

AOD Treatment Initiative for Family Reunification

Fact sheet for intake 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.

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 a maximum of 12 months, but potentially up to 24 months).

It is vital therefore that parents are supported to engage in AOD treatment as soon as possible after their involvement with child protection.

Following a competitive process, the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) selected the service providers to deliver the additional assessment and treatment services across Victoria from March 2018 (these are listed in the table below).

Why do I need to know about this initiative?

As an intake provider, you have a valuable role in ensuring that parents requiring treatment as part of their children's FRO are referred to the appointed service provider in your catchment for assessment and treatment as quickly as possible.

Who is this service for?

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

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?

Intake providers will be expected to engage with clients, service providers and child protection to facilitate this cohort's early and ongoing access to treatment.

Under this initiative, intake providers may receive direct referrals from child protection practitioners following the issuing of a FRO with associated AOD conditions for the parent. While some parents may choose to self-refer, it is likely that child protection will also refer the details of these parents to intake as a safety net to ensure they connect with the treatment system. Child protection will obtain parental consent for their information (treatment needs, place of residence etc.) to be shared between service agencies where necessary.

Following a referral by child protection, the AOD intake provider will:

- refer the parent's information onward to the appropriate service provider funded under this initiative
- contact the parent if more information is required before providing the parent's details to the service provider. In this event, providers will be expected to follow-up if initial attempts to contact the parent are unsuccessful
- advise child protection of the allocated AOD service provider details, or if they have been unable to make contact with the parent (in order to obtain further information) after a reasonable effort¹ to do so.
- continue to provide bridging support as required for this cohort as they would ordinarily do.

It is important to note that this initiative will help to expand the services available to this client group; it is not the only avenue for treatment available to them. Therefore, where there is limited capacity within a service provider funded under this initiative to accept a client for assessment and/or treatment within a reasonable time, normal processes will apply to connect the parent with an alternative service provider with capacity.

To enable service delivery to this client group to be continuously improved, intake providers will be expected to participate in area-based working groups with key representatives from the department, child protection and service providers in their respective catchment. These groups will enable all agencies to periodically discuss barriers and opportunities to the most effective treatment pathway for this cohort. The establishment of these localised working groups is expected to be coordinated by service providers in the early phase of the initiative's roll-out. For reference, key area-based contacts for service providers and child protection are provided in the table below.

How do I report on this initiative?

Providers will continue with their reporting of intake using drug treatment activity units (DTAUs).

In addition, in Q4 of 2017-18, intake 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, intake 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.

Will this increase my workload?

The department does not anticipate that this initiative will increase intake volumes or require intake providers to offer a service that is more intensive than is already expected of them in accordance with the AOD program guidelines. The department will monitor service delivery in the establishment phase of this initiative to determine whether its roll-out has any operational impact on intake.

¹ 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?

Intake 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 (please make sure to include 'family reunification' in the email 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 (Bayside Peninsula)	Bayside	Bayside Integrated Services	1800 229 263 9690 9778	Bayside Alcohol and Other Drug Partnership (TaskForce Community Agency)	Primary contact: Fiona Mulligan – email: fionam@taskforce.org.au Secondary contact: Anna Murru – email: annam@taskforce.org.au	Cheltenham	8585 6000
Frankston, Mornington Peninsula (Bayside Peninsula)	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 (Southern Melbourne)	South East Melbourne	South Eastern Consortium of AOD Agencies (SECADA)	1800 142 536	SURe (EACH)	Contacts: Amy Youl – Program Manager Community Services, amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au Stephanie Bortignon – Team Manager, stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au Robert Watson – Project Manager Reunification Program, robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au	Dandenong	1300 555 526
Boroondara, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse (Inner Eastern Melbourne)	Inner East	Eastern Health Turning Point AOD Consortium	1800 778 278	SURe (EACH)	Contacts: Amy Youl – Program Manager Community Services, amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au Stephanie Bortignon – Team Manager, stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au Robert Watson – Project Manager Reunification Program, robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au	Box Hill	9843 6000
Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges (Outer Eastern Melbourne)	Eastern Melbourne	EACH SURE Consortium	1300 007 873	SURe (EACH)	Contacts: Amy Youl – Program Manager Community Services, amy.youl@anglicarevic.org.au Stephanie Bortignon – Team Manager, stephanie.bortignon@anglicare.org.au Robert Watson – Project Manager Reunification Program, robert.watson@anglicarevic.org.au	Box Hill	9843 6000
Melbourne, Moonee Valley (Western Melbourne); Moreland (Hume Moreland); Yarra (North)	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: DRibton-Turner@regen.org.au ; Telephone:	Footscray Preston	1300 360 462 1300 664 977

