



Western Australian Network of  
Alcohol & other Drug Agencies

# Standard on Culturally Secure Practice Review Update

## Background

The *Western Australian Alcohol and other Drug Sector Quality Framework (2005)* was developed in consultation with the WA alcohol and other drug (AOD) sector, and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AOD services Australia-wide. The Framework formed the basis for the *Standard on Culturally Secure Practice (Alcohol and other Drug Sector) (2012)*.

The Standard is industry specific in that it was developed by the AOD sector for the AOD sector. However, it contains all of the elements of a quality management system standard (like ISO9001:2015) and is flexible enough to be applied by services that offer a diverse range of programs to meet identified service user needs. The Standard is registered with the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) and is supported by the *WANADA Scheme* which lays down the requirements for auditing against the Standard.

Cultural security is a core principle of the Standard and aims to guide services in working respectfully and appropriately with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Standard also aims to support a culturally responsive approach to working with people generally. Factors considered include age, social circumstances, values, expectations, belief systems, ethnic and cultural background, sexuality and gender and co-occurring social, physical and mental health issues. For all people, a number of these factors come in to play.

The Standard has been adopted by organisations across Western Australia including regional, rural and remote services and by an organisation in Far North Queensland. Participating service types currently include: supported accommodation, outpatient counselling, support and advocacy, residential rehabilitation, needle and syringe exchange, outreach, sobering up shelters, community patrols, medical services and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

## Standard Review

WANADA is currently coordinating a review in consultation with interested parties which seeks to refine and improve the current Standard. Those involved include:

- Certified member and non-member organisations
- Interested member organisations
- Institute for Healthy Communities Australia Certification (IHCAC) – Certification Body
- Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) – Accreditation Body
- Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA) – co-user of Scheme
- Other relevant health and community service organisations, funding bodies, contract auditors, other peak bodies, research bodies (including National Drug Research Institute), Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia, Aboriginal Elders (Looking Forward, Moving Forward Project) and service user representatives.

So far, 31 interested parties have contributed to the review.

The project is overseen by a Steering Group comprising senior representatives from a range of AOD service types and other interested parties such as the Mental Health Commission (Non-Government Purchasing and Development Directorate and Alcohol Other Drugs and Prevention Services - *Strong Spirit Strong Mind Aboriginal Programs and Workforce Development*), the WA Primary Health Alliance and the Department of Justice.

## Project Objectives and Deliverables

- **Revised Standard (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)**
- **Revised Scheme** – coherent, fit for purpose, standalone.
- **Revised Interpretive Guide**
- **Suite of tools and resources** – to support organisations in reviewing and improving their services in line with the Standard; and in their delivery of high quality, evidence based services that meet the needs of their service users
- **Promotion Plan** – to increase awareness, credibility and use of the Standard nationally
- **Transition Plan** – for organisations that are currently certified against the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the Standard and will be working toward certification against the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition upon release
- **Website and/or Quality Portal** – to support organisations with quality processes and certification
- **Product Management Plan** – to monitor and maintain currency of the Standard and Scheme and associated tools and resources
- Consideration of expanded Standard ownership.

## PROGRESS

### Name

The name of the Standard has resulted in a widespread misunderstanding that it is applicable to Aboriginal services only. A revised name is required that retains the strong cultural focus and the Standard's uniqueness as an AOD sector standard and at the same time, makes clear its applicability to a range of service types.

E.g. **Alcohol and other Drug and Human Services Standard**

Informed | Responsive | Safe

*Supporting culturally responsive service provision*

### Content

Consultation has identified a need for strengthening a number of key areas including clinical governance, risk management, governance, financial management, harm reduction, outcomes measurement, consumer participation, cultural security (specifically) and cultural responsiveness (generally).

Other feedback includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Reduce health-centric terminology to increase applicability across service types e.g. change treatment plan to treatment/care plan.
- Combine some sections to reduce duplication.
- Emphasise the relationship between monitoring, measuring and evaluation of outcomes and service user experience/satisfaction and planning/continuous quality improvement.
- Strengthen and make clearer Performance Expectation 1: Defining and understanding the target community.
- Include additional performance expectations related to quality management and management of documented information.
- Provide a comprehensive glossary.
- Include worker wellbeing indicators.
- Remove many of the specific policy requirements but retain the general principle that information will be documented as necessary.

A number of services have agreed to assist with work on specific areas including governance, financial management and harm reduction. WANADA is involved in the Looking Forward Moving Forward project which involves organisations working directly with Aboriginal Elders to improve cultural safety and accessibility of services. The learning from this project will serve to inform the Standard. In addition, the NSW Health Clinical Outcomes and Quality Indicators (COQI) Project researchers have offered to share the work that they are doing with regard to outcomes measurement and quality indicators for alcohol and other drug treatment services. QNADA has also generously shared their draft Outcomes Framework.

### Structure/Rating of the Standard

A number of points have been raised which suggest that an amendment to the structure/rating scale of the Standard is necessary:

- Due to the increased maturity of the sector and expectations from stakeholders, many of the good practice criteria should now be considered essential
- Although a tiered achievement approach is useful, 'good practice' is not an appropriate term to describe or encourage extension and does not lend itself to genuine learning
- Some Good Practice criteria are not relevant to some service types
- Certification should require all Essential Criteria to be met

Considering these points, the revised Standard will now comprise only essential criteria, assessed against a four point rating scale as follows:

- Not applicable (dependent upon service type – this will need to be demonstrated)
- Not Met – the actions required have not been achieved
- Satisfactorily Met – the actions required have been achieved
- Met with Merit – in addition to achieving the actions required, measures of good quality and a higher level of achievement are evident

All essential criteria will need to be met in order to achieve certification. Moving to this approach will mean ensuring that all criteria included can reasonably be considered to be essential (or not applicable) to the diversity of service types that may use the Standard. The level of achievement is dependent upon how a criterion is evidenced. This gives greater flexibility for demonstrating high quality practice and innovation relevant to service type.

## **WANADA Scheme**

A first draft of the revised Scheme was completed with input from the certification body (IHCA) management and contract auditors, JAS-ANZ, the ATCA, Mental Health Commission (MHC) Aboriginal Programs, MHC Workforce Development and this Review's Steering Group. Based on advice from JAS-ANZ, the draft is a combination of Part 1 and Part 5 of the Human Services Scheme and will henceforth be a standalone scheme. WANADA is working collaboratively with JAS-ANZ to progress the development of the new Scheme.

Significant changes include:

- A requirement for services to meet 100% of Essential Criteria
- The inclusion of the term 'Performance Objective' to describe the sub-sections of each Performance Expectation
- A requirement for the Certification Body to gather, document and maintain current information about cultural protocols relevant to the service being audited, and to provide this documented information to the Audit Team prior to their engagement with the service
- The addition of an example against the 'Support Guide' role, namely 'a Service Provider may engage a recognised Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community Elder to provide advice and guidance to the Audit Team'
- A comprehensive reworking of the evaluation instructions to reflect rating changes and reduce ambiguity
- The addition of the required use of a medical technical expert for medical services
- The addition of the *option* for users of services exempt from the 'service user sampling' requirement to participate in the audit process

## **Interpretive Guide**

The Standard is supported by a separate Interpretive Guide that provides examples of the way in which the criteria contained in the Standard might be applied in practice. Consultation showed strong support for the Interpretive Guide from services that had used it. The Interpretive Guide will be comprehensively reviewed and augmented to reflect the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Standard.

## **Tools and Resources**

WANADA applied for two McCusker Foundation intern students to assist in the collation and mapping of tools and resources to the Standard. The first intern commenced on 29 June 2018. The second will be commencing on 14 August 2018.

## **Quality Portal**

WANADA is considering the development of a quality portal for services that use the Standard. The portal features would include cross mapping of standards, electronic self-assessment and ability to upload/update evidence, progress tracking, an automated quality improvement plan, workflow management tools, a document library, template generation tools and access for auditors. Automated mapping of evidence requirements across standards will be helpful to organisations who are audited against more than one standard.

## **WANADA Sector Quality Support**

WANADA continues to support services to improve quality systems and achieve certification. This includes contributing toward certification costs through MHC funding.

Currently there are:

- 15 organisations that are certified against the Standard on Culturally Secure Practice
- 8 organisations actively working toward certification
- 1 organisation has made contact and are considering the use of the Standard

Positive feedback has been received from organisations that have received support from WANADA.

## **Feedback on the Certification Process**

Certified organisations provided feedback on their experience of the certification process. Identified opportunities for improvement have been noted and will be addressed directly or communicated to the certification body. Feedback regarding the auditors conduct, thoroughness and ways of working with the client groups was very positive. As requested, WANADA is exploring the engagement of a second certification body in consultation with JAS-ANZ.