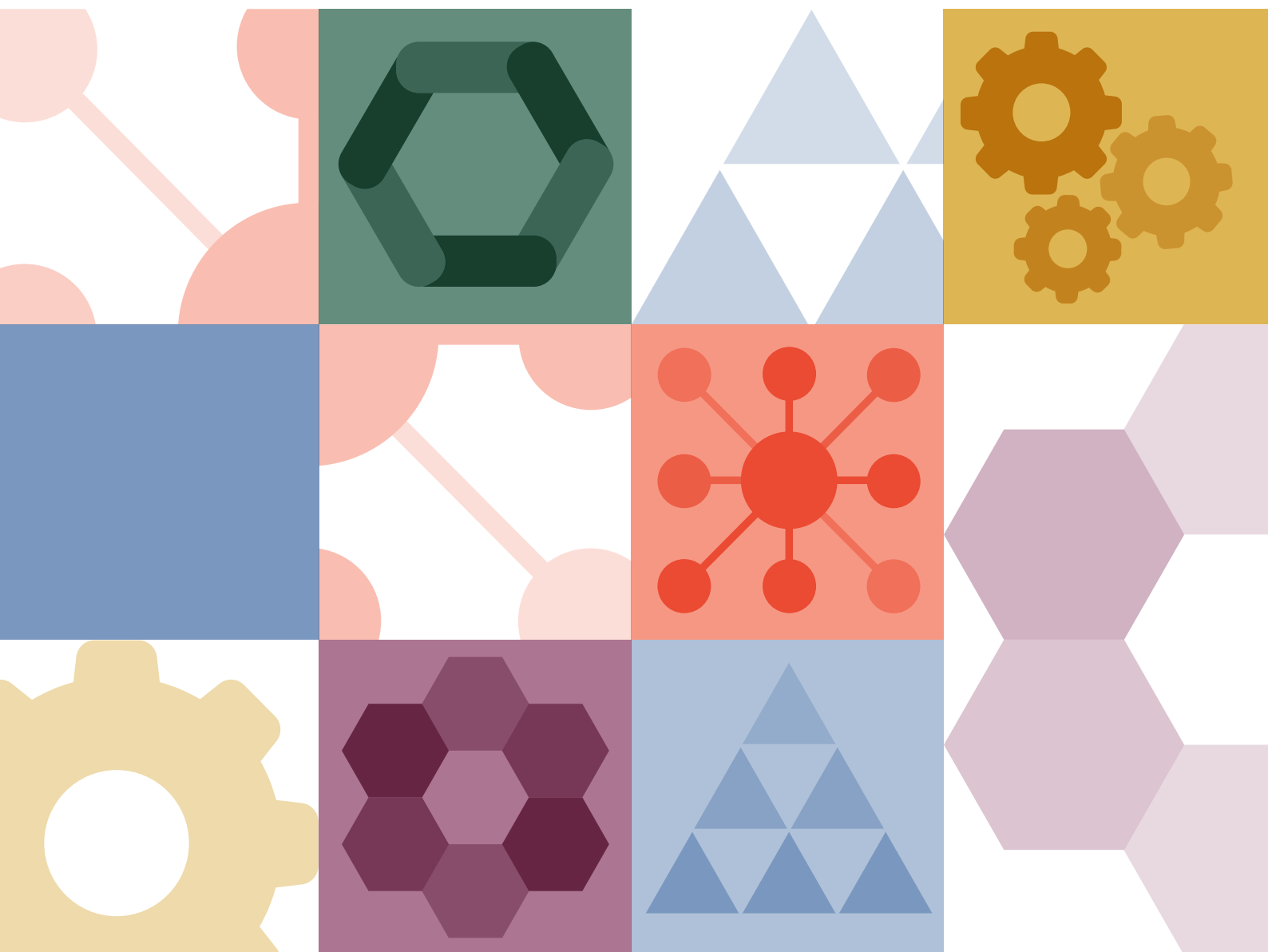




STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2024 - 2026

Shaping a brighter future
for people and communities



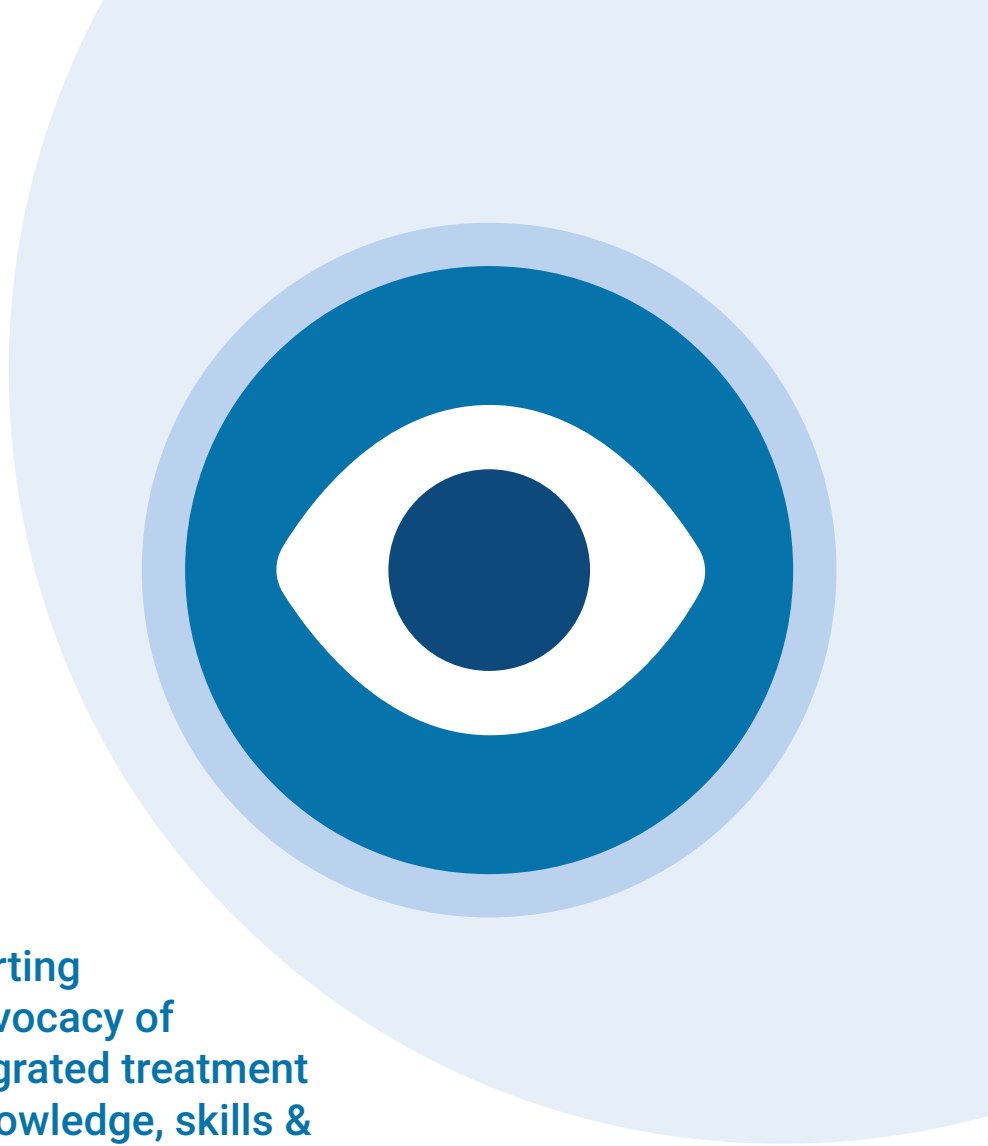


INTRODUCTION

In Victoria, as in other parts of the world, mental health (MH) and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services are working with increasing numbers of people who are experiencing both mental health and substance use conditions. The co-occurrence of these conditions (often referred to as 'dual diagnosis', comorbidity or concurrent disorders) can add complexity to engagement, assessment, treatment and recovery. In response to this the Victorian Government have recognised the need to invest in a number of approaches and strategies to assist the MH and AOD service sectors to optimally respond to working with this consumer group and their families, carers and supporters, who are the rule and not the exception, within both service sectors. The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (2021), recommended that mental health services, both clinical and community based, develop better integrated treatment and care responses for people living with co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction and their families, carers and supporters, building on the work already done by the Victorian Dual Diagnosis Initiative (VDDI). Nexus is a component of this state-wide Victorian Dual Diagnosis Initiative and has been servicing the North Eastern Melbourne metro region for over 20 years.

We are a small but diverse and highly skilled team, passionate and committed to improving service delivery for people living with co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction and their families, carers and supporters. We are also actively engaged at a state, national and international level promoting, being informed by and adding to the evidence base for best practice around service delivery to communities where people are impacted by mental health and substance use issues.

VISION (2024-26)



To be a leader in supporting implementation and advocacy of evidence informed integrated treatment and care, that builds knowledge, skills & confidence of the stakeholders we work with; to improve the lives of people living with co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction.

This Strategic Action Plan is informed and guided by the following key policy, legislative and service sector guides as directed by the Victorian State Government:

- Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (RCVMHS) Recommendations 35 & 36.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022.
- Integrated care – The Guidance.
- Our workforce, our future.
- Mental Health Transformational Plan
Priority area 7 (P7) – Integrated treatment and care for people living with co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction.

