



## **Research, scope and design a Pilot Project: Safer Families**

Project Update #1

April 2017

### **1. Background**

ACT Health engaged ATODA to research, scope and design a pilot project to provide more effective responses for people who use alcohol and other drugs (AOD) in harmful ways and either experience domestic and family violence (DFV) or are at risk of using DFV. Included in this, is an expectation that ATODA will:

- Research, scope and design a pilot project (for delivery at a later point);
- Engage expert clinical expertise;
- Develop an evaluation plan;
- Identify and consult with key stakeholders; and,
- Consider key partnerships for implementation of the pilot project.

The project is conceptualised as a long-term multi-year project to increase the capacity of the ACT drug treatment system, services and staff to deliver programs that reflect best practice in DFV prevention and responses. Year 1 of this funding will focus on developing the infrastructure and framework for this work to occur in subsequent years (with roll out to AOD services planned from 2018).

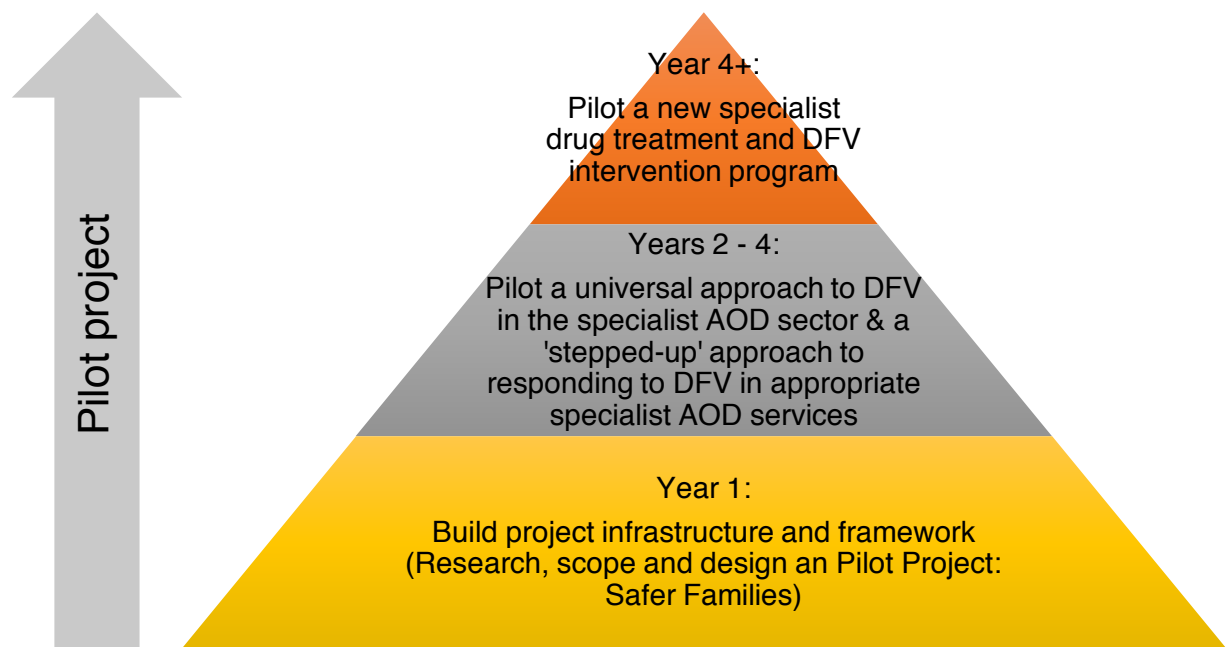
### **2. Pilot Project Vision, Model and Objectives**

#### Draft Pilot Project Vision

The draft pilot project vision is for an ACT AOD specialist sector that universally identifies, responds to and prevents DFV in a consistent way that not only reflects best practice, but also meets community expectations of safety.

#### Draft Pilot Project Model

By laying the necessary foundations in earlier years of the pilot project through strengthening service delivery across the sector, it is expected that a specialist integrated AOD treatment and DFV intervention pilot program will be established to meet the clinical, therapeutic and other needs of people who use AOD in harmful ways and either experience DFV or are at risk of using DFV. In this way, the pilot project may be understood as a “pyramid” of sector-wide activity, as set out in the diagram below.



