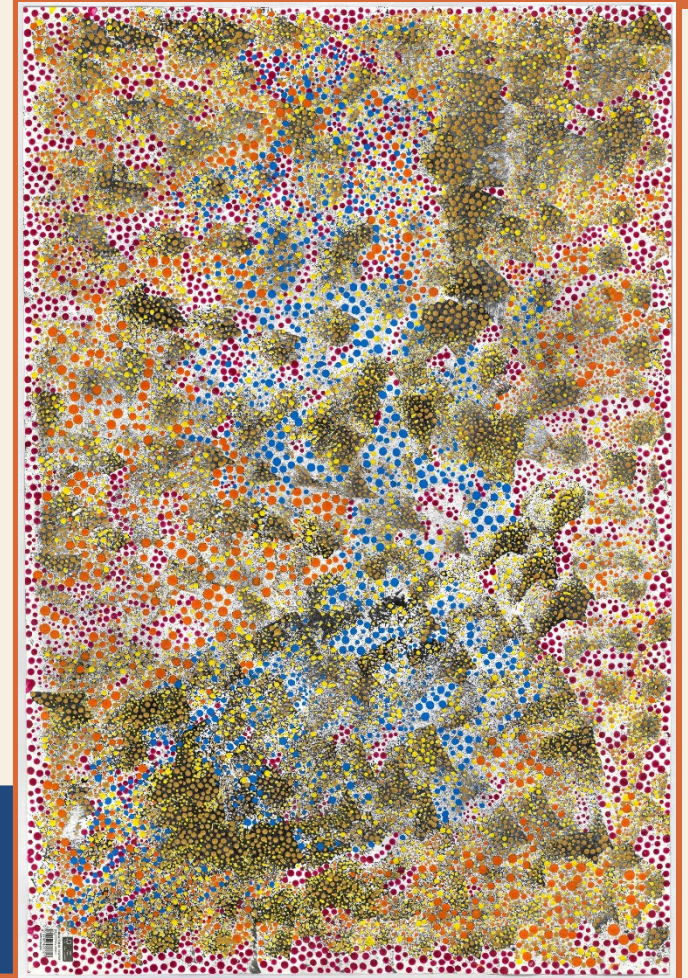
Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug  
Association ACT

**Title:** Unspoken  
History, Map of Pain

**Artist:** Sharon

**Date:** 2020

To learn more, scan  
the QR code or click  
[here](#).



For more information about the SUSOSE:

[anke@atoda.org.au](mailto:anke@atoda.org.au)