

Event Summary: Adding Gender to the Agenda a Women's AOD Services Network Satellite Event

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NADA Members and Stakeholders were invited to attend a one hour satellite event at the end of the NADA 2016 Conference on the 7 June.

Twenty five people attended the session which provided non Network members an opportunity to hear more about the Network including the upcoming Associate membership category. In addition those in attendance were offered an opportunity to discuss issues they see in their roles when working with women and raise some ideas for future activity of the Network. The below highlights the discussion and its outcomes.

Discussion themes and possible areas for actions

- Improving services for Aboriginal women (pregnant women of particular note)
- Exploring the complexities of women with AOD issues in contact with the criminal justice system. Look at involving the Community Restorative Centre NSW.
- Need for improved access to treatment for pregnant women in acknowledgement that pregnancy is an opportunity positive motivating factor for change and can access to treatment can help to prevent a continuation of intergenerational trauma.
- FACS focus on residential treatment as the only treatment option for pregnant women/women with babies which can be contrary to the needs of the client.
- Pursue advocacy opportunities on the importance of treatment matching client need and validity of non-residential treatment options for women where appropriate. Consider developing case studies to highlight different variety and diversity of service models.
- Lack of women's only services outside of Sydney – problematic for allowing access to children/family if from out of the area. Also need to consider brokerage for services to be able to support women to get to the Sydney based services.
- Look at developing another pathway if funding doesn't come through for women/pregnant women in particular. A new model to hold women while on a waiting list for a placement.
- For mixed gender services: how to best support women and minimise barriers preventing them from accessing and staying in mainstream services. Look at male: female ratio accessing treatment.
- How to work with members to better support parents and their children.
- Young women:
 - Young mothers – rehab wait list problematic, younger women often in homelessness situations and in toxic, violent relationships



- Young people can be resistant to detox and have negative perceptions of treatment. Need education on what treatment is. Mixed gender may be more appropriate for young women. Importance of social networks and a sense of belonging for young people.
- Lack of detox facilities for young people.

- Need to consider needs of lesbian, bisexual and queer women – ask questions about sexuality asked in treatment settings? Do service have a Rainbow Tick?

- Need increase in contact with Women’s Health Centres – with and without AOD services/workers

- Review data: change in the system – number of women seeking treatment

Where to from here?

NADA and the Women’s AOD Services Network will review this write up at the 2016-2017 planning meeting and consider it when identifying priority areas for activities in the next financial year.

Information on the priority areas will be provided on the NADA Website Women’s Network Page along with information on the associate Network in July/August 2016.

Contact Ciara@nada.org.au for further information.