

2018 SNAPSHOT



Recorded over

100,000 contacts

with our telephone and online counselling services



Delivered courses to more than

1900 students

and over

1000 community and family members across Australia



Our websites recorded more than

1.5 million page views

(includes Turning Point, Counselling Online, DACAS, DirectLine, Gambling Help Online and JustAskUs)



98%

positive experience

reported by survey callers



Worked on more than

50 research projects



Provided face-to-face care for more than

6000 people

in our clinical services





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WELCOME

Welcome to *Turning Point 2018*, a publication that looks back on some of the outstanding work the dedicated Turning Point team has worked on over the past year.

Eastern Health

Turning Point has continued to be a pivotal part of Eastern Health's Statewide Services program, providing national leadership in addiction treatment, research and education.

Eastern Health is in a unique position to harness the specialist skills, knowledge and expertise Turning Point has and to use them in a broader healthcare setting.

Similarly, Turning Point can use its comprehensive knowledge in the addiction field to test and implement new approaches across Eastern Health's hospitals and community services.

In addiction treatment, Turning Point continues to lead evidence-based practice. This year it has seen the opening of a Victorian first — a new eight-bed withdrawal unit located at Box Hill Hospital. This represents the first stage of a 20-bed extended withdrawal and stabilisation service for clients with addiction and medical comorbidities. The new Box Hill Hospital ward has opened alongside a fully refurbished facility at Wellington House.

Across research, Turning Point maintains a well-earned international reputation for its evidence-creating work in finding solutions to the complex questions that addiction issues create.

At a local, national and international level, Turning Point's work is often cited by not only those within the addiction sector but the broader healthcare community

In the education space, Turning Point continues to provide high-quality courses. For the healthcare professionals they support, it means better care for patients, as well as a strong and capable workforce. For families they assist, it means being able to better understand what a loved one with an addiction issue is going through.

Governments at a local, state and federal level engage Turning Point to help form policy, with Turning Point's expertise also sought for commentary in the media on key addiction issues in the news.

As this publication demonstrates, much has been achieved by Turning Point over the past 12 months, with many exciting opportunities ahead.

Congratulations to all Turning Point staff, partners and collaborators on their continued strong leadership and outstanding work.

We are proud to have Turning Point as one of our key services and look forward to delivering the Eastern Health strategic initiatives of healthcare excellence, leading in research and innovation, and leading in learning in the area of addiction.



Karen Fox
Executive Director, Clinical Operations
(Surgery, Women and Children and
Acute Specialist Clinics, Mental Health,
Medical Imaging and Statewide Services)





Monash University

As society works to find solutions to addiction issues, an all-of-community approach is emerging as essential to managing the challenges that alcohol, drug and gambling concerns present.

The strong partnership shared by Monash University and Turning Point is an example of why such collaborations are important.

Turning Point is renowned nationally and internationally as a leader in addiction research, treatment and education.

Monash University is a member of the Group of Eight, comprising Australia's most prestigious and accomplished universities. Monash University is recognised both at home and abroad for its strong reputation in research and in clinical, pre-clinical and health sciences.

The partnership that Monash University shares with Eastern Health reinforces the strong reputation and leadership these organisations have in their respective fields.

Turning Point is a key component of Eastern Health and contributes substantially to academic output through the Eastern Health Clinical School. Monash University is proud to work in partnership with Turning Point on a broad range of projects.

The Master of Addictive Behaviours course continues to be an outstanding opportunity for those in the health sector to expand and further develop their skill sets.

Turning Point's comprehensive research program, which includes world-first initiatives, such as the internationally unique "Ambo Project" supported by Movember funding, takes an evidence-based approach to issues that directly inform health policy and practice.

Solutions to the problems posed by addiction requires involvement of the whole community. Turning Point, through Eastern Health and Monash University, provides vital clinical service and research leadership towards this, as well as bringing together health services, government, the broader health sector, educational institutions, community groups and the public in general.

Monash University congratulates
Turning Point on its achievements
and commends this Annual Review.
We will continue to work together
to meet the challenges of addiction
in its various forms





Prof Ian Davis

Prof of Medicine

Monash University and Head
Eastern Health Clinical School



INTRODUCTION

It has been another extraordinary year of achievement at Turning Point.

Across treatment, research and education, our dedicated staff have continued to excel. Turning Point continues to demonstrate leadership and innovation through its work centred on putting clients first.

It has been an extremely busy 12 months, including moving our statewide and national programs from Fitzroy to our new base at 110 Church Street, Richmond.

Along with our fellow Eastern Health Statewide Services partner Spectrum, the new location has allowed us to bring our programs and services across treatment, research and education under one roof. Importantly, it has also provided our clients, students and staff with a high-quality, modern environment to work from.

Our move to Richmond has allowed us to see first-hand the introduction of a medically supervised injecting room to the area. Turning Point is a strong advocate for treating addiction as a health issue and taking an all-of-community approach. It has been pleasing to see that this sentiment is becoming more commonplace among the broader community.

Looking back on the year, a number of key highlights stand out.

Our helplines have gone from strength to strength, with multiple new services added, including a program dedicated to helping clients and their families navigate the Victorian treatment system and ensure they receive the best care.

We were delighted to open a new residential service at Box Hill Hospital, which is part of a new service model that provides extended management of complex alcohol and other drug withdrawal for clients with medical comorbidities. This service includes a new 21-day stabilisation program at Wellington House in Box Hill.

We were also pleased to receive additional funding to support clients at risk of overdose, improve family violence responses and increase peer support.

Our clinical services also provide unique training experiences for a broad range of healthcare professionals and we are delighted that the reputation of Turning Point nationally and internationally attracts addiction clinical trainees and researchers from around the world

Collaboration between our clinical and research areas has seen the commencement of numerous clinical trials across our sites, as well as studies investigating clients and families experiences of care. We look forward to seeing these innovative approaches making a difference to our clients and their families, and are grateful to the Victorian Government and other funders for their support.

