



Media Release: ATODA Welcomes ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022 – 2026

8 December 2022

The Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA) welcomes the release of the ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022 – 2026 (the Plan). This is the ACT’s second action plan under the National Drug Strategy 2017 – 2026, and was developed in consultation with the specialist alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) sector and other stakeholders.

ATODA CEO, Dr Devin Bowles said “This Plan is a critical document in the context of nation-leading legislative reform in the ACT. ATODA applauds the ACT Government’s clear commitment to responding to drug use as a health issue rather than a criminal justice issue. The priorities for action articulated in this Plan align with the evidence about what works and with the objectives of the National Drug Strategy 2017 – 2026.”

Dr Bowles noted that “The breadth and quality of the specialist ATOD sector in the ACT is something that the community can take pride in. ATODA appreciates the recognition of the cooperation between the non-government and government specialist ATOD providers to assist clients on their journeys and to reduce ATOD related harms in the ACT. The upfront recognition of the peer workforce and the need to address stigma is also encouraging.”

ATODA and the ATOD sector look forward to working closely with the ACT Government on the implementation of the ACT Drug Strategy Action Plan 2022-2026, to reduce harms associated with alcohol and other drugs in the ACT community over the next four years.

For more information or comment, please contact Dr Devin Bowles, CEO, ATODA on 0413 435 080.

ATODA is the peak body for the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector in the ACT. Its purpose is to lead and influence positive outcomes in policy, practice and research by providing collaborative leadership for intersectoral action on the social determinants of harmful drug use, and on societal responses to drug use and to people who use drugs. ATODA’s vision is a healthy, well and safe ACT community with the lowest possible levels of alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harms.

While the term AOD (alcohol and other drug) is commonly used to refer to the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector, ATODA’s preference is to use the term ATOD. This acknowledges the role that specialist service providers in this sector play in providing tobacco cessation support, and because tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of the burden of disease in Australia, contributing far more than alcohol or all illicit drugs combined.

Advice for media: Communicating about alcohol and other drugs

Mindframe is funded by the Australian Government and supports safe media reporting, portrayal and communication about suicide, mental ill-health, alcohol and other drugs. Relevant resources include:

- Mindframe Guidelines for communicating about alcohol and other drugs: <https://mindframe.org.au/alcohol-other-drugs/communicating-about-alcohol-other-drugs/mindframe-guidelines>
- Mindframe guidelines for image use in communicating about mental ill-health, suicide and alcohol and other drugs: <https://mindframe.org.au/images-matter-mindframe-guidelines-for-image-use>
- Adding help-seeking information: <https://mindframe.org.au/alcohol-other-drugs/communicating-about-alcohol-other-drugs/adding-help-seeking-information>