

TURNING POINT **2019**

TREATMENT • RESEARCH • EDUCATION



2019 SNAPSHOT



91%
indicated "high"
or "very high"
satisfaction with
our training



Worked on
more than
50
research
projects



Trained
2,660
students

and more than
1,000
community and
family members
across Australia



Our websites recorded
more than
2.1 million
page views



Provided face-to-face
care for more than
6,350
people



Over
105,000
contacts to our
telephone and online
support services



Follow up surveys
with clients indicated that
79%
experienced improvements
in their substance use
since commencing
treatment

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WELCOME

Eastern Health

Welcome to Turning Point 2019, our showcase publication celebrating achievements and progress in the specialty field of alcohol, drug and gambling addiction.

A highly-valued part of Eastern Health's Statewide Services program, Turning Point has continued to deliver outstanding and innovative research, education and treatment services over the past year – proving yet again why it is a state, national and international leader in this space.

Our service and governance model provides us with an opportunity to expand current health approaches within the community through the team's specialised skills and knowledge in the area of addiction, while also assisting in developing new methods of treatment in hospital and community settings.

This is exemplified by Turning Point's recent launch of its Peer Support Forums via Counselling Online, a national service that allows those suffering from addiction – and their friends and families – to connect with one another for support, as well as share experiences and coping strategies.

In research, Turning Point continues to be held in high regard both locally and internationally for its multi-disciplinary approach to investigating the impact of alcohol and other drugs as well as potential solutions.

"In research, Turning Point continues to be held in high regard both locally and internationally for its multi-disciplinary approach to investigating the impact of alcohol and other drugs as well as potential solutions."

Our research stretches across addiction and related health and social issues, and Turning Point finds itself uniquely placed to influence policy and enhance practice.

The workforce development team is commended for its commitment to deliver learning and development opportunities to benefit health care providers and the community as a whole.

2018-2019 at Turning Point has been a busy and successful year and there are a number of exciting projects on the horizon.

We acknowledge all Turning Point staff, partners and collaborators for their exceptional work, and extend our congratulations for their continuing achievements. We also recognise the ongoing efforts and accomplishments of Turning Point's consumers.

The focus of Turning Point is helping people affected by addiction across its treatment, research, education and leadership arms, and we look forward to its continued success in this over the next year.



**Adj Prof
David Plunkett**
Chief Executive
Eastern Health



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

Prof Christina Mitchell

Dean of Medicine, Nursing
and Health Sciences
Monash University



Prof Ian Davis

Prof of Medicine,
Monash University
and Eastern Health
Head,
Eastern Health
Clinical School

Monash University

Unfortunately addiction in its various forms remains pervasive throughout our society. All of us are touched to a greater or lesser extent by the challenges that various types of addiction pose, either at a personal level, through our work, or through its effects on society as a whole.

These challenges can only be addressed by strong and effective partnerships that bridge clinical care, education, and research. The partnership between Monash University, Eastern Health and Turning Point is a shining example of how such partnerships can work effectively to deliver innovation and world-class outcomes for the wider community.

Turning Point has an international reputation for excellence in addiction medical clinical care and research. It is also a major provider of education, ensuring that the field will be well-served in the future with skilled clinicians and researchers.

Turning Point oversees a wealth of research projects, all of which are aimed at improving outcomes for those affected by addiction and its related issues.

Turning Point also runs the Master of Addictive Behaviours course, one of the most popular and well-subscribed courses offered by Monash University.

The recent establishment of the Monash Addiction Research Centre (MARC) under Turning Point helps to cement the relationship even further. MARC brings together clinicians and academics with shared vision.

Together, the partnership of Turning Point, Eastern Health and Monash University continues to push the field ahead in terms of innovative research that is translated directly to the clinical coalface, as well as ensuring that training of future clinicians and researchers is of the highest quality. Monash University is proud to be part of this partnership.

The problems of addiction will not go away by themselves. They require careful and sensitive thought, outstanding clinical care, training and education programs, all based on the best evidence and a strong research foundation. Turning Point is an exemplary model of how these diverse components can be brought together effectively and translate into meaningful outcomes for the wider community.

Monash University congratulates Turning Point on another outstanding year of achievements and looks forward to continuing to grow and set the standard for this work. We commend this Annual Review to you.

"Monash University congratulates Turning Point on another outstanding year of achievements and looks forward to continuing to grow and set the standard for this work."

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Turning Point 2019. It is always exciting to showcase some of the fantastic work our outstanding team has delivered over the past 12 months, and the last year was certainly no exception. Spanning national service delivery, training, surveillance and clinical trials, to ensuring consumers and their families receive the highest quality care, our diverse and skilled workforce remains at the forefront of addiction treatment, research and education.

With ongoing community and political debate regarding responses to drug-related deaths, mental health, suicide, prescription medications, methamphetamine and family violence, it is critical in the era of fake news and social media-driven agendas that we continue to offer solutions that are solidly based on evidence.

Findings from our three-year Beyond the Emergency study, launched by former Prime Minister the Hon Julia Gillard AC in May 2019, highlights the impact of our research and surveillance programs in terms of public policy and planning. This work, in conjunction with other clinical and education initiatives, including unique telephone and online programs, is helping us to transform how addiction is both viewed and treated.

We are always delighted when the work we do is recognised internationally, and were elated to be one of only 20 organisations world-wide – and the only one in Australia – to be awarded a grant as part of the Google AI Impact Challenge.

This exciting project, in collaboration with our IT partners at Monash University, will focus on applying Artificial Intelligence models to enhance our coding of ambulance clinical records to build a national surveillance system that will inform suicide prevention efforts globally.

In preparation for the roll-out of Safescript, Victoria's real-time prescription monitoring system, and with funding from the Victorian Government, we have recently added two new important telephone support programs.

The GP Clinical Advisory Service (GPCAS) provides peer-based mentoring for GPs needing advice and support related to evidence-based approaches to managing addiction and pain, while the Pharmaceutical Helpline supports consumers with concerns related to prescription drugs.

Complementing these services, we have recently launched a national online Peer Support Forum on Counselling Online, which provides an important space for consumers to support each other in their recovery journeys as well as share advice, support and offer messages of hope.

These clinical services are informed by a rigorous research program which seeks to improve current clinical treatment options.

We have been fortunate to receive funding to conduct multiple clinical trials across our services including novel pharmacological interventions for methamphetamine dependence, a new injectable buprenorphine depot for opiate dependence, innovative brain training interventions post-detoxification as well as structured telephone-based psychological therapies.

This work would not be possible without the full support of our clinical staff, who continue to provide key insights that inform our research agenda.

"We are always delighted when the work we do is recognised internationally, and were elated to be one of only 20 organisations world-wide – and the only one in Australia – to be awarded a grant as part of the Google AI Impact Challenge."

By integrating the research findings into our multiple education programs, we are able to ensure the health workforce is kept up-to-date on the latest evidence and how it applies to everyday practice.

We are privileged to be able to attract key international leaders in the addiction field to share their knowledge and insights in our Masters program as well as our monthly Talking Point series, and to work with many organisations to reach out across the health landscape to build addiction competencies and capacity.

We couldn't realise any of these remarkable achievements without the dedicated, passionate and highly-skilled staff we have across the organisation, as well as the strong partnerships we prize with other organisations.

Turning Point understands that there are multiple challenges to address in the addiction field. However, by working together, we believe that change is not only possible, but close at hand.



Anthony Denham

Program Director
Statewide Services
Eastern Health



Prof Dan Lubman

Director
Turning Point
Eastern Health
Chair of Addiction
Studies and Services
Monash University

FEEDBACK



"My experience was amazing, the nurses and counsellors were fantastic, caring and extremely professional. I have learnt so much about myself."



"I was treated with respect and all of my needs were met. The groups were very informative and I took a lot away from them. I love the renovations you have done. I'm glad I chose to detox here."



"I could not have hoped for a better result and that is directly attributed to my counsellor. It just proved to me that phone counselling can work and did work for me very well."



"My experience was invaluable to my recovery from alcohol addiction. Staff exceptionally helpful, understanding and caring."



"My counsellor was very genuine and invested herself into doing the best she could with whatever was up for discussion. She is amazing and I will never forget her compassion and empathy towards me."



"My counsellor was patient, encouraging, and very easy to open up to. I felt safe discussing my thoughts, emotions and where I was at with gambling. I found the program critical to me controlling my gambling; now having the knowledge and tools to use."



"I had an amazing experience. I could not speak of my counsellor more highly. She helped me not only to learn to control my drinking but also how to process my emotions in healthy ways. This program helped me turn over a new leaf and I'm very grateful for the assistance I received."

SENIOR STAFF



Prof Dan Lubman
Director



Anthony Denham
Program Director
Statewide Services

Research and Education



A/Prof Victoria Manning
Head of Research and
Workforce Development



Kristen Smyth
Manager
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Relations



Dr Kieran Connolly
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Sharon Matthews
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Dr Debbie Scott
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Dr Michael Savic
Strategic Lead
Clinical and Social Research

Treatment Services



Dr Matthew Frei
Clinical Director



Mpilwenhle Mthunzi
Associate Program Director

Dr Shalini Arunogiri
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Specialist Clinical Services

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Manager
Turning Point Telephone
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Jonathan Tyler
Manager
Specialist Clinical Services

Orson Rapose
Systems Manager

Teddy Sikhali
Manager
Eastern Treatment Services

Alex Lebani
Nurse Unit Manager

Carmen Harris
Service Development
Manager

HOPE AND RECOVERY

Turning Point and our partner organisations provide compassionate care for people affected by substance use problems, with the view that instilling hope is a core component of treatment and the recovery journey.

No one sets out to become addicted or to be debilitated by their substance use. Turning Point staff understands there are many reasons people find themselves in this situation, and they know how hard it can be to seek professional support.

"Stigma, which is reinforced by the constant negative portrayal about addiction in the media, as well as the lack of community understanding about the effectiveness of treatment, means that there are extraordinary delays in help-seeking, and a sense of hopelessness about treatment and recovery," Prof Dan Lubman said.

"From the first contact on our helplines, to the care that people receive in our community and residential services, instilling hope is at the core of all our interactions."

Ensuring the voice and experience of those with lived experience is heard is also a key part of inspiring hope, and Turning Point has been delighted to introduce a number of opportunities for this to occur over the past few years.

"We understand the importance of providing a holistic approach to treatment. We also understand that offering a number of ways consumers can support each other in their recovery, by sharing advice, experiences and messages of hope, is extremely effective."

"Growing our peer workforce has been a priority, while our Peer Support Forums via Counselling Online and Gambling Help Online provide a safe space to connect with others for support and strategies to cope and recover," Prof Lubman said.

Nurse Unit Manager, Lisa Harvey, is thrilled to be able to integrate a peer workforce into Turning Point's residential programs.

"Recovery journeys are complex for anyone to navigate. That's why we strive to provide a range of supports that complement our treatment – this way we have the best chance of achieving a positive outcome for all."





"Growing our peer workforce has been a priority, while our Peer Support Forums via Counselling Online and Gambling Help Online provide a safe space to connect with others for support and strategies to cope and recover."

– Professor Dan Lubman

RECOVERY TREE A SIGNAL OF HOPE: This year a Recovery Tree was painted in the newly developed 1 East Withdrawal Unit at Box Hill Hospital. It was painted by one of our counsellors, Tiffany Alston. Every client who stays at 1 East has the opportunity to add a message of hope to the tree, creating a powerful symbol for everyone who stays and works there. Pictured is Lisa Harvey, Nurse Unit Manager, 1 East.

