

# 2021 Annual Report



"SANDAS undertook the development of our new Strategic Directions for 2021 to 2024. These directions refine and concentrate both SANDAS and the board's efforts to bring value to its members."



I have been incredibly proud to serve as Chair of a vibrant, diverse and committed board, building on the strong foundations left by our previous and long-standing Chair, Helene Nielsen.

2020/21 was a time of exciting renewal for SANDAS with new members joining the board, strengthening representation of the Aboriginal sector and regional SA. We welcome Vicki Holmes (Nunkuwarrin Yunti); Tom Steeples (Independent Member from the South East); Jenny Scarce (Country & Outback Health); Gabrielle Preston (Centacare); Ashleigh Hosking (Mission Australia); and Ruth Tulloch (Uniting Communities). We thank Helene Nielsen (Centacare); Cheryl Lierton (Uniting Communities) and Helen Graham (Mission Australia) for their service.

SANDAS undertook the development of our new Strategic Directions for 2021 to 2024. These directions refine and concentrate both SANDAS and the board's efforts to bring value to its members; ensure diversity and the contribution of lived experience as well as good governance and accountability. Key activities driven by these directions are SANDAS' commitment to the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan; the development of an election platform for 2022 and strategic efforts to build sector capability through targeted workforce development.

Despite the continued challenges COVID-19 presented over 2020/21 SANDAS has remained committed to its core mission of representing the voice of its members and service users. SANDAS continued to have an active voice on key issues impacting the Alcohol and Other Drug sector including the need to continue the Equal Remuneration Order; cessation of specialist federal funding streams from July 2022; addressing stigma; consultation on the evaluation of

the National Ice Action Strategy and the Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia health needs assessment as well as advisory group representation on real time prescription monitoring. The PHN-funded Alcohol and Other Drug sector underwent a significant recommissioning process bringing about a reformed and restructured service landscape. SANDAS worked with its members to hear about their experiences and share these with the commissioning agencies.

Stability across the sector will be shortlived as we approach July 2022, when South Australia will face reduced service capacity as well as the loss of unique, innovative, and much-needed services with the expected cessation of both the National Ice Action Strategy and the SA AOD Treatment Grant Opportunity funding streams. Originally awarded to increase the capacity of overstretched treatment services in South Australia, cessation of funding will result in a reduction of over 1/3 of current funding. SANDAS has and will remain proactively engaged with commissioning agencies and federal and state members of parliament in its efforts to advocate for continuation of these funding streams.

Engagement with members and key stakeholders remained a priority. SANDAS continues to have strong and developing relationships with DASSA and both PHNs that support the discussion of service delivery planning, improvements and opportunities. A major achievement for SANDAS was a commitment from DASSA, both SA PHNs, the National Indigenous Advancement Agency and the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Branch to attend an SA Alcohol and Other Drugs Service Roundtable convened by SANDAS in July 2021. This forum represents the first time all major Alcohol and Other Drug commissioning agencies have come together.

Of course, all these achievements and efforts would not have been possible without the SANDAS team - thanks Michael, Sam, Lesli and Bec!

Chris Chalubek
SANDAS Board Chair



This has been the year that wasn't for many people around the world and in other parts of Australia. In South Australia we

have been so fortunate to be able to continue to meet, see clients face-toface, return to work face-to-face and attend events, whilst also having the opportunity to develop sophisticated online treatment and support, meeting and workforce development systems. We should celebrate this as we are clearly in a much better place than many of our colleagues. However, even here the impact of COVID-19 has been dramatic. We have seen changes in the way people are drinking alcohol and using other drugs, changes in client complexity and presentations, and increased demand for services.

Whilst we have seen some increases in funding and some flexibility in re-purposing existing funding over this year, we have not seen a significant investment by either state or federal government in alcohol and other drug early intervention, prevention, or treatment provision. And despite some good attempts (e.g., the DASSA-led Health Needs Analysis Project) we have not seen the development of robust data collection at local or state and territory level that could better inform future sector planning, development and funding. We may find that the impact of COVID-19 on people's alcohol and other drug consumption could have been better managed with a timelier focus on developing a sound evidence base.

