



Western Australian Network of
Alcohol & other Drug Agencies

WANADA State Budget 2019/20 Summary

The Western Australian Treasurer, the Hon. Ben Wyatt MLA, handed down this third State Budget on 9 May 2019.

The State Budget figures indicate an operating surplus of \$533 million, two years ahead of schedule. This has been primarily driven by a surge in the iron ore price due to supply problems in Brazil (attributable to the Vale mining disaster) and market conditions in China. Other factors that have driven the growth in State revenue are: top-up funding from the Commonwealth to address the State's GST shortfall; and State Government expense growth being restricted to an average of about 2 per cent (and predicted to average 1.3 per cent over the forward estimates).

There are ongoing macro-economic concerns, with: State net debt predicted to reach about \$40 billion across the forward estimates; the economy yet to demonstrate a substantial post-boom revival; faltering business confidence; and ongoing household living pressures.

Alcohol and Other Drugs Investment

Alcohol and other drugs was a significant focus in the weeks leading up to the State Budget. The State Budget includes funding for multiple initiatives, the highlight being the State Government's response to the Methamphetamine Action Plan Taskforce Final Report:

- A comprehensive **response to the Methamphetamine Action Plan Taskforce Final Report** that allocates \$42.5 million across multiple prevention, treatment, harm reduction and workforce development initiatives. (See **Attachment A** for further information).
- Establishment of **Recovery Colleges** - \$3.6 million for a hub and satellite design, with the hub located in Perth, and satellite locations across regional Australia. The service model is designed to address both mental health, and alcohol and other drug use issues.
- **13 FTE CADS** funding has been secured beyond the 2021/22 fiscal year, with \$3.184 million allocated across the forward estimates.
- **Aboriginal Community Connectors** (formerly Aboriginal Community Patrols) has received \$6.53 million in 2019/20.
- **The Casuarina Prison Expansion**, comprising four additional accommodation units has an allocation of \$56.7 million. This expansion includes the unit dedicated to a male alcohol and other drug treatment facility. While this allocation does not include funding for service provision, WANADA anticipates this to occur in the next 12 months.
- **Alcohol Interlocks Assessment and Treatment** has had funding extended across the forward estimates, totalling \$6.051 million across the forward estimates.
- Funding to **Doors Wide Open** – \$83,925 to support the organisation as it secures a path to financial sustainability.

The Mental Health Commission Budget Bulletin indicates that the alcohol and other drug sector funding will increase by \$2.3 million over the next financial year. WANADA notes, however, that further funding increases will be evident in future years, as new services become operational.

WANADA's Position

WANADA welcomes the State Government's considered and balanced investment to address the harms associated with alcohol and other drug use. The State Budget funds provide certainty for a number of services and introduces a range of initiatives that improve service pathways and access. Targeted investments such as the crisis centre, low medical detox and the expansion of the Transitional Housing and Support Program will also contribute to addressing system bottlenecks.

WANADA believes that the State Budget announcements, along with recent investment in additional regional residential services and dedicated prison alcohol and other drug services, demonstrate substantial improvements in service system configuration and balance. This has the potential to improve consumer access and deliver sustainable outcomes, and will provide a foundation for future growth aligned to the *Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025*.

Cross-Sector Initiatives

The State Budget included investment in a number of initiatives across several sectors, to address issues that often co-occur with alcohol and other drug use concerns:

- Youth, prevention and Aboriginal health and wellbeing:
 - o \$900,000 over three years to develop a Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy to find alternatives to detention and services aimed at diversion;
 - o \$1.3 million to support the West Kimberley Youth and Resilience Hub Project; and
 - o \$8.1 million for the Suicide Prevention Strategy, to continue to work to reduce the risk of suicide in WA including remