

Questions on Notice – 1 June 2021 Public Hearing - Inquiry into the use of cannabis in Victoria

1. Ms Crozier - Data on the number of referrals to AOD services and how many people have been successfully rehabilitated

In 2019-20, there were 23,843 Victorians who accessed Victorian funded alcohol and other drug treatment, reflecting more than 44,100 completed courses of treatment. In addition to treatment, Victorians accessed support for their substance use and addiction via specialist harm reduction services, including needle and syringe programs and local initiatives and services.

Treatment is just one part of the recovery journey and services provide support at several different stages from prevention, early intervention, harm reduction, treatment and ongoing support.

Taking a public health approach to substance use and addiction, the Department of Health is committed to reducing the harm associated with AOD use. Harm reduction may include support to cease, reduce or manage current use while minimising harm and is a key component of the treatment system.

A recovery-oriented approach is taken to AOD treatment, understanding and acknowledging that relapse is common and people may need to, and do enter treatment a number of times including remaining in treatment in some cases for extended periods, before achieving sustainable AOD use that aligns with their recovery goals.

Source: 1. Victorian Alcohol and Drug Collection, Victorian Agency for Health Information

2. Ms Crozier - How many individuals are in the mental health system with AOD issues?

In 2019-20, there were 2,556 or 3.3 per cent of registered mental health consumers who had a substance use disorder as their primary mental health diagnosis. Nineteen per cent, or 14,749 registered mental health consumers had a substance use disorder as a comorbidity.

Source: Department of Health and Human Services, Client Management Interface / Operational Data Store 2019-20

3. Dr Cummings - Provide copies of documents referred to in your opening presentation.

Please see Attachment 1, Forensic AOD Service Delivery Model 2018 as referenced in opening remarks.

4. Dr Cummings - Provide statistics of children on waiting lists for drug and rehab services.

The Department of Health does not hold waitlist data for youth AOD services. Youth AOD services prioritise young people based on need and funded organisations have assertive waitlist management in place.

The Victorian Alcohol and Other Drug system includes both youth community and residential AOD treatment services. These services include youth outreach, community and residential withdrawal and rehabilitation.

This assertive approach to waitlist management has been aided by 100 additional AOD workers funded in 2020-21 in both youth and adult services, and ensures that the needs of young people are assessed and re-assessed, that preparedness (including personal circumstances such as school and work obligations are managed) and motivation endorses entry to treatment at the right time.

In relation to youth residential rehabilitation, the new 20 bed youth residential rehabilitation facility in Traralgon will open in the second half of 2021. This service is in addition to the existing 15 bed youth residential rehabilitation facility in Eltham and 12 bed healing service for Aboriginal young people in Hastings.