WELLINGTON HOUSE BROUGHT ME BACK



Sarah* is in her mid-forties with a long history of addiction to alcohol. She was sober for 13 years before experiencing personal trauma which triggered her into drinking again.

Turning Point Counsellor Craig Payne said when Sarah was admitted to Wellington House for the third time in roughly six months, she was determined to overcome her addiction, with the explicit aim of setting herself up to be a better mother who could care for her children.

"She had discharged herself early in her previous admissions and came back this time determined to stick it out and stay the full 28 days we can offer at Wellington House. Sarah is a powerful example of not only the difficulty of living with addiction but also the power of never giving in," Craig said.

Sarah's commitment to completing the program at Wellington House was evident throughout her admission, and she worked with the staff to navigate the tough times instead of leaving when things became too difficult. Using the supports around her and not trying to do it alone was the key to the success of her time at the service.

In her own words, Sarah was "an absolute wreck physically, mentally and spiritually" upon admission and by the time of her discharge she had begun an amazing transformation.

"She'd gone from struggling to walk to jogging around the park; from highly emotional to talking through emotions; from being anxious around others to supporting them through their journeys and providing great insight and contributions in the group program," Craig said.

Sarah felt that she became more honest with herself and more clearly identified the issues she needed to address in her life. She embraced the group program provided at Wellington House and was an active contributor. She completed her 28-day stay, and left with a clear focus and support plan.

"It was a pleasure to be part of Sarah's journey and I have high hopes for her continued sobriety," Craig said.

**Name changed for privacy*

HELPING HAND: Counsellor Craig Payne is passionate about helping consumers through their addiction journey.



"African parents feel highly disempowered by the difference in parenting practices and norms between their country of origin and Australia and attendees expressed an interest in more support in that area."

– Susan Marryatt

REACHING OUT: AFRICAN- AUSTRALIAN HEALTH LITERACY

In October 2018, Turning Point's Reaching Out program was invited to participate in a project to provide alcohol and drug health literacy education to African communities in collaboration with the African Australian Taskforce and Victoria Police.

Eight sessions were delivered between March and April 2019 across Melbourne to participants including community leaders, parents and youth. The content for the program was developed in partnership with key service organisations such as the Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS), Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY), Community Support Groups (CSGs) and Afri-Auscare.

Susan Marryatt, alcohol and other drugs (AOD) Counsellor at Turning Point and co-facilitator of the project, said feedback received about the sessions was extremely positive and encouraging.

"Community leaders were highly engaged in the program we delivered, and felt that it helped improve the community's understanding of alcohol and drug issues," Ms Marryatt said.

This is a project which not only aims to empower and increase the AOD health literacy of people within the Melbourne African communities, but also to gain a better understanding of the support and service needs of these communities.

Co-facilitator and Outreach AOD Clinician at Turning Point Ronan Walsh said that the African community's understanding and cultural practices around substance use

can be very different to European Australian cultural norms.

"African parents feel highly disempowered by the difference in parenting practices and norms between their country of origin and Australia and attendees expressed an interest in more support in that area," Mr Walsh said.

Turning Point's crucial work with the African community in Melbourne is just one of their many projects with Culturally And Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities around Australia.

REACHING OUT: Ronan Walsh and Susan Marryatt work with a number of CALD and Indigenous communities around Victoria.

60 YEARS IN NURSING AND STILL GOING STRONG

Jackie Shaw's story

Jackie personally recounts her career working as a nurse in alcohol and drug treatment services.

"For the past two and a half years, I've had the incredible privilege of working with the Nurse and Midwife Support program run by Turning Point, which allows me to share time with the generations of nurses who follow me, and perhaps to give back some of what has been given to me: a lifetime of learning and satisfaction."

– Jackie Shaw

I have worked as a nurse in the field of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) treatment since 1986. At the beginning of my career in 1958, I had no idea I'd devote so many years to alcohol and drug addiction treatment but after all these years, I am still glad that this is the path I walked down.

Growing up in the United Kingdom, I chose nursing because I knew it would give me a tertiary education while also providing board and lodging, clothing (in the shape of uniforms), a small salary, and a chance to live in London. It was as a nursing student that I first met people who were severely addicted to alcohol. They were often homeless, living in the still unrepaired bomb sites from WWII, on the streets, or in men's hostels nearby.

In 1967, I immigrated to Australia and started working in the neurology ward of a city hospital. Then, in the mid-1980s I started working part-time with the St Vincent's Department of Community Medicine (effectively their alcoholism clinic), where I ran drink-driving courses and was involved with kids who were referred from the court for treatment and counselling for alcohol and other drugs.

The transition from neurology to addiction medicine seemed a natural progression to me, as much of the symptomology I observed in consumers with addiction was neurological or psychological.

When a new residential detox clinic opened in Melbourne in 1988, I joined the team as deputy director. The publicly-funded detox clinics at that time were initially 'non-medicating'; they offered a true 'cold turkey' experience with supportive care.

The skills of the workers and the quiet environment were the treatment. However, as our understanding grew we moved on to the biopsychosocial model of care and applied it with compassion – with great effect. After a few days of shelter, good food, fluids (no alcohol, of course), showers, clean clothes and care, a new person would emerge. It was incredibly inspiring!

I stayed at the clinic until 1990, following which I was invited to start a pilot home detox program and left to pioneer the program in Box Hill using the Emergency Department of Box Hill Hospital as 'back-up'.

Through this program, our skills and understanding grew. The literature started to show better results with empathy, unconditional positive regard, and consumer-centred counselling – all the models that we now consider basic.

For the past two and a half years, I've had the incredible privilege of working with the Nurse and Midwife Support program run by Turning Point, which allows me to share time with the generations of nurses who follow me, and perhaps to give back some of what has been given to me: a lifetime of learning and satisfaction.

When I look back over those 60 years I can't believe it's been that long. There has been so much change, but one constant has been the consumers. While the faces change and the details are different, the patterns and themes are the same. The other constant has been the wonderful people I have worked with. So much compassion, dedication and laughter.

I am a nurse, and I'm proud of it. It is my craft, profession and identity – I love being a nurse and am happy I chose an exciting and fulfilling career working in the field of addiction.

DEDICATED TO CARE: Nurse Jackie Shaw has been helping people for 60 years - and counting.



SUPPORTING SAFESCRIPT

Overdose deaths related to pharmaceutical drugs continue to rise, unfortunately exceeding the number of lives lost on Victorian roads each year. As part of a broader public health response, in early 2019 the Victorian Government launched the real-time prescription monitoring program, SafeScript.

SafeScript provides a real-time, point-of-care picture of the supply to patients of high-risk medicines such as opioids and benzodiazepines. This enables more informed and safer clinical decisions to be made by doctors and pharmacists across Victoria.

To support General Practitioners (GPs) through the implementation of SafeScript, the Victorian Government funded Turning Point to develop the General Practitioner Clinical Advisory Service (GPCAS), a peer mentoring and support service delivered via telephone.

Dr Matthew Frei, Clinical Director at Turning Point, said that twelve GPs from across Victoria's six Primary Health Networks (PHNs) had received comprehensive clinical training, equipping them to provide advice and support to their colleagues related to common clinical challenges identified via SafeScript.

"Advisors have responded to a growing number of queries about high-risk

medicine use in patients with multiple prescribers or pharmacies, managing dependence, chronic pain and referral options. They are also supported by a team of experienced addiction and pain specialists," Dr Frei said.

Demand for GPCAS' services is expected to grow significantly in 2020, when SafeScript use becomes compulsory for all doctors prescribing monitored medicines. GPCAS is an invaluable service for Victorian prescribers and complements Turning Point's existing suite of helpline support, including the Drug and Alcohol Clinical Advisory Service (DACAS), which has provided addiction specialist advice to primary care and hospitals for over twenty years.

"Advisors have responded to a growing number of queries about high-risk medicine use in patients with multiple prescribers or pharmacies, managing dependence, chronic pain and referral options."

– Dr Matthew Frei

SAFER PRESCRIBING:
GPCAS advisors at Turning
Point are fielding a steadily
growing number of queries.



PEER SUPPORT FORUM ADDED TO COUNSELLING ONLINE

This year Turning Point launched the Counselling Online Peer Support Forum, a recovery-orientated peer support community for people affected by their own or a loved one's substance use.

The Forum aims to foster an environment for people concerned about their own substance use to seek support whenever they need it. It also provides a dedicated space for family members and friends to share their stories and gain support from others in similar situations.

Rick Loos, Manager of Turning Point's Telephone and Online Services, said it provides a safe environment for peers to share their stories, strategies and messages of hope to others interested in making positive changes to their substance use.

"And while there is a strong focus on peer support, the Forum is moderated by Turning Point's trained alcohol and other drug counsellors to ensure discussion and support is provided safely, and we can respond to those needing immediate help," Mr Loos said.

The forum's development is based on the experience gained through launching and maintaining the highly successful Gambling Help Online Peer Support Forum.

Now in its sixth year of operation, the Gambling Help Online Peer Support Forum has provided support for almost


11,000
members

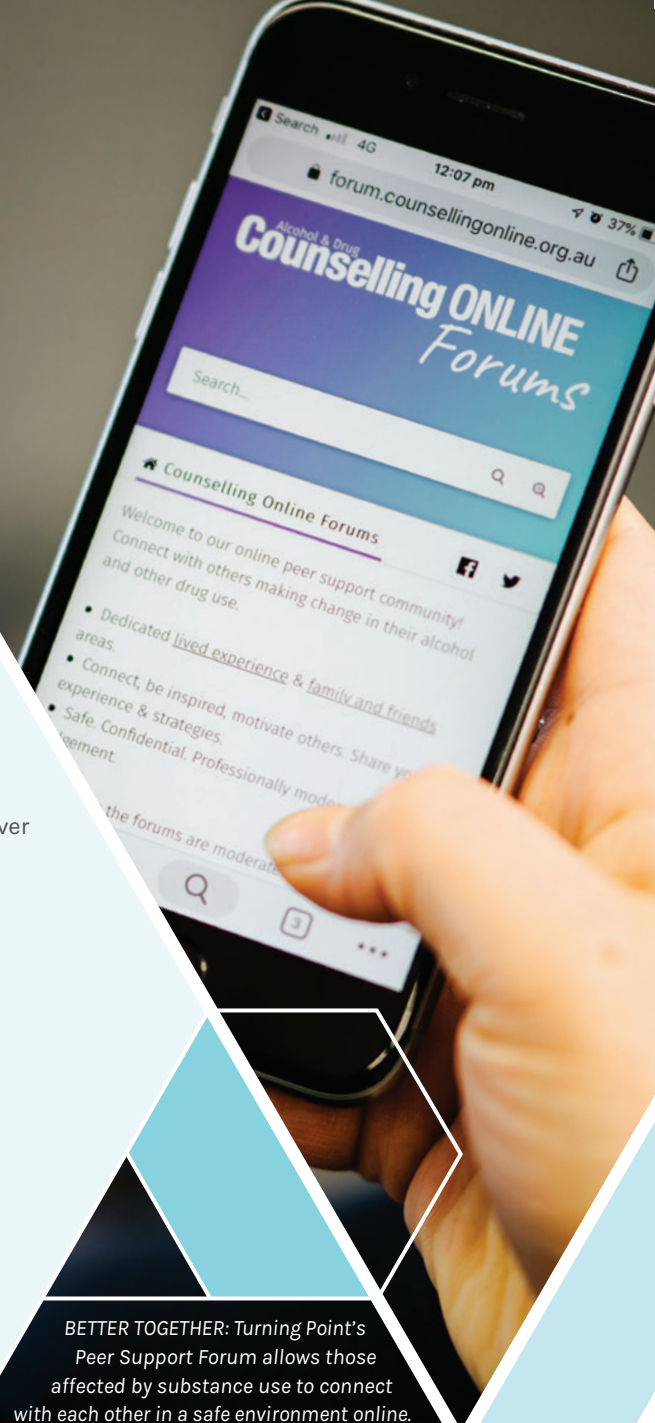

who have posted over
20,000
messages

Following its launch in January 2019, the Counselling Online Peer Support Forum has seen promising results, with over


750
member registrations
in its first six months

The Forum has gained a high level of interest from both consumers and treatment providers across Australia, demonstrating the importance of offering a range of support options that can be easily accessed by consumers and families.

