



Annual Report 2018-19

No Harm, No Discrimination

atdc
Alcohol, Tobacco and other
Drugs Council Tasmania



From the CEO

When I reflect back on the past 12 months, I believe that the best words to describe the efforts of the ATDC team is 'purposeful' and 'steadfast'.

At all times our goal has been to be change-makers working on issues and projects that deliver impact, while holding steadfast to our unwavering commitment to evidence based policy and practice.

There's no doubt that we are a small organisation with ambitious goals and this annual report provides a summary of the progress against our key priorities and the highlights of what we've delivered.

This includes our advocacy for three-year funding agreements and our contribution to the development of the Tasmanian Government's reform agenda for alcohol and other drug services. It includes our work to progress a consumer representative organisation and the delivery of a diverse range of workforce training events. It's been the 2018 Workforce Survey, our advocacy for a trial of pill testing and our ongoing (some might say unrelenting) efforts to improve data sharing and increased access to government alcohol and other drug data and information.

None of this could have been achieved without the contribution of the ATDC team including Dr Jackie Hallam, Olivia Montgomery, Shanthini Gurung, Tracey Wing and Lena Lashin. I also give thanks to Kate Wright and Nick Merklin who also worked alongside us during this time.

I want to also thank the ATDC Board of Governance for the guidance and advice they continue to provide, and particularly their willingness to stand alongside our team as the organisation steps forward to act on issues that are not always straight-forward or simple.

We enter the next 12 months with an even stronger sense of purpose, which will see us continue our current work and increase our efforts to address issues including stigma and discrimination, naloxone availability and Tasmania's justice response to problematic drug use.

I often refer to the ATDC as a 'boutique peak'. That is, while our sector may be small in numbers, this is one of our key strengths because it means we are uniquely placed to know exactly what we do, and why and to be agile and lead with a shared voice.

It's a very privileged role and one the ATDC does with a great sense of pride and responsibility, and we look forward to continuing our work into the year ahead.



Alison Lai
Chief Executive Officer

From the Chair

This year – under the very capable leadership of our CEO Alison Lai and her team – the Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council has really made an impact in the alcohol, tobacco and other drugs sector.

We've had a new skills-based Board and a new strategic direction, as well as a new sense of determination, commitment and flair! We've been committed to reviewing and evaluating the Board's governance role, in the realisation that our approach needs to enable Ali and her team to try new ways of addressing some of the wicked problems that we engage with in the sector.

During the year we adopted the positioning line **No Harm, No Discrimination** – indicating our commitment to see Tasmania free from harms associated with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, as well as an end to discrimination in regards to people seeking support about their use of substances. **No Harm, No Discrimination** also symbolises our desire to be a contemporary, focused, active and inclusive organisation.

The Board has had a new look and feel this year, with a number of new Board Members. Each one of them – Greg Peterson, Penny Chugg, Penny Egan and Rosie Nash – have brought their expertise and insight to the Board.

Our 'old hand' Board members – Shirleyann Varney and Stephen Brown – have continued to also bring expertise and insight, as well as experience and knowledge about the ATDC Board to our meetings and considerations. My thanks to each one of them for their ongoing commitment and dedication – as well as for the support they have offered to me.

I would also like to take this opportunity to publicly recognise the work of our CEO, Alison Lai. Ali has now been in the role for just over 12 months and has been at the forefront of many of the changes and initiatives we have seen over the last year. With her characteristic thoughtfulness, compassion and determination Ali has provided leadership to the ATDC and the broader ATOD sector. It has not always been smooth sailing, but I've very much appreciated the ways in which Ali and her team have remained focused on the bigger picture and on helping the ATDC to provide leadership and support to the Tasmanian ATOD sector.

Finally, on behalf of the ATDC Board I would like to express a sincere thank you to everyone who has played a part in supporting our work over the past 12 months.



Michael Voumard
Chair

Our Members

We are the peak body representing and supporting community organisations, and the people they assist, to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harm for all Tasmanians.

