



CMHDARN CONNECT

Welcome to the third edition of CMHDARN Connect!

What a lot of things have happened in the CMHDARN world this year! Thanks for being a part of this great network and for being so welcoming of me, your new(ish) CMHDARN Coordinator. It has been a pleasure meeting and working with you.

As you know, CMHDARN provides seeding grants to support organisations to become research ready and undertake research in the mental health and alcohol and other drugs sectors. The Evaluation of the 2018-2019 CMHDARN Seeding Grant Program has been finalised and you can read the report [here](#). The report also contains information about the grant recipients and their projects, which are very diverse and interesting to read, so I hope you enjoy it.

The first webinar in a series of CMHDARN webinars on research skills will be recorded live in February 2020. This webinar will examine the topic of "Why Research" with a panel of experts from across the mental health and alcohol and other drugs fields. Watch out for the promotional material coming soon.

We are also starting to plan the CMHDARN Symposium. So, if there is a topic that you think we must cover or something you'd like to see at the Symposium, please get in touch.

Warm regards,

Jo

CMHDARN Coordinator

COMMUNITY RESEARCH MENTORING PROGRAM

Applications are open!!

Click [HERE](#) for more information and [HERE](#) for the application form

SMART Recovery Australia: Establishing an evidence base for mutual support groups

Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART) Recovery Australia is a non-government organisation (NGO). The purpose of SMART Recovery Australia is to help support the training and dissemination of SMART Recovery groups throughout NSW and across Australia. SMART Recovery groups are widely available in Australia across a range of regions and health districts. Groups are highly integrated with both NGO and government delivered health services. There are more than 300 groups being delivered throughout Australia each week.

SMART Recovery were fortunate to receive seed funding from the Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Research Network (CMHDARN) in 2012. This funding provided an opportunity for SMART Recovery to engage academic research partners for the first time to commence a program of research focused on establishing an evidence base for SMART Recovery, both within Australia and Internationally. This first study involved conducting a cross sectional survey of group members and SMART Recovery facilitators. This study provided an opportunity to examine the range of skills that SMART Recovery participants use to support their recovery, with the results highlighting the importance of group cohesion and the SMART Recovery 7-day plan (Kelly, Deane, & Baker, 2015). It also provided an opportunity to compare and contrast group members and facilitators views on the core aspects of the SMART Recovery program (Kelly et al., 2016).

Click [HERE](#) for the full article

CMHDARN RESEARCH SHOWCASE

Have you published recently?

CMHDARN maintains a bibliography of published research by the members of NADA / MHCC / CMHDARN to showcase the important work that is happening in our sectors.

Please email info@cmhdaresearchnetwork.com.au if you have published recently and would like your work to be included in this great [resource](#).

The Odyssey House – University of Technology Sydney Residential Rehabilitation Evaluation Project

Odyssey House NSW treats approximately 90-100 people with AOD problems each year in its residential rehabilitation program in Sydney. Aside from acute physical or psychiatric illness, or for legal reasons, the program has few exclusion criteria – following detoxification (if required), the program accepts anyone who needs it. The residential rehabilitation is delivered according to Therapeutic Community principles, whereby clients live and work together, transitioning across 4 stages (Levels 1-4) as they gain insight, skills and confidence in managing their addiction and returning to a healthy, functional lifestyle. Clients vary in the length of time they remain in the program, but 9-12 months of treatment is typical.

Odyssey House has been providing treatment for AOD clients for over 40 years and has a great reputation across the sector. However, its outcomes had not been evaluated previously by independent researchers. While being known for providing good treatment is important, as the saying goes “The plural of anecdote isn’t evidence” – and governments, health services and members of the public are increasingly keen to know whether the treatments being provided have empirical evidence to support them.

Click [HERE](#) for the full article

CMHDARN RESEARCH ETHICS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Would you like to engage in ethical research to improve the delivery of services to consumers / clients in the mental health and alcohol and other drugs sectors?

CMHDARN has a committee to support your research!

For more information, please see '[Information for Applicants](#)' or contact the CMHDARN Coordinator at info@cmhdaresearchnetwork.com.au

World first survey to assess the needs for information and decision-making support among people with problematic alcohol use and co-occurring depression

Research team: Dr Alana Fisher, A/Prof Katherine Mills, Dr Christina Marel, and Prof Maree Teesson

Problematic alcohol use and depression are common, highly burdensome, and frequently co-occur, affecting ~ 2.5 million+ Australian adults. Despite a number of effective treatment options available and fact that alcohol continues to be the most common main drug of concern for Australians seeking treatment, most people have significant unmet treatment needs.

To guide the development of patient decision-support resources that promote shared decisions and the informed, timely uptake of guideline-consistent treatments in this setting, researchers at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use conducted a world-first comprehensive decisional needs assessment of people with problematic alcohol use and co-occurring depression from key stakeholder views of patients, clinicians, and families. ...

Click [HERE](#) for the full article

Useful Resources from across the sectors

Research papers / books / reports

[Involving peers in research: the UNSW community reference panel](#)

Walker et al. Harm Reduction Journal, 2019, 16:52

There is limited literature about how to best “do” community involvement in research and no one model of community involvement in research that has been shown to be more effective than others. This paper presents one way to receive the input of people with experiences relevant to research with marginalised groups, including people who use and inject drugs. The UNSW Community Reference Panel is a virtual network of people from across Australia who are engaged to provide input and consultation on research design, processes, materials, and outputs. Although this panel goes some way towards community involvement and consultation in the research process, it does not take the place of other aspects of community governance and ownership, especially as informed by principles of research with Indigenous peoples. This model is an example of a means to bring the voices and perspectives of people who are generally excluded from the research and decision-making structures that affect their lives, including people who inject drugs, to influence the questions that are asked in research, how research gets done, and to what purpose research findings are put.

