

# AOD Treatment Initiative for Family Reunification

Fact sheet for service providers

## What is the initiative?

In the 2017-18 State Budget, the Victorian Government announced a significant funding boost for alcohol and other drug (AOD) services, with a strong focus on harm reduction, treatment and support. This included \$17 million over four years for additional treatment services for parents to help them meet the requirements of family reunification legislation.

The objective of this initiative is to enable parents who are required to undergo AOD treatment as part of their children's family reunification order (FRO) to access timely treatment, in order to maximise their chances of reuniting with their children in the time frame of the FRO.

Following a competitive process, the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) selected the service providers to begin the roll-out of the additional assessment and treatment services across Victoria from March 2018 (see table below).

## Who is this service for?

This initiative targets parents who must meet court-issued conditions to seek AOD treatment relating to their children's FRO.

Recent changes to the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* mean that a child who is subject to a FRO may be placed in permanent care if the parent fails to satisfy conditions of the order (such as a requirement to undergo AOD treatment) within the time permitted (typically up to 12 months).

It is vital therefore that parents are supported to engage in AOD treatment as soon as possible after their involvement with child protection. While this initiative targets parents with children on a FRO, where resources permit service providers are encouraged to consider how they can support parents with AOD issues earlier in the child protection process.

The provision of funding for this target cohort reflects Victoria's AOD Program Guidelines, which provide that parents who require AOD treatment to achieve reconciliation with their children are one of a select group of clients who must be given priority access to treatment (<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/alcohol-and-drugs/aod-service-standards-guidelines/aod-program-guidelines>).

## What do I need to do?

Funding has been allocated to service providers to deliver a mix of assessment, counselling and care and recovery coordination to parents who are required to undergo AOD treatment as part of their children's FRO.

Referrals to service providers of parents in this client group will be made by Victoria's AOD catchment-based intake providers. Separate service expectations have been developed for intake providers and child protection to establish an intake process that will assist parents to engage in assessment and treatment as soon as possible after their involvement with child protection.

Service providers are required to give parents in this cohort priority access to treatment. Where a provider is presented with more than one person in this priority with a similar level of need, priority of access should be determined on the length of time that someone has waited for AOD treatment (or as the case may be under this initiative, the time remaining on the parent's FRO).

If there is a delay between assessment and treatment, the service provider will provide bridging support to the parent as they would do ordinarily. If there is likely to be an inordinate delay in commencing a parent's treatment, the usual process to identifying an alternative provider with capacity to accept the client should be taken.

Service providers will be expected to liaise with and inform child protection about the outcome of their initial engagement with the parent; that is, to advise about the assessment and treatment plan for the parent, or if they have been unable to contact a parent after a reasonable<sup>1</sup> effort to do so. Service providers will also be expected to notify child protection if significant problems arise in the parent's treatment progress.

Providers are expected to proactively identify, manage, and help to overcome the barriers to treatment their clients may be experiencing. In this context, in the early phase of operations providers will be expected to establish a localised working group in their respective catchment with key representatives from their own organisation, the department, child protection and intake providers to periodically discuss barriers and opportunities to the most effective treatment pathway for this client group.

As discussed below, providers are expected to capture data on the treatments that are delivered to the target cohort to inform the department's evaluation of the initiative's effectiveness. Providers may also be asked to provide periodic narrative reporting on the delivery of this initiative to help evaluation.

## How do I report on this initiative?

Providers will continue with their reporting of assessment, counselling and care and recovery coordination using drug treatment activity units (DTAUs).

In addition, in Q4 of 2017-18, service providers may be required to complete an adjusted DTAU supplementary spreadsheet and a short narrative report on progress. If additional reporting is required, the department will provide an update on these requirements as soon as they are settled. These requirements will be for the purpose of understanding the number of referrals made and the number of referrals successfully converted into treatment. This will also assist in tracking demand.

Upon commencement of the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Collection (VADC) system in October 2018, service providers will be required to specifically record which of their clients have dependent children on an FRO – further information will be available in the VADC specifications and associated guidance. The department will monitor and periodically test the reporting regime for this initiative to determine whether further amendments would be beneficial to the evaluation of its effectiveness over time.

## How will funding be paid for this initiative?

As advised during the call for submissions process, funding will be allocated against drug treatment activity units. Pro-rata funding was allocated for 2017-18, including three months of establishment funding.

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<sup>1</sup> What constitutes a 'reasonable' effort is left to clinical judgement as there is no formal guidance. The department's consultations in developing this initiative suggest that, at a minimum, the first call to the parent should be made within 48 hours of receiving a referral, and at least three attempts should be made to contact the parent by phone in the first ten business days.

## Who can I contact with any questions?

Service providers are encouraged to speak with their divisional representatives. Queries about this initiative can also be directed to the department via email at [aod.enquiries@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:aod.enquiries@dhhs.vic.gov.au) (please make sure to include 'family reunification' in the subject line).

