



NADA
network of alcohol & other drugs agencies

NGO Practice Enhancement Program: Working with Complex Clients Initiative

Background Information

March 2012

The Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies (NADA) is the peak organisation for the non government drug and alcohol sector in NSW.

NADA's goal is to support non government drug and alcohol organisations in NSW to reduce the alcohol and drug related harm to individuals, families and the community.

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INTRODUCTION

The Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies (NADA) is the peak organisation for the non government drug and alcohol sector in NSW.

NADA represents over 100 organisational members that provide a broad range of services including drug and alcohol health promotion, early intervention, treatment, and after-care programs. These community based organisations operate throughout NSW. They comprise both large and small services that are diverse in their structure, philosophy and approach to drug and alcohol service delivery.

NADA's goal is to advance and support non government drug and alcohol organisations in NSW to reduce drug and alcohol related harm to individuals, families and the community.

NADA provides a range of programs and services that focus on sector representation and advocacy, workforce development, information management and data collection, governance and management support plus a range of capacity development initiatives.

NADA is governed by a Board of Directors primarily elected from the NADA membership. It holds accreditation with the Australian Council on Health Care Standards (ACHS) until 2014.

NADA is primarily funded by the NSW Ministry of Health.

Further information about NADA, its programs and services is available on the NADA website at www.nada.org.au.

BACKGROUND

NADA was funded by NSW Health Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Office in July 2010 to roll out a two year Practice Enhancement Program for the NSW non government drug and alcohol sector. This program aims to build capacity within drug and alcohol non government organisations (NGOs) through addressing staff skills, knowledge and confidence, as well as organisational capacity in responding to the needs of clients who present with complex needs.

For the purpose of this project, complex clients are defined as, but not limited to:

People with drug and alcohol / drug and alcohol and mental health issues who present with cognitive impairment (such as intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder), and / or involvement with the criminal justice system.

The Practice Enhancement Project objectives are to:

- Identify the service practice development needs and barriers of non-government drug and alcohol services in relation to responding to clients with complex needs.
- Implement projects and activities to build the capacity of the sector to respond to drug and alcohol clients with complex needs as defined above.
- Evaluate the outcome of capacity building projects and related activities to inform ongoing workforce, organisational development and provision of treatment.
- Improve the engagement of drug and alcohol NGOs with complex-needs clients and improve treatment outcomes for this population where service practice grants are provided.

NADA identified the following range of strategies to meet the program aims:

1. Mapping and scoping activities.

- Consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- Consultation with the NADA membership.
- A literature review and service mapping exercise.

See the NGO Practice Enhancement Program Literature Review and Consultation Report.

2. Practice enhancement training and workshops.

These activities are aimed at building the capacity of drug and alcohol services in the NSW NGO sector to work with drug and alcohol clients who also present with complex needs. These include:

- Brokerage of training in acquired brain injury offered free to the NADA membership.
- Brokerage of training in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder offered free to the NADA membership.
- The continued roll out of *the NO BARS: supporting D&A services to work with criminal justice clients* training (developed in partnership between NADA and the Community Restorative Centre).

3. Training grants.

The provision of one off training grants for NADA member services to participate in professional development opportunities they have identified that focus on complex clients. This includes individual and on-site in house training opportunities.

In-house training to date includes Introduction to ABI (x2) Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (x4), Screening and Assessment in Acquired Brain Injury (x3) and The Triple Co morbidity (Drug and Alcohol, Mental Health and Acquired Brain Injury (x3).

4. Service practice enhancement seeding grants.

Seeding grants of up to \$50,000 were offered to assist organisations with implementing strategies for improving service capacity to work with drug and alcohol clients who also present with complex needs. The competitive grants process was capped at \$350,000.00 and were oversubscribed by \$650 000.00 with 25

applications received. Ten services were successful in receiving twelve month seeding grant funding in May 2011 to be completed in May 2012.

5. Member and stakeholder forums.

Forums hosted for service practice enhancement seeding grant recipients and the broader NADA membership will allow stakeholders and the NADA membership to network and share their experiences of working with complex needs clients and opportunities to forge partnerships across the represented sectors.

6. Resource Development.

The identification, development and distribution of resource material for the drug and alcohol non government sector over the course of the project. Resources include:

- Targeted email updates focused on research, training and information relevant to complex needs.
- Development of detailed list of services and resources on the NADA website.
- Holistic Practice when Working with Complex Clients: A resource for NGO drug and alcohol services is under development to be launched in June 2012.

7. Comprehensive program evaluation.

NADA has engaged an external consultant to carry out a detailed evaluation of the program which will be complete in July 2012.

NADA will continue to seek policy and advocacy opportunities to address the identified issues facing the NGO D&A sector in working with complex clients.

STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

NADA acknowledges the invaluable expertise and participation of stakeholders in the development and implementation of this project to date. NADA also encourages stakeholders to contact us should they wish to be involved in any identified activities or should they have suggestions for future directions of this program area.

For more information:

If you would like more information or would like to be involved in the Practice Enhancement Program: Working with Complex Needs Initiative: please contact Ciara@nada.org.au / 02 8113 1036 or Heidi@nada.org.au / 02 8113 1317 for more information.