

BOOK 1

AGENCY HANDBOOK

ON ASSESSING &
REFERRING CLIENTS



N.A.D.A.

Non Government Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Workers Training and Workplace Assessment Resource Package for "Assessing and Referring Clients"

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Glossary

AOD	Alcohol and other drug.
Assessment	Making a judgment from the evidence collected and deciding whether it satisfies the competency standard.
CSHI	Community Service and Health Industry.
Competency standard	Describes what a competent worker should be able to do in his/her particular job role.
Competency-based assessment	Deciding whether the worker's performance in an assessment procedure meets the competency standard criteria.
Competency-based training	Training based on the competency standards.
ITABs	Industrial Training Advisory Bodies – the national and state bodies for each industry. The drug and alcohol field is covered by the Community Services and Health ITAB (one national and one state body) which coordinate implementation of training reform, e.g. the devising of the competency standards.
Module	A specific section of learning, which can be completed in itself, that may deal with a section of a competency.
Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	The acknowledgment of skills and knowledge obtained through formal training (industry and education), work experience and life experience. The main focus of RPL is the competencies of these experiences, not how, when or where they have been learnt.
Recognised training organisations (RTOs)	Educational or training organisations (e.g. TAFE) whose training courses have been accredited by the ITAB.
Staff appraisal	A system of assessing the worker's progress at certain intervals.

The resource package

These resources are a competency-based workplace assessment and training package.

The package consists of:

- *Book 1: Agency Handbook on Assessing & Referring Clients* - This handbook
- *Book 2: Recognition of Assessment Applicant's Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients*
- *Book 3: Self-Directed Learner's Guide on Assessing & Referring Clients*
- *Book 4: Workplace Assessment Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients*

The purpose of this resource package

The purpose of this resource package is to assist both workers and managers to assess competency in the skill of assessing and referring clients.

With these resources, managers can:

1. learn about the process and procedures in workplace assessment;
2. assist workers in some competency-based workplace training;
3. assess workers' skills.

Workers can:

1. assess their skills in this area of work;
2. carry out some self-directed training if required;
3. be assessed by their managers in these skills.

Integrating these resources into the workplace

Most agencies have some form of staff development plan to assess workers and assist in identifying their training needs. These resources can be used as part of these plans, as:

1. Part of a staff appraisal or professional development plan between managers and employees.

These resources can be used to examine workers' competency in assessing and referring clients;

OR

2. Part of a formal assessment with a registered training organisation.

Managers and supervisors can assess their staff but they can not issue a qualification. Only **registered training organisations (RTOs)**, e.g. TAFE, who employ qualified workplace assessors, can do this. For a fee these assessors can come to the workplace and officially assess an employee. These resources have been designed so a qualified assessor can use them. If a worker is found to be competent, this can be registered with the training body and the worker can have a record of their standard of competency. If they then choose to do further training, they need not repeat this work.

What is a competency standard?

A competency standard describes what a competent worker should be able to do in his/her particular job role.

Competency standards (or 'units of competence' as they are sometimes called) describe:

- what people need to be able to do in the workplace;
- the standards and conditions they must meet in doing these things.

Competency standards are made up of skills, knowledge and attributes (e.g. the values, attitudes workers need if they are to be competent for that standard etc).

This resource package has been designed to fit into the National Competency Standards for Alcohol and Other Drug Work developed in 1999. These standards were based on those aspects which workers in the field thought were required to be an alcohol and other drug worker.

What is competency-based training?

Competency-based training (CBT) means training designed to meet national competency standards. It is outcomes-based and defines what people need to do in a workplace. CBT takes a more flexible approach to training, which means training does not have to occur in the classroom (e.g. it can occur on the job). It also provides greater access and flexibility for people to receive training. National and State bodies called Industry Training Boards (ITABs) have developed competency standards, which are endorsed and nationally recognised. This means that if you achieve a national competency it will be recognised in any state in Australia.

What is workplace assessment?

Workplace assessment is a formal system of assessing workers' competency in their job role against competency standards. The workplace assessor collects evidence from the employee/ candidate and judges whether a person is competent to carry out a task. In *Book 4: Workplace Assessment Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients*, details are given on how workplace assessment is developed and carried out.

Background to the development of competency standards

In the 1990s, the 'National Training Reform Agenda' was developed to create a unified national system of training, not just for the community health sector or AOD work, but for all industries. Some of the things this agenda proposed were that:

- training for all industries should meet nationally consistent standards;
- training should be based on outcomes rather than how long a person spends in doing a course;
- training should relate to what people actually need to do in a given job (that is, be 'competency-based');
- training should include teaching modes other than face-to face so as to make training more accessible;
- training providers should be officially approved and their courses accredited by an overriding body (VETAB);
- 'prior learning' – learning that has been done on the job or through several short courses – needs to be systematically recognised.

