



ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS ADVISORY BOARD

COMMUNIQUE – MEETING 24 APRIL 2024

The Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board (AODAB) is established pursuant to s.14 of the *Alcohol and Other Drug Act 1974* (the Act) to provide advice to the CEO (the Mental Health Commissioner, the Commissioner) about matters relevant to performance of functions under section 11 - the functions of the CEO. In fulfilling this purpose, the AODAB consults with the alcohol and other drugs (AOD) and related sectors to ensure advice to the Commissioner reflects the broad range of views and experience of people affected by AOD related harm, such as communities, young people, the ageing population and those with co-occurring health issues such as mental health conditions.

The AODAB is committed to communicating information about its work where possible, and it was agreed to provide a publicly available communique, in broad terms, about the activities of the AODAB. This communique provides all stakeholders with information from the 24 April 2024 meeting.

New governance structure and elevated profile of AOD

The AODAB was briefed on the new governance structure for the AOD sector and greatly appreciated the frank and engaging presentation by the Commissioner and the team on the processes being adopted to embrace a new governance structure.

The AODAB noted that the Commissioner and the team have been constructive and engaged with members during the independent governance review process.

The AODAB was pleased with the proposed structure on AOD governance and is optimistic about plans and opportunities to elevate the focus on AOD within the Mental Health Commission and the broader system. The AODAB is keen to support the Commissioner to enhance the profile of AOD.

The AODAB discussed the implications for its membership and for its relationships within the new governance structure. The AODAB recognises that in order to enhance its contribution to the sector, and the MHC, replacements of previous positions and some modest expansion of the membership is important.

The Mental Health Commission will be invited to the next AODAB to provide an update on the development of the Mental Health and AOD Strategy.

Stigma and discrimination

The AODAB spent time discussing the critical issue of stigma and discrimination and the impacts it has on prevention initiatives, service delivery, service quality and engagement, retention and outcomes and that a holistic approach is required to address the issue.

The next AODAB meeting is scheduled for 26 June 2024.