

In Victoria, as in other parts of the world, mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services are working with increasing numbers of people who are experiencing both mental health and substance use conditions. The co-occurrence of these conditions (often referred to as '*dual diagnosis*') can add complexity to engagement, assessment, treatment and recovery.

The identification of strategic directions for working with people with co-occurring conditions is intended to guide the next stages in the development of workers, agencies and systems capacity to respond effectively to people with both conditions.

What are co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions?

Co-occurring conditions refers to the relationships between a person's mental health and substance use concerns. Examples may include:

- a mental health problem or disorder leading to or associated with problematic substance use
- a substance use concern or disorder leading to or associated with a mental health concern or disorder.

Dual diagnosis capability'

'Dual diagnosis capability refers to the evolving capacity and orientation of workers, agencies and sectors to routinely identify, welcome and respond effectively to a range of co-occurring mental health and substance use concerns. It does this with an integrated treatment, recovery-oriented focus with the person and their family or carers driving their recovery'

Integrated treatment

Integrated treatment is often the most effective response for people with co-occurring conditions. Integrated treatment may be defined as *'consumers receive combined treatment for mental illnesses and substance use disorders from the same practitioner or treatment team. They receive one consistent message about treatment and recovery.'* (SAMHSA, 2009)

An integrated system of care is one in which infrastructure has been developed to support integrated service delivery within mental health and alcohol and other drug services.

AOD and Victorian Mental Health Services (Community Support Services (MHCSS) and clinical services)

All AOD, MHCSS and clinical mental health services are encouraged to note the strategic directions for dual diagnosis practice outlined below.

Victorian Dual Diagnosis Initiative (VDDI) teams are available as a resource to assist services & providers to understand, implement and achieve these strategic directions (see attachment 1 –VDDI profile / contact details)

Integrated systems of care

Strategic directions for dual diagnosis practice

Why do we need strategic directions?

- There is a high prevalence of co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions amongst people receiving treatment for either a mental health or a substance use condition
- An array of harms and unwanted outcomes are strongly associated with having both mental health and substance use conditions together
- Recognition of and effective responses to co-occurring conditions often leads to better outcomes.

Strategic directions:

- Promote consistency of practice across the service systems and support continuous service improvement
- Support mental health (both clinical and community support services) and alcohol and other drugs services to further develop their capacity to recognise and respond effectively to people presenting with co-occurring conditions.

Strategic directions for dual diagnosis practice

Strategic Direction 1	Improve outcomes for people with co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions and their families and significant others
Strategic Direction 2	Provide integrated screening, assessment, treatment and care for people experiencing co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions
Strategic Direction 3	Facilitate integration of the systems and services responding to people with co-occurring mental health and substance use conditions and their families and significant others
Strategic Direction 4	Further develop dual diagnosis capability of Victorian clinical mental health, AOD and mental health community support services sector organisations and workforce

Implementing strategic directions for dual diagnosis

All AOD and MHCSS treatment providers, and clinical mental health services are encouraged to note the strategic directions for dual diagnosis practice.

For additional support and information regarding the Victorian Dual Diagnosis Initiative, please note the organisations identified in **attachment 1** – identifying Victoria's Dual Diagnosis Teams by AOD and MHCSS catchment.



Victorian Dual Diagnosis Initiative (VDDI)

The **Victorian Dual Diagnosis Initiative (VDDI)** is a cross-sector (Alcohol and Drug, Mental Health Community Support and Clinical Mental Health) initiative funded by the Victorian Department of Health to contribute to the further development of mental health and drug and alcohol clinicians, agencies and sector's capacity to recognise and respond effectively to people with co-occurring mental health and substance use concerns (dual diagnosis).

The VDDI's structure includes four metropolitan agencies with links to VDDI workers embedded in each rural region. The **VDDI Education and Training Unit** is the state wide workforce development component of the VDDI. It develops, promotes and supports industry relevant Dual Diagnosis capability building activities & competency based training and education products.. The VDDI is coordinated by the **VDDI Leadership Group (VDDILG)** and the **VDDI Rural Forum (VDDIRF)**.

Services provided by the VDDI include:

- Promotion of best practice for co-occurring mental health and substance use problems via provision of a range of specialist clinical services including primary, secondary, tertiary consultations.
- Provision of mentoring and change management strategies to stakeholder services and individual staff members in the implementation of integrated practice and the further development of levels of dual diagnosis capability.
- Facilitation of agency self-assessment of the agency's dual diagnosis capability and development of a plan to further develop the agency's capability (including identification of training needs).
- Education and training within a workforce development context.
- Engagement of consumers and carers in developing integrated dual diagnosis practice and related policy development.

VDDI Contact details:

Department of Health Region	AOD / MHCSS catchment	VDDI Service / Contacts
Eastern Metropolitan	Eastern Melbourne	Eastern Dual Diagnosis Service Contact: Gavin Foster Tel: 03 9843 1288 Email: gavin.foster@easternhealth.org.au
	Inner East Melbourne	
North West Metropolitan	Inner North Melbourne	NEXUS Contact: Chris Hynan Tel: 03 9288 2353 Email: Chris.HYNAN@svhm.org.au
	North Melbourne	
	North Western Melbourne	SUMITT Substance Use Mental Illness Treatment Team Contact: Shane Sweeney Tel: 03 8387 2202 Email: shane.sweeney@wh.org.au
	South Western Melbourne	
Southern Metropolitan	Bayside	Southern Dual Diagnosis Service Contact: Debra Alexander Tel: 03 8792 2330 Email: debra.alexander@southernhealth.org.au
	Frankston-Mornington Peninsula	
	South-Eastern Melbourne	
Statewide	VDDI Education & Training Unit	VDDI Education & Training Unit Contact: Bill Tune Tel: 03 9288 3856 Email: william.tune@svhm.org.au
	VDDI Rural Services	
Barwon South-West	Barwon	Contact: A/Prof. Richard Harvey Tel: 03 4215 2512 Email: richardha@barwonhealth.org.au mailto:debra.alexander@southernhealth.org.au
	Great South Coast	Contact: Jill Reid Tel: 03 5561 9189 Email: j.reid@swh.net.au
Gippsland	Gippsland	Contact: Dean Rooke Tel: 03 5150 3444 Email: DRooke@lrh.com.au
Grampians	Grampians	Contact: Marisha Jarecki Tel: 03 5320 4100 Email: MarishaJ@bhs.org.au
Hume	Goulburn Valley	Contact: David Murray Tel: 03 5823 6000 Email: david.murray@gvhealth.org.au
	Hume	Contact: Gary Croton Tel: 03 5722 2677 Email: gary.croton@awh.org.au
Loddon Mallee	Loddon Mallee	Contact: Paul Hurnall Tel: 03 5454 7608 Email: phurnall@bendigohealth.org.au
		Contact: Jill Gleeson Tel: 03 5018 7901

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