

The NSW Centre for AOD Consumer Reference Committee turns 5: building consumer engagement in NSW



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Acknowledgement of Country, and recognition of community

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners of this land we are on today.

We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and connections to land, water and community.

We pay respect to the Elders of the Ngunnawal Nation past, present and emerging.

We'd also like to recognise people with lived and living experience of AOD use, the important role they play in shaping policy, education, services, and their improvement.

We acknowledge that through their expertise, diverse experience, and peer support, lives are saved, and health outcomes are realised.

We would like to recognise those peers who came before us, loved ones we have lost and the impact this can have on family, friends, and kin.

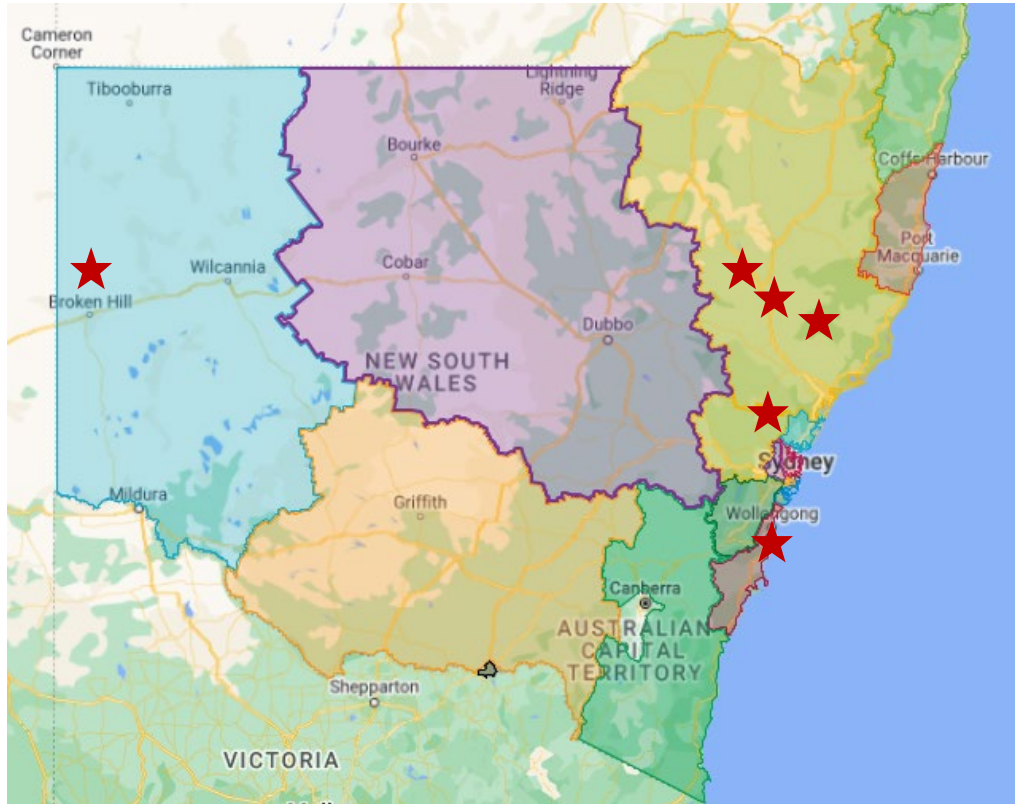
This participation takes courage, gives voice to, and helps to reduce stigma and discrimination.

We respect and value their generous contributions and acknowledge that, without them, our work would be poorer

