



Media Release: New report highlights strength of ACT alcohol and other drug workforce while pointing to need for further investment

12 March 2026

The Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA) has released findings from the latest ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Sector Workforce Profile (Workforce Profile).

The ACT alcohol and other drug (AOD) sector employs approximately 400 workers and provides vital treatment and harm reduction services to thousands of people across the ACT each year, supporting community health and wellbeing and reducing harms associated with alcohol and other drug use.

The Workforce Profile shows the sector continues to expand and deliver a growing range of specialist services and supports. More than 80 per cent of respondents reported being “satisfied” or “completely satisfied” with their job, and turnover intention across the sector remains relatively low.

The ACT Minister for Health Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA said:

“The ATODA Workforce Profile will help us develop a better understanding of the specialist alcohol and other drugs workforce in the ACT, the people who are the heartbeat of our AOD sector.

“The ACT Government remains committed to supporting evidence-informed and impactful initiatives to address the needs of people affected by harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drug use in the ACT. We look forward to continuing to work with ATODA, the sector, and community on these important projects.”

ATODA CEO Anita Mills said the findings highlight the professionalism and commitment of the workforce.

“The Workforce Profile tells us that the AOD sector workforce in the ACT is not only a satisfied workforce, but one that is highly competent and equipped to manage the complexity of need within the community,” Ms Mills said.

The results also show the sector has a strong base of skills and experience. More than 55 per cent of workers hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, and more than 90 per cent report being confident in their ability to do their job well.

Lived experience is a significant strength of the workforce. Around 70 per cent of workers report personal experience of impacts from their own alcohol and/or drug use, or from supporting a family member or close friend affected by alcohol or drug use.

However, the findings also highlight opportunities for increased investment. The results indicate an estimated shortfall of 86 workers, with almost two-thirds of the workforce regularly working overtime. The average weekly income for full-time workers in the sector also remains well below the ACT population-wide average full-time income.

“The Workforce Profile shows the diversity, competence and commitment of the ACT AOD sector, and reinforces the importance of continuing to invest in the people delivering these essential treatment and harm reduction services for our community,” Ms Mills said.

The launch of the ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Sector Workforce Profile will be hosted by ATODA at 159 Maribyrnong Avenue, Kaleen on Thursday 12 March from 2:00pm to 3:30pm, with an address from ACT Minister for Health Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA.

[Click here](#) to view the Workforce Profile 2025 full report.

For more information or comment, please contact Anita Mills, CEO, ATODA on 0431 504 805.

ATODA is the peak body for the alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector in the ACT. Its purpose is to advocate for a strong and sustainable alcohol, tobacco and other drug sector in the ACT, using best practice policy, research and evidence. ATODA’s vision is a healthy ACT community with reduced alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harms, served by a high-quality treatment and harm reduction sector.

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>
- Australian Alcohol & Other Drugs Council: [Best Practices for AOD Services in Media Engagement](#)