**Table: AOD treatment initiative for family reunification – key intake provider, service provider and child protection contacts**

Local government area (DHHS area/s in brackets)	AOD catchment	INTAKE		ASSESSMENT/TREATMENT		CHILD PROTECTION	
		Intake provider	Intake contact number/s	Funded service provider (consortium name, with lead agency in brackets)	Lead agency contact number/s	Nearest DHHS office location/s with child protection on site	DHHS office number/s
Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip, Stonnington ( <b>Bayside Peninsula</b> )	Bayside	Bayside Integrated Services	1800 229 263 9690 9778	Bayside Alcohol and Other Drug Partnership (TaskForce Community Agency)	Primary contact: Fiona Mulligan – email: <a href="mailto:fionam@taskforce.org.au">fionam@taskforce.org.au</a>  Secondary contact: Anna Murru – email: <a href="mailto:annam@taskforce.org.au">annam@taskforce.org.au</a>	Cheltenham	8585 6000
Frankston, Mornington Peninsula ( <b>Bayside Peninsula</b> )	Frankston-Mornington Peninsula	Frankston and Mornington Drug and Alcohol Services (FaMDAS)	1300 665 781	Stepping Up Consortium Frankston Mornington Peninsula Partnership (TaskForce Community Agency)		Frankston	9784 3100
Cardinia, Casey, Greater Dandenong ( <b>Southern Melbourne</b> )	South East Melbourne	South Eastern Consortium of AOD Agencies (SECADA)	1800 142 536	SURe (EACH)	Contacts:  Amy Youl – Program Manager Community Services, <a href="mailto:amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au">amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au</a>  Stephanie Bortignon – Team Manager, <a href="mailto:stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au">stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au</a>  Robert Watson – Project Manager Reunification Program, <a href="mailto:robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au">robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au</a>	Dandenong	1300 555 526
Boroondara, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse ( <b>Inner Eastern Melbourne</b> )	Inner East	Eastern Health Turning Point AOD Consortium	1800 778 278	SURe (EACH)	Contacts:  Amy Youl – Program Manager Community Services, <a href="mailto:amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au">amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au</a>  Stephanie Bortignon – Team Manager, <a href="mailto:stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au">stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au</a>  Robert Watson – Project Manager Reunification Program, <a href="mailto:robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au">robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au</a>	Box Hill	9843 6000
Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges ( <b>Outer Eastern Melbourne</b> )	Eastern Melbourne	EACH SURE Consortium	1300 007 873	SURe (EACH)	Contacts:  Amy Youl – Program Manager Community Services, <a href="mailto:amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au">amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au</a>  Stephanie Bortignon – Team Manager, <a href="mailto:stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au">stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au</a>  Robert Watson – Project Manager Reunification Program, <a href="mailto:robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au">robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au</a>	Box Hill	9843 6000
Melbourne, Moonee Valley ( <b>Western Melbourne</b> ); Moreland ( <b>Hume Moreland</b> ); Yarra ( <b>North</b> )	Inner North	UnitingCare ReGen and Odyssey House Victoria	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (UnitingCare ReGen)	Primary Contact: Donna Ribton Turner – email: <a href="mailto:DRibton-Turner@regen.org.au">DRibton-Turner@regen.org.au</a> ; Telephone:	Footscray  Preston	1300 360 462  1300 664 977

<b>Eastern Melbourne)</b> Whittlesea, Darebin, Banyule, Nillumbik ( <b>North Eastern Melbourne</b> )	North Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and Other Drug Service	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (UnitingCare ReGen)	(03) 9384 8830; mobile:0403266277	Preston	1300 664 977
Bass Coast, Baw Baw, LaTrobe, South Gippsland ( <b>Inner Gippsland</b> ); East Gippsland, Wellington ( <b>Outer Gippsland</b> )	Gippsland	ACSO	1300 022 760	Uniting AOD Services Grampians (UnitingCare ReGen)	North Catchment Manager: Marlyn Gavaghan – email <a href="mailto:mgavaghan@regen.org.au">mgavaghan@regen.org.au</a> ; mobile: 0418 630 924	Bairnsdale Leongatha Morwell Sale Warragul	5150 4500 5662 4311 5136 2400 5144 9100 5624 0600
Ararat, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Moorabool, Pyrenees ( <b>Central Highlands</b> ); Hindmarsh, Horsham, North Grampians, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack ( <b>Western District</b> )	Grampians	ACSO	1300 022 760	Uniting AOD Services Grampians (UnitingCare ReGen)	Family Reunification Coordinator for Uniting ReGen Gippsland and Grampians: Keryn Ralph – email: <a href="mailto:KRalph@regen.org.au">KRalph@regen.org.au</a> (phone contact details to be advised).  General enquires can be made to North and Inner North intake:  North intake – email: <a href="mailto:NIntake@regen.org.au">NIntake@regen.org.au</a> ; telephone: (03) 9420 7677; Clinical Nurse Consultant: Simone Hogan  Inner North intake – email : <a href="mailto:InnerNorthIntake@regen.org.au">InnerNorthIntake@regen.org.au</a> telephone: (03) 9420 7686; Clinical Nurse Consultant: Linda Coventry Pool.  Contact for Uniting Grampians: Ivan Thorne – email: <a href="mailto:ithorne@ucare.org.au">ithorne@ucare.org.au</a> ; telephone: 0438661296  Contact for Uniting Gippsland: Tracey Donaldson – email: <a href="mailto:tracey.donaldson@ucgipps.org.au">tracey.donaldson@ucgipps.org.au</a> ; telephone: (03) 5144 7777	Ballarat Horsham	5333 6530 5381 9777
Brimbank, Melton ( <b>Brimbank Melton</b> ); Hume ( <b>Hume Moreland</b> ); Maribymong ( <b>Western Melbourne</b> )	North West Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and Other Drug Service	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey House)	Primary Contact: Mark Gordon, Counselling Coordinator: email: <a href="mailto:mgordon@odyssey.org.au">mgordon@odyssey.org.au</a> ; telephone: (03) 8391 6705; mobile: 0404 144 733 General enquiries: <a href="mailto:nw.intake@odyssey.org.au">nw.intake@odyssey.org.au</a>	Footscray	1300 360 462
Hobsons Bay, Wyndham ( <b>Western Melbourne</b> )	South West Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and Other Drug	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey House)	Primary Contact: Victor Bilous, SW Catchment Manager: email:	Footscray	1300 360 462

		Service			<a href="mailto:vbilous@odyssey.org.au">vbilous@odyssey.org.au</a> ; mobile: 0466331146 General enquiries: <a href="mailto:sw.intake@odyssey.org.au">sw.intake@odyssey.org.au</a>		
Colac-Otway, Greater Geelong, Queenscliff, Surf Coast ( <b>Barwon</b> )	Barwon	Barwon AOD Consortium	1300 094 187 Colac area: 1300 763 254	Stepping Up Consortium Barwon Partnership (Odyssey House)	Primary contact: Bryn Williams – email: <a href="mailto:bwilliams@stepping-up.org.au">bwilliams@stepping-up.org.au</a> ; mobile: 0466 380 726.  Secondary contact: Shelley Cross – email: <a href="mailto:scross@stepping-up.com.au">scross@stepping-up.com.au</a> ; mobile: 0408 559 642	Colac Geelong	5234 2804 52264540
Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga ( <b>Ovens Murray</b> )	Hume	ACSO	1300 022 760	Gateway Health (Gateway Health)	Primary contact: Maryanne Donnellan – email: <a href="mailto:maryanne.donnellan@gatewayhealth.org.au">maryanne.donnellan@gatewayhealth.org.au</a> ; mobile: 0428 901 863	Wangaratta Wodonga	5722 0555 6055 7777
Greater Shepparton, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie ( <b>Goulburn</b> )	Goulburn Valley	ACSO	1300 022 760	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey House)	Primary Contact: Kevin Shanks, Manager, People & Programs Development: email: <a href="mailto:kshanks@odyssey.org.au">kshanks@odyssey.org.au</a> ; telephone: (03) 9420 7667; mobile: 0401 826 097 General enquiries: (as a temporary measure, use Kevin Shanks' email: will advise ASAP of a more specific program email address).	Seymour Shepparton	5771 1600 5832 1500
Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander ( <b>Loddon</b> ); Buloke, Gannawarra, Mildura, Swan Hill ( <b>Mallee</b> )	Loddon-Mallee	ACSO	1300 022 760	Northern Victoria Alcohol and Other Drug Services (Salvation Army)	Primary contact: Juanita Davis – email: <a href="mailto:juanita.davis@aus.salvation.army.org">juanita.davis@aus.salvation.army.org</a> ; telephone: (03) 5440 8451; mobile: 0428 045 004  General enquiries: Jemma Lamb – email: <a href="mailto:jemma.lamb@aus.salvationarmy.org">jemma.lamb@aus.salvationarmy.org</a> ; telephone (03) 5440 8411; mobile: 0438 836 319	Bendigo Mildura Swan Hill	5434 5555 5022 3111 5032 0100
Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool ( <b>Western District</b> )	Great South Coast	ACSO	1300 022 760	Great South Coast Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services Consortium (Western Region Alcohol and Drug Inc.)	Primary contact: Geoff Soma – email: <a href="mailto:geoffs@wrad.org.au">geoffs@wrad.org.au</a> ; telephone: (03) 5564 5710	Hamilton Portland Warrnambool	5551 3299 5523 9999 5561 9444