Women in contact with the Sydney LGBTQ Communities: Report of the SWASH Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer Women's Health Survey ([link](#))

Mooney-Somers et al (2019)

The SWASH survey is a comprehensive survey of important health issues relevant to lesbian, bisexual, queer (LBQ) and other non-heterosexual identifying women engaged with Sydney's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities. The survey covers sexual health and wellbeing, violence, mental health, tobacco use, illicit drug use, alcohol consumption, and cancer, STI and HIV screening.

Effect of increasing the delivery of smoking cessation care in alcohol and other drug treatment centers: a cluster-randomized controlled trial ([link](#))

The aims of this research were to test the effectiveness of an organizational change intervention integrating smoking cessation treatment into usual alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment, compared with usual care, on 1) 7-day point prevalence abstinence (PPA) at 8 weeks follow-up; 2) prolonged abstinence; 3) cigarettes smoked per day; 4) number of quit

attempts; and 5) offer and use of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). All outcomes were assessed at 8 weeks and 6.5 months follow-up.

SHARE WHAT YOU READ: If you read a research paper / article or visit a website that you think is relevant to share with other CMHDARN members, send it to the CMHDARN Coordinator at info@cmhdaresearchnetwork.com.au. We are looking for papers / articles and websites that cover co-occurring mental health and alcohol and other drugs and also mental health and alcohol and other drugs sectors separately. I will collate the articles and develop a series of categories, to develop a resource that will sit alongside and complement the "CMHDARN Research Showcase".

Webinars

Experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in primary healthcare when speaking about substance use and depression

The [Alcohol and Other Drugs Knowledge Centre](#) is hosting a free webinar on Monday 9 December 2019 with Dr Sara Farnbach from the [National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre](#) (NDARC).

There are a range of barriers to accessing mental health or substance use services including stigma, which can impact on service use by the people who need them. In addition, healthcare workers may be unsure of how to approach discussing these concerns with clients. In this webinar, Dr Sara Farnbach will present research findings conducted with Aboriginal men in residential treatment rehabilitation services and primary healthcare workers on speaking about substance use and depression in primary healthcare. The webinar aims to inform practice for healthcare workers who work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in primary health care settings and provide information to researchers working around substance use and depression.

The webinar will run for approximately 40 minutes, and is free to attend. There is no additional software required to join the webinar, other than a stable internet connection. We'd recommend that you use Google Chrome to view the webinar.

The webinar will be held on the 9th of December at:

- 12.00pm (NSW, Vic, Tas and ACT)
- 11.30am (SA)
- 11.00am (Qld)
- 10.30am (NT)
- 9.00am (WA)

Access the webinar online [here](#)

Living Library: A record of lives lived in recovery

The Living Library video series was launched recently for Mental Health Month to celebrate the theme "Share the Journey". The films aim to help others understand the lived experience of mental illness, they tackle stigma and normalise help seeking. Each video is a community member of South Western Sydney.

Click on the names of the people below to view each video.

[Antonia](#): A proud mother and carer for adult children with mental illness.

[May Lyn](#): A passionate youth health advocate with lived experience of mental illness.

[Lily](#): A friendly and determined mental health peer worker.

[Dallas](#): A creative artist and dedicated mental health worker.

Useful websites / resources

Drug Trends - <https://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/program/drug-trends>

Drug Trends triangulates data from various sources to identify emerging problems in substance use in Australia.

Information from annual interviews with people who regularly inject drugs ([Illicit Drug Reporting System](#)) and who regularly use ecstasy and other stimulants ([Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System](#)) are used alongside analyses of routinely-collected indicator data to describe changes in drug use and harm across Australia over time.

National-level data (e.g., drug-related mortality and hospitalisations) are also regularly reported on to describe country-level trends in drug-related harms ([National Illicit Drug Indicators Project](#)).

Availability of substances on online drug marketplaces operating on the 'dark net' are monitored regularly to capture trends in online availability of illicit and emerging substances ([Drugs and New Technologies](#)).

[Trauma-informed Care and Practice Organisational Toolkit \(TICPOT\)](#)

The latest addition to the TICPOT suite of resources is a trauma-informed Leadership Framework. This resource aims to support service leaders and practice champions to foster organisational change across mental health and human service contexts. With an ability to integrate theory into practice, leaders can use this framework to develop skills to champion trauma-informed change in their organisations. **Read more and download the Framework [here](#)**

Other publications you might want to check out

NADA Advocate

Published quarterly, the Advocate raises significant issues relating to the non government AOD sector in NSW. Subscribe to develop your knowledge about, and be connected to, the sector. Click [HERE](#) for the latest issue.

Miscellaneous Sector News

Get involved - Our Turn to Speak

Our Turn to Speak is a national survey that seeks to understand the life experiences of people living with severe and complex mental health issues in Australia.

Our Turn to Speak will investigate the lived experiences – both positive and negative – of people affected by these issues. SANE Australia's Anne Deveson Research Centre (ADRC), in partnership with the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences (MSPS) at the University of Melbourne is seeking 7,000 people aged 18 and over who have experienced complex mental health issues in the last 12 months.

In order to advocate for better support for people affected by complex mental health issues and to improve social outcomes, we are seeking a sample of 7,000 respondents who reflect Australia's diverse population.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and to participate

<http://ourturntospeak.com.au>



The Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Research Network (CMHDARN) is a collaborative project between Network of Alcohol and Other Drugs Agencies (NADA), Mental Health Coordinating Council (MHCC) and the Mental Health Commission of NSW.

[Visit the CMHDARN website here](#)