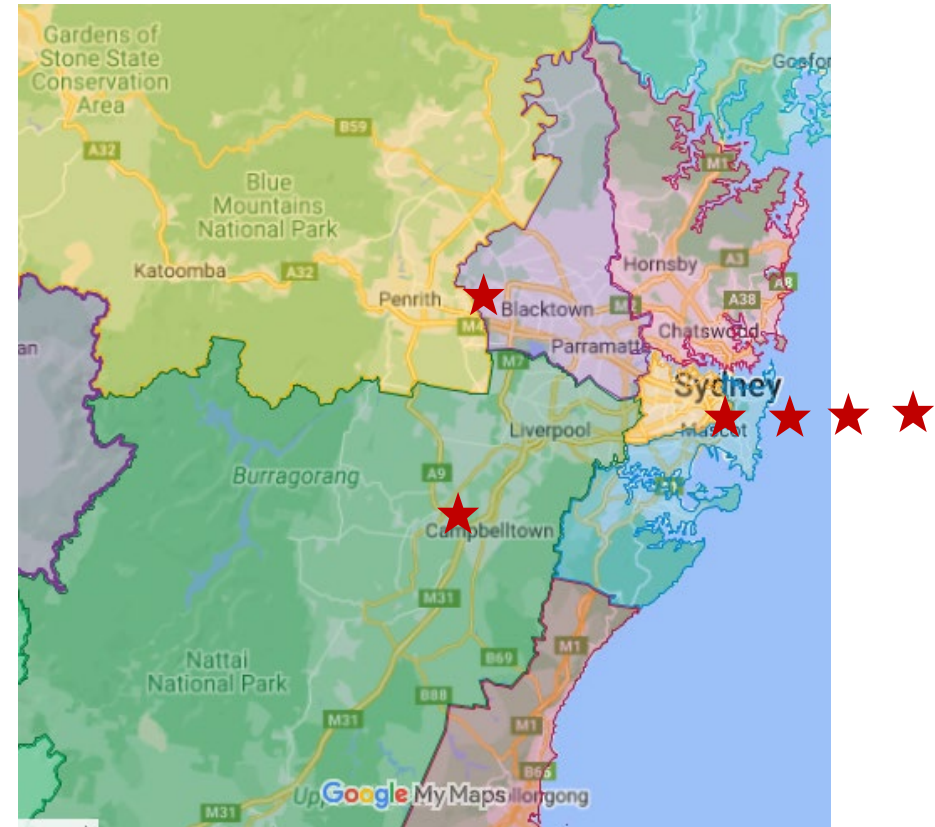
Who are we?

12 members of our Consumer Reference Committee (CRC) from different parts of Sydney & NSW

6 bimonthly online meetings of **4** hours, plus **2** full day face to face meetings / year

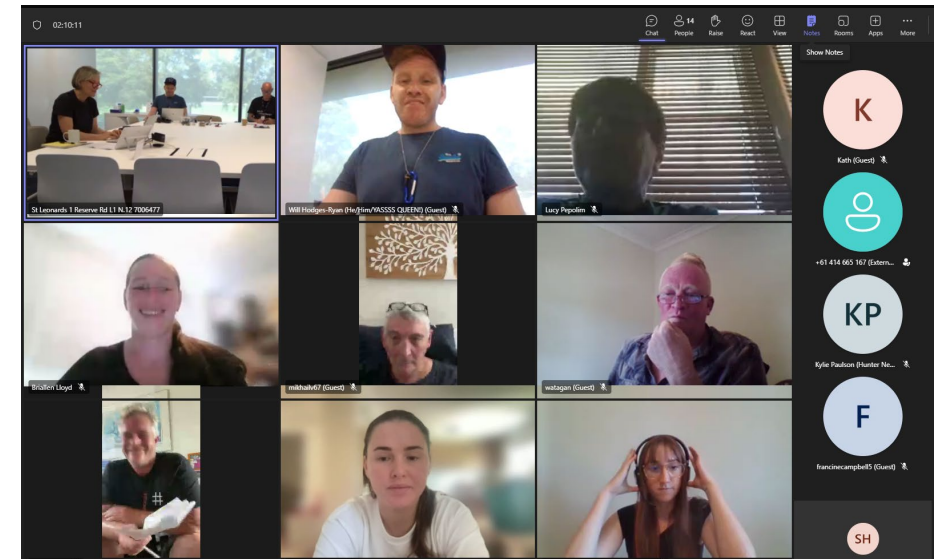


AND



The aim of our presentation?

- to show how establishing our Consumer Reference Committee has increased consumer engagement in NSW,
- to highlight the role of collaboration with NUAA in this work, and
- to share learnings.



So, how did we increase consumer engagement in NSW?



**From the
1990s**

NUAA and Centre for AOD have a long-standing partnership.

2019

Centre for AOD starts Consumer Reference Committee and a Consumer Liaison Officer role established.

2022

Centre for CAOD starts regular internal forum to promote consumer engagement.

