

## **Enhancing alcohol and other drug responsiveness in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health and Healing Organisations: Barriers and Solutions**

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**Background:** WANADA and the Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA) have collaborated to enhance alcohol and other drug (AOD) responsiveness and establish a foundation for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health and Healing Organisations (ACCHOs) to become certified against the Alcohol and Other Drug and Human Services Standard (AOD Standard). Provision of AOD treatment is identified as a core service in the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations Core Services and Outcomes Framework [1]. Despite this, few WA ACCHOs have been funded to provide AOD treatment or support.

**Description of Model of Care/Intervention:** Through collaboration and reciprocal learning, nine very-remote, remote and metropolitan WA ACCHOs have participated in a two-year project to develop their AOD responsiveness within their existing service models and practices and aligned to their community needs. The culturally informed and industry specific AOD Standard was used as the evidence-informed framework, with a systems focus applied to workforce development [2] to develop tailored, service driven and sustainable AOD response plans.

**Effectiveness/Acceptability/Implementation:** Services have increased their AOD awareness, have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to enhanced AOD responsiveness, and have also indicated system governance improvements and increased mindfulness in demonstrating cultural security in practice through the application of the AOD Standard.

**Conclusion and Next Steps:** Enhancing access to AOD support, through a network of established and aligned services such as ACCHOs, will contribute toward an overall improvement in health and wellbeing for Aboriginal people, whilst easing pressure on an overextended AOD specialist service system.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** Multifaceted. This shift in primary health service provision to include AOD responsiveness requires support through the development and change process, and a commitment from Government to sustainable service delivery funding. A supported systems approach to enhance the primary health workforce's AOD knowledge and responsiveness skills, is essential and should be embedded and maintained in primary health curriculum.

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### **Reference List**

[1] NACCHO. Core Services and Outcomes Framework: The Model of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Comprehensive Primary Health Care. National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Canberra, ACT: June 2021

[2] Roche, A., & Pidd, K. (2010). *Alcohol and other drugs workforce development issues and imperatives: setting the scene*. Adelaide: National Centre for Education and Training on Addition (NCETA), Flinders University.

*Within Western Australia, and in the context of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, the term Aboriginal is used on advice to WANADA by Elders and Community Leaders across WA, recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander may be appropriate in the national context and Indigenous may be appropriate in the international context. There is no disrespect intended.*