

Meeting Communique

13 - 14 June 2024

The Australian National Advisory Council on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ANACAD) is pleased to publish this communique following the most recent ANACAD meeting, held on Kurna land in Adelaide on 13-14 June 2024.

The Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon Mark Butler MP, attended the meeting and discussed a number of important items with ANACAD, including alcohol policy and emerging issues including synthetic drugs.

To help inform discussions on synthetic drugs, representatives from three organisations were invited to present to ANACAD in a dedicated session, including:

- The Emerging Drugs Network of Australia, who provide up to date data on illicit substances through emergency physicians, clinical toxicologists and forensic laboratories. Their presentation focused on the importance of a national approach to toxicosurveillance in sentinel emergency departments,
- The National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs, a consortia of research centres and St Vincent's Health Australia, who aim to detect and respond to trends in emerging drug health. Their presentation focused on the Prompt Response Network and its ability to support a rapid response to emerging drugs, and
- The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, a leading research group located at the University of New South Wales who provide advice on evidence-based responses to the health challenges related to alcohol and other drugs. Their presentation provided an update on its Drug Trends program and broader drug monitoring capacity in Australia.

The presentations provided valuable insights into Australia's capacity to respond to emerging drug issues, and Members appreciated the opportunity to discuss specific issues with people who are currently working in this space.

The Chair of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Addiction Medicine Specific Interest Group provided a presentation on improving GP engagement with alcohol and other drug (AOD) work. Following the presentation, Members considered possible avenues for increasing engagement with AOD in primary care settings.

Members discussed progress made against the ANACAD workplan and considered a number of other AOD matters, including:

- The end of the Opioid Dependence Treatment Transition Process,
- Continuation of work to reduce AOD related stigma and discrimination,
- Associations between alcohol and other drug use and family, domestic and sexual violence,

- Recently released AOD research and emerging key themes, and
- Future engagement with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare regarding additional analysis of the *National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2022-2023*.

The Chair of ANACAD will provide confidential advice to Minister Butler following this meeting, which will include insights from the presentations.

The next ANACAD meeting will be held in September 2024.