The base our internationally renowned research team covers is comprehensive and far reaching, taking an evidence-based approach to addiction. This year we commenced multiple world-first clinical trials, investigating the effectiveness of novel devices, medications and psychological interventions.

We have also studied the need for an increased focus on the role of alcohol in suicide prevention, as well as examining the relationship between alcohol, drug use and family violence.

We have drawn on our internationally unique ambulance data to see how we can better meet the needs of men with mental health concerns and developed a national surveillance system for alcohol and drug presentations.



"We were delighted to open a new residential service at Box Hill Hospital, which is part of a new service model that provides extended management of complex alcohol and other drug withdrawal for clients with medical comorbidities."

In Workforce Development, we continue to provide high-quality education and training programs for those within the healthcare sector, as well as the broader community. A highlight this year has been our collaboration with the Australian Nurses and Midwives Federation. This program has been most successful in attracting nurses to the AOD sector, as well as maintaining the skills of those already in the sector.

We hope you enjoy this year's Turning Point Annual Review. It provides a brief taste of what our wonderful staff have been working hard on over the past 12 months.

We are extremely grateful for their commitment to ongoing improvement. Even in challenging times, the positive attitude they bring to work each day inspires us all to think, innovate and maintain our commitment to client-centred care.





Anthony Denham
Program Director
Statewide Services
Eastern Health



WELCOME TO CHURCH STREET

In March 2018, Turning Point celebrated its move to the heart of North Richmond with an event to open the Church Street building.

The occasion included a Welcome to Country by Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy.

Eastern Health Statewide Services Program Director Anthony Denham said Turning Point was delighted it had been so warmly welcomed by other local health partners and the general community. "We've certainly made a positive start at Church Street and we look forward to that continuing in many years to come."

Turning Point Director Prof Dan Lubman said the new building made a clear statement to clients and their families about the importance of addiction as a health condition and that they should expect the same standards of care as in other areas of health.

FRESH START:

Turning Point has a new home in North Richmond.



SENIOR STAFF



Prof Dan Lubman Director



Anthony Denham Program Director Statewide Services

Research and education

Dr Naomi Crafti

Workforce Development

Sharon Matthews

Population Health

Dr Debbie Scott

Population Health

Dr Michael Savic

Acting Strategic Lead Clinical Research

Strategic Lead

Manager

Manager



A/Prof Victoria Manning Head of Research and Workforce Development



Dr Kieran Connolly Associate Program Director



Kristen Smyth Manager of External Stakeholder Relations, Monash University Special Adviser of External Affairs Turning Point

Treatment services



Dr Matthew Frei Clinical Director



Mpilwenhle Mthunzi Associate Program Director

Dr Shalini Arunogiri Clinical Lead Specialist Clinical Services

Rick Loos Manager Telephone and Online Services

Jonathan Tyler Manager Specialist Clinical Services

Orson Rapose Systems Manager

Teddy Sikhali Manager Fastern Treatment Services

Sharon Hill Nurse Unit Manager (Acting) Wellington House

Carmen Harris Partnerships Manager



EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY MAKING PUT INTO PRACTICE

Turning Point continues to contribute to policy discussion as part of its all-of-community approach to tackle addiction.

Turning Point Director Prof Dan Lubman, Clinical Director Dr Matthew Frei and External Stakeholder Relations Manager Kristen Smyth provided evidence to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Drug Law Reform. The Inquiry captured a push for greater investment and understanding of how alcohol and other drugs (AOD) can impact people and the need for evidence-based policy approaches that can change lives.

"It is an important role of Turning Point to be able to provide the latest evidence to key policy makers and to promote evidence-based approaches that have been successful in Australia and internationally," Kristen said.

One outcome of the Parliamentary Inquiry was the establishment of a medically-supervised injecting centre in Richmond, an area that was a key focus of Turning Point's 2017 symposium and oration.

Alongside colleagues Dr Victoria Manning and Dr Debbie Scott, Kristen has also been working with the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA) and stakeholders from family violence and child protection.

"It is important that we help the alcohol and other drug sector partner with colleagues in the family violence sector to ensure we can provide innovative responses to Victoria's Royal Commission into Family Violence," Kristen said.

This policy work is underpinned by Turning Point's strong credentials in research. Key recent projects, such as Patient Pathways, which documented the treatment journeys of over 790 clients across Victoria and Western Australia, identified a number of key recommendations for policy and service development, while a review of the effectiveness of AOD treatment and models of care was recently published to inform a service planning model for Victoria.

Government responses to such submissions and reports has seen increased funding for the treatment sector, new initiatives that enhance treatment pathways and an expansion of residential rehabilitation beds.

Ms Smyth said just as clients were looking for hope and clarity, the same was true for policy makers and funders.

"We use our research and treatment expertise to articulate a pathway between primary care and the acute end of the spectrum, coupled with calls for stronger governance and enhanced education for the broader workforce."

COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY

Turning Point and Eastern Health aim to deliver services that help improve health and wellbeing outcomes for everyone in our community regardless of ethnicity, nationality, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, beliefs, religion or physical and intellectual ability.

We are committed to creating a workplace that celebrates our differences and fosters an appreciation of the values, skills and life experiences of all.

Among our dedicated staff is External Stakeholder Relations Manager Kristen Smyth. Ms Smyth said she greatly appreciated the work Turning Point had done in creating a transgender supportive workplace.

"Since the day I spoke with Prof Dan Lubman about my transition I've received nothing but warmth, love and encouragement from across the organisation," Ms Smyth said.

"There's a generosity and understanding at Turning Point that helps you on those days when you question everything. Through adversity and triumphs, my own experience is merely a reflection of the spirit and essential humanity that runs to the core of this place."





of recovery." – Carmen Harris

COLLABORATING FOR BETTER CARE

This year, Turning Point's **Eastern Treatment Services** secured additional funding for a number of important service enhancements that are benefiting clients across the eastern region of Melbourne.

