



MEDIA RELEASE

Welcome funding boost for alcohol and other drug services in Health Budget

The Health Budget announcement of “\$68.3 million for better drug and alcohol prevention and treatment” provides a reprieve for many organisations providing vital services to individuals, families and communities impacted by alcohol and other drugs (AOD) across Australia.

“For the first time in years there’s light at the end of the tunnel that isn’t a train coming for Australia’s AOD sector in the wake of tonight’s Federal Budget,” said Melanie Walker, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (AADC).

In particular, the Government will provide \$33.6 million over two years from 2023–24 to improve health outcomes through extending existing AOD programs in the community. This funding includes:

- \$17.3 million over two years from 2023–24 for the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services Maintenance program, which provides financial support to the social and community services sector
- \$5.9 million in 2023–24 for the Alcohol and Drug Foundation to run the Good Sports program, which offers free support to community sports clubs to develop policies relating to AOD use and mental health
- \$3.5 million over two years from 2023–24 to The Glen for Women, which provides culturally appropriate AOD treatment services to First Nations women
- \$3.1 million over two years from 2023–24 to Hello Sunday Morning for its Daybreak program, which provides free online and mobile app services to support Australians experiencing problematic use of alcohol to reduce their intake and related harms
- \$2.7 million over two years from 2023–24 for the Path2Help program, which provides a national online directory linking people to locally available support and information services
- \$1.1 million over two years from 2023–24 for the SMART Recovery Australia program online platform, which provides free access to addiction support programs.

“The Government is also extending a range of other programs, including those providing screening and counselling, and funding essential diagnostic services for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). In addition, the more than 50,000 Australians who need treatment for opioid dependency will have funded support to access the treatment they need from their local pharmacy at a cost they can afford, through a \$377.3 million investment over 4 years in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Opioid Dependence Treatment program,” said Ms Walker.

AADC is also anticipating that the AOD sector will receive a share of [an extra \\$4 billion reportedly allocated in the Budget](#) to help pay the wages bill for government and community organisations providing critical services to vulnerable groups. The measure - which will enable indexation to be applied to Commonwealth contracts with service providers - comes on top of an initial \$560 million provided in last October’s Budget over four years to address cost pressures for community sector organisations arising from both wage pressures and higher inflation.

“The AOD sector has been underfunded for many years and this has been exacerbated by the lack of consistent indexation on Commonwealth contracts with AOD services for the better part of a decade. We are hopeful that the commitments in the 2023-24 Budget indicate this Government’s willingness to invest sustainably in a brighter future for people who use drugs, their families and communities moving forward,” said Ms Walker.

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