This year also saw a major re-commissioning of federally funded services through the Primary Health Networks. Whilst new services didn't commence until the 1st of July 2021 the impending significant changes were announced in early 2021, with the sector in a state of significant flux for some months. Those services that were not recommissioned are a significant loss. Many of them have long histories of working with clients and deep roots in their communities. The discontinuity in service provision when funding changes is always an issue for clients. I would like to acknowledge the work that both unsuccessful and new organisations have undertaken to transition and support their clients through these changes. We welcome the new providers now working with clients, their families and communities in relation to the harms associated with alcohol and other drug use.

Over the year there have been some exciting learning and development opportunities. These have included workshops on working with families, trauma-informed care, and responding to clients who have experienced sexual assault. We were also able to conduct our 2020 Symposium in the early part of 2021 (due to COVID-19) in a face-to-face event. It brought together over 80 people to hear from nationally and internationally renowned speakers on evidence-based treatment and issues of interest to the AOD sector.

This has been a year of considerable advocacy. The most critical issue was, as always, funding. SANDAS, working with the AOD Peaks Network, and many from other sectors, undertook a successful campaign to reinstate the Equal Renumeration Order (ERO) funding from the Federal Government. Securing an extension to this funding will

see some \$800,000 returned to the South Australian drug and alcohol sector for the next two years.

We have also been campaigning to secure the extension of the National Ice Action Strategy funding which currently terminates on the 30th of July 2022. The loss of this funding would reduce Federal funding in South Australia by approximately \$3.5 million per year. On the same date, the SA AOD Treatment Grant Opportunity funding worth approximately \$7m per annum will also terminate. Whilst we have secured the ERO funding, the other two streams are still in significant doubt and will remain a focus of advocacy throughout 2021/22.

On a positive note, in the most recent State budget, the drug and alcohol sector was awarded \$4.2 million in funding. Some The work that SANDAS does could not be undertaken without the support of many others. I would like to thank the board, both current members and those who have resigned over the year, for their support and guidance to the organisation and myself. I would like to also thank the many of you who have made contact and discussed issues with us. Your engagement is critical to the work we do on your behalf.

I would also like to thank major funding bodies, the Federal Department of Health and the South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing, who provide our core funding. This year has seen a growing level of engagement and trust with both funding bodies. Again, their input, collegiality and support are very important in enabling us to do the work that we do.



of this is for limited time projects, whilst a proportion is recurrent. Most of this resource will be allocated to DASSA but will provide some extra NGO treatment capacity to address COVID-19 related demand that the sector clearly requires.

Sam and I have had opportunity to meet with many of our members this year, both face- to-face and online. It has been inspiring to see the ongoing work that is being done despite COVID-19, and the significant levels of commitment that workers and organisations have shown to their clients. In regional SA, we were able to visit Pt Lincoln, Mt Gambier, Port Pirie and Murray Bridge.

Finally, I would like to thank the team - Sam, Lesli, Michelle (resigned) and Bec. Working with such a small team and very limited resources can be very challenging but these colleagues have enabled the organisation to make a significant contribution to the work of the alcohol and other drug sector.

Michael White

SANDAS Executive Officer

Despite COVID-19, or maybe because of it, this year has felt both very busy at times and very quiet at others. We have missed the opportunities to bring people together as regularly as we usually would, though we have managed to do so at times.

The sector has worked incredibly hard and well to continue to deliver treatment and support, early intervention, prevention and information and education services to South Australians affected by their alcohol and drug use or use by others.

# Annual Symposium

One of the most significant face-toface events we were able to present was this year's annual Symposium. We had a great range of speakers covering a broad range of topics (see the Training Highlights for a full list). It felt wonderful to be in a big room with a crowd of people sharing information and knowledge, and networking over good food.



# Annual State Treatment Forum

The State Treatment Forum for this year was postponed until July 2021, due again to the impact of COVID-19 and also the delayed finalisation of contracts by Adelaide and Country SA Primary Health Networks (PHNs).