Partnerships Manager Carmen Harris said the Risk of Overdose initiative had been funded by the Victorian Government to provide support for clients at higher risk of overdose.

Clients are primarily those using opiates or multiple drugs in combination and require extra support to keep themselves safe. As part of the initiative, Turning Point is linking with local needle and syringe service CHOPER (Community Health Outreach Program Eastern Region).

Turning Point has also successfully recruited peer worker Craig Payne, who is gaining valuable training, support and ongoing professional development from Victoria's leading peer support organisation, the Self Help Addiction Resource Centre (SHARC)

"Peer work offers an important alternative for our clients, with the opportunity to be supported by a staff member that has a lived experience of recovery," Ms Harris said.

Another new initiative, KickStart, is a criminogenic, alcohol and drug group treatment program trial, jointly funded by the Department of Justice and Regulation and the Department of Health and Human Services. Turning Point has commenced delivering the program in Ringwood, with Inspiro Community Health staff also involved in the trial.

The program aims to reduce waiting times for forensic clients on mandated treatment orders. Participants are male and have been assessed as medium to high risk of both alcohol and drug-related harm and reoffending.

"The first group session had the highest attendance for a KickStart program across Victoria and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive," Ms Harris said.

"The highly-skilled facilitators have had great results in retaining clients and engaging them about the potential harms of alcohol and drug use and its links with their offending."







(A) MELISSA'S STORY

Counsellor Marcia Perry has helped many consumers on their road to recovery. Among those she has supported is Melissa.

Melissa is 60 years old and there is no history of substance use issues in her family other than herself. Her father passed away more than 10 years ago and she lives with her mother who has dementia. Melissa is her mother's carer but has great support from aged care workers. She also has a 24-year-old daughter.

Ms Perry said Melissa presented to Turning Point in an emotional and stressed state due to an escalation in her alcohol consumption.

"Melissa had been a social drinker for all of her adult life but as her mum's health deteriorated, her drinking escalated. Over the past two years, her consumption increased to such a level that she was drinking two bottles of white wine every evening."

When Melissa came to Turning Point, her goals included reducing her alcohol use, gaining part-time employment and improving her general health. She is well on her way to achieving those goals.

Melissa has been attending regular counselling sessions at Turning Point Eastern Treatment Services over the past few months.

She has reduced her alcohol consumption to a maximum of three glasses of white wine an evening and even has two alcohol-free days each week.

"Melissa is also now working part-time as a receptionist which she is enjoying greatly. As well as building her skills, it allows her respite from caring for her mother for a day or two," Ms Perry said.

Pleasingly, Melissa's health has also improved. She is exercising regularly, sleeping better and is less emotional.

"Melissa has shown great determination and courage, and is on the right path to recovery."



PROVIDING BETTER CARE

Turning Point is proud to be the site for a Victorian-first State Government initiative in alcohol and other drug treatment, based at Box Hill Hospital and Wellington House.

The Turning Point Addiction Medicine Unit opened the first of its new residential services in mid-lune.

Located at Box Hill Hospital, it comprises eight beds and provides medically supported management of complex alcohol and other drug withdrawal. The service is open to clients who have been referred from across Victoria.

Wellington House in Box Hill has also been refurbished and is offering a new extended residential stabilisation program.

As with the Box Hill Hospital beds, all Wellington House care will be staffed 24/7 by nurses and supported by medical specialists and allied health clinicians.

Clinical Director Dr Matthew Frei said the Turning Point Addiction Medicine Unit provided high-quality services in a supportive environment.

"This initiative addresses an important gap in the current service system by providing an extended period of

medically supported withdrawal and stabilisation to clients who present with complex medical problems.

"With growing concerns about the harms associated with pharmaceutical opioids, the new unit will also be able to support GPs in regional areas by offering a residential program for clients who need a supported environment to help stabilise their condition."

INNOVATIVE IDEAS:

Ward 1 East staff including Trudy Trice, Sharon Hill and Iulie Schlipalius are delighted with the new dedicated alcohol and other drug ward at Box Hill Hospital.

"This initiative addresses an important gap in the current service system by providing an extended period of medically supported withdrawal and stabilisation to clients who present with complex medical problems." - Dr Matthew Frei



NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

Turning Point's Neuropsychology Service, led by Dr Catherine Cox, with Dr Vanessa Petersen and Dr James Gooden, has been running since 2012.

It provides statewide neuropsychological support for individuals with long-standing alcohol and other drug histories. Services are in high demand with referrals increasing annually to almost 200 in the last financial year and workshops regularly fully booked.

The service provides evidence-based assessments that are able to diagnose acquired brain injury, intellectual disability and learning disability as well as identify an individual's strengths and weaknesses.

"By conducting this comprehensive assessment, we are able to recommend a range of treatment and support options that are tailored to clients' strengths," Dr Cox said.

"We provide targeted referral pathways, enable entry into services such as the NDIS and deliver cognitive and lifestyle modifications that ultimately reduce the likelihood of reoffending."

Dr Cox said for individuals on the program, this provided an ideal opportunity for them to receive individualised support.

Recently, the service has also been approached to play a key role across both the AOD and forensic sectors.

The service has begun providing assessments to individuals attending the new Victorian Drug Court, a division of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria.

Dr Cox said this program provided an ideal opportunity for participants to receive targeted support informed by neuropsychological assessment.

"The Turning Point neuropsychology team are very pleased to be able to offer their expertise in conducting in-depth diagnostic and functional assessments to assist in treatment planning and are delighted to work in partnership with the Victorian Drug Court."



NM SUPPORT - ONE YEAR ON

"While it's concerning that Australian nurses and midwives are experiencing health issues, it's comforting to know that the service is being utilised across the country, including rural and remote areas." Jonathan Tyler **EXPERT HELP:** NM Support clinician Elle Brown offers expert assistance to nurses and midwives.