Our Board

- Michael Voumard – Chairperson
- Stephen Brown – Treasurer
- Penny Chugg – Deputy Chairperson
- Professor Greg Peterson
- Shirleyann Varney
- Dr Rosie Nash
- Penny Egan

Member Organisations

- Alcohol and Drug Foundation
- Advocacy Tasmania
- Alcohol & Drug Services (North & South)
- Anglicare Tasmania
- Australian Red Cross Tasmania
- Bethlehem House Tasmania
- Cancer Council Tasmania
- Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation
- Drug Education Network
- Headspace/Cornerstone Youth Services
- Holyoake Tasmania
- Launceston City Mission (Missiondale)
- Mental Health Families & Friends Tasmania
- Mission Australia
- North West Private Hospital
- Pathways Tasmania
- Relationships Australia Tasmania
- Rural Alive and Well
- South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation
- St Helens Private Hospital
- Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre
- Tasmanian Council on AIDS, Hepatitis & Related Diseases
- Tasmanian Council of Social Service
- Teen Challenge Tasmania
- The Hobart Clinic
- The Link Youth Health Service
- The Salvation Army
- Tasmanian Users Health & Support League
- Wyndarra Centre
- Youth, Family & Community Connections



Our **vision** is a Tasmania **without** alcohol, tobacco or other drug related **harm** or **discrimination**

Our Workforce

Who are the people working with Tasmanians with alcohol, tobacco and other drug problems?

Full results, analysis and recommendations from the 2018 ATDC Workforce Survey can be found at atdc.org.au



Strategic Focus

During the past year the ATDC developed our Strategic Plan and Sector Development Strategy for 2019-2022.

Our work throughout the next three years will focus on:

- being the ATOD sector experts;
- supporting the ATOD sector to be collaborative, inclusive and effective;
- facilitating positive change in community attitudes and policy settings, and;
- setting the standards as a high performing ATOD organisation.

The ATDC is committed to supporting the Tasmanian ATOD sector to be collaborative, inclusive and effective. To achieve this, we will continue investing in the professional and business development of those working in the sector. We will continue to take the lead on responding to key issues, ensuring Tasmanian ATOD community service organisations have a say in matters that impact them. We will also continue to nurture the culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing that is a defining feature of the Tasmanian ATOD sector. At all times our work is underpinned by our unwavering principles of evidence-based policy and practice, harm minimisation, partnerships and consumer participation

Clarity and Consistency

The ATDC has a unique position as Tasmania's independent peak body for the ATOD sector, bringing together a broad range of organisations as a strong collective voice for positive change. 2018-2019 saw us develop position papers on several topics of relevance and importance: **Pill testing, Justice and Health, Tobacco21, and Stigma and Discrimination.**

These resources bring together our extensive member consultation with an analysis of data and research findings to reinforce our advocacy on key issues.

We have already begun to see the benefits of this clear and consistent messaging, encouraging discussions around complex issues such as pill testing and we hope to continue this momentum over the next year.

Sparkling Conversations

We have seen a growing public awareness of many key issues over the past 12 months, including pill testing, waste water monitoring and the impacts of overdose. The ATDC has consistently advocated for these issues in the broader community through building a strong media presence, regular in-depth opinion pieces and establishing our organisation as the ATOD sector experts.

Increased Stability

The ATDC's successful lobbying for all ATOD community sector organisations funded through the Tasmanian Government to receive three year funding agreements was a significant achievement during 2018-19.

The insecurity and uncertainty of short funding agreements is incredibly challenging for community organisations, impacting business continuity, staff retention and organisational viability.

We are pleased to see increased stability through longer funding agreements as a result of our strong advocacy, and will work to ensure this continues in the future.

Challenging Stereotypes

Tackling stigma and discrimination across the community has been front-of-mind throughout the year, with a renewed drive to reduce stigmatising language when talking about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and the people who use them.

Language can appear subtle, however the impact is powerful, and this will be a central part of our ongoing work to reduce stigma and discrimination.



Practitioner Wellbeing

Practitioners are faced with many unique challenges in the ATOD sector. They work with complex presentations and hear personal stories that invariably impact on their own wellbeing. Clinical psychologist Grant Blake from ForensiClinic facilitated one day practical workshops in Hobart and Launceston to arm 69 ATOD staff from around Tasmania with the skills and strategies to identify, monitor and address the challenges with working in our sector.

Participants were particularly satisfied with the quality of training materials and the enthusiasm of the presenter. All training measures showed improvements in all areas of skill and knowledge.



“Thought provoking content and the facilitator had great energy... Best training I've ever been to, enjoyed the level of engagement with peers in the sector”

Fantastic facilitator and practical skills that I can use with clients... Interactive, informative with good specific case examples... everything was of a very high standard

Managing Trauma in Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment

Facilitated by Paula Ross from 360edge, these two one day practice-based workshops were attended by 75 alcohol and other drug sector workers in Hobart and Launceston.