# Recommissioning

Both Adelaide PHN and Country SA PHN recommissioned services funded by the Federal Department of Health. Core funding has been extended by the Federal Department of Health for two years, to 30 June 2023. National Ice Action Strategy funding continues to June 30th, 2022.

# Continuous Improvement

This year saw the end of our 2018-2021 Strategic Plan. The Board met for a full day in February 2021 and developed new Strategic Directions which can be accessed on our website. We have also undertaken an internal project to move SANDAS records to the cloud. This is helping to facilitate working from home and provides improved document, project, and activity management.

The 2020 Member Survey again highlighted the sector's concerns about funding, recruitment and retention, the need for support for the peer workforce, the need for ongoing training and development activities and to address stigma.

This year we have moved away from hard copy Annual Reports. Online publication allows us to reduce environmental waste and provides the option of embedding links to external references.

# Advocacy

Funding for long-term, stable services sufficient to meet the needs of the community remains one of our most significant priorities. SANDAS, in collaboration with the National AOD Peaks Network, is advocating for increased federal funding and that at a minimum the National Ice Action Strategy (NIAS) funding is permanently incorporated into Core funding, ensuring the long-term stability of services funded under the NIAS.

A number of years ago the Federal Government introduced the Equal Remuneration Order (ERO) funding for the non-government sector. This was a fund to enable services to increase salaries in line with changes in the Social Community Home Care and Disability Services Industry (SCHADS) Award. By the date this was expected to end, it represented approximately

10% of the funding for organisations receiving this support. A national campaign by a range of peak bodies including the National AOD Peaks Network has seen this funding continued for a further two years. However, to date the government has not developed a mechanism to acquit the income. Whilst we welcome its reinstatement, its anticipated loss meant that many services had to budget for this year based on it ceasing. This has caused issues for staff retention across the sector.

To progress discussions at federal level, we

have continued to meet with Minister Hunt's advisers, the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Branch of the Department of Health and a range of federal politicians including Mark Butler, Shadow Minister for Health and Rebekha Sharkie, MP. We have worked closely with our colleagues in the National AOD Peaks Network, The Australian Alcohol and Drug

Council (AADC) and the National AOD Coalition (a group of 70 AOD research, advocacy, and service delivery organisations). At a state level we have met with Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Stephen Wade, and members of both Houses of the SA Parliament. We continue to meet regularly with senior staff from DASSA, the wider Department

for Health and
Wellbeing and other
relevant departments
and both Primary
Health Networks on a
regular basis.

Over the year we have participated in the SACOSS Policy Council and the State NGO Peaks Network, providing input on issues of concern to the AOD non-government sector. We have also worked closely with a number of other organisations, including the Primary Health Association of Australia, the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education and the Australasian Professional Society for Alcohol and Other Drugs.

# **IN 2020/2021 SANDAS REPRESENTED**

46 members (36 organisations and 10 individuals) and delivered the following:

#### **Training**

7 professional development opportunities to 205 participants, covering 11 topics.

#### Advocacy

11 representations to government/ relevant bodies and 11 media engagements.

# Representation

Participation in 27 committees/ reference groups, guided by perspectives and information shared at 17 member site visits and in the 2020 Members' Survey

# Information

248 eNews bulletins, reaching 400 subscribers.

#### **RESOURCED BY**

11 volunteer Board members, 2 core funding bodies and 4 staff members (3 FTE).

# Conclusion

The work of the sector has been indelibly impacted by COVID-19. We are seeing the entrenchment of a number of changed practices such as telehealth and working from home. Both have strengths and challenges which will need to be explored to ensure the best outcomes for clients, families and communities.

This year, SANDAS has remained committed to the development, delivery and promotion of workforce development activities across the sector. COVID-19 continued to challenge the delivery of training and events, but with some creativity, flexibility and the use of technology, we continued to provide the sector with a program of trainings and seminars designed to support the ongoing learning of workers in the sector.

# Guest speakers & events

SANDAS provides guest speakers and representatives for events that provide community education, cross-sectoral knowledge sharing and professional development. This year saw staff present at:

- Murray Bridge Safe Committee
- Limestone Coast Substance Misuse planning meeting
- International Family Drug Support Day
- Mental Health System and Sector Leaders' Summit
- Murray Mallee AOD Sector Forum
- NIDAC Conference

# Recognise and Respond to Disclosures of Rape and Sexual Assault

This workshop was delivered online by Yarrow Place and was tailored to workers in the Alcohol and Drug Sector, addressing issues of rape and sexual assault and how to best respond to disclosures by clients.

# Superskills for Supervisors

In response to sector requests, SANDAS subsidised training delivered by 360Edge, tailored for managers and team leaders in the AOD sector. This training supported supervisors to develop skills in providing effective supervision to front line workers.

# Cultural Awareness Training Workshop

Run by Aston Consulting, this 3-hour workshop provided an entry into the concepts of cultural awareness and culturally sensitive practice for workers in the AOD sector.

# Approved Treatment Programs Initiative

Delivered by DASSA and the Attorney General's Department to inform the AOD NGO sector about the initiative and how to connect clients with the program, which enables clients to receive a reduction in fines for participation in an approved AOD treatment program.

# SANDAS Symposium 2021 (rescheduled from 2020)

Speakers for this year's Symposium were:

- Helene Nielsen from Neami National speaking on the co-design of Australia's first Urgent Mental Health Care Centre
- Jennifer Duncan, CEO, Australian Alcohol and other Drug Council speaking on the integration of Mental Health and Alcohol and Drug services
- Dr Matthew Dunn of Deakin
   University speaking on Performance
   Enhancing Drugs Harm Reduction
   Responses
- Associate Professor James Martin of Swinburne University speaking on COVID-19 and the Dark Web trade of illicit drugs
- Professor lain McGregor of the University of Sydney and Director of the Lambert Initiative speaking on the therapeutic use of cannabis
- Matteo Sewillo of the Penington Institute speaking on harm reduction for GHB use
- Ben Hopkins of Baptist Care SA speaking on the development of the Tumbelin Farm program

## Workforce Development Project

Utilising funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health, SANDAS commissioned 360Edge to provide professional development workshops to AOD workers in identified areas of need. Many workshops were postponed due to COVID-19. The first workshop of this round was Trauma-Informed Care delivered in Ceduna. We're looking forward to the remainder of workshops under this program to be delivered next year.

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's report on behalf of the Board of SANDAS.

#### Financial Results

The 30 June 2021 financial statements show a net surplus for the year of \$37,593 and I would like to highlight the following in relation to the financial statements.

# **Income Statement**

- The major source of cash inflows is the grant funding of \$447,947 represented by:
  - \$207,120 contributed by SA Health (Mental Health and Substance Abuse funding)
  - \$215,234 contributed by Commonwealth Department of Health (CSCBSPP funding).
  - \$25,246 contributed by Commonwealth Department of Health for the delivery of 12 workforce development workshops, originally over 18 months but now extended due to COVID-19.
- Additional income this year is attributable to COVID-19 relief payments as well as a 12% increase in membership fees to \$9,831.85. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant effect on our ability to acquit funds as some contracted training events could not be run. These funds will be carried forward.
- SANDAS expended \$462,345 against the grant funding and additional income, with the surplus of \$37,593 being able to be rolled into the next financial year to create value-add to the sector.

# **Balance Sheet**

Member's funds have grown to \$354,703.
 This will allow SANDAS to remain in a stable financial position in an otherwise volatile world, to continue to operate and meet its objectives serving the South Australian Alcohol and Other Drug sector.

- The cash balance at 30 June 2021 was \$448,337 giving SANDAS strong liquidity, with a current ratio of 6.8.
- An increase in trade debtors was noted, due to all membership fees being invoiced on the 29th of June 2021 for the upcoming financial year.
- As with last year, funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health for the delivery of workforce developments workshops has been accrued but not yet expended. The timeframe for delivery has been extended, and we foresee the supply of these workshops to be finalised this financial year.