Workplace issues including stress, bullying, harassment and burnout are among the primary health concerns for nurses and midwives in Australia contacting Nurse & Midwife Support (NM Support).

Launched in March 2017, NM Support provides confidential, 24/7 assistance and referral to nurses, midwives and students Australia wide.

Among the many issues that NM Support has received calls about, workplace issues are prominent, with physical health, alcohol and drug, and mental health concerns also common issues.

Service Manager Jonathan Tyler is very pleased with the success of the service so far.

"While it's concerning that Australian nurses and midwives are experiencing health issues, it's comforting to know that the service is being utilised across the country, including rural and remote areas," he said.

NM Support Stakeholder Engagement Manager Mark Aitken, who works with the Nursing & Midwifery Health Program Victoria, has travelled across Australia to promote the service. He says that while he is overwhelmed by the positive feedback he has received during his travels, he is hoping more nurses and midwives will take the opportunity to phone the support line.

"I would encourage any nurse or midwife who needs our help to call us today. Put our support number in your phone so that it is accessible when you need it. Whether you work in an urban or rural location, you are not alone help is available."

NM Support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call **1800 667 877** or visit www.nmsupport.org.au



GROWING VICTORIA'S ADDICTION MEDICINE SPECIALISTS

Turning Point's medical team is a great place for doctors to train and work. Clinical Director Dr Matthew Frei explains.

In 2003, Eastern Health's alcohol and drug service employed its first addiction medicine physician.

At that time, the qualification of Addiction Medicine Specialist was relatively new and Victorian jobs in the tertiary health sector were scarce. Medical trainees were difficult to attract to a specialty perceived as a poor cousin to psychiatry and general medicine.

Following its amalgamation with Eastern Health in 2009, a key goal of Turning Point was to build its medical workforce to provide high-quality specialist support to GPs and the alcohol and other drug sector, as well as create a comprehensive and rich training experience to attract trainees.

Over the past nine years, Turning Point has been successful in creating addiction training positions for both psychiatrists and physicians. Today, the training positions are in high demand and have produced a cohort of trainees who are now working as addiction specialists in Victoria.

As part of a Victorian Government initiative to grow the addiction specialist sector, Dr Keri Alexander was appointed as Director of Addiction Training at Turning Point and for the past few years, has been actively supporting other health services to grow the number of training positions available.

There is growing interest in addiction specialty training and we have been fortunate to see a five-fold increase in the number of addiction trainees across Victoria since the project started.

80 per cent

of drivers participating in telephone support were highly distressed at the time of the call. Financial impact and concern around work and family responsibilities were common sources of distress.

BECOMING BETTER DRIVERS

Driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs is a serious threat to public safety.

In 2017, VicRoads in partnership with Turning Point conducted a pilot trial of a new Brief Intervention at the Point of Detection.

This telephone support service was offered to drivers who had been detected drink or drug driving in Victoria between September 2017 and March 2018.

Turning Point research fellow Dr Jasmin Grigg said the project aimed to provide drivers with information on the penalty process and preparing for loss of licence. It also provided access to a professionally trained counsellor for confidential and anonymous alcohol and drug support.

Telephone support was provided to 28 drivers detected drink or drug driving during the trial period.



Key results included:

- ▲ At the point of detection, two methods of referral to the telephone support service were tested: e-referral and provision of a brochure. Drivers accepting an e-referral were 36 times more likely to participate in telephone support than drivers accepting a brochure.
- ▲ Eighty per cent of drivers participating in telephone support were highly distressed at the time of the call. Financial impact and concern around work and family responsibilities were common sources of distress.
- ▲ Drivers reported a positive experience with the service. All drivers who completed the outcome evaluation were satisfied with the support received and felt better informed about:
 - 1: The process that occurs after being detected drink or drug driving
 - 2: The steps to get their licence re-issued
 - **3:** The potential legal consequences if they continue to drink or drug drive.

"The proximity of telephone support to the driving offence may be acting on a window of opportunity. It might be a teachable moment whereby individuals recently detected driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs are more open to an intervention aimed at decreasing future hazardous drink and drug driving behaviour," Dr Grigg said.

EDUCATION NEEDED FOR PARTNERS AND FAMILIES

New research led by Turning Point and the Coroners Court of Victoria has found that in cases of pharmaceutical opioid overdose deaths where a partner or acquaintance was present, a significant number did not realise the importance of what they were witnessing.

Researchers conducted a review of pharmaceutical opioid overdose deaths between 2011 and 2013, utilising the Coroners' Court of Victoria Overdose Deaths Register, with 125 witnessed overdoses studied

The majority of these witnessed overdoses (77.6 per cent) occurred at the deceased's residence, with the witness being a partner or unrelated acquaintance who did not realise the significance of what was happening.

Turning Point researcher Dr Rowan Ogeil said reasons for this included:

- ▲ The witness did not recognise the symptoms as being consistent with an overdose or different from a normal sleep episode
- ▲ They did not know the deceased was using pharmaceutical opioids or did not recognise prescribed opioids can cause significant harm and death.

Dr Ogeil said targeted education could be provided more proactively to those prescribed pharmaceutical opioids and their families.

"Previous research has identified users of other opioids including heroin have been able to recognise the signs of overdose and administer medication when they have undergone training. Similar training for pharmaceutical opioid users and those close to them should be examined," Dr Ogeil said.

Dr Ogeil said further education could also benefit pharmacists and health workers A

The majority of these witnessed overdoses (77.6 per cent) occurred at the deceased's residence, with the witness being a partner or unrelated acquaintance who did not realise the significance of what was happening.

SUPPORT NEEDED:

Dr Rowan Ogeil has studied the importance of education for partners and families of patients with addiction issues.





SCREENING FOR ALCOHOL USE AMONG TEENS

Turning Point wants young people presenting with depression and other psychological concerns to be routinely screened for alcohol misuse.

A Turning Point study of 1884 high school students found a significant association between seeking help for depression and lifetime alcohol use and alcohol-related problems. Importantly, none of the adolescents who had experienced alcohol-related problems had sought help for these issues, despite seeking help for depression.

Turning Point Director Prof Dan Lubman said the results indicated that alcohol misuse was prevalent among adolescents who sought help for depression.

"Over a third of participants reported experiencing three or more separate types of alcohol-related problems over the study period," he said.

Prof Lubman said young people experienced a number of barriers to help-seeking, including the belief that they could resolve the problem by themselves.

Turning Point researcher Dr Ali Cheetham said previous research had found that general practitioners and mental health professionals did not readily identify co-occurring alcohol misuse among young people presenting with depression.

"It is critical there is a focus on the development of alternate coping strategies."



Researcher Dr Katrina Witt has studied links between suicide and alcohol misuse.



IMPACT OF ALCOHOL ON SUICIDE RATES

Turning Point experts are calling for an increased focus on the role of alcohol in suicide prevention.

In an article published in the Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, Turning Point researcher Dr Katrina Witt and Director Prof Dan Lubman said there had been limited discussion about the importance of reducing alcohol consumption in Australia, despite robust evidence demonstrating a link between suicide and population levels of drinking.

According to Dr Witt and Prof Lubman, people with alcohol and other drug use problems are typically excluded from randomised controlled trials for the prevention of self-harm and suicide, despite one-quarter to one-third of suicide descendants meeting diagnostic criteria for an alcohol use disorder.

"Individuals with alcohol concerns are infrequently identified as an important 'at risk' group, despite the fact that alcohol dependence in particular has been consistently identified as the second most common psychiatric diagnosis behind depression as a precipitating factor for suicide," Dr Witt and Prof Lubman stated.

Dr Witt and Prof Lubman said the issue was of particular concern for men because they were less likely to seek help for suicidal ideation and behaviours until they reached crisis point.

"It is important that alcohol and other drug services are adequately skilled to identify individuals at risk of suicide and appropriate prevention and intervention strategies are sufficiently resourced."

Dr Witt and Prof Lubman said future suicide prevention strategies must also advocate for policies that effectively reduce alcohol consumption and reduce stigma for people with addiction issues.



"While it is widely recognised that children can be adversely affected by parental alcohol and drug use, it is currently unknown what the best approaches are to support vulnerable families."

- Dr Debbie Scott



As a response to Victoria's Royal Commission into Family Violence and at a critical time in policy development, Turning Point has strengthened its engagement with the family violence and child protection sectors.

Strategic Lead for Population Health Research Dr Debbie Scott said Turning Point researchers were playing an important role in trying to understand the role of alcohol and drugs in family violence.

"By working with colleagues at No To Violence, Berry Street and Our Watch, we are attempting to bring together our collective wisdom to inform best practice and improve outcomes for families," Dr Scott said. Dr Scott is also working on a project funded by the NSW Ombudsman Child Death Review Team to understand the role of alcohol and other drugs in child maltreatment deaths in NSW.

"While it is widely recognised that children can be adversely affected by parental alcohol and drug use, it is currently unknown what the best approaches are to support vulnerable families," Dr Scott said.

Earlier this year, Turning Point worked with the Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria to provide Family Violence Risk Assessment Training to clinical staff. The training assists clinicians who work with victims of family violence to develop initial

NEW PARTNERSHIPS:

Dr Debbie Scott and the Turning Point team are working on better outcomes for families by collaborating with the family violence and child protection sectors.

risk assessment skills and knowledge of appropriate referral pathways.

Turning Point's Eastern Treatment Services is also hosting a Specialist Family Violence Advisor for Family Safety Victoria, who is providing capacity building, training and secondary consultation to all AOD services in the eastern region.



METHAMPHETAMINE AND PSYCHOSIS

Turning Point recently conducted a study on how thinking and memory (cognitive) processes are affected in people who experience methamphetamine-related psychosis.

Senior Lecturer Dr Shalini Arunogiri said the study aimed to identify markers that would help distinguish which people were at higher risk of developing the problem and to identify possible treatment targets.

Data was collected from 103 adults who reported using methamphetamine at least weekly; comparing people who had and had not experienced psychotic symptoms in the past month.

"We asked people about their drug use and mental health history. We also measured their level of impulsivity, decision-making, memory and how well they recognised emotions in the faces of others," Dr Arunogiri said.

"We found that psychotic symptoms in methamphetamine-using adults were not associated with problems with cognition but were associated with problems with emotion recognition. In particular, we found that accurate recognition of anger may be a specific difficulty experienced by those with methamphetamine-related psychosis."

Dr Arunogiri said the study was the largest of its kind to date and to her knowledge, was the first study that assessed emotion recognition in people with methamphetamine psychosis.

"While further research needs to be done in this area, our new findings mean that acute health and treatment services, and frontline workers may be able to assess and respond to people with methamphetamine-related psychotic symptoms differently," she said.

"Our findings also suggest that methamphetamine-related psychotic symptoms may have similarities to schizophrenia and other non-drug related psychoses."

Dr Aunogiri said the study would lead to further research to understand how people with substance-related psychoses transitioned to persistent disorders and help develop more effective services for patients experiencing such disorders.



BEYOND THE EMERGENCY

Men frequently suffer from mental health problems but can be reluctant to seek help and often they present in the context of an acute physical illness or crisis.

Given this reluctance to seek help, it is important that when they do make contact their mental health needs are appropriately identified and early, targeted interventions offered.

One source of contact is through ambulance services, with 1.2 million annual attendances for Australian men. However, these contacts have not necessarily resulted in linkages to ongoing care.

The Beyond the Emergency project provides a unique opportunity to enhance help-seeking and access to effective treatment for men and boys via an innovative national public health response.

