

## **A novel service delivering addiction medicine treatments to people in Melbourne's CBD experiencing homelessness**

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**Background:** In May 2020 after the initial covid wave in Australia, accommodation in CBD hotels was made available to the homeless population of Melbourne to reduce their risk of being exposed to the virus. Due to the high rate of substance use disorders in this population<sup>1</sup>, an AOD outreach team was rapidly constituted by the RMH's Addiction Medicine & Hospital in the Home services. After the dissolution of that programme, a conversation began with Cohealth's Central City homeless outreach team about how the experience during lockdown could be used to inform the delivery of addiction medicine services to Melbourne's homeless population.

**Description of Model of Care/Intervention:** An Addiction Medicine Registrar from RMH who is also a specialist GP is seconded to Cohealth's Central City homeless outreach team for 2.5 days per week. Access is via a member of the outreach team or directly with the doctor who accompanies the outreach team when available. We also have a dedicated phone line that clients of the service can call any time during business hours to discuss treatment and a mobile clinic with which we hope to target sites where we know homeless people congregate. A pharmacy in the CBD has been identified for medication supply. The initial focus is on offering long-acting injectable buprenorphine to those interested in addressing their opioid use and identifying and treating hepatitis C.

**Effectiveness/Acceptability/Implementation:** We are hoping to begin treating our first patient in the next week or so and will present effectiveness/acceptability/implementation data at APSAD 2022.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:** TBC – apologies this info was not recorded before NC went overseas on holiday and is uncontactable. Returning in 1 week and can proceed then.

### **References:**

1. Fazel S, Khosla V, Doll H, Geddes J (2008) The Prevalence of Mental Disorders among the Homeless in Western Countries: Systematic Review and Meta-Regression Analysis. PLOS Medicine 5(12): e225.