



## ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS ADVISORY BOARD COMMUNIQUE – 2022 UPDATE

The Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board (AODAB) was established pursuant to the Alcohol and Other Drug Act 1974 to provide advice to the Mental Health Commissioner. The AODAB identifies and communicates emerging alcohol and other drug issues and research to the Mental Health Commission (Commission), informing effective and contemporary prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and rehabilitation approaches for people, and their family/significant others, experiencing alcohol and other drug use issues and those with co-occurring mental health and other health issues.

The intention of this communique is to provide an overview of activities of the AODAB in 2022.

### Membership changes

AODAB members are appointed by the Minister for Mental Health. Members are appointed based on their leadership, experience, knowledge, interest and expertise in the AOD sector and do not represent specific organisations or professions. Members are appointed for an initial term of up to three years and considered for reappointment at the discretion of the Minister. Members serve a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.

Appointments to the AODAB in 2022 included:

- Professor Steve Allsop as AODAB Chair, replacing Colleen Hayward;
- Katiska Davis providing the youth and Aboriginal perspective, replacing Keisha Calyun; and,
- Ethan James providing the community services perspective, replacing Jill Rundle.

The AODAB appreciates the contributions and expertise provided by those that departed the AODAB in 2022.

[Current members profiles can be viewed here.](#)

### 2022 Meetings

The AODAB met six times in 2022.

Throughout 2022 the AODAB provided advice to the Commission on the Commonwealth Kava pilot and Volatile Substance Use in WA. In addition, the AODAB provided feedback on the Statutory Review of the Mental Health Act, the Immediate Drug Assistance and Crisis Centre (IDACC) Model of service and members are currently involved in working groups for System Wide Data Working Group (SWDWG).

The AODAB continues to be actively involved in consultations relating to the current Liquor Control Act reform. The AODAB submission focuses on the role of minimum unit price, regulation of online sales, building better community protections, and opportunities to reduce exposure of vulnerable people to alcohol advertising. The AODAB reiterates that public health policy needs to be driven by evidence, not common beliefs, perceptions and the views of vested interests and notes the significant body of evidence about the strategies that can have an impact on preventing and responding to alcohol related problems.

### AODAB 2023 priorities

The AODAB undertook an annual planning exercise to identify 2023 priorities. The four key priorities for 2023 are:

**Priority area 1:** Ensure and retain a capable, knowledgeable and stable AOD workforce and support this workforce with development initiatives aimed at specialist AOD staff and those in mainstream health (e.g., medicine, nursing) and other key domains (e.g., social work, law enforcement, justice, child protection).

**Priority area 2:** Ensure public health evidence and expertise is the primary influence in decisions about alcohol and other drug related harm prevention, reduction and treatment and manage the contentions and ill-advised investment in strategies associated with vested and commercial interests that are not evidence-based.

**Priority area 3:** Recognise that a majority of people affected by alcohol and other drug related harm do not access treatment and support, therefore ensure that there is enhanced access to services in AOD specialist and mainstream health settings, particularly focussing on regional and remote areas. This will mean we will aim to ensure people and communities affected by alcohol and other drug related harm receive timely, effective evidence-based and culturally secure services.

**Priority area 4:** Ensure seamless access to quality care and improved prevention and treatment pathways developed through interagency engagement and collaboration, resulting in quality cross-agency and multi-sectoral strategies to prevent and reduce AOD related harm and co-occurring mental health issues.

As the AODAB will remain responsive to changes and challenges in the broader community, this plan will be updated as required to reflect future environmental drivers and changes.

**The next AODAB meeting is scheduled for 15 February 2023.**

*Please feel free to distribute this Communique to your wider networks. Communiques and other relevant documents for the AODAB are available on the [Mental Health Commissions website](#).*