DEFINING THE PURPOSE AND ROLE OF NEXUS

Nexus is engaged in a range of workforce capacity building activities. The capacity building service strategies applied by Nexus fall under the following key headings/domains: key roles that Nexus performs are identified below:

Nexus seeks to achieve the following outcome:

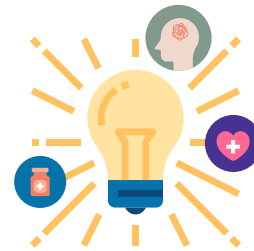
Better outcomes for people living with co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction, their families, carers and supporters



It intends to do this by:

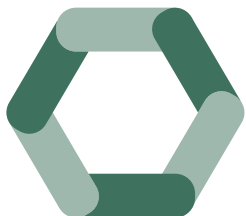


Creating a more skilled, capable and confident workforce

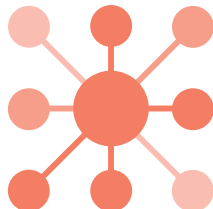


Raising the awareness and profile of the need for integrated treatment/care for co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction

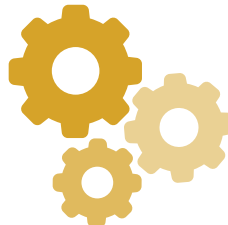
Nexus' work can be grouped into the following 5 domains:



ADVOCATE



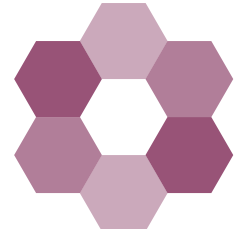
**SECTOR
INFORMANT**



**STRATEGIC
THINKER**

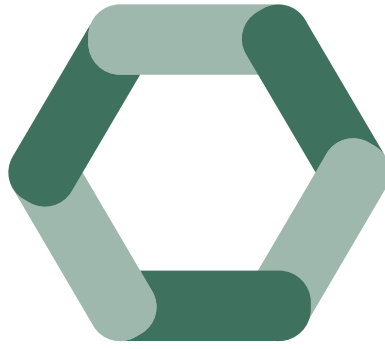


**CAPACITY
BUILDER**



**SECTOR
CONNECTOR**

Note: Each of the domains identified does not function in isolation but intersects and works in conjunction with one another



ADVOCATE

Nexus plays the role of advocate by influencing and advocating at the governmental, organisational and individual levels to change practice, policies and perceptions.

Existing activities

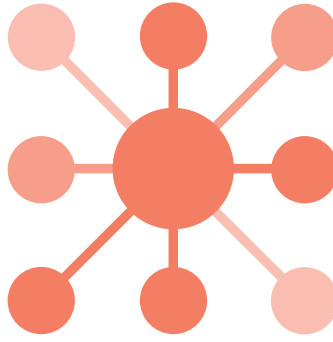
To date, Nexus' advocacy work has been predominantly implicit and done through:

- Its work in workforce development/training.
- Extensive support of local networks.
- Presenting at conferences.
- Developing policy submissions.
- Directly advocating to the Victorian Department of Health.

Close interactions with frontline MH and AOD staff is a key strength of Nexus. It enables Nexus to have a detailed understanding of the challenges encountered by staff when supporting people living with co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction, and their families, carers and supporters, and to articulate this in its advocacy work.

New activities

- Proactively advocating to the Department of Health (DoH) to inform and influence their viewpoints and policy direction.
- Advocating to St Vincent's Hospital Mental Health department (STVMH), Mission, Foundation and other relevant services.
- Identify other areas of focus for Nexus' advocacy work.



SECTOR INFORMANT

Nexus plays the role of sector informant by disseminating critical information (including information related to best practice, sector events and capacity building opportunities) to the MH and AOD sectors.

Existing activities

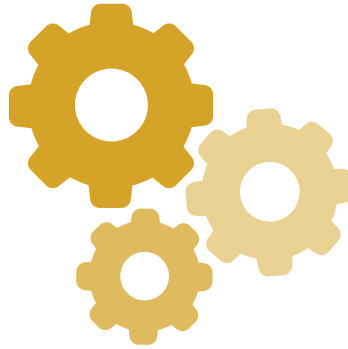
Nexus currently disseminates information through:

- Its website.
- Training (including resources) that it provides.
- Networks/groups that it is part of.
- The publications that it develops (typically in collaboration with other organisations).
- The relationships that it has with staff members in other organisations (through informal meetings).
- Conferences and public forums and other speaking engagements.

Because of Nexus' long standing history and experience in the sectors in which it works, it is also able to effectively direct information seekers to relevant/appropriate sources of information.

New activities

- To communicate the key roles that Nexus performs to ensure that there is a shared expectation amongst key stakeholders. To seek feedback and connection with stakeholders.
- Highlighting the outcomes that Nexus has achieved so that its key stakeholders (including Department of Health and St Vincent's Hospital) are more aware of them.