Eastern Melbourne) Whittlesea, Darebin, Banyule, Nillumbik (North Eastern Melbourne)	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 North Catchment Manager: Marlyn Gavaghan – email mgavaghan@regen.org.au ; mobile: 0418 630 924 Family Reunification Coordinator for Uniting ReGen Gippsland and Grampians: Keryn Ralph – email: KRalph@regen.org.au (phone contact details to be advised). General enquires can be made to North and Inner North intake: North intake – email: NIntake@regen.org.au ; telephone: (03) 9420 7677; Clinical Nurse Consultant: Simone Hogan Inner North intake – email : InnerNorthIntake@regen.org.au telephone: (03) 9420 7686; Clinical Nurse Consultant: Linda Coventry Pool. Contact for Uniting Grampians: Ivan Thorne – email: ithorne@ucare.org.au ; telephone: 0438661296 Contact for Uniting Gippsland: Tracey Donaldson – email: tracey.donaldson@ucgipps.org.au ; telephone: (03) 5144 7777	Preston	1300 664 977
Bass Coast, Baw Baw, LaTrobe, South Gippsland (Inner Gippsland); East Gippsland, Wellington (Outer Gippsland)	Gippsland	ACSO	1300 022 760	Uniting AOD Services Grampians (UnitingCare ReGen)		Bairnsdale	5150 4500
						Leongatha	5662 4311
						Morwell	5136 2400
						Sale	5144 9100
						Warragul	5624 0600
Ararat, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Moorabool, Pyrenees (Central Highlands); Hindmarsh, Horsham, North Grampians, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack (Western District)	Grampians	ACSO	1300 022 760	Uniting AOD Services Grampians (UnitingCare ReGen)		Ballarat	5333 6530
						Horsham	5381 9777
Brimbank, Melton (Brimbank Melton); Hume (Hume Moreland); Maribymong (Western Melbourne)	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: mgordon@odyssey.org.au ; telephone: (03) 8391 6705; mobile: 0404 144 733 General enquiries: nw.intake@odyssey.org.au	Footscray	1300 360 462
Hobsons Bay, Wyndham (Western Melbourne)	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			vbilous@odyssey.org.au ; mobile: 0466331146 General enquiries: sw.intake@odyssey.org.au		
Colac-Otway, Greater Geelong, Queenscliff, Surf Coast (Barwon)	Barwon	Barwon AOD Consortium	1300 094 187 Colac area: 1300 763 254	Stepping Up Consortium Barwon Partnership (Odyssey House)	Primary contact: Bryn Williams – email: bwilliams@stepping-up.org.au ; mobile: 0466 380 726. Secondary contact: Shelley Cross – email: scross@stepping-up.com.au ; mobile: 0408 559 642	Colac Geelong	5234 2804 52264540
Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga (Ovens Murray)	Hume	ACSO	1300 022 760	Gateway Health (Gateway Health)	Primary contact: Maryanne Donnellan – email: maryanne.donnellan@gatewayhealth.org.au ; mobile: 0428 901 863	Wangaratta Wodonga	5722 0555 6055 7777
Greater Shepparton, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie (Goulburn)	Goulburn Valley	ACSO	1300 022 760	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey House)	Primary Contact: Kevin Shanks, Manager, People & Programs Development: email: kshanks@odyssey.org.au ; 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 (Loddon); Buloke, Gannawarra, Mildura, Swan Hill (Mallee)	Loddon-Mallee	ACSO	1300 022 760	Northern Victoria Alcohol and Other Drug Services (Salvation Army)	Primary contact: Juanita Davis – email: juanita.davis@aus.salvation.army.org ; telephone: (03) 5440 8451; mobile: 0428 045 004 General enquiries: Jemma Lamb – email: jemma.lamb@aus.salvationarmy.org ; telephone (03) 5440 8411; mobile: 0438 836 319	Bendigo Mildura Swan Hill	5434 5555 5022 3111 5032 0100
Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool (Western District)	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: geoffs@wrad.org.au ; telephone: (03) 5564 5710	Hamilton Portland Warrnambool	5551 3299 5523 9999 5561 9444