

By the Sector, for the Sector: Developing an Employee Value Proposition for the NSW Alcohol and Other Drugs Workforce

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Background: *Workforce shortages are a critical constraint on the delivery of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) services in Australia. In New South Wales (NSW), the AOD workforce spans public, non-government, and community-controlled sectors, with longstanding challenges in attraction, retention, and visibility of career pathways. This project aimed to address these challenges through a coordinated, sector-wide approach.*

Description of Model of Care/Intervention: *This project developed the first sector-wide Employer Value Proposition (EVP) for the NSW AOD workforce, co-designed across government and non-government stakeholders. The EVP established a shared narrative about the value, impact, and diversity of AOD careers, intentionally moving beyond organisation-specific recruitment approaches. It was operationalised through a coordinated recruitment campaign, including video storytelling featuring lived and professional experience, social media promotion, and shared resources to support local recruitment. The model emphasised collective ownership and consistency across a fragmented service system.*

Effectiveness/Acceptability/Implementation: *Early implementation indicates strong sector uptake, with services across NSW adopting the EVP and campaign assets to support recruitment. The campaign was awarded Bronze for Best Employer category at the Australia and New Zealand Transform Awards. Two recruitment campaigns have been conducted. Qualitative data will be presented on the evaluation (currently underway). Early results demonstrate feasibility and acceptability of a shared, cross-sector recruitment model in a complex service environment.*

Conclusion and Next Steps: *A sector-wide EVP represents a novel, scalable approach to workforce attraction in AOD. Future evaluation will assess impacts on applications, recruitment outcomes, and retention, and inform refinement of the model.*

Implications on communities, practice, policy and/or First Nations

communities: *Strengthening the AOD workforce supports improved access to care and continuity of services. The model highlights the policy value of coordinated, stigma-reducing workforce strategies and the importance of partnering with community-controlled organisations to support culturally appropriate workforce development.*

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *None to declare.*