All accredited training must now be developed according to these competency standards.

Why this resource package?

The Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies (NADA) received funding to run a trial to develop and test this resource package. It was considered that assessing and referring clients was a fairly common activity conducted at most non-government drug and alcohol agencies. It was seen as appropriate for resources to be developed around the associated skills.

AOD COMPETENCY STANDARDS

There are nine national competency standards for the alcohol and other drugs sector, which is part of the Community Services and Health Industry.

The competency standards are:

AOD1	Introduction to the Alcohol and Other Drugs sector
AOD2	Orientation to the Alcohol and Other Drugs sector
AOD3	Provide first point of contact for potential clients
AOD4	Support people with alcohol and/or other drugs issues
AOD5	Provide services to clients with alcohol and other drugs issues
AOD6	Work with clients that are intoxicated
AOD7	Provide needle exchange services
AOD8	Work with clients who have alcohol and other drug issues
AOD9	Provide alcohol and other drug withdrawal services

AOD Qualifications

Individual units of competence are grouped (or packaged together) to give a nationally accredited qualification. The following nationally accredited qualifications are available in the AOD sector.

- Certificate II in Community Services (Alcohol and Other Drugs)
- Certificate III in Community Services (Alcohol and Other Drugs)
- Certificate IV in Community Services (Alcohol and Other Drugs)
- Diploma of Community Services (Alcohol and Other Drugs)
- Advanced Diploma of Community Services (Alcohol and Other Drugs)

If you want a copy of the competency standards or are interested in AOD training but are unsure where it is available, contact:

Community Services and Health Training Australia,
Level 6, 1 Oxford St
Darlinghurst NSW 2010
TEL: 02 92633589
FAX: 0292633599.

Useful websites include:

www.anta.com.au
www.cshta.com.au

What this package covers

The resource package is based around the Department of Education and Training (DET) module

Assessment and Referral 3260 B

This module is one of those developed for AOD National Competency Standard.

CHCAOD8: Working with clients who have alcohol and/or other drugs issues

This unit of competency relates to assessing client needs, providing a range of services to meet their needs, reviewing client progress and evaluating the work done with clients. This competency standard (CHCAOD8) is large and comprehensive. Its tasks require high-level skills from candidates/employees. In order to be considered competent in all of CHCAOD8, the worker would have to provide further evidence of competency to a qualified assessor at an RTO on the following:

A Senior First Aid certificate or equivalent, and competency in

- basic sociology;
- pharmacology;
- early and brief intervention strategies.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IN USING THE RESOURCE PACKAGE

Step 1

Purpose : For managers and workers to gain an overall understanding of the whole process.

After managers and workers have read *Book 1: Agency Handbook on Assessing & Referring Clients*, read *Book 2: Recognition of Assessment Applicant's Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients* and *Book 4: Workplace Assessment Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients* to gain an understanding of what is required in assessing and referring clients.



Step 2

Book 2: Recognition of Assessment Applicant's Kit

Purpose : For workers to carry out a self-assessment of their competency in assessing and referring clients.

After general perusal of the resources, the next step is for workers who want to assess their level of competency.

Book 2: Recognition of Assessment Applicant's Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients is a self-assessment kit. This will help workers to identify areas in which they are competent and those in which they may need to learn more about assessing and referring clients before they consider workplace assessment. Instructions on how to complete the self-assessment are in the kit.



Step 3

Book 3: Self-Directed Learner's Guide

Purpose: For workers to use this self-directed training guide to gain or revise their knowledge in assessing and referring clients.

It contains all of the skills and knowledge required for carrying out a comprehensive assessment of a client, a case-management plan and referral of clients. It also gives information on record-keeping and report-writing. The learner's guide is designed for workers to use, depending on where they feel they need to learn more, after they have completed *Book 2: Recognition of Assessment Applicant's Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients*.



Step 4

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Step 4

Purpose: To prepare for workplace assessment.

If learning is complete and workers and managers have agreed on a workplace assessment, workers can start preparing by collecting the appropriate evidence to indicate their competency.

The type of evidence to collect is detailed in both *Book 2: Recognition of Assessment Applicant's Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients* and *Book 4: Workplace Assessment Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients*

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Step 5

Book 4: Workplace Assessment Kit

Purpose: For managers to be able to assess workers' competency in assessing and referring clients.

Included in this package is the final resource, *Book 4: Workplace Assessment Kit on Assessing & Referring Clients*. It is a guide for managers or supervisors to use in assessing their workers' competency in assessing and referring clients. Managers and workers need to read this guide together, so they can establish the evidence required for workplace assessment. It is best if this is a collaborative activity so that workers can feel empowered in this system of assessment.

References

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