

AOD treatment initiative for family reunification

Fact sheet for child protection practitioners

What is the initiative?

The aim of this initiative is to enable timely alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment for parents who are required to undergo AOD treatment as part of their child's Family Reunification Order (FRO).¹ Service providers may also support parents of children who are subject to an Interim Accommodation Order (IAO) that places them out of parental care, where they have the capacity to do so. This facilitates access to treatment as soon as possible after their involvement with Child Protection in order to maximise their chances of reuniting with their children in the time frame for family reunification.

The service providers funded to deliver the services in each AOD catchment are listed in the table below. Intake is delivered by the existing catchment-based AOD intake providers.

Who is this service for?

This initiative targets parents who must meet a court-ordered condition to undergo AOD treatment relating to their child's FRO, or where children are placed on an IAO that places them out of parental care.

The provision of funding for this target cohort reflects Victoria's AOD Program Guidelines, which provide that parents who require AOD treatment to achieve reunification with their children are one of a select group of clients who must be given priority access to treatment (<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/alcohol-and-drugs/aod-service-standards-guidelines/aod-program-guidelines>).

What do I need to do?

How do I make a referral?

Following the issuing of a FRO or IAO that places the child in care with an associated AOD condition for the parent, child protection practitioners will make a direct referral to the relevant catchment-based AOD intake provider. This referral should be as soon as possible after court or, at the most, within seven days after the order is issued. Child protection practitioners must make this referral irrespective of whether the parent chooses to self-refer to intake (this will provide a safety net to ensure the parent connects with the treatment system).

¹ In the 2017-18 State Budget, the Victorian Government announced a significant funding boost for alcohol and other drug (AOD) services, with a strong focus on harm reduction, treatment and support. This included \$17 million over four years for additional treatment services for parents to help them address their problematic AOD use within the family reunification time limits under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*.

Referral is to be made via telephone to the AOD intake provider servicing the local government area in which the parent resides (please see area-based contact list below). The AOD intake provider may request a copy of the court order and conditions, which can be sent as a [secure email](#) (also refer to [Information security](#)) in the Child Protection manual).

It is important to document the referral process on CRIS in the 'Referral' tab. The child protection practitioner must also provide the AOD intake provider with their contact details.

How will I engage the parent in making the referral to the AOD provider?

To enable AOD service providers to contact parents to begin treatment, child protection practitioners must:

- discuss this initiative with parents
 - during the course of Child Protection intervention
 - immediately prior to the FRO or IAO that places the child in care being made at court
- alert parents their information will be provided to the AOD intake provider (including their name, address and AOD-related conditions) in order for the AOD intake provider to be able to identify, and refer the information to, the appropriate service provider
- include parental agreement in the AOD condition attached to the order; for example, with wording to the following effect:
“*[Insert parent's name]* must agree to a referral being made by the department to an AOD service and participate in assessment and treatment for AOD dependence as directed by the department and must allow reports to be given to the department”.

What happens after I refer a parent to an AOD provider?

Following a referral by Child Protection, the AOD intake provider will:

- refer the parent's information onward to the appropriate service provider funded under this initiative
- contact the parent if more information is required before providing the parent's details to the service provider
- advise Child Protection of the allocated AOD service provider details, or if they have been unable to make contact with the parent (in order to obtain further information) after a reasonable effort to do so.²

The service provider will initiate contact with the parent to commence the assessment and course of treatment. The service provider will advise the allocated child protection practitioner about the outcomes of this process; whether that is to advise about the assessment and treatment plan for the parent, or if they have been unable to contact a parent after a reasonable effort to do so. Service providers will also be expected to notify Child Protection if significant problems arise regarding the parent's treatment progress.

AOD intake and service providers will provide bridging support as required for parents as they would ordinarily do whilst a parent is waiting for assessment or treatment to commence. Child protection practitioners should seek information about this and document it on CRIS, in the child's case plan and court reports as required.