These clinical workshops were specifically developed for AOD professionals to build and strengthen their core clinical skills in managing trauma within alcohol and other drug treatment.



Statewide Cross Sector Bus Tours

The annual ATDC Bus Tours were run in March 2019 in each of the three regions of Tasmania. Workers from the allied health, housing, justice, employment, and disability sectors joined regional tours of local ATOD providers to gain an understanding of programs and services available, referral processes and local emerging issues.

Evaluation showed that all respondents found that the most valuable parts of the tours were the knowledge of what each service did, the ability to see first-hand where they were referring clients, and broadening their networks and referral pathways.



“I loved the opportunity to network with other bus tour participants while learning about a range of services available, and to physically see the locations and meet the staff, all these things will greatly assist me in my role”

Working with Families Masterclass

We know that involving families in AOD treatment significantly improves outcomes. The ATDC engaged 360edge to facilitate two Masterclasses in Hobart and Devonport for 54 staff from across the sector. The sessions were full of demonstrations, clinical discussion and practical skills to enable our workforce to learn new and effective ways of working with families of those in AOD treatment.

Workers reported that the material was clearly presented and their improved knowledge would be able to be used in their workplaces.



“Fantastic Workshop, loved the expertise, knowledge and experience of the presenter, plenty of opportunity for discussions, great interactive sessions”

Bloodwise Training

The ATDC together with member organisation TasCAHRD facilitated three information sessions to 59 ATOD workers state-wide around latest treatments available for blood borne viruses and the stigma and discrimination faced by people who use drugs and/or have a blood borne virus.

“I now have a better understanding of blood borne viruses, better capability to provide a service without judgment, and to be more aware of the potential negative impact from individual bias”

Evaluation showed that all workers found the training relevant to their workplaces.



Policy and Research

ATDC as Sector Experts

We are a member driven peak body that represents a wide variety of organisations and people on the often-controversial subject of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Gaining consensus is not always an easy task to achieve. In all of our work, we need to have a good idea of who we are representing and what their views are.

The ATDC has a variety of ways that members can contribute to our ever-evolving knowledge base of who and what constitutes the Tasmanian ATOD sector. We have the workforce survey, conducted every two years, that provides a profile of our workers and organisations. We also have our regional member meetings and numerous face-to-face meetings that provide a direct connection to members.

This year we developed the idea of an ATDC Advisory Council - a new method of obtaining member views, with the purpose of ensuring that ATDC business is member informed. The Advisory Council has a variety of members from across the sector who bring different perspectives. We look forward to working with the Advisory Council in the year ahead.

We regularly prepare submissions to draft documents and in doing so consult widely. The material from consultations forms the basis of our responses, alongside evidence-based research.

All drafts of submissions are distributed to members for comment and then publicly available at atdc.org.au

Reform Agenda for Alcohol and Drug Services in Tasmania

The ATDC conducted an extensive consultation process, speaking to representatives from 19 member organisations across the state. We asked members to prioritise and provide feedback on the eight reform directions outlined in the draft Reform Agenda. We also facilitated a face-to-face consultation session between member organisations and the Tasmanian Government Mental Health Alcohol and Drug Directorate.

The submission provided feedback on the draft Reform Agenda and included comprehensive feedback on each reform direction. The ATDC synthesised feedback into three key steps, and six actions that were recommended to progress the Reform Agenda beyond the consultation phase into the implementation stage.

The ATDC has also continued to represent the ATOD sector perspective as a member of the Reform Agenda Writing Group and the Reform Agenda Advisory Group.

APSAD Conference

This year ATDC Policy Manager Dr Jackie Hallam was appointed as the Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and Drugs (APSAD) 2019 Conference co-convenor.

The annual APSAD conference attracts well over 400 delegates and is scheduled to occur in November 2019 in Hobart. Jackie has chaired regular meetings and managed processes to ensure that the conference delivers a high-quality scientific program.

Stronger Data, Better Outcomes

A long-standing issue identified by members is the lack of data on which to base decision making. Our submission to the Tasmanian Department of Treasury made the case for investment in a shared data system that would build collective understanding to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harm in Tasmania.

The ATDC thanks Primary Health Tasmania for their support of this work and the Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Directorate who continue to work with us to determine the best approach to increasing access to Tasmanian ATOD data.

