

South Australian Initiative to Facilitate COVID-19 Isolation Requirements in Homeless, COVID-positive Aboriginal people with Substance Dependence, including a Managed Alcohol Program

Authors: VICTORIA COCK¹, KATHERINE SENIOR¹, BRONWYN GORDON¹, THELMA MUCHENJE¹

¹*Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia (DASSA), Adelaide, Australia*

Presenter's email: katherine.senior@sa.gov.au

Background: From November 2021, South Australia experienced a rise in COVID-19 cases. COVID-positive individuals were required to isolate for 10 days. On 1 January 2022, DASSA was asked to provide a quarantine facility for homeless, COVID-positive, Aboriginal people with substance dependence.

Description of Model of Care/Intervention: In consultation with Aboriginal groups, the DASSA Inpatient Unit was converted into a culturally-appropriate quarantine facility, including a fire pit; culturally-appropriate catering; recognition of the importance of community by facilitating movement within the unit; and offering a choice of substance withdrawal management or a managed alcohol program (MAP).

Effectiveness/Acceptability/Implementation: 70 clients were admitted over 10 weeks. 60 successfully completed their isolation in the unit. No clients absconded from the facility. 65 identified as alcohol dependent. 53 clients were successfully managed utilizing the MAP.

Conclusion and Next Steps: This model of care illustrates the value of culturally safe environments and managed alcohol programs to facilitate successful COVID-isolation in substance-dependent Indigenous people.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *no conflicts of interest identified. No funding was received for this research.*