



# 2024 Sobering Up Centre Review

## Frequently asked questions

### Who will be conducting the SUC Review?

The Commission has engaged an experienced, independent First Nations consultant – *Yamagigu Consulting Pty Ltd* (Yamagigu) to conduct the 2024 Review in consultation with service providers, stakeholders, Aboriginal Elders, members of the public and local communities.

### What is the purpose of the SUC Review?

The purpose of the 2024 Review is to identify any barriers and/or challenges to accessing the SUCs, gaps in service provision and recommendations to improve the service user journey.

The findings will inform future SUC service requirements as part of the PSP procurement process which will be undertaken in 2025/26 (with new service agreements awarded by 1 July 2026).

Additionally, the 2024 Review will involve specific consultation regarding the proposed location and service model of the new purpose-built facility for the Broome SUC.

### How does the 2024 SUC Review differ to the one conducted in 2019?

Information gathered from the 2024 Review intends to build (rather than substitute) the valuable insights obtained from the [2019 Review](#).

The 2019 Review focused on high-level recommendations on the service model based on information gathered across the nine communities where a SUC operates.

The 2024 Review will provide specific recommendations to enhance the service model for each individual SUC. These recommendations will be central to the SUC PSP process particularly when it comes to drafting and negotiating new service requirements for each of the seven services involved in the PSP process.

Given the various nuances that are characteristic of each SUC, consideration of the specific recommendations at a localised level will ensure the SUC service model is place-based, culturally appropriate and meeting the needs of the local community.

Importantly, the 2024 Review will be Aboriginal led and engage a broader audience. It will involve not only service providers, Elders, Community Leaders and key stakeholders but also members of the general public to identify SUC service needs and their role in each community.

### When will the Review be conducted?

Consultations will commence in Broome in October and conclude at the end of November. All remaining SUC locations will commence consultations in November and will conclude in December.

### Which services are included in the SUC Review?

The 2024 Review will focus on the SUCs in Broome, Kununurra, Derby, Wyndham, Port Hedland, Carnarvon and Kalgoorlie.

The Roebourne and Perth SUC are not in scope for the 2024 Review (or the SUC PSP process) as they are co-located with AOD Treatment Services.

### What opportunities will be available to participate in the 2024 SUC Review?

A mixed-methods approach will be used within the SUC local communities. This will ensure flexibility for service providers, stakeholders and the public/local community to participate in the Review in a way that suits them.

Methods for engagement will include face-to-face and/or teleconference interviews, yarning circles, community online surveys and informal vox pop ('voice of the people') public community sessions.

### How can I participate in the 2024 SUC Review?

If you would like to participate or provide feedback into the 2024 SUC Review please contact Simone Ismail, Manager, Community Support Services on email: [simone.ismail@mhc.wa.gov.au](mailto:simone.ismail@mhc.wa.gov.au) or phone: 6553 0655.



# 2024 Sobering Up Centre Review: Proposed new Broome SUC location

## Frequently asked questions

### How effective is the Sobering Up Centre Model for reducing drinking?

The Sobering Up Centres (SUCs) are a harm reduction service and were established in Western Australia (WA) in 1991, as one of the key recommendations from the Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody. The aim of a SUC is not to stop or reduce people's drinking but instead provide a safe place for people to stay overnight if intoxicated and diverting people away from the hospital and emergency department as well as police custody.

Harm reduction services aim to reduce the negative consequences associated with alcohol and other drug use and reduce other related risk factors. Instead of focusing solely on eliminating the behaviour, harm reduction strategies recognise that people may not be ready or able to stop their alcohol and/or drug use however they aim to meet individuals where they are at in their journey, providing them with options and support.

### How many service users repeatedly use the Broome SUC service?

The majority of clients accessing the SUC are repeat clients and on average a client is admitted to the SUC 3-4 times a month. Milliya Rumurra Aboriginal Corporation (Milliya Rumurra) works with these clients to seek treatment however in many cases the objective of individuals is to sober up and have a safe place to sleep. Milliya Rumurra has previously attempted to limit SUC access to repeat users, but this was not associated with an increased inclination to seek treatment.

### Can we compare Broome SUC data with other locations in WA that have a dual-purpose facility?

Data is difficult to compare given the differences in SUC bed capacity and the various geographic and social factors that may influence the rate of admissions within each community (e.g., the number of transient and itinerant people, the prevalence of alcohol consumption etc).

For example, the Carnarvon SUC which is co-located with Community Alcohol and Other Drug Services has 10 beds and a significantly lower number of admissions each year compared to the Broome SUC which has a 20% higher number of beds and can therefore admit more people.

### How many people who use the Broome SUC are from outside of Broome i.e. is this service helping the Broome community specifically?

There is a larger number of clients outside of Broome that access the SUC compared to those who reside in Broome. Milliya Rumurra has anecdotally reported that Broome is a tourist town and people do tend to come to Broome to consume high levels of alcohol.

The SUC is still supporting the wider Broome community and Broome residents by taking intoxicated and transient people off the street who may otherwise cause harm to themselves or others and impact the safety and security of people in the local area.

### Was the Broome SUC more effective in or out of town i.e. has there been a comparison of statistics from when the SUC was at the Old Post Office versus out in Roebuck? How has the Broome SUC changed since it has moved out of town?

In the 2023-24 reporting period, there has been an approximate 30% decrease in admissions since the SUC has moved from the Old Post Office site to Roebuck. Milliya Rumurra has reported that the decrease is a result of clients now not being able to 'walk in' to the SUC from 4.00pm to 12.00am as the interim facility is located 7km out of town and requires transport to access.

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### What other locations are still available for consideration, as an alternative to 18 Napier Terrace?

The Mental Health Commission has undertaken extensive market research and analysis to identify possible site options. As a result of this process, the site at 18 Napier Terrace was selected as the preferred site. A decision regarding the acquisition of this land will be confirmed following the consultation period and outcomes from this process are considered and finalised.