

Regional Area ATDC Member Meetings – March 2020

Summary of Outcomes

In March, the ATDC convened a series of three Regional Area Member Meetings (RAMMs) in three regions across Tasmania.

- 10 March – Hobart ATDC Boardroom, 9.15 – 11.15 am
- 10 March – Launceston Anglicare Boardroom, 2.30 – 4.30 pm
- 11 March – Devonport Anglicare Boardroom, 10.00 – 12.00 pm

ATDC staff in attendance: Alison Lai (CEO). Jackie Hallam (Policy Manager and 2IC and Tracey Wright, Consumer Organisation Project Officer, were both present at the Hobart session).

Sector Representation

The following 11 member organisations were represented across the three meetings, with 28 individuals attending across all meetings.

Member Organisations Represented at RAMMs		
Hobart (10 attendees)	Launceston (10 attendees)	Devonport (8 attendees)
Alcohol and Drug Service (2)	Alcohol and Drug Service (2)	Alcohol and Drug Service (2)
Anglicare Tasmania (1)	Anglicare Tasmania (1)	Anglicare Tasmania (3)
Cancer Council (1)	Launceston City Mission (3)	Launceston City Mission (1)
Advocacy Tasmania (1)	Salvation Army (2)	Advocacy Tasmania (1)
Tasmanian Prison Service (2)	TasCAHRD (1)	YFCC (1)
Drug Education Network (1)	Drug Education Network (1)	
TasCOSS (1)		
Mental Health Families and Friends (1)		

The meetings once again provided a great opportunity to recap on the activities that have occurred since the last series of meetings held in December 2019 and enabled participants to gain a deeper understanding of the developments that are occurring across the AOD sector in Tasmania.

At this RAMMs we welcomed Tracey Wing, ATDC Project Officer for the Consumer Organisation Development Project. Tracey joined the Hobart session to provide an overview of her work to-date on the consumer organisation project, and to seek feedback from participants on a draft consumer engagement organisational audit tool. Due to the low numbers in the north and north-west, ATDC CEO Alison Lai facilitated this discussion at these sessions.

The agenda for all meetings was as follows:

- Welcome and introductions
- Special guest speaker – Tracey Wing
- ATDC CEO Update
- Key updates and information collaboration

Consumer Engagement Organisational Audit Tool – Tracey Wing (facilitated by ATDC CEO, Alison Lai at the Launceston and Devonport sessions).

Tracey introduced the draft audit tool, highlighting that:

- It is the first draft and designed to be a self-audit tool for organisations
- It is hoped that it will add to current consumer engagement practices and move the Tasmanian ATOD sector forward towards meaningful consumer engagement
- It is being designed with the view that it will cater to the diversity of consumer engagement activities in the sector
- Utilises two scales (level of consumer engagement and degrees of participation)
- Noted that there is a lot of good-will towards consumer engagement but there were varied ideas on what constitutes meaningful engagement.

A copy of the draft audit tool was provided to RAMMs participants, and feedback was varied including:

- The tool would provide a good process to undertake a gap analysis and would be welcomed (ADS, Anglicare & TasCOSS).
- It would be applicable for resource development (DEN).
- Queries with respect to training for consumer representatives (ADS and MHFF), and Tracey provided an update on the leadership training scheduled for May (now postponed to September due to Coronavirus precautions).
- The degree of participation scale (from 'inform' to 'empower') was welcomed. TasCOSS noted that using this as a signpost helped make the process feel achievable and not abrasive.

- The Tasmanian Prison Service welcomed it, noting that the intent of the process was challenging in the prison system (noting that there is a consumer reference group operating inside the prison).
- Missiondale noted that they work to an empowerment model, which is part of their treatment approach.
- YFCC indicated that they couldn't tick just one box. With lots of different service areas operating at different levels, they couldn't clearly 'pick' one answer to reflect all the programs.
- Wondered how the tool would work given the parameters of the programs they're delivering and what is reasonable within the treatment perspective and needing to be mindful of the clinical requirements of treatment that have limited flexibility.
- An agreement that consumer engagement is 'very fluid' and how can the audit tool reflect this.
- Serenity House and Anglicare Tasmania (north-west) provided examples of where they have active consumer engagement (e.g. house rules at Serenity and the Participant Advisory Council at Anglicare Tasmania where current and past participants have the opportunity to connect directly with Chris Jones).
- Would be interested in an 'audit' of all AOD organisations in Tasmania to see what's happening across the sector. They believe there are examples of consumer engagement occurring.

ATDC Update – Alison Lai, CEO

Alison thanked all the members present for attending their relevant regional meetings. Alison's update also included:

- CEO Communique for Oct- Dec 2019 was handed out to all attendees.
- Strong encouragement for everyone to consider who (or what program) they could nominate for the ATOD Awards. Nomination forms were provided.
- Highlighted that the AOD Reform Agenda is pending release (perhaps after Easter). The ATDC remains hopeful that there will be some new funding announced when it is released.
- Tasmanian Drug Strategy (TDS) noted as in development with the ATDC representing the Tasmanian community sector on the TDS Advisory Group. Due for completion at the end of 2020.
- Confirmed that the 'cranes' will be returning for International Overdose Awareness Day. More time will be provided for the community to contribute folded cranes.
- Pill testing is likely to come back into the media, with the Tasmanian Government expected to provide a response to the Australian National University evaluation report.
- Noted that the ATDC is in the process of finalising a Decriminalisation Position Paper. Additionally, in response to a question in relation to cannabis legalisation (Drug Education Network had attended the Cannabis Conundrum information session). Alison confirmed her professional view that cannabis legislation in Australia was indeed a very strong possibility.