BETTER TOGETHER: Turning Point's Peer Support Forum allows those affected by substance use to connect with each other in a safe environment online.



TREATMENT INNOVATION: MEDICATION CLINICAL TRIALS

Victorians now have the opportunity to participate in world-first clinical trials of new medications for addiction through a range of clinical trials offered this past year at Turning Point. This has included clinical trials of N-acetyl cysteine and lisdexamfetamine for methamphetamine and a new injectable buprenorphine depot for opioid use disorder.

Clinical Lead of Specialist Clinical Services at Turning Point Dr Shalini Arunogiri is thrilled to have been at the forefront of this clinical innovation.

"To see treatments in action that have the potential to transform the recovery journey of consumers is incredibly exciting," Dr Arunogiri said.

A key achievement for Turning Point has been the ability to offer Victorians a unique chance to participate in these world-first trials. Participants have included individuals who would not

otherwise have accessed treatment or care for addiction, including people who have been using the Melbourne Supervised Injecting Room (MSIR).

Dr Arunogiri said that many participants have reported that the new treatments have changed their quality of life, and have enabled them to engage with friends, family and work.

"These trials have been brought to fruition through the collaboration of the clinical trials team at Turning Point, bringing together experienced multi-disciplinary clinicians including addiction specialist doctors, nurses and psychologists and research staff such as research nurses and research assistants," she said.

"We look forward to sharing the results with participants, drug and alcohol service providers and the community when the trials are completed. These trials have also fostered our team's passion for bringing world-first clinical innovations to Victorians, and we look forward to undertaking more of them in the coming years."

"To see treatments in action that have the potential to transform the recovery journey of consumers is incredibly exciting."

– Dr Shalini Arunogiri

POSITIVE CHANGES: Dr Shalini Arunogiri's work on innovative treatments has changed the lives of many participants.



"Men thought risky drinking started at between 10 to 30 standard drinks, which sits in stark contrast to National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines of no more than four drinks in a single occasion."

– Dr Michael Savic

CHANGE NEEDED: Results from a study of Victorian men's drinking behaviours show a culture change is needed.



UNDERSTANDING AND CHANGING MEN'S DRINKING CULTURES

Men are overrepresented in statistics on alcohol consumption and related harms.

As part of a project funded by VicHealth, researchers from Turning Point and Monash University examined the factors influencing risky drinking among men. This was accomplished by conducting focus groups with over 100 Victorian men, individual interviews with 40 men, and observations of the settings in which men drink.

The study showed that men considered drinking to be a central part of socialising with other men, and that drinking enabled men to 'open up' and connect with other men.

Dr Michael Savic, Strategic Lead of Clinical & Social Research at Turning Point, said men did not see drinking as risky in the same way that public health organisations do, and were sceptical of public health messages around drinking.

"For example, men thought risky drinking started at between 10 to 30 standard drinks, which sits in stark contrast to National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines of no more than four drinks in a single occasion," Dr Savic said.

Men also typically reported that they would not intervene in another male friend's drinking unless he was incapable

of taking care of himself or where there was the possibility of drink-driving. However, some men reported engaging in more discreet or 'stealth' forms of care (e.g. providing subtle hints or water) in order to look after their friends without undermining their sense of independence.

The results of this research indicate changes are needed to address men's risky drinking cultures, and researchers at Turning Point continue vital work to develop and implement both policy and practice initiatives that help lead to better health outcomes for men.

REDUCING RELAPSE: (L to R) Hugh Piercy, Dr Joshua Garfield and A/Prof Victoria Manning have worked on a study to reduce methamphetamine relapse.

RE-TRAINING THE BRAIN DURING METHAMPHETAMINE WITHDRAWAL

Research suggests that up to 80 per cent of people relapse after being treated for methamphetamine withdrawal, highlighting the need to test new approaches. One technique that has proven effective for people with alcohol use disorders is Cognitive Bias Modification (CBM), which aims to reduce automatic (subconscious) responses to cues that can trigger cravings and lead to consumption.

Head of Research and Workforce Development at Turning Point Associate Professor Victoria Manning said that this simple, computerised "brain-training" teaches the brain to avoid methamphetamine images and approach non-methamphetamine images.

"After finding that it significantly reduced relapse after alcohol withdrawal, we wanted to examine its feasibility among people in treatment for methamphetamine withdrawal," A/Prof Manning said.

This study – a world first – was conducted at Wellington House, Depaul House, and Windana by researchers from Turning Point, Monash University and Deakin University, and was funded through a grant from the Eastern Health Foundation.

The main aim of the study was to determine the acceptability and feasibility of CBM with consumers withdrawing from methamphetamine. Participants underwent four consecutive days of training and completed follow-ups assessing treatment outcomes both two weeks and three months after being discharged.

A/Prof Manning noted that a large majority of participants found the training to be an appropriate treatment option during withdrawal and reported that it improved their attention, with very few reporting that it triggered craving.

