



Western Australian Network of  
Alcohol & other Drug Agencies

## **New National Standard for Alcohol and Drug agencies launched in Perth**

**28 August 2012**

A new national standard for alcohol and other drug agencies was launched in Perth today by the Minister for Mental Health, the Hon. Helen Morton MLC.

The *Standard on Culturally Secure Practice for the Alcohol and other Drug Sector* has been developed by the Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (WANADA) with funding from the WA Drug and Alcohol Office and the Australian Government's Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH).

The standard can be applied by services throughout Australia, including 90 services in WA. It is the first to require that services define and understand their target population, whether it be men, women, young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or people from a particular location.

DrugARM WA is one of eight Western Australian organisations currently working towards certification against the new standard.

"Certification is an external recognition of the high standard of service alcohol and other drug agencies make to the community," says DrugARM WA CEO Debra Zanella.

Agencies have previously worked on quality improvement using the WA Alcohol and other Drug Sector Quality Framework. By applying the new standard, agencies can now work towards formal certification.

WANADA CEO Jill Rundle says she has seen enormous changes over the last seven years as services have worked to improve outcomes for the community.

"We've seen so many improvements, including improved services for people who have both mental health and alcohol and other drug issues and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people," said Ms Rundle. "Our growing and increasingly diverse population requires flexible services that make it their business to know the communities they serve."

According to the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare, in 2009–10 52 government-funded alcohol and other drug treatment agencies in WA provided 17,187 treatment episodes, an increase of 272 treatment episodes from the previous year.

DrugARM WA works with people in regional and metropolitan areas including Armadale, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, Port Hedland, Northbridge and Joondalup. "It's important that we know the specific needs of these very different communities," says Ms Zanella.

"The strength of the standard means that the continuous improvement methodology can be used not only agency wide but for smaller programs within services, such as our street vans. More importantly, we know that it will lead to better outcomes for the people we work with."

### **Media Enquiries**

Jill Rundle, CEO, WANADA on (08) 6365 6365 or mobile 0407 055 513  
Debra Zanella, CEO, DrugARM WA on (08) 9497 9498