Partners in language: Working collectively to address stigma

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Background:

The Alcohol Tobacco and other Drugs Council (ATDC) has developed an Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Communications Charter to address stigma. The purpose of this Charter is to promote ethical, respectful and responsible communication that reduces stigma, minimises harm and ultimately encourages people to seek help if they want it.

Description of Model of Care/Intervention:

The Charter drives change in the wider community through the promotion of shared non-stigmatising language to be used by organisations such as media outlets when reporting as well as other government and non government organisations and individuals who communicate/publish AOD subject matter.

Description of Model of Care/Intervention:
The Charter was developed through active involvement from representatives from government, media champions and community managed AOD organisations. The ADF, MindFrame and Common Cause provided expertise to craft the document. Lived Experience Advocates were also active partners in the project, contributing their thoughts and willing to be the faces on the Charter itself.

The Charter acts as a plain-English agreement and sets out the core principles regarding communication of AOD subject matter. The Charter invites organisations and individuals to become signatories and commit to upholding the principles. It is also accompanied by an Image Guidelines document that provides examples of preferred images that media outlets can use. This is the first agreement of its kind in Australia.

Conclusion and Next Steps:
This presentation discusses the content, the development and implementation processes, concluding with an example of how the Charter was used and what the outcome was.

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