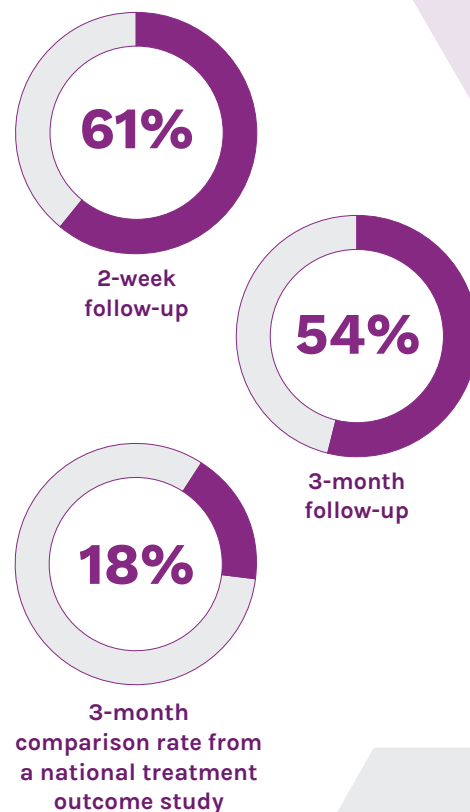
"Of the participants followed-up, 61 per cent reported no methamphetamine use during the first two weeks following discharge. Three months after leaving the withdrawal unit, 54 per cent reported no methamphetamine in the past month – much higher than the 18 per cent observed in previous research," she said.

The findings, recently published in the Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, are encouraging and suggest CBM could also be beneficial for people seeking treatment for methamphetamine use in terms of reducing relapse.

Turning Point will now look to conduct a large, randomised controlled trial to test the efficacy of this low-cost, easily-administered intervention to help improve treatment outcomes.



Abstinence rate from methamphetamine



USING AI TO ESTABLISH A WORLD-FIRST SUICIDE MONITORING SYSTEM

In May 2019, Google.org announced that Turning Point, in partnership with Monash University, was successful in securing a \$1.2 million grant to use artificial intelligence (AI) to assist the coding of national ambulance data for suicide-related attendances.

Professor Dan Lubman, Turning Point Executive Clinical Director and Project Lead, said that as the only Australian grant recipient and one of only 20 organisations funded globally, Turning Point is excited to be working with Google to establish a cost-effective model that can inform suicide prevention efforts globally.

"Suicide rates are unfortunately continuing to rise in Australia and around the world, and this

grant from Google gives Turning Point the opportunity to undertake a project that has huge potential to make a positive impact," Prof Lubman said.

"Ambulances are often the first point of contact in a crisis, making ambulance clinical records a unique data source to help inform suicide prevention efforts. The focus of this project will be the timely identification and coding of suicide-related ambulance attendance data to inform policy and public health responses for suicide prevention."

Turning Point has been coding ambulance records for alcohol and drug-related attendances since 1998 and more recently, with funding from Beyond Blue and Movember, has demonstrated that

ambulance records can also be used to map suicide-related attendances in the Beyond the Emergency study (see pages 20-21 for further information).

Given the ubiquity of ambulance services around the world, there is potential to adapt the AI-informed system developed through this project for suicide surveillance efforts in low- and middle-income countries, where such data is lacking.

"The grant will help us generate data that will play a central role in informing public health prevention, policy and intervention, as well as identifying emerging trends, populations and geographical hotspots for targeted responses," Prof Lubman said.

GLOBAL IMPACT: Prof Dan Lubman, Dr Debbie Scott and Sharon Matthews have already contributed to a Google workshop in San Francisco.

"The focus of this project will be the timely identification and coding of suicide-related ambulance attendance data to inform policy and public health responses for suicide prevention."

– Professor Dan Lubman



BEYOND THE EMERGENCY

Turning Point's world first study – Beyond the Emergency – with Beyond Blue, Movember and Monash University and in partnership with ambulance services Australia-wide, has investigated the scale and nature of male mental health presentations to ambulance services.

The three-year research program found that men experiencing acute mental health issues frequently present to ambulance services, with paramedics feeling that they are poorly equipped to respond effectively. Findings consistently highlighted a system that is not working for men or ambulance services.

This ground-breaking research also paints a more complete picture of male suicidal behaviour in Australia, which could be up to three times higher than hospital estimates.

The research team coded ambulance clinical records from all states and territories, except South Australia and Western Australia.

Dr Debbie Scott, Strategic Lead for Turning Point's Population Health team, said the team found that between July 2015 and June 2016 there were more than 110,000 ambulance attendances to men experiencing acute mental health issues.

"That equates to approximately 300 call-outs relating to men's mental health every day. Of these, almost 80 per cent require transport to hospital and over a quarter were attending to men who had tried to take their lives or were having serious thoughts about doing so," Dr Scott said.

The national survey of paramedics revealed only 14 per cent reported comprehensive mental health training, and two in three felt underprepared in responding to mental health presentations.

Interviews with paramedics supported the survey data, and stressed the need for organisational and whole-of-system responses to support paramedics to provide appropriate care to people affected by mental health issues.

The research team also interviewed men who had recently accessed an ambulance service for mental health issues. In these conversations, men spoke about how they valued empathy, non-judgment and professionalism when seeing paramedics and how they also needed more support from the system.

"The Beyond the Emergency report recommends better training for paramedics, sustained use of ambulance records to identify and monitor community health needs and a sweeping overhaul of the current service system," said Professor Dan Lubman, Turning Point Executive Clinical Director and Project Lead.

"The Beyond the Emergency report recommends better training for paramedics, sustained use of ambulance records to identify and monitor community health needs and a sweeping overhaul of the current service system."