Funded by Movember and beyondblue, the Turning Point-led project looks at ambulance attendances for men with mental health and/or alcohol and other drug related issues across four states and two territories.

Attendances were coded to comprehensively map the types, trends and context of ambulance presentations in men over three years.

There were 1230 paramedics from across Australia who completed an online survey and an additional 73 paramedics and 30 male patients who participated in comprehensive, in-depth interviews relating to their experiences with mental health and alcohol and drug presentations.



The Beyond the Emergency project provides a unique opportunity to enhance help-seeking and access to effective treatment for men and boys via an innovative national public health response.

Research fellow Dr Michael Savic said the project provided a unique insight into the current response to men presenting with mental health and/or alcohol and other drug-related issues, with important opportunities for training and service enhancement.

One product that is in development as a result of the research is a targeted paramedic training program that focuses on building paramedic skills around engagement and mental health.

The Beyond the Emergency team is also testing a low-cost population level intervention that aims to provide a sustainable public health response for male mental health presentations.

"Paramedics consistently told us that they wanted to be able to leave something with the men they saw. We are currently piloting a brief help-seeking intervention, which involves paramedics handing out a referral card to a website designed for men that promotes further help-seeking."



NATIONAL AMBO PROJECT

The National Ambo Project (NAP) is an internationally unique, national surveillance system for alcohol and other drug use and overdose attendances by ambulances.

In 2017-18, the coding team entered over

350,000 records

across six jurisdictions (ACT, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria), with data from WA available in 2018. The current data was used to generate over 10 reports to inform state and federal governments, as well as three dedicated websites and high-impact publications.

INVALUABLE FINDINGS:

Project Manager Sharon Matthews' work on the National Ambo Project has found alcohol as the drug most commonly associated with ambulance attendances

The project is a collaboration between Turning Point's Population Health Research Program, Monash University, Ambulance Victoria, Ambulance Tasmania, ACT Ambulance Service, Ambulance Service of New South Wales, Oueensland Ambulance and St John's Ambulance Northern Territory, and is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

Project Manager Sharon Matthews said coding and analysis of ambulance service records provided an excellent basis for an ongoing monitoring system for acute alcohol and drug misuse and overdose at a population level.

"This is invaluable in identifying emerging patterns in alcohol and drug misuse, including differences across sub-populations or geographic regions, or clustering within distinct time periods and informs both prevention and treatment responses, as well as acting as a potential evidence base to support evaluation of policy initiatives and intervention effectiveness," she said.

In 2017-18, the coding team coded over 350,000 records across six jurisdictions (ACT, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, Tasmania and Victoria), with data from Western Australia available in 2018. The current data was used to generate over 10 reports to inform state and federal governments, as well as three dedicated websites and high-impact publications.

In all states and territories, the substance most commonly associated with ambulance attendances is alcohol Cannabis and amphetamines are the most common illicit substances, with benzodiazepines the most common prescription medication associated with ambulance attendances.

This ambulance data provides striking evidence of the magnitude of burden of AOD misuse in the population and on health services – a burden that cannot be estimated accurately or in a timely manner through other means.





EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Turning Point is continuing to provide outstanding education and training programs to those who work in the AOD and wider health sector, as part of an overarching aim to ensure better care for consumers and their families.

Workforce Development Manager Dr Naomi Crafti said lifelong learning was essential for those who worked in the AOD field.

"At Turning Point we're proud to provide a diverse and comprehensive range of programs that help achieve this important goal," Dr Crafti said.

"Along with Turning Point's other key pillars of treatment and research, education is crucial to optimising client outcomes.

"It plays an important part in ensuring those in the sector and the broader community have the skills they need when it comes to providing better and more informed care for those who need it"

The Workforce Development team is involved in a range of projects, the majority of which are focused on training and educating people to work in the AOD sector or with clients with alcohol and drug problems.

These projects include developing and delivering the Master of Addictive Behaviours course in partnership with Monash University, enhancing the AOD skill set of new workers, providing skills-based professional development workshops to the broader sector and hosting case-based webinars for clinicians throughout Victoria.

The team has also been involved in running service workshops, piloting a placement program for the AOD sector and the community workshop series Breakthrough: Ice Education for Families.

"Breakthrough provides families with an insight into the challenges that people who know someone affected by methamphetamine or other drugs can face and the support networks available," Dr Crafti said

She said Turning Point had also continued to be a leader in building recovery resources for the sector.

"In collaboration with SHARC (Self Help Addiction Resource Centre), we developed a recovery guide for clinicians, clients and family members, and recorded a set of recovery stories to be used for educational purposes. The message is one of hope — people do recover from alcohol and other drug problems."



EDUCATION SUPPORT FOR NURSES

Turning Point has been involved in two key projects with the Australian Nurses and Midwives Federation over the past couple of years.

The first project involves delivering education on methamphetamine to more than 1500 nurses over a four-year period.

The second project is aimed at attracting nurses to the AOD sector and encouraging them to stay within it.

This has included a range of programs, including information sessions for nurses, promotional campaigns, introductory training programs on working in the AOD field and upskilling courses for nurses currently working in AOD treatment.

Scholarships for nurses to complete a Graduate Certificate in Addictive Behaviours (in conjunction with Monash University) have also been offered.





CHANGE AGENT NETWORK

The Change Agent Network (CAN) is a community of practice that unites existing and emerging leaders within the Victorian AOD sector.

Turning Point was instrumental in the CAN's establishment in 2014 and has oversight of its annual activity. It does this in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services, Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association, Bouverie Centre, Deakin University and Leadership Victoria.

Project Officer Rebekah Couldrey said CAN members had a range of skills and experiences, and were from diverse professional backgrounds.

"They are committed to developing and sharing leadership knowledge and expertise; to sharing values and principles around collaboration and evidence-based practice; and to generating and supporting culture and practice change," she said.

As part of its activities this year, the Change Agent Network held a forum called "Everything you wanted to know about the AOD sector (but didn't know who to ask)."

"The forum was targeted at mental health and allied health services, with the aim of improving relationships and responses for clients with comorbid mental health issues. The event was sold out, with over 100 attendees, and the feedback was fantastic," Ms Couldrey said.

The CAN has also strengthened its link with the Victorian Mental Health Interprofessional Leadership Network and is in the midst of a large scale collaboration.

Ms Couldrey said she had seen many CAN members grow and develop as part of their involvement.

"The training provided by Leadership Victoria has been invaluable, as has the mentoring provided internally within CAN. The Change Agent Network remains an important leadership initiative for our sector at a time of increasing sector demand and growth."





EXPERTS DEBATE:

Turning Point's Annual Symposium and Oration is a key event on Victoria's AOD sector calendar.

"Hosting forums that put a spotlight on key research and perspectives demonstrates the important leadership role Turning Point continues to hold in the addiction field." Prof Dan Lubman

EVENTS

Providing a forum for a range of perspectives across the addiction field continues to be a key priority for Turning Point.

Throughout the year, Turning Point hosts a range of events with experts providing an insight on current trends and issues in alcohol, other drugs and gambling.

The events have strong appeal among those in the AOD sector and the broader healthcare community. Importantly, they also provide an opportunity for networking and collaboration, allowing those attending to engage and share ideas with each other.

Among the regular events Turning Point hosts is lunchtime seminar series Talking Point. Guest speakers this year included A/Prof Liam Smith

from BehaviourWorks Australia, who discussed behavioural strategies for improving engagement with AOD treatment, and Prof Reinout Wiers from the University of Amsterdam on the use of targeted cognitive training in the treatment of substance use disorders

Turning Point's Annual Symposium and Oration continues to be a flagship event for the organisation and is widely attended by those in the AOD sector and beyond.

In 2017, the event was held at the State Library and tackled the sensitive subject of overdose deaths

Jeremy Dwyer from the Coroners' Court of Victoria, Prof Paul Dietze from the Burnet Institute, Dr Matthew Frei, Turning Point's Clinical Director, and Dr Marianne Jauncey, Medical Director at Sydney's Medically Supervised Injecting Centre, were all part of an expert panel.

Turning Point Director Prof Dan Lubman said events said such as the Oration and Symposium were important events on the AOD sector calendar.

"Hosting forums that put a spotlight on key research and perspectives demonstrates the important leadership role Turning Point continues to hold in the addiction field."





PARTNERSHIPS

Each year, Turning Point works with a range of organisations across the alcohol and other drug sector, the gambling help sector, the broader healthcare community, government and academia.

The collaborative relationships we share with our partners are invaluable and we are extremely grateful to them for their assistance, whether it is through funding, project participation, advice or support.

Below is a list of organisations that Turning Point has been fortunate to work with in 2018.

- ACSO-COATS
- ▲ Access Health & Community
- ▲ ACT Ambulance Service
- ▲ ACT Health
- ▲ Alcohol and Drug Foundation
- ▲ Alcohol Office, NSW Health
- ▲ Alcohol Research Group, Emeryville, California, USA
- ▲ Alfred Health
- ▲ Ambulance Tasmania
- ▲ Ambulance Victoria
- ▲ Amity Services Northern Territory
- ▲ Arabic Welfare Incorporation
- ▲ Association of Participating Service Users
- ▲ Australian Community Support Organisation

- ▲ Australian Federation of International Students
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority
- ▲ Australian Institute of Family Studies
- ▲ Australian Multicultural Community Services Inc
- ▲ Australian National University
- ▲ Australian Rechabite Foundation
- ▲ Australian Research Council
- ▲ Australian Vietnamese Women's Association
- ▲ Ballarat Community Health Centre
- ▲ Banyule Community Health Service
- ▲ Barwon Health
- ▲ Barwon Youth
- ▲ Bendigo Community Health
- ▲ beyondblue
- ▲ Black Dog Institute
- ▲ Bouverie Centre
- ▲ Brimbank City Council
- ▲ Burnet Institute
- ▲ Cancer Council Victoria
- ▲ Caraniche
- ▲ Catholic Care

- ▲ Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Toronto, Canada
- ▲ Centre for Alcohol Studies, International Health Policy Program, Bangkok, Thailand
- ▲ Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health
- ▲ Centre for Drug & Alcohol Research, Aarhus University, Denmark
- ▲ Centre for Gambling Education and Research, Southern Cross University
- ▲ Centre for Health Initiative, University of Wollongong
- ▲ Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs, Stockholm University, Sweden
- ▲ Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research, University of Oueensland
- ▲ Chisholm TAFF
- ▲ Dandenong Drug Court
- ▲ Dandenong Magistrates Court
- ▲ Deakin University
- ▲ Defence Health
- ▲ Department of Communities, Queensland
- ▲ Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania

- ▲ Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria
- ▲ Department of Health, Commonwealth
- ▲ Department of Health, Northern Territory
- ▲ Department of Justice, Victoria
- ▲ Drummond Street Services
- ▲ Eastern Access Community
 Health
- ▲ Fastern Health Foundation
- ▲ Eastern Melbourne PHN
- ▲ Eastern Region Mental Health Association
- ▲ Flinders University, SA
- ▲ Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education
- ▲ Gambling Research Australia
- ▲ Gateway Community Health
- ▲ Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria
- ▲ Harvard University Medical School
- ▲ Health Strategy and Policy Institute, Vietnam Ministry of Health
- ▲ HealthTRx
- ▲ Hong Kong Polytechnic University



- ▲ Hunter Valley Research Foundation
- ▲ Inspiro Community Health Service
- ▲ Institute for Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney
- ▲ Institute for Social Science Research, University of Queensland
- ▲ ISIS Primary Care
- ▲ lack Brockhoff Foundation
- ▲ Jesuit Social Services
- ▲ Knox Community Health Service
- ▲ La Trobe University
- ▲ Latrobe Valley Community Health Service
- ▲ Leadership Victoria
- ▲ Link Health & Community
- ▲ Logan House (Queensland)
- ▲ Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund
- ▲ Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne
- ▲ Mental Health Professionals Network
- ▲ Menzies Institute
- ▲ Monash Health
- ▲ Monash University
- ▲ Movember
- ▲ Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
- ▲ National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre

- ▲ National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales
- ▲ National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund
- ▲ National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University
- ▲ National Health and Medical Research Council
- ▲ National Research Centre for Environmental Toxicology, University of Queensland
- ▲ Neami
- ▲ Networking Health Victoria
- ▲ New Hope Foundation
- ▲ NSW Ambulance Service
- ▲ NSW Department of Justice
- ▲ Ngwala
- ▲ Nurses and Midwives Health Program Victoria
- ▲ Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
- ▲ Odyssey House
- ▲ Orygen Youth Health
- ▲ Penington Institute
- ▲ Peninsula Drug and Alcohol Program
- ▲ Peninsula Health
- ▲ Polish Community Services
- ▲ Oueensland Ambulance Service
- ▲ Queensland University of Technology
- ▲ ReGen
- ▲ SalvoCare Eastern
- ▲ SANE

- ▲ Self Help Addiction Resource Centre
- ▲ Sheffield Hallam University, UK
- ▲ Social and Health Research (SHORE) and Whariki Research Centre, Massey University, New Zealand
- ▲ South Australian Ambulance Service
- ▲ South Australian Office of Problem Gambling
- ▲ South Australian Police
- ▲ South City Clinic
- ▲ South East Alcohol and Drug Service
- ▲ South Sudanese Community in Australia Inc
- ▲ Southern Ethnic Advisory and Advocacy Council
- ▲ Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre Incorporation (UNITED)
- ▲ St John's Ambulance, Northern Territory
- ▲ St Vincent's Hospital, Melhourne
- ▲ Star Health (formerly Inner South Community Health Service)
- ▲ Stepping Up
- ▲ Stockholm Prevents Alcohol and Drug Problems, Stockholm County Council, Sweden
- ▲ Taskforce
- ▲ Thai Health Promotion Foundation
- ▲ The Salvation Army
- ▲ University of Calgary, Canada

- ▲ University of Manchester, UK
- ▲ University of Melbourne
- ▲ University of Newcastle
- ▲ University of Oregon, USA ▲ University of Queensland
- ▲ University of Tasmania
- ▲ University of Waikato, New
- Zealand ▲ University of Western Sydney
- ▲ University of Wollongong
- ▲ University of Sydney
- ▲ University of Tasmania
- ▲ VicHealth
- ▲ Victoria Police
- ▲ Victoria University
- ▲ Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- ▲ Victorian Alcohol And Drug Association
- ▲ Victorian Auditor-General's Office
- ▲ Victorian Coroners' Court
- ▲ Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation
- ▲ Western Health
- ▲ Western Sydney University
- ▲ Windana
- ▲ Women's Alcohol and Drug Services
- ▲ World Health Organisation
- ▲ Youth and Wellbeing CRC
- ▲ Youth Support and Advocacy Service



WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In 2018, Turning Point launched a new website and implemented a new co-ordinated digital communications strategy.

External Stakeholder Relations Manager Kristen Smyth said that the new site was developed after more than a year of workshops and planning on how to harness the breadth of work across Turning Point's three main platforms of clinical engagement, translational research and workforce development and education.

"The website has a fabulous new look with a number of features that focus on Turning Point's leadership across a wide range of activities," she said.

Web Administrator Brian Ward said the website was responsive and mobile-friendly to meet the needs of an increasingly mobile audience.

"Website content is being updated on a regular basis and it is being reviewed and redeveloped so it is published in a form that is readily accessible by the community," Brian said

"Our email newsletter and Twitter account are being used to deliver news and event details in a synchronised manner to our important stakeholder audiences. We are also producing more video content and this is being better integrated into the website."

Other website developments include significant upgrades to the national Counselling Online and Gambling Help Online sites, as well as Victoria's DirectLine website, incorporating alcohol and drug assessment tools and structured intervention support.



HELPLINE SERVICES

Alcohol and Drug Helpline Services

DirectLine Victoria

1800 888 236

Ice Advice Line

1800 423 238

Northern Territory Alcohol and Drug Information Service

1800 131 350

Tasmanian Alcohol and Drug Information Service

1800 811 994

Victorian Drug Diversion Advice Line 03 9418 1030

Family Drug Helpline

1300 660 068 (after hours)

Online Counselling and **Support Services**

Counselling Online (national)

www.counsellingonline.org.au

Gambling Help Online (national)

www.gamblinghelponline.org.au

SANF Forums

www.sane.org (after hours)

Professional Consultation Services

Nurse & Midwife Support

1800 667 877

www.nmsupport.org.au

Victorian Drug and Alcohol Clinical Advisory Service

1800 812 804

Tasmanian Drug and Alcohol Clinical Advisory Service

1800 630 093

Northern Territory Drug and Alcohol Clinical Advisory Service

1800 111 092

ACT Drug and Alcohol Clinical Advisory Service

03 9418 1082

Gambling Helpline Services

Gambler's Helpline Victoria

1800 858 858

Gambling Helpline NSW

1800 858 858

Gambling Helpline Tasmania

1800 858 858

Gambling Helpline Northern Territory

1800 858 858 (after hours)

Gambling Helpline South Australia

1800 858 858

Gambler's Help Youth Line Victoria

1800 262 376

Warruwi Gambling Help

1800 752 948

Information websites

AODstats

www.aodstats.org.au

DirectLine

www.directline.org.au

Just Ask Us

www.justaskus.org.au

Drug and Alcohol Clinical Advisory Service (DACAS)

www.dacas.org.au

Parenting Strategies

www.parentingstrategies.net

Turning Point

www.turningpoint.org.au

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