

First Nations led research to understand treatment access and outcomes for First Nations people in the NSW NGO sector

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Introduction: Almost one in four people accessing non-government (NGO) and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHO), alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment services in NSW recorded in NADAbase (a data collection system) were First Nations people. This study will use this routinely collected data for research and service improvement to advance access and outcomes for First Nations peoples.

Approach: NADA has established a First Nations Research and Data Reference Group. The group is made up of 14 members representing the diversity of Aboriginal communities, professional and lived experience, specialist NGO and ACCHO AOD services and data, evaluation and research. The group will guide the analyses, interpretation and reporting on First Nations peoples' data that are collected through NADAbase to explore the access and outcomes for First Nations peoples accessing alcohol and other drugs treatment services. This will be guided by a First Nations data sovereignty statement.

Key Findings: NADA's First Nations Research and Data Reference Group and the research is in its initial phase. Preliminary results show that First Nations people accessing NGO/ACCHO AOD services in NSW are more likely to be from a regional area, unemployed, referred from the criminal justice system, nominate methamphetamine as their primary drug of concern, and not complete treatment.

Discussions and Conclusions: Preliminary results provide early insights into the data within NADAbase. The First Nations data sovereignty statement, developed by the Reference Group, as well as consultation with First Nations workers and ACCHO treatment providers will guide the research questions, interpretation, and how the results are disseminated to improve outcomes for First Nations people.

Implications for Practice or Policy: Research completed by NADA, led by the First Nations Research and Data Reference Group, will provide a greater opportunity for understanding and learning from First Nations AOD workers and ACCHO treatment providers. The research will support service improvement to advance access and outcomes for First Nations peoples.

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