

AOD Consumer Organisation Using a Seamless Transition Model

By John Ross

John's Story

“It’s your road and yours alone, others may walk it with you but no one can walk it for you.” Rumi

My names John, today I’m going to introduce an idea that I came up with about consumer led seamless transition recovery model of practice for the alcohol and drug sector.

The idea is very simple and it works in a circular fashion, enabling people to seamlessly transition backwards and forwards as they need

Johns Story

“When patterns are broken; new worlds emerge”

Tuli Kupferberg

In the past I struggled with Heroin addiction, I tried to get help in Tasmania through 2 GP's to get onto Methadone which I was denied, then the Detox Centre in New Town denied me because they thought my risk of relapse was too high. So I went to the emergency department because I was withdrawing, the hospital referred me to a private centre which had a waiting list and I couldn't afford to pay for.

Johns Story

This left me without support or access to any service and going Cold Turkey; it also led me to take matters into my own hands and seek heroin from interstate which I had been doing for a while. I was caught by the police and charged for importing and at this stage I felt no other option than to brave withdrawal alone, because I knew I had to change my life whether I could get support or not.

Johns Story

After Detox alone, my GP suggested Reiki Tummo and Meditation for Heart; which was synchronistic of my past actions of going to the Padmalight shop to find a book about Open Heart Meditation and I had started using the meditation during my detox. So I joined with the Lotus Centre and began classes for Open Heart Meditation and Reiki Tummo. Through my connections at the Lotus Centre I was referred by Klaus Baur to Advocacy Tasmania's Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Consumer Engagement Program.

Johns Story

Advocacy Tasmania's Consumer Engagement Program supports consumers to build the skills they need in order to participate in meaningful consumer engagement through out the Tasmanian AOD sector. They run a Consumer Reference Group which meets once a month to discuss consumer experiences with AOD services and inform the promotion and practice of the program itself. The program has supported me to develop my ideas around how to use seamless transition as a recovery model.

Johns Story

During our group sessions I listened to the other members talk about the experience of what consumers want and need from services and how this is not always currently met. This reminded me of a business model called the seamless transition, I could see how combined with a consumer organisation and peer workers this model could easily be transferred into the AOD sector to be used for consumer led recovery.

Johns Story

“Hope for the best and work towards it, versus expecting the worst and doing nothing.” Unknown

So I took the idea to the Consumer Group where we had consistently talked about the need for a consumer organisation and peer workers in the AOD sector. We considered what we would want a consumer organisation to look like and what would be the position description of the peer worker and then we worked on how to incorporate the consumer led seamless transition model, I will present a short version of this model to you all today

Seamless Transition

The seamless transition means for a consumer to shift with no awkward transitions or barriers for example:

- **Attraction** – The service, story or issue gets your attention through broad promotion and advertising throughout the community or if you are already using the service, a program or option gets your attention through internal promotion
- **Relation/Acknowledgment** – You compare your own life, issue or story to the stimulus, you identify a need or a desire to use the service options that you have seen advertised

Seamless Transition

- **Research** – You would do some personal research into the services you are interested in, you may talk to other consumers or community members or look on the internet
- **Effective Reach** – You will make contact with Peers, a service, a reference group or an expert group to gain information and develop an opinion, attitude, identify options or develop a plan

Seamless Transition

- **High Involvement Decision/Action** – You take action after considerable research, after gaining meaningful input and having developed an informed opinion of what you want; you can make an informed and detailed plan
- **Selective Perception** – Start to see the consequences of your decision and the affect it has in your life, as well as the expanding opportunities your decisions and action has created and the skills of reflection, awareness and self-empowerment become more prominent in your life. You start again at the beginning of the cycle for your next goal

AOD Consumer Organisation

“Any addiction is bad, whether narcotic, alcohol, morphine or idealism.” Carl Jung

- The consumer organisation would be developed and run for and by consumers/peer workers, it would be a central service in the sector that connects all consumers with all services via what we decided would be peer liaisons.
- The organisation would also offer a 9-5 drop in and call up centre where consumers can access support, referral, advocacy, information, education, peer support, hygiene/health and time out services

AOD Consumer Organisation

- The organisation would also be responsible for consumer engagement programs and capacity building in consumers and for family members of consumers
- in order to begin the seamless transition it would be essential for the organisation to actively engage with and promote itself to the broader community
- And importantly AOD and other community services would need to agree to work with the organisation as a gateway for working with consumers and a process would have to be designed around making this work

AOD Consumer Organisation

“Seamless Transition can change the way we live our lives as consumers of AOD services, the sector just needs to be open to change.” John Ross

It sounds like a huge change to the way services currently work and while we appreciate that medical interventions are highly important, we believe that in order to offer meaningful support, the sector needs to offer treatment and services that address the issues of the whole person; accessible from one central service.

By using the principles of consumer engagement I believe we can make this change.

AOD Consumer Organisation

Thank you for listening today, if you would like to know more about the plans we have developed and the ideas behind them, please register for our AOD Consumer Engagement Forum in either :

- Hobart on the 15th of June @ <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/alcohol-and-other-drug-consumer-engagement-forum-tickets-24612355217>
- or Devonport on the 8th of June @
- <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/alcohol-and-other-drug-consumer-engagement-forum-tickets-24613432439>

