



## Key Themes from Tuesdays with Nexus 29th September 2020 - 9.30am

23 people attended this session – Thank you for your participation.

### ***AOD Trends in COVID- What's Happening? Mark Powell Operations Manager, WRAD***

Mark provided an update of what impact COVID is having on AOD usage and services in the rural areas through the lens of Warrnambool based WRAD

- Alcohol remains most used substance / ↑cannabis use
- ↑Opportunistic use due to extra gov. benefits
- Cannabis substituted for Meth as cost of meth increases
- ↑GHB use
- Some evidence of Youth experimentation combining GHB with alcohol for hallucinogenic effect
- ↑ use of prescription drugs paralleling anxiety increase
- Co-occurring anxiety/ stress with alcohol / cannabis use intertwined
- ↑Risky and harmful use due to local price increases and sourcing through dark web
- Brief Interventions Program well attended/ GP clinics - more first-time clients
- Youth dislike using telehealth due to lack of privacy etc. for others not travelling has made appointments easier and increased attendance but majority use telephone over telehealth (85% attendance usually 60-70%)
- Some issues re phobia use of camera hence telephone use vs telehealth
- L17s has increased (police reporting family violence) Concerns perpetrators in background during telehealth etc.
- Sliding Doors program up 120% people want connection
- Being creative: Use of court funds for Coles/ taxi vouchers plus laundry vouchers and Tasty Plate has provided over 400 meals
- Across community justification for use: 'I don't need to get up tomorrow to go to work' 'I cant escape my household therefore I..'
- DHHS have wanted telehealth use for a while current situation has accelerated timelines
- People use Neighbourhood houses for telehealth due to poor internet connection
- Decrease in COATS referrals may experience explosion of referrals in near future
- Concerns about not seeing people face to face, ***'they are not in the light where they can be seen'*** What is being missed



**Carer perspectives through second round lockdown. Jacqui Hill, Carer Consultant Mental Health, St Vincent's Melbourne**

Jacqui gave a breakdown of the *caring fairly* survey see link below for full details:

**First wave:**

- 60% families lost support
- 47% individuals lost support
- 44% ↑ in unpaid care
- 88% reported increase stress in caring
- 37% lost all regular income
- Reductionist first wave response
- Creativity required: e.g. campaign to take sure that exemptions could be made for mandatory mask wearing and make sure that masks available at clinics DHHS responded with supply as did the St V's sewing circle supplying handmade masks
- Services need to be creative in finding ways to keep connected / some services have done it well using tech to keep connected others not so well
- Remember that now not only usual carer role but additional responsibilities e.g. elderly parents / loss of employment etc. universal neg. impact on mental health
- Nonclinical services have found creative ways to keep running services
- Can bring computer to teenagers no need to drag to appointments ↑ engagement
- New state-wide mental health HUBs opening Banyule this may a difference for the 'missing middle' don't need to be accurately unwell to receive service / single sessions/ 'just in time' service

<http://www.caringfairly.org.au/resources/covid-19-carer-survey-results>

**Tandem Support and Referral line – Statewide – 1800314325**

**Carer Gateway - 1800442737 - statewide**

<https://www.carergateway.gov.au/>

**Rainbow Help line 1800729367 - statewide**

<https://www.rainbowdoor.org.au/>

**Head to Help – Mental Health Hubs – 1800595212 - statewide**

<https://headtohelp.org.au/>



**Update-** A new Alcohol and Other Drug service called Diverse Pathways to help navigate and reduce the many barriers to treatment experienced by culturally diverse and First Nation clients living in Melbourne's North-West.

**Department of Health- Coronavirus Health Information Line- 1800 020 080.**  
**The line operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

**NEMHSCA Webinar:**

**Harm Reduction Webinar- An empowering person centered approach to Substance Use and Mental Health**

Free Webinar **Harm Reduction- An empowering, person centered approach to Substance Use and Mental Health** designed and delivered by staff from Nexus Dual Diagnosis Service, Harm Reduction Victoria, Mind Australia and Wellways. Brought to you by NEMHSCA, Yarra Drug and Health Forum and Yarra Mental Health Alliance. See detailed description of the webinar below.

The webinar will commence on **Monday the 05th of October from 12.30pm-2.00pm** and can be accessed easily these three ways.

1. Register here through eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/120148604711>
2. By going to [www.sli.do](http://www.sli.do) and entering the event code (**37978**) on the day.
3. Using this direct link on the day <https://iframe.dacast.com/b/95030/c/563629>

*Webinar details- Harm reduction is a recovery oriented essential practice that can be used by any health care worker regardless of the setting. It values the consumers own experiences with substance use and mental health and supports their expertise in planning and decision-making. In this webinar viewers will be introduced to the principle's of Dual Diagnosis and Harm Reduction. Viewers will hear real stories using interviews and animations on how staff and consumers from Mental Health settings implemented the Before, During and After Harm Reduction tool and some of the outcomes from using this approach. Viewers will be guided to free Harm Reduction resources to use with consumers and understand why Harm Reduction is a practice that shouldn't be limited to Drug and Alcohol workers.*



The webinar will be followed by a live Q&A and is open to the public.

**This webinar is a collaboration with staff from Nexus Dual Diagnosis Service, Harm Reduction Victoria, Wellways and Mind Australia. It is brought to you by NEMHSCA, Yarra Drug and Health Forum and the Yarra Mental Health Alliance.**

Next session:

**'Tuesdays with Nexus' - A weekly interactive online session**