- Confirmed, in response to a question regarding the Primary Prevention, Early Intervention that the 'Everybody's Business' was out-of-date. The ATDC had raised this with both the ADF and DEN with respect to the need.

Key Updates and Important Collaboration

Advocacy Tasmania:

- AOD clients are currently a priority for Advocacy Tasmania with the hope of expanding its scope in this space.
- Noted that housing is a presenting issue for their AOD clients.
- Advocacy Tasmania is getting out and about in the South, visiting IPWU every fortnight and they have started fortnightly visits to the Bridge.
- They are also active in the north and north-west.
- Clarification was provided that they wouldn't be able to provide advocacy for child-protection issues or matters relating to the education system. However, they could assist someone who is on pharmacotherapy and has been turned away, or turned away from a GP.
- They are also able to assist individuals who want to make a submission to the Royal Commission.

Alcohol and Drug Service (South, North and North-West)

- Staffing continues to be an ongoing challenge with understaffing impacting nursing and medical staff. This is an issue across the island.
- Having difficulty recruiting additional medicine specialists so the strategy is to recruit and train up individuals.
- Pharmacotherapy staff also continues to be a challenge.
- Highlighted that they now have a MINT trainer in-house (Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers), which is an international qualification.
- Spoke to the challenge of the pharmacotherapy program in the Tasmanian Prison Service being capped at 26, with complaints about the lack of accessibility.

Anglicare Tasmania

- Noted increased referrals from ADS in the south as a preliminary step before IPWU. By conducting assessments and providing recommendations with respect to their readiness for detox it is taking the load off the ADS.
- Mark Mason is now the regional manager in the South, and Jodie Stokes is the manager in the north / north-west. Ben McGregor is the new Senior Practice Advisor.
- In the north-west spoke about their Hepatitis Education Program, which will run until the end of June. It is a program that is being expanded from the south into the north and north-west. Focuses among

many things on healthy living, reducing Hepatitis C, community and GP education and they can provide clinical and non-clinical presentations.

Cancer Council Tasmania

- 559 Lives Project to be launched, which will offer people free nicotine replacement therapy for three months, alongside behavioural counselling. Among the target groups there will be low SES, pregnant women, ATSI, young people and people with mental health concerns. The Quitline are working with different partnership organisations, and AOD treatment providers can arrange to become a partner to be able to be part of the program.

Drug Education Network:

- Provided an outline of their AOD peer workforce project:
 - o After three years the intention is to have 36 peers in the Tasmanian AOD workforce.
 - o DEN to also provide a package of resources for those organisations that want to take on a peer worker.
 - o Working with the Self Help Addiction Resource Centre (Victoria) to deliver 'organisational readiness' training for the partnership AOD organisations.
 - o Maria Duggan is the contact person for this project.
 - o Maria also distributed new Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder postcard resources that can also be provided in PDF and as posters.
 - o Also discussed their resources focused on cannabis consumption during pregnancy 'be alcohol free this pregnancy'.
- In the north they are involved with the upcoming cattle/dairy conference

Mental Health Friends and Families

- Noted mental health reforms currently underway and increased demand for carer representatives for interview panels.

Launceston City Mission

- Missiondale:
 - o Have bed availability
 - o Introduced to Laura who coordinates the youth program and is now based at Missiondale
- Serenity House:
 - o Still looking for the site for the new facility on the north-west
 - o Will explore how the new site can be smoke-free, and provided positive feedback on the 'No Butt's training, and free NRT they've been able to offer



TasCAHRD

- Have been busy participating in a number of community events including Women living with HIV, delivering their Bloodwise training, and their TasPeople program.

TasCOSS

- Shared information on HeLLOTas, noting they have a new project officer working on a community of practice and working with GP's to ensure that messages are being understood by clients.

Tasmanian Prison Service

- Confirmed the challenges being experienced by the shutdown of the Apsley Unit but flagged the opportunity for the program to be reviewed.

The Salvation Army:

- Mobile NSP is operating and will be travel to locations including George Town.

YFCC:

- Concerns regarding no formal advice regarding whether the existing National Ice Action Strategy funding will continue.
- There are also concerns regarding the future of the Equal Remuneration funding and how the loss of that funding will impact their services
- Spoke to a recent issue with the Burnie Rotary Club who was funded through the Tasmanian Community Fund to deliver 'Don't Meth with Me' education sessions at four high-schools. The education sessions were very concerning, stigmatising and resulted in one student fainting and a complaint being lodged by the Department of Education to the Rotary Club. The ATDC confirmed that they would be raising this concern with the Tasmanian Community Fund.