

Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Research Network

Strategic Plan 2021-2024

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

CMHDARN aligns with the Commission's three strategic priorities outlined in *Living Well in Focus 2020-2024*, namely:

- Strengthening community recovery and wellbeing
- Strategically invest in and embed lived experience in community wellbeing and mental health
- Ensuring the right workforce for the future

VISION

That community-managed / non-government mental health and alcohol and other drugs services conduct and participate in research that supports improved outcomes for people living with mental health conditions and co-existing substance use.

PURPOSE

CMHDARN seeks to promote the value of research and the use of evidence-based practice to mental health and alcohol and other drug service delivery in order to build the capacity across the two sectors.

CMHDARN's overall aim is to:

- Promote an increased understanding and awareness of co-existing mental health and alcohol and other drugs issues
- Through the promotion and translation of evidence-based practice, improve the health and social outcomes for people living with mental health conditions and co-existing substance use.
- Improve the quality of service delivery for people accessing services, their supporters and the workforce in the mental health and alcohol and other drug sectors through an increased application of evidence-based practice.

Language and Terminology

CMHDARN acknowledges the diversity of views and preferences regarding language across both sectors. However, for the purpose of this document, the following terms are used to describe people with lived and living experience of mental health and/or substance use;

- People living with mental health conditions and co-existing substance use. This term is used in preference to consumers, clients, service users or patients.
- Support persons is inclusive of all the people who have a role in the support of a person living with co-existing mental health and substance use. This includes carers, family of origin or a family of choice, friends, a kinship group, or a community.

PRIORITY AREAS

Research Momentum & Capacity:

Increase the research capacity of the CMO/NGO mental health and AOD services

Increase workforce confidence in applying research to practice

- **Increase** workforce research skills and contribute to knowledge creation and innovation across the CMO/NGO MH & AOD sectors

- **Build** the capacity and confidence of people including people living with mental health and co-existing substance use and support persons who work in the MH & AOD sectors to undertake practice-based research

Promote Member Knowledge Sharing Activities:

Promote research activities which encourage best practice knowledge sharing

Encourage participation of people with lived experience, support persons and kinship groups in knowledge sharing activities and research endeavours

- **Hold** networking and learning activities for members

- **Encourage** participation and co-design in research activities for people living with mental health and co-existing substance use and support persons

- **Share** information and resources

- **Promote** membership benefits of CMHDARN

- **Increase** understanding of co-existing issues for people accessing mental health and AOD services

MH & AOD Partnerships:

Support integration of CMO/NGO mental health and AOD services and research partnership projects

Increase application of best practice responses to co-existing mental health and AOD issues

- **Encourage** partnerships projects across the mental health & AOD sectors

- **Develop** and promote research collaborations and relationships with and between universities, academics and researchers in the mental health & AOD sectors

- **Prioritise** and promote research activities with an integrated mental health & AOD focus

- **Encourage** consistent language use across the two sectors in research activities