2023

NSW Health launches 2 important policies 1)“All of Us – a guide to CE for all NSW Health”, 2) consumer, carer and community member remuneration

2024

Centre for AOD appoints its first Consumer Engagement Officer (identified consumer role)



CRC Collaboration & achievement



1102

Downloads of RACGP podcast on AOD stigma & discrimination (from June 2023 - 25 Oct 2024)

8

Consumers participate in videos for NSW AOD Clinical Care Standards

5

Occasions CRC co-chairs have been members of Centre for AOD interview panels

6

CRC members + 4 consumers + 5 clinicians co design AOD Care Charter i.e. stigma and discrimination

4 &

growing

Opportunities to present at conferences, symposiums and NSW Parliament House

2

CRC members on “Hubs” tender evaluation panels who assessed 47 applications. Total funding of **\$34M** over 4 years from NSW “Ice” response.



CRC Collaboration & achievement with other agencies: a small foot inside a big door.

“The MERIT
program made the
difference. I was
finally able to quit.”

— Michael
MERIT program participant

Want to get help for alcohol or other drug use?

MERIT is a voluntary program that can help you to decrease your alcohol or other drug use and improve your health and wellbeing.

If you are accepted into the program your court matters will be put on hold while you receive 12 weeks of drug treatment.

Completing the program may lead to a better sentencing result.

To find out more contact your local MERIT team, call the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) on 1800 250 015 or visit merit.justice.nsw.gov.au

Local contact details:



NSW Department of
Communities and Justice (DCJ)
requested feedback on the
MERIT local court posters

- 6 CRC members provided feedback
- QR code would be good
- Focus more on harm reduction rather than abstinence

“MERIT was a safe
place to challenge
my views on
substance use.”

— MERIT program participant

MERIT is a voluntary program that can help you reduce your alcohol or other drug use and improve your health and wellbeing.

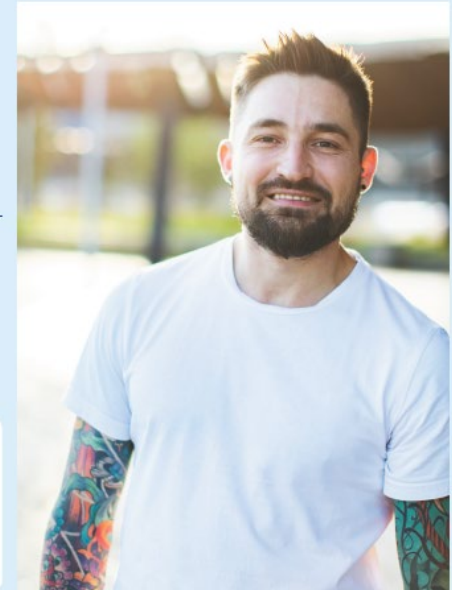
If accepted into the program your court matters will be put on hold while you receive 12 weeks of treatment in the community.

Completing the program may lead to a better sentencing result.

To find out more contact your local MERIT team, call the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) on 1800 250 015 or visit merit.justice.nsw.gov.au



Local contact details:



Before

After

Collaboration & achievement: NSW User and AIDS Association and Centre for AOD



- * NUAA was a member of the CRC from the start!

- * NUAA provided safe and purposeful story telling training for all CRC members

- * A contract across many areas of service
e.g. harm reduction: Needle and Syringe Program, Dancewize NSW, Drug Alerts.

- * Continued partnership in growing the lived and living experience workforce in NSW
(QR code for Connect ED at bottom. E.g. Build and Share)



Want more info?



What have we learnt?



Partnership with NUAA, NADA and other organisations means that more consumers have an opportunity to participate. Our net is wider.



It takes time to build trust & understanding



Don't let fear hold you back e.g., fear of sharing an opinion, fear of not getting it right.

Are you interested in setting up a consumer committee?



We plan to hold 2 x 1-hour webinars



Possible topics include: selection processes and setting up a committee, what's worked well and not so well, what's a typical meeting like?



Webinars planned for early 2025.

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Thank you

For more information, please contact us, Lucy Pepolim and Brie Lloyd, via Sue Hailstone - Centre for AOD Consumer Liaison Officer. 0491 212 560. MOH-AODCRC@health.nsw.gov.au