Who can I contact with any questions?

Child Protection practitioners are encouraged to discuss this with their manager first, then contact the Mental Health and Wellbeing Division in the Department of Health via email aod.enquiries@health.vic.gov.au (please make sure to include 'family reunification' in the email subject line).

Table: AOD treatment initiative for family reunification – key intake provider, service provider and Child Protection contacts

Local government area (DH area/s in brackets)	AOD catchment	INTAKE		ASSESSMENT/TREATMENT		CHILD PROTECTION	
		Intake provider	Intake contact number/s	Funded service provider (consortium name, with lead agency in brackets)	Lead agency contact number/s	Nearest DFFH area office location/s with Child Protection on site	DFFH office number/s
Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Port Phillip, Stonnington (Bayside Peninsula)	Bayside	Bayside Integrated Services	1800 229 263 9690 9778	Bayside Alcohol and Other Drug Partnership (TaskForce Community Agency)	Primary contact: Jason Thomasse – email: jason.t@taskforce.org.au	Cheltenham	8585 6000
Frankston, Mornington Peninsula (Bayside Peninsula)	Frankston-Mornington Peninsula	Frankston and Mornington Drug and Alcohol Services (FaMDAS)	1300 665 781	Stepping Up Consortium Frankston Mornington Peninsula Partnership (TaskForce Community Agency)	Secondary contact: Jackie Paisley – email: jackiep@taskforce.org.au	Frankston	9784 3100
Cardinia, Casey, Greater Dandenong (Southern Melbourne)	South East Melbourne	South Eastern Consortium of AOD Agencies (SECADA)	1800 142 536	SURe (EACH)	Contacts: Grenville Wise – Program Manager, Alternative Care & Support Services, email: grenville.wise@anglicarevic.org.au Kim Griffin – Team Leader, AOD, email: kim.griffin@anglicarevic.org.au	Dandenong	1300 555 526
Boroondara, Manningham, Monash, Whitehorse (Inner Eastern Melbourne)	Inner East	Eastern Health Turning Point AOD Consortium	1800 778 278	SURe (EACH)	Contacts: Leon Jordan – Program Manager Community Services, email: leon.jordan@anglicarevic.org.au Aaron Weston – Senior Team Leader, AOD, email: aaron.weston@anglicarevic.org.au	Box Hill	9843 6000
Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges (Outer Eastern Melbourne)	Eastern Melbourne	EACH SURE Consortium	1300 007 873	SURe (EACH)	Aaron Weston – Senior Team Leader, AOD, email: aaron.weston@anglicarevic.org.au	Box Hill	9843 6000
Melbourne, Moonee Valley (Western Melbourne); Moreland (Hume Moreland); Yarra (North Eastern Melbourne)	Inner North	UnitingCare ReGen and Odyssey House Victoria	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (UnitingCare ReGen)	Primary Contact: Marlyn Gavaghan – email: marlyn.gavaghan@vt.uniting.org Mobile: 0418 630 924	Footscray Preston	1300 360 462 1300 664 977
Whittlesea, Darebin, Banyule, Nillumbik (North Eastern Melbourne)	North Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and Other Drug Service	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (UnitingCare ReGen)	Keryn Ralph – Manager, Catchment Clinical Services, email: keryn.ralph@vt.uniting.org Mobile: 0447 200 374	Preston	1300 664 977
Bass Coast, Baw Baw, LaTrobe, South Gippsland (Inner Gippsland); East Gippsland, Wellington (Outer Gippsland)	Gippsland	ACSO	1300 022 760	Uniting AOD Services Grampians (UnitingCare ReGen)	General enquires can be made to	Bairnsdale Leongatha Morwell	5150 4500 5662 4311 4141 1400

					North and Inner North intake: North intake – email: north.intake@vt.uniting.org Inner North intake – email: regen-triage@vt.uniting.org Ph: 03 9480 6800	Sale Warragul	5144 9100 5624 0600
Ararat, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Moorabool, Pyrenees (Central Highlands); Hindmarsh, Horsham, North Grampians, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack (Western District)	Grampians	ACSO	1300 022 760	Uniting AOD Services Grampians (UnitingCare ReGen)	Contact for Uniting Grampians: Ivan Thorne – email: ivan.thorne@vt.uniting.org Mobile: 0438 661 296 Contact for Uniting Gippsland: Tracey Donaldson – email: tracey.donaldson@vt.uniting.org Ph: (03) 5144 7777	Ballarat Horsham	5333 6530 5381 9777
Brimbank, Melton (Brimbank Melton); Hume (Hume Moreland); Maribyrnong (Western Melbourne)	North West Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and Other Drug Service	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey House)	Primary Contact: Taran Dhillon, NW Catchment Operations Manager – email: tdhillon@odyssey.org.au Ph: (03) 8537 7129 Mobile: 0424 361 569 General enquiries: nw.intake@odyssey.org.au	Footscray	1300 360 462
Hobsons Bay, Wyndham (Western Melbourne)	South West Melbourne	North and West Metro Alcohol and Other Drug Service	1800 700 514	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey House)	Primary Contact: Sona Bajaj, SW Clinical Manager – email: sbajaj@odyssey.org.au Mobile: 0466 364 335 General enquiries: xwerribee@odyssey.org.au	Footscray	1300 360 462
Colac-Otway, Greater Geelong, Queenscliff, Surf Coast (Barwon)	Barwon	Barwon AOD Consortium	1300 094 187 Colac area: 1300 763 254	Stepping Up Consortium Barwon Partnership (Odyssey House)	Primary contact: Abby Lewis, Clinical Manager – email: alewis@odyssey.org.au Mobile: 0466 351 485 Secondary contact: Nicholas Morgan, Operations Manager – email: nmorgan@odyssey.org.au Mobile: 0466 319 468 General enquiries: xbarwon@odyssey.org.au	Colac Geelong	5234 2800 5226 4540
Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga (Ovens Murray)	Hume	ACSO	1300 022 760	Gateway Health (Gateway Health)	Primary contact: Caddie Russell – email: caddie.russell@gatewayhealth.org.au Mobile: 0477 210 059 General enquiries:	Wangaratta Wodonga	5722 0555 6055 7777

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					aodadmin@gatewayhealth.org.au		
Greater Shepparton, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie (Goulburn)	Goulburn Valley	ACSO	1300 022 760	North and West Metro AOD Service (Odyssey House)	<p>Primary Contact: Louise Walker, Consortia Manager – email: walker@odyssey.org.au Mobile: 0422 505 542</p> <p>General enquiries: Jacki Mirtshin, email: jmirtshin@odyssey.org.au Mobile: 0438 229 450</p> <p>Kristy Jackson, email: kjackson@odyssey.org.au Mobile: 0466 585 416</p>	Seymour Shepparton	5771 1600 5832 1500
Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander (Loddon); Buloke, Gannawarra, Mildura, Swan Hill (Mallee)	Loddon-Mallee	ACSO	1300 022 760	Northern Victoria Alcohol and Other Drug Services (Salvation Army)	<p>Primary contact: Cameron Abley – email: cameron.abley@salvationarmy.org.au Ph: (03) 5440 8451 Mobile: 0418 917 628</p> <p>General enquiries: Renato Angelo – email: renato.angelo@salvationarmy.org.au Ph: (03) 5440 8411 Mobile: 0436 411 122</p>	Bendigo Mildura Swan Hill	5434 5555 5022 3111 5032 0100
Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool (Western District)	Great South Coast	ACSO	1300 022 760	Great South Coast Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services Consortium (Western Region Alcohol and Drug Inc.)	<p>Primary contact: Mark Powell – email: markp@wrad.org.au Ph: (03) 5564 5789</p>	Hamilton Portland Warrnambool	5551 3299 5523 9999 5561 9444

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