



Department of Health

Our Healthcare Future: Advancing Tasmania's Health

Exposure Draft Consultation Team

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To whom it may concern,

Submission to: *Advancing Tasmania's Health Exposure Draft*

The ATDC is the peak body representing and supporting community organisations, and the people they assist, to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related harm for all Tasmanians. Our vision is a Tasmania without alcohol, tobacco or other drug-related harm or discrimination. The use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs continues to be a major cause of harm in Tasmania and is a significant driver of preventable death, disease and illness, hospitalisations, psychological distress, unemployment, homelessness, police arrests and prison sentences.

As an independent not-for-profit organisation, the ATDC represents a broad range of community-managed organisations delivering specialist alcohol, tobacco and other drug programs and services. These organisations provide information and awareness, prevention and early intervention, harm reduction, and specialised treatment and recovery services and programs.

It is on behalf of these organisations that we provide the following feedback on the *Exposure Draft*:

- **Increase the visibility of the important role of community-managed alcohol and other drug services.**

Across the Exposure Draft alcohol is mentioned seven times with nearly all references focused on the goal of limiting harmful alcohol use. We welcome consideration to the inclusion of a reference to how people affected by alcohol and other drug (AOD) use impact the health system (e.g., hospitalisations, presenting to emergency departments etc) and the role of specialist community managed AOD service providers. We note that there are numerous mentions of how people presenting with mental health concerns impact the health system – for example page 21:

A further challenge is the growing number of people presenting to hospital for mental health and behavioural conditions. Mental health reforms, aimed at providing community-based care options for these patients, will result in better outcomes for those patients while also reducing the demand on the public hospital system."

The same could be referenced for Tasmanians presenting with AOD issues and the reforms that are currently progressing (as mentioned in the *Reform Agenda for Alcohol and Drug Sector in Tasmania*) where community-based care is also referenced as having a key role. Given the breadth and impact of AOD use across the Tasmanian community, the ATDC recommends the inclusion of additional references to the impact of AOD on the health system and the role of the AOD community-managed sector providing specialist support.



- **Strengthening reference to the prevention of AOD issues in the community.** The ATDC notes that the *Reform Agenda for the Alcohol and Drug Sector in Tasmania* is referenced in the Exposure Draft (p13). With respect to the purpose of the Exposure Draft, it's important to note that the Reform Agenda is primarily focused on reforming the AOD treatment and support system (tertiary prevention mainly). While the Exposure Draft references *A Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan 2022-2027* this strategy only includes references to prevention activities for alcohol and tobacco with illicit, and pharmaceutical drug use not included. The ATDC is aware that the Tasmanian Government intends to develop a revised *Prevention, Promotion, Early Intervention Framework*¹. This piece of work will be a critical component of the government's overarching strategic response to AOD use and will contribute to the aims of *Our Healthcare Future*. The ATDC recommends a reference to the Prevention, Promotion, Early Intervention Framework be included to further strengthen the wider aim of prevention in the Exposure Draft.
- **Involving Tasmanians with lived experience of AOD use in future co-design processes.** The ATDC is funded by the Tasmanian Government to coordinate a Lived Experience Advocate Service (<https://www.atdc.org.au/leas/>). This Service has 20 Tasmanians available to contribute to co-design and reform discussions across the health system. All our advocates have received accredited health consumer leadership training, and have a variety of expertise, knowledge, and skills to contribute. We welcome the opportunity to be included in any future community / consumer consultation processes to enable some of these Tasmanians to participate.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to this consultation process. If you require any further information or clarification on any of the points above, I can be contacted by email at ceo@atdc.org.au or via phone on [REDACTED].

With kind regards

Alison Lai
Chief Executive Officer

10 July 2022

¹ Found here: <https://www.health.tas.gov.au/health-topics/alcohol-and-drugs/projects-and-initiatives-alcohol-and-drugs-tasmania/tasmanian-drug-strategy-2022-2027#:~:text=The%20Tasmanian%20Drug%20Strategy%20is,and%20when%20they%20need%20it.>