

## Regional ATDC Member Meetings – July 2016 Summary of Outcomes

### July Meetings

In July, the ATDC convened a series of three Regional Member Meetings (RAMMs) in three regions across Tasmania. Debra Rabe (Interim Chief Executive Officer) chaired the meeting that were held on:

- Monday 18 July at Youth, Family and Community Connections Junction Hub in Devonport
- Tuesday 19 July at Anglicare in Launceston
- Wednesday 20 July at the Salvation Army Bridge Centre in New Town.

In addition to the CEO, other ATDC staff attended, these included: Jackie Hallam (Policy and Research Officer), Madelyn Derrick (Facilitating Collaboration in Local Neighbourhoods Project Officer), Erin Nunn (Sector Capacity Building Project Officer) and Carolyn Docking (Communications Officer – Hobart only). In addition to ATDC staff, Stuart Smith, ATDC Board President, also attended all three meetings.

### Sector representation

Member Organisations represented at RAMMs		
Devonport (total number of attendees = 11, includes 4 ATDC staff)	Launceston (15)	Hobart (11)
Youth Family and Community Connections (3 people)	Red Cross	QUIT/Cancer Council Tasmania
Alcohol and Drug Service (2)	Advocacy Tasmania	Colony 47
Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation	Drug Education Network (2)	Salvation Army (2)
Rural, Alive and Well	Launceston City Mission (2)	Drug Education Network
Anglicare	Alcohol and Drug Service	Tasmania Prison Service
Advocacy Tasmania	Salvation Army (2)	
	Missiondale	
	Anglicare	

The meetings provided a great opportunity to recap on activities that have occurred since the last series of meetings held in late 2014 and enabled participants to consider the year ahead for the ATOD sector.

Discussion was wide ranging and covered matters that had arisen from previous meetings, such as:

- ATDC constitutional changes
- ATDC staff and projects
- Local and regional issues

## ATDC Constitutional changes

Stuart Smith presented the draft constitution document to participants at each meeting. Stuart flagged the key points to participants, these included:

- The transition from the ATDC Board consisting entirely of sector representatives towards a Board that consists partly of sector representatives and also skills based positions.
- The current Board consists of 10 position, this is reduced to seven in the draft constitution
- Page Seager had prepared the draft document.

Stuart asked the participants to read the document and/or take it back to their organisation and give it to the people in their organisation that would be voting at the ATDC's Annual General Meeting, scheduled for October. Stuart asked that any feedback be provided to him in the interim.

## ATDC team

Due to recent changes in staffing at the ATDC, participants were able to meet staff and hear about the roles and projects currently occurring at the ATDC. These included:

- Jackie Hallam (Policy and Research Officer) – Jackie listed the various functions associated with the Policy and Research role, these included: policy development, evaluation, outcomes, data, policy submissions. Jackie informed members that she is available to help members access reports/evidence/data/policy/frameworks around AOD material. Jackie also listed the following submissions that the ATDC has prepared since the last RAMMs meeting (and noted that these documents are found on the ATDC website) these included:

- ATDC Submission to the *Proposed Liquor Licensing Regulations 2016 – Consultation paper*
- ATDC Submission to *A Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan*
- ATDC Submission to the *Inquiry into Palliative Care*
- ATDC Submission Response to the *Mid-Point review of the National Tobacco Strategy*

Jackie also noted the media article in The Mercury, 'Greens proposal for festival pill testing' which the ATDC contributed to.

- Madelyn Derrick – Madelyn introduced herself and the project – Facilitating Collaboration in Local Neighbourhoods. A key driver of the project was that Neighbourhood Houses were struggling to respond to AOD presentations. Madelyn outlined two aspects of moving the project forward and sought feedback on these program components, these included:
  - 1) Be the Change – eight session program, run in the Neighbourhood houses, for family/friends of people with AOD issues, run by AOD workers. This will be evaluated in the pilot stage to be run in the three Tasmanian regions (north-west, north and south) starting in late August and finishing in December
  - 2) Website/app – a web designer has been approached as a first step in the process. This work involved the production of a website and app that will provide assessment, brief intervention and then referral options to local AOD service providers. Supporting this will be a reference group of sector representatives. AOD staff will have the opportunity to be a part of this group and help lead the project.

- Erin Nunn – Erin introduced herself and her background as a Community Pharmacist and gave a brief description of her project area – Sector Capacity Building Project. Erin sought input for two areas:
  - Overdose Awareness Day event, scheduled for August 31. Erin discussed the idea of overdose response training provided by the Pennington Institute. It was discussed that this event would occur in Hobart on August 31 but may also be brought up north or north west. At the time of writing, training parameters were still being formulated.
  - Professional development/training ideas- Erin asked meeting participants about ideas for training events in the next year.
  - Ideas included: Motivational Interviewing, stigma and discrimination, interaction between prescription medications and street drugs, complex PTSD, anger management
  - Other idea raised was to broaden the invitation to include mental health workers for the topic of complex PTSD
- Debra informed the meeting participants that the ATDC had appointed a new Workforce Development Officer, James Johnstone, who is starting with the ATDC on August 1. Further, that the Workforce Development Survey would be sent out to AOD workers soon (expected around September 2016). Jackie asked participants to reflect on the AOD workforce and if there were any issues they thought should be addressed in the survey. Those issues are noted under local/regional issues section below.
- Debra also informed participants that the ATDC is about to launch a new version of its website and that there is a new feature – a job portal- where members can list sector vacancies. This will be announced and promoted in eNews.

## Local and regional issues

### *Staff recruitment*

A participant from the north-west meetings noted the difficulty of attracting people in remote areas for part time jobs, and provided the example of a 1-2 day job in Smithton. Applicants tended to be under qualified.

Further, an ongoing structural issue is the identification of sources of new workers for the sector. 'Where is our workforce coming from?' was a question raised by meeting participants.

### *Qualifications*

There was discussion around the availability and degree of appropriateness of alcohol and other drug qualifications. It was suggested that a role for the ATDC may be in providing leadership and direction around AOD qualifications and that a range of options was needed as TAFE was not always suitable nor accessible. It was suggested that the ATDC website could include a list of qualifications, including distance options.

### *Generalist versus specialist AOD workers*

One participant noted that there had been a move toward generalist health/welfare workers undertaking AOD work. The participant was concerned about the depth of AOD knowledge that upskilling generalist workers would result in, and also expressed concern about the provision of 'in house' AOD training.



Alcohol, Tobacco and other  
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#### *Concern about AOD funding*

There was a discussion about a perception of risk that AOD funding may be subsumed under mental health services and hospitals. A key role for the ATDC as a peak body is to remind and advocate for the work that member community service organisations perform. Services such as early intervention, prevention and health promotion as well as treatment are being done well by CSOs. It was noted that evaluation and measuring outcomes is a critical part of supporting the case for CSOs.

#### *Access to withdrawal services on north and north-west*

Access to specialist medical services such as detoxification units was raised as an ongoing issue. ATDC CEO is on the North West Review Committee, and it was noted that this issue is on the agenda. There was discussion that there may be access to flexible funds for travel costs for clients to access such services in Hobart.