

## Practice based/ Service Delivery Abstract Template

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**Insert Title here: Delivering inclusive and affirming services for people who practice chemsex**

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**Background:** Evidence documents a prevalent practice of the sexualised use of crystal methamphetamine and gamma-hydroxybutyrate (chemsex) among sexuality and gender diverse communities. Chemsex may be associated with harms to physical, mental, and psychosocial health. Researchers have advocated for tailored chemsex interventions that encompass harm reduction, are peer-led and interdisciplinary, however there is limited guidance to inform the application of these principles. In response, ACON has delivered and researched a multifaceted model of care for people engaged in chemsex.

**Description of Model of Care:** ACON has delivered a dedicated Substance Support Counselling service for GBMSM practicing chemsex for over 12 years. This service has historically demonstrated efficacy against outcomes relating to crystal methamphetamine dependence and psychosocial wellbeing. ACON has also recently commenced the delivery of a peer-led chemsex service, encompassing one-on-one peer support and a group program. Each of these services address harm reduction, chemsex management, sexual health, sexual wellbeing, community connection, psychoeducation and service navigation.

**Implementation:** ACON's chemsex services have been evaluated via qualitative interviews with clients, peer-workers and counsellors to explore ACON's service acceptability, feasibility and appropriateness. Findings underscore the acceptability and appropriateness of specialist chemsex services, affirm the importance that services prioritise harm reduction, incorporate lived experience and offer care that traverses domains of drug use, sexual health, sexual wellbeing and mental health.

**Conclusion and Next Steps:** ACON's experience spanning counselling services, peer-led interventions and chemsex research affirms recommendations that those who practice chemsex require interdisciplinary support that incorporates harm reduction and lived experience. Given the prevalence of chemsex among sexuality and gender diverse communities, there is an imperative to build the capacity of service providers to deliver culturally aware and affirming chemsex care. ACON is well placed to deliver chemsex capacity building programs for the AOD sector.

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