Adjunct to this the ATDC has been working closely with other government departments to access existing data in health and justice.

National Tobacco Strategy

Tobacco kills the majority of people who consume it. It is the most harmful drug that has ever existed in society. As a nation we have come a long way; however, Tasmania has the second highest smoking rates in the country. This is not acceptable to the ATDC or our members.

We welcomed the range of initiatives outlined in the National Tobacco Strategy 2012-2018 and then suggested that the strategy could be strengthened through increased linkages to organisations and clients supported through the Tasmanian ATOD sector.

By providing collaborative, strategic, evidence-based, targeted responses we suggested that we could successfully reduce tobacco related harm in Tasmania.



Sector Support

Tasmanian Leaders Program Scholarship

Investing in the development of the future leaders of the Tasmanian alcohol, tobacco and other drugs sector is of key importance to the ATDC. In 2018-2019 the ATDC entered into a partnership with Tasmanian Leaders Inc to provide a scholarship for a representative from the Tasmanian ATOD sector to participate in the annual Tasmanian Leaders Program.

The inaugural recipient of the ATDC scholarship was Damian Collins from Youth, Family and Community Connections on the North West Coast. Damian commenced the Program in February 2019 and has been powering his way through the first part of the course. Damian's reflections on his involvement thus far have included the benefit he has gained from the broad skill set of the other participants and how the sessions have improved his strategic influence, which he has found most valuable.

Small Grants Fund

Another new capacity building initiative implemented this financial year was the ATDC Small Grants Fund whereby ATDC members applied for discreet funds to go towards professional development, qualification or training for individual employees which will enhance their ATOD skills and knowledge. The initiative was a great success with 13 individuals funded across 10 member organisations to attend ATOD training opportunities relevant to their work. The successful grants went to a variety of courses including the 2019 APSAD Conference, 2019 ADF Prevention Conference, Hepatitis Educator training, Neuroscience clinical training and qualifications in specific ATOD interventions.

We thank the Australian Government Department of Health for their support of these new sector capacity building initiatives.

Consumer Voice

Including the voice of consumers in the design and delivery of ATOD programs and services is a priority for the ATDC. Through the financial support of the Tasmanian Government, over the past 12 months, we have been able to move closer to making this a reality through the **Consumer Organisation Development Project**.

Options Paper

Our key focus has been the development of an options paper to provide the Tasmanian Government with possible models for a Tasmanian funded ATOD consumer representative organisation. After extensive consultation with consumers and sector ATOD sector leaders, this Options Paper was completed and submitted.

The Options Paper, which includes the recommendation to proceed with a stand-alone consumer organisation has been formally endorsed by the Consumer Organisation Project Advisory Group and the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Expert Advisory Group.

Consumer Representation

As we await a response from the Tasmanian Government about funding the recommended consumer organisation in the 2020-21 State Budget, the ATDC has focused on nurturing and supporting the core group of consumer representatives that has started to take shape during this time.

To enable this important work to continue beyond the end of 2019, the ATDC has submitted a request to the Tasmanian Government to continue funding a consumer engagement project officer through to the end of June 2020, at which time we hope that the future of a dedicated consumer representative organisation will be confirmed.

Acknowledgements

The ATDC wishes to gratefully acknowledge everybody who offered their time to contribute to our submissions through face to face, phone interviews and group discussions. The depth of engagement in this process is a signal of goodwill and optimism from the community sector to collaborate with other stakeholders to drive reform into the future.

We also wish to acknowledge the people who access alcohol and other drug services and the committed workforce who work with them every day.



atdc

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The ATDC is a Quality Innovation Performance (QIP) accredited organisation against the QIC Health and Community Services Standards 7th Edition.



International Overdose Awareness Day

Observed on the 31st of August every year, International Overdose Awareness Day seeks to create better understanding of overdose, reduce the stigma of drug-related deaths, and create change that reduces the harms associated with drug use.

In July and August 2019, the ATDC called on members of the Tasmanian community to fold 1,000 origami cranes to remember those lost to drug overdose. In just 7 weeks, over 4,200 cranes were contributed by people from all over Tasmania. Displayed as part of an installation in Hobart, sections of the crane display and will travel across the state over the next 12 months.

Thank you to all who helped with this project, and we pay tribute to all Tasmanians lost to drug overdose.

No Harm, No Discrimination