– Professor Dan Lubman

Men's experiences

Men value professionalism, compassion and positive communication when receiving paramedic support

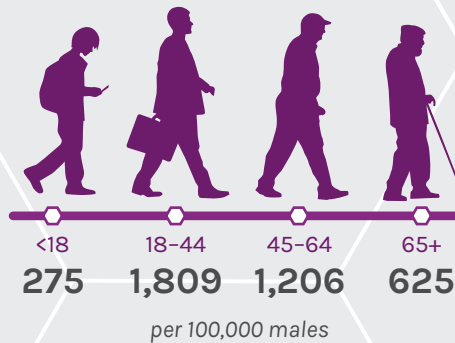


12-MONTH OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL AMBULANCE DATA



More than
110,000
ambulance
attendances
in 2015/16 for
males experiencing
acute mental
health issues

By age



Re-presentations

42%

of attendances had
multiple attendances,
with



10x

Transportation to hospital

78.3%

of attendances were transported
to hospital, typically the closest
emergency department



7.4%

re-presenting 10 times
or more

Paramedic experiences



<14%
reported
comprehensive training
for mental health
responses

<1 in 3
felt highly confident
in responding to people
experiencing
mental health issues



Enhance ambulance service capacity

to respond effectively to mental health
presentations

Continue to use coded ambulance clinical records

to identify and monitor community
mental health needs

Re-design the current service system

to provide timely, accessible
and non-stigmatising
treatment options

UNDERGRADUATE INTERNSHIPS AT TURNING POINT

The Turning Point Internship Program was established in 2018 and is funded by the Victorian Government. It provides third-year students of psychology and social work experience in the field of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) and equips them with the skills to be more "job-ready" to work in the sector.

Twice a year, 10 students who are enrolled in a placement unit at Melbourne-based universities, currently Deakin University and RMIT, are admitted into the program. The Internship Program involves 140 hours of education and observational placement over a 16-week period.

The interns complete two units of competency from the AOD skill set and observe activities across all clinical areas of Turning Point including telephone, online, outpatient services and residential treatment.

Workforce Development Manager Dr Naomi Crafti said the combination of skills training and real-world clinical observation has resulted in students developing a highly desirable and transferable skill set.

"This makes them more job-ready and more attractive to prospective employers in the AOD sector," Dr Crafti said.

This program will run again next year, and moving forward Turning Point plans to follow students after graduation to further understand the impact this internship has on their career.

"This makes them more job-ready and more attractive to prospective employers in the AOD sector."

– Dr Naomi Crafti

An evaluation after the first internship found that:

100%

said that the placement increased their desire to work in the AOD field

100%

said that the placement offered them new information about the AOD field

100%

of interns said they would recommend this placement to others



"Had an awesome first day at Carrington Road, so interesting and such lovely staff!"



COLLABORATION WITH THE ANMF

Turning Point continues to work with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) on key training projects.

One recent project has involved Turning Point providing training on evidence-based treatments for methamphetamine to more than 1,500 nurses over a four-year period.

Another project is focused on increasing the number of nurses working in the field of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) and also supporting current AOD nurses to continue in this area.

There are a number of areas of focus including:



Introductory training programs on working in the AOD field



Upskilling nurses currently working in AOD treatment



Holding information sessions for nurses



Scholarships for nurses to complete a Graduate Certificate in Addictive Behaviours (in conjunction with Monash University)



Promotional campaigns

Turning Point is thrilled to be working with the ANMF on these projects, and looks forward to continued collaboration for many years to come.

EDUCATION EXCELLENCE: (L to R) Dr Naomi Crafti, Phoebe Spry-Bailey and Sheridan Byrne, part of the Workforce Development team that provides unique learning opportunities.



"This course has been specifically designed for practitioners and policymakers, incorporating the latest research evidence related to treatment, neuroscience, social policy and public health, as well as emerging addictions such as gaming disorder."

– Dr Lopez-Fernandez

WELCOME ADDITION: Dr Olatz Lopez-Fernandez has further strengthened the Master of Addictive Behaviours course.

NEW MASTER OF ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOURS COORDINATOR

Turning Point's new Master of Addictive Behaviours (MAddBeh) Course Coordinator, Dr Olatz Lopez-Fernandez, brings a global level of experience to our education programs.

Before moving to Australia, Dr Lopez-Fernandez worked as a Senior Lecturer and Senior Researcher across multiple European universities including the University of Barcelona (Spain), Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium), and Nottingham Trent University (United Kingdom).

Dr Lopez-Fernandez is unique in terms of having a PhD in education as well as a second PhD in psychology. By bringing together both elements, Dr Lopez-Fernandez is ensuring the world-class addiction content within the Masters course is provided with the latest evidence-based approaches to adult online learning.

Dr Lopez-Fernandez also brings an established track record in behavioural addictions, including internet, social media and gaming addictions.

With a strong background in teaching, Dr Lopez-Fernandez said she is impressed with the high quality of the Master of Addictive Behaviours course, which features lectures from

internationally-renowned addiction experts from both Australia and overseas.

As the course is offered fully online, it provides flexibility and access to expert lecturers and high-quality resources that are consistently valued by learners of all ages and disciplines.

"This course has been specifically designed for practitioners and policymakers, incorporating the latest research evidence related to treatment, neuroscience, social policy and public health, as well as emerging addictions such as gaming disorder. It provides a unique opportunity to build specialist knowledge, as well as academic and professional competencies," said Dr Lopez-Fernandez.

EVENTS

Offering an insight into current trends and issues across the alcohol, other drugs and gambling fields, Turning Point's calendar of events continues to prove integral to the addiction sector and broader health care community.



Turning Point's series of engaging **lunchtime seminars, Talking Point**, continued this year with notable guest speakers including Dr Matthew Young, A/Prof Suzanne Nielsen, Professor Fiona Measham, Dr Malcolm Dobbin, Prof Gordon Smith and A/Prof Bryce McLeod, as well as Turning Point's Professor Dan Lubman, Dr Olatz Lopez-Fernandez and Dr Shalini Arunogiri.