STRATEGIC THINKER

Nexus plays the role of a strategic thinker by contributing and informing what leading practice in integrated treatment and care for co-occurring mental illness and substance use/addiction looks like.

Existing activities

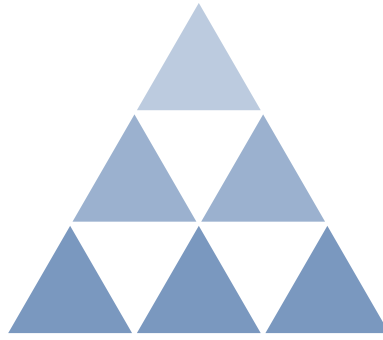
Nexus currently achieves this by actively organising and participating in:

- Network meetings.
- Forums.
- Product development e.g. tools for practice.
- The Victoria Dual Diagnosis Initiative (VDDI) – Nexus plays a lead role in the VDDI and is well-positioned to influence the thinking and strategic direction of other organisations which are part of the VDDI.
- Conferences.
- Research and article writing.

It also leverages informal interactions and relationships with staff members of MH and/or AOD organisations to influence thinking and strategic direction.

New activities

- Being more strategic in identifying specific areas where Nexus will proactively seek to influence and inform the direction/thinking of the broader MH and AOD sectors. This will be a key topic that is discussed during Nexus' 6-monthly strategic review session.
- Consider introducing a KPI on the number of formal events organised by Nexus where it has the opportunity to further strengthen its role as a strategic thinker.
- Undertake and partner around more research to strengthen Nexus' position as a leader in co-occurring mental illness and substance use.



CAPACITY BUILDER

Nexus plays the role of capacity builder by improving the confidence, skills and capabilities of the MH and AOD workforce.

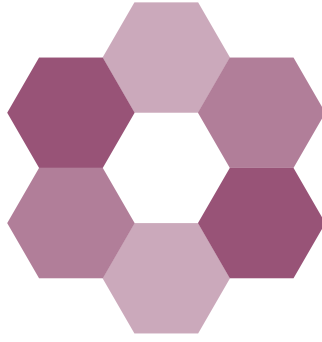
Existing activities

Nexus currently supports workforce development by:

- Providing tertiary consultation services to assist in identifying gaps and opportunities to fill them.
- Creating and providing high quality education, training and implementation in a range of areas related to integrated practice.
- Facilitating reflective practice sessions.
- Influencing staff through networks that Nexus participate in.
- Providing other opportunities for professional development such as:
 - Organising conferences and forums.
 - Facilitating staff rotations between service providers.
 - Organising staff placements.
 - Providing scholarships.

Nexus collaborates with international experts and Australian universities to disseminate key research, implications and resources to organisations to strengthen and build their knowledge/capacity.

Focus on promoting the use of Nexus' training packages e.g. Reasons for Use Package (RFUP), Foundations of Practice, Carers Can Ask (CCA) and Before, During After (BDA), and actively following-up with service providers to support implementation.



SECTOR CONNECTOR

Nexus plays the role of sector connector by encouraging collaboration between services in the provision of integrated treatment and care for people living with co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction and the broader public health sector.

Existing activities

Nexus connects service providers by:

- Articulating the commonalities between service providers (and using this as a strategy to encourage them to work together).
- Facilitating connections between service providers, providing warm introductions where necessary.
- Guiding and upskilling service providers to network more effectively.
- Creating formal and informal opportunities for service providers to build connections.
- Including and supporting service connection opportunities in training.

Nexus supports and actively contributes to the sharing of ideas across multiple service providers.



NEXT STEPS

Key Targets, Activities & Stakeholders including deliverables for 2024-26

The tables on following pages do not represent the entirety of Nexus work.

Targeted Agencies for 2024-26:

- St Vincent's Area Mental Health Service.
- State funded AOD and community MH agencies that operate in the St Vincent's MH catchment.
- State funded AOD and community MH agencies that provide services in Banyule, Boroondara, Nillumbik and Yarra.
- Peak bodies and state-wide organisations TANDEM, SHARC, MHVIC, VAADA, CMHL etc.

Outputs & KPIs:

Refer to strategic priorities tables.

Outcome Measurement Processes and Mechanisms:

Tools: surveys, focus groups, pre and post measures, semi structured interviews with management, file audits, case study, masters or PHD student placement for specific research project.

Future Growth:

Engagement with tertiary sector and other peak education bodies
– seek opportunities to explore how we can influence.

St Vincent's Health Australia – seek further opportunities for collaboration.



St Vincent's Hospital

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💻 www.svhm.org.au/our-services/departments-and-services/n/nexus