#### Auditor

Clarke & Brownrigg provided accounting and audit services to SANDAS and an unqualified audit opinion has been issued on the financial statements showing full confidence in SANDAS being able to meet its reporting, legal and regularity obligations.

# Conclusion

COVID-19 is a challenge that we as society need to become accustomed to. Nonetheless we as an organisation have been blessed to have been spared the impact that many have faced in other states and internationally. This has ensured that we enter the new financial year not only financially resilient but with an increasing surplus which allows us the capacity to provide our services well and above what would be expected, ensuring we achieve to the best of our abilities for all our members. Sadly, due to other commitments this will be my last report however I hope my contribution to the sector has made a meaningful difference.

I would like to thank the board and staff for their support and friendship over the period I have worked with SANDAS.

#### Paul Brianni

Treasurer

## **SANDAS Board Members**

#### Chair:

Helene Nielsen - *Centacare* (to Nov 2020)

Chris Chalubek - Sonder (from Nov 2020)

## Secretary/Deputy Chair:

Cheryl Lierton - Uniting Communities (to Oct 2020)

Ruth Tulloch - *Uniting Communities* (from Nov 2020)

#### Treasurer:

Paul Brianni - Individual Member

Helen Graham - Mission Australia (to June 2021)

Vicki Holmes - Nunkuwarrin Yunti (from Feb 2021)

Ashleigh Hosking - *Mission Australia* (from June 2021)

Simone Mather - Life Without Barriers

Gabrielle Preston - Centacare

Margie Randle Hepatitis SA

Jenny Scarce - Country & Outback Health (from Nov 2020)

Tom Steeples - *Individual Member* (from Sept 2020)

Sally Underdown - Alcohol & Drug Foundation

Michael White - Ex Officio

# Executive Committee Members as at 30.6.21

Chris Chalubek Ruth Tulloch Paul Brianni Michael White

# Board members resigned during 2020/2021

Helene Nielsen Cheryl Lierton Helen Graham



# **SANDAS Secretariat**

Michael White Executive Officer

Sam Raven
Senior Policy & Project Officer

Lesli Bevan

Project Officer – Comorbidity,

Quality & Communication (0.6 FTE)

Michelle Lindblom

Finance & Admin Officer (0.4 FTE)

(to Oct 2020)

Bec Rilett
Finance & Admin Officer (0.4 FTE)
(from Oct 2020)

Staff resigned during 2020/2021

Michelle Lindblom (Oct 2020)

# Strategy, Policy and Advocacy Committees and Reference Groups

SANDAS is represented on a variety of government, sector, and human services committees and reference groups.

These contribute to the development of resources and research projects or provide advocacy for the AOD sector. This year these have included:

- National Ice Action Strategy Evaluation Consultation
- Review of the SA Sobering Up System
- Urgent Mental Health Care Centre Codesign Consultation
- Adelaide PHN AOD Treatment Services Consultation
- Police Drug Diversion State Reference and Operational Group
- DASSA Health Needs Analysis Project Governance Group
- Real Time Prescription Monitoring
   Education and Training Working Group
- DASSA Assertive Outreach Service Governance Group
- DASSA Appointment Booking System Governance Group
- Mindframe AOD Media Monitoring consultations
- National AOD Peaks Capacity Building Network
- SANDAS Comorbidity Network
- SACOSS Policy Council
- National AOD Peaks Network
- State NGO Peaks Alliance
- Skills IQ Industry Reference Group for Direct Client Care (National Training Package Management)
- SA Human Rights Network
- Justice Reinvestment SA Board
- SA Health Youth Treatment Orders Consultation
- APSAD Scientific Program Committee –
   2021 Conference
- Hoi Sinh Network (LDAT)
- · Southern Families Mental Health and

- AOD Community of Practice
- Murray Mallee AOD Sector Forum
- Revision of the National Comorbidity
   Guidelines Consultation
- Take Home Naloxone Pilot Stakeholder Roundtable
- Community Service Roundtable with Penny Wong, Linda Burney & Nat Cook
- Department of Correctional Services
   Partnerships Group

