

Working with Asylum Seeker Clients to Overcome Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Disorders: Clinical Experience

David Kelly¹ and Nirekha De Silva²

Emails– David.kelly@odysseyhouse.com.au; Nirekha.desilva@odysseyhouse.com.au

Background: This conference abstract presents a clinical experience of working with asylum seeker clients who have Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) disorders. Asylum seekers are individuals who have fled their home countries due to persecution, violence, or human rights violations, seeking protection and asylum in another country. The combination of traumatic experiences, uncertainty, and displacement can contribute to the development or aggravation of AOD disorders among this vulnerable population.

Description of the Intervention: The presentation will share insights gained from providing therapeutic interventions to asylum seeker clients with AOD disorders and highlight effective strategies for supporting their recovery. The experience is based on a community based AOD support services provided by Odyssey Multicultural Programme, that specializes in providing culturally sensitive care to diverse populations, including asylum seekers.

Effectiveness: Effectiveness of intervention will be presented based on following themes:

1. Understanding the unique challenges faced by asylum seeker clients with AOD disorders.
2. Cultural considerations in assessment and treatment
3. Trauma-informed care and its application
4. Collaborative and integrated care models
5. Strength-based and resilience-focused interventions

Conclusions: This presentation aims to provide attendees with practical insights and lessons learned from the clinical experience of working with asylum seeker clients with AOD disorders. By sharing effective strategies and best practices, this session intends to contribute to the advancement of culturally sensitive and trauma-informed care for asylum seekers experiencing AOD disorders.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: The Odyssey Multicultural Programme is implemented with funding support from NSW Health.

¹ Executive Director (Programs), Odyssey House NSW, Sydney, Australia

² Research Officer, Odyssey Multicultural Programme, Odyssey House NSW, Sydney, Australia