Turning Point also hosted several **Connect and Learn webinars** which covered a broad range of important topics such as methamphetamine-associated psychosis, risk in adolescence, women in substance abuse treatment and an introduction to SafeScript.



In October 2018, Turning Point hosted its **annual Symposium and Oration**. Over 120 people attended and heard from speakers discussing the powerful topic "*the many faces of trauma*".

Dr Louise Du Chesne began the event with her insights into the military nature of trauma. Turning Point's Kristen Smyth spoke of her own experience of untreated childhood trauma. Jacqui Watt from No To Violence, a support and guidance service for male perpetrators of family violence also spoke at the event.

The 2018 Oration was delivered by Liana Buchanan, Victoria's Principal Children's Commissioner, who spoke about what she had seen in child protection and young people in the justice system over the last 18 months. She described continuing systemic issues and called for justice for those who still suffer abuse and trauma.

Turning Point Program Director Anthony Denham described the Oration and Symposium as insightful and deeply moving.

"The audience's engagement proved once again that forums like these are such important events on the AOD sector calendar. Turning Point looks forward to continuing to lead the way in the addiction field with our events, research and evidence-based treatment," Mr Denham said.



TAKE NOTE: A highly engaged audience heard from a range of speakers at the 2018 Turning Point Oration and Symposium, a key event in the AOD calendar.

ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

Turning Point continues to grow its internet and social media presence.

This year, Turning Point has:



Reached more than
2 million
webpage views
across its websites –
a 25 per cent increase
from last year.



Continued its social media
growth, with almost

9000
followers

across its programs
platforms including Twitter,
Facebook and Instagram.



**Rebuilt the Drug and Alcohol
Clinical Advisory Service
(DACAS) website,**

which now has a modern design
that is mobile-friendly.



**Improved user experience
across all our websites**

with a series of web enhancement
activities including new
self-assessment tools and online
counselling and email support.

In the second half of 2018, Turning Point conducted a social media strategy review based on existing reach and engagement data which led to a revision of content and posting frequency for each program.

Posting content on topics including self-care, mindfulness, physical and creative activities has helped prepare and maintain consumers' readiness to engage with treatment. This approach has led to an increase in followers across all programs.

Turning Point continues to expand its social media presence, with plans to launch new LinkedIn accounts and introduce new accounts across other platforms for several programs.

***BETTER CONNECTION:** Turning Point will be launching a number of social media initiatives in the coming year.*



"Thank you - what
a brilliant idea.
God bless"



"I hope this helps anyone else
that reads this and starts them
on the way to recovery."



HELPLINE SERVICES

Turning Point operates a wide range of telephone and online support services across Australia.

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

SANE Forums
www.sane.org
(after hours forum moderation)

DirectLine Online Counselling Victoria
www.directline.org.au

Professional Consultation Services

Nurse & Midwife Support
1800 667 877
www.nmsupport.org.au

GP Clinical Advisory Service
1800 812 804

Safescript Pharmaceutical Helpline
1800 737 233

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

Drug and Alcohol Clinical Advisory Service (DACAS)
www.dacas.org.au

Parenting Strategies
www.parentingstrategies.net

Turning Point
www.turningpoint.org.au

Social media

Follow us

 @TurningPointAu

 youtube.com/TurningPointAU

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 2019.

- 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
- Area 4 Pharmacotherapy Network
- Association of Participating Service Users
- Auckland University
- Australasian Chapter of Addiction Medicine
- Australian Community Support Organisation
- Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority
- Australian Institute of Family Studies
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
- Australian National University
- Australian Research Council
- Ballarat Community Health Centre
- Banyule Community Health Service
- Barwon Health
- Barwon Youth
- Bendigo Community Health
- beyondblue
- Bouverie Centre
- Burnet Institute
- Cancer Council Victoria
- Caraniche
- Catholic Care
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Toronto, Canada
- Centre for Health Initiative, University of Wollongong
- Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research, University of Queensland
- Chisholm TAFE
- City of Melbourne
- City of Port Phillip
- City of Stonnington
- City of Whittlesea
- Curtin University
- 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
- EACH
- Eastern Health Foundation
- Eastern Melbourne PHN
- Flinders University
- Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health
- Gateway Community Health
- Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria
- Harvard University Medical School
- HealthTRx
- Inspiro Community Health Service

- Institute for Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney
- Institute for Social Science Research, University of Queensland
- ISIS Primary Care
- Jesuit Social Services
- Knox Community Health Service
- La Trobe University
- Latrobe Valley Community Health Service
- Leadership Victoria
- Link Health & Community
- Logan House (Queensland)
- Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne
- Mental Health Professionals Network
- Menzies Institute
- Monash Health
- Monash University
- Movember
- National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales
- National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University
- National Health and Medical Research Council
- National Research Centre for Environmental Toxicology, University of Queensland
- Networking Health Victoria
- NSW Ambulance Service
- NSW Department of Justice
- Ngwala
- Nursing & Midwifery Health Program Victoria
- Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
- Odyssey House
- Orygen Youth Health
- Penington Institute
- Peninsula Drug and Alcohol Program
- Peninsula Health
- Queensland Ambulance Service
- ReGen
- Royal Australasian College of Physicians
- Royal Australasian College of General Practitioners
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
- SalvoCare Eastern
- SANE
- Self Help Addiction Resource Centre
- Sheffield Hallam University, UK
- SMART Recovery
- South Australian Ambulance Service
- South Australian Office of Problem Gambling
- South City Clinic
- South East Alcohol and Drug Service
- St John's Ambulance, Northern Territory
- St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne
- Star Health (formerly Inner South CHS)
- Stepping Up
- Taskforce
- The Salvation Army
- University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
- University of Calgary, Canada
- 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 Coroner's Court
- Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation
- Western Health
- Western Sydney University
- Windana
- Women's Alcohol and Drug Services
- World Health Organisation
- Youth Support and Advocacy Service



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