#### Year 1 Draft Objectives:

- Engage and liaise with AOD specialist treatment and support services and other key stakeholders (including through the DFV sector) to scope the existing capacity and needs around integrating DFV into routine AOD practice.
- Design a multi-year Pilot Project that will facilitate the development of both collective capacity around DFV across all services in the AOD sector, and specific and targeted clinical DFV capacity within individual services.
- Develop an evaluation plan and recruit an external evaluation team to monitor and measure the Program's implementation and impact.
- Recruit clinicians with specialist AOD and DFV expertise to provide advice on project design and implementation.
- Develop a tool that will collect baseline information from participating services on DFV capabilities that can be readministered at regular intervals to assess increased capacity.

### **3. Some Activities to Date**

Project Activities commenced in February 2017 and following is a summary of activities that ATODA has undertaken related to AOD and DFV:

- Internal project planning (including a two-day workshop with key stakeholders) and staff recruitment (including staff with DFV capacity building expertise).
- Engagement of expertise (including clinical, evaluation, DFV and / or AOD) including:
  - 360 edge
  - AOD Policy Unit, ACT Health
  - Consumer representatives
  - Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS)
  - Domestic Violence Prevention Council
  - Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University
  - National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University
  - National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales
  - Odyssey House Victoria
  - Office for the Coordinator General of Family Safety
  - ReGen
  - Research School of Population Health, Australian National University
  - Social Research and Evaluation
  - Specialist AOD Treatment and Support Services
  - State and Territory AOD Peak Bodies (including NADA and WANADA)
  - Strengthening Hospitals Initiative, The Royal Womens Hospital
  - Toora Women Inc
  - Womens Centre for Health Matters
  - Womens Services Network
- Review of data collection from consultations with specialist AOD services, DFV service providers and women who have had experience with both AOD and DFV services in the ACT. This data collection occurred through a previous research project undertaken as a collaboration between ATODA, ANU and UNSW titled: *Enhancing Supports for Women Affected by Harmful Alcohol and Other Drug Use and Domestic and Family Violence*. Data reviewed for this project related to needs of services in relation to capacity to utilise standardised screening tools and assessment practices and subsequent service responses. Consultations occurred with 16 participants from the AOD sector, 12 participants from DFV services and 9 women.
- Documentation of existing resources and opportunities through an environmental scan. This incorporated information on:
  - DFV capacity building projects with the AOD Sector (Australia and overseas)
  - DFV capacity building projects with other health settings (Australia and overseas)
  - DFV service delivery in the ACT.
  - Policy initiatives related to DFV in the ACT and other Australian jurisdictions.
  - Researchers with expertise in AOD and or DFV.
  - Tools related to DFV assessment, screening, referrals, and service policies.

- Implementation of a pilot training package on *AOD Information / Harm reduction, screening and brief intervention training (utilising the ACT eASSIST)* in early April 2017 with a DFV service provider (DVCS). The training was favourably evaluated by participants.
- Mapping of available training and providers for AOD and DFV in the ACT and other Australian jurisdictions.
- Preliminary engagement with the Office of the Coordinator General for Family Safety regarding the whole-of-government DFV training.
- Scoping and engagement of speakers for a Symposium (for more information see next steps).

#### **4. Next Steps for Engaging Stakeholders**

##### Drug Services Forum

The project is an agenda item for discussion with specialist AOD services at the Drug Services Forum on 5 May 2017.

##### Domestic and Family Violence service providers and stakeholders

Continued engagement with DFV service providers and stakeholders through one-on-one meetings and established groups e.g. Womens Services Network.

##### AOD and DFV Symposium

Invitations for an AOD and DFV symposium to be held on Wednesday 24 May 2017 will be disseminated shortly (in lieu of the annual ACT ATOD Sector Conference). This symposium will be a key step in bringing the various parts of the ACT AOD sector together (workers, consumers, researchers, policy makers and service providers) to build our knowledge base and shared dialogue for the important sector-wide changes that lie ahead in relation to strengthening our service delivery responses to DFV. The symposium will also be an important opportunity for the ACT ATOD sector to build linkages with DFV service providers and stakeholders. The symposium will be broad in its approach, touching on a range of concepts relevant to specialist AOD treatment and support in the context of DFV, including gender-responsiveness and trauma-informed practice.

##### Project Advisory Group

A Project Advisory Group will be established (following the Symposium). The terms of reference for the group is currently under development (and is being informed by stakeholder engagements), but will likely include representatives from the following:

- ATODA
- ACT Government Policy (AOD and DFV)
- Specialist ACT AOD services
- Specialist ACT DFV services
- Evaluators

- Clinical consultants

#### Additional Consultative Mechanisms for Project Activities

Some project activities will require specific engagement strategies to ensure appropriate input from the AOD and DFV fields (particularly for example in relation to the development of tools to inform AOD practice). This could occur through one-off forums, approaches for expert input or a range of other consultative mechanisms.

#### **5. Further Information**

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