# State Representation

SANDAS met with the following to represent the interests of the SA AOD sector:

- Minister for Health and Wellbeing,
   Stephen Wade MLC
- Commissioner for Consumer Affairs,
   Liquor and Gambling
- Adelaide Primary Health Network
- Country SA Primary Health Network
- · Office of the Chief Psychiatrist

# National Representation

SANDAS met with the following to represent the interests of the SA AOD sector nationally:

- Ms Rebekha Sharkie, Federal Member for Mayo
- Office of the Minister for Health,
   Department of Health, Drug Strategy
   Branch, Canberra
- Mark Butler MP, Shadow Minister for Health
- Australian Alcohol and Drug Council (member)
- National Coalition on AOD Funding
- Rethink Addiction Campaign Advisory Group

# **SANDAS Member Organisations**

Alcohol and Drug Foundation

Baptist Care SA

Catherine House

Centacare Catholic Family Services

Country and Outback Health

Drug Arm

**Encounter Youth** 

Family Drug Support

FocusOne Health

Grandparents for Grandchildren

Hepatitis SA Inc.

Junction Australia

Life Without Barriers

Mind Australia

Mission Australia

Moorundi ACCHS Inc

Murray Mallee General Practice Network Inc.

Neami National

NOFASD Australia

Northern Area Community and Youth Services Inc.

Nunkuwarrin Yunti

**OARS Community Transitions** 

Pangula Mannamurna Aboriginal Corporation

Port Augusta Substance Misuse Service

Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service Inc.

PsychMed

Relationships Australia

Sammy D Foundation

SMART Recovery Australia

Sonder

Substance Misuse Limestone Coast

Teen Challenge SA Inc

**Towards Independence Network of Services** 

Umoona Tjutagku Health Service Aboriginal Corp.

**Uniting Communities** 

Visible Recovery Pty Ltd

West Coast Youth and Community Support

## **Submissions**

Submissions have been made in response to:

- Draft South Australian Tobacco Control Strategy 2021-25 with the ADF
- Review of the Health Care Act 2008 (HCA) with SACOSS and others
- Proposed exclusion of children and adults with an 'acquired' disability from the NDIS

## Media releases/interviews

- Equal Pay Day calling for maintenance of FRO
- Home delivery of alcohol arguing against relaxation of licensing laws
- Unaccredited Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation
   Services calling for the government to
   regulate private residential rehabilitation
   services
- Response to the release of the National Household Drug Data 2019
- Interviewed by media in relation to:
  - Covid-19 impacts on AOD treatment services
  - Overdose deaths in SA for International
     Overdose Awareness day
  - Home delivery of alcohol with food
  - Police dogs in schools
  - Youth Treatment Orders
  - National Wastewater Reports in relation to SA
  - Amyl Nitrate use and control in SA



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SANDAS acknowledges and appreciates ongoing support from:

- Commonwealth Department of Health
- SA Department for Health and Wellbeing –
   Drug and Alcohol Services SA (DASSA)



Formed in 2004, we are the peak body representing South Australia's Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) sector.

#### **OUR VALUES**

The work of SANDAS is underpinned by 5 core values:

Health and Wellbeing: We work to reduce individual and community harm associated with alcohol and other drug use. Our work is underpinned by a belief in the rights of people to health, social justice, equity, reconciliation, cultural safety and social inclusion.

Evidence: We support alcohol and other drug treatment using evidence-based interventions, provided by workers who are qualified and supported to deliver high quality, culturally appropriate services to individuals, families and communities.

Lived experience: We value the lived experience of clients, families, peer workers and communities as integral to the provision of effective treatment services.

Collaboration: We enable the strengthening of connections between individuals, organisations, communities, the alcohol and drug and other related sectors, to facilitate collaboration and cooperation.

Representation: We represent the AOD NGO sector knowing our united voice is stronger than individuals or organisations acting alone. We actively engage our members in the development of our representation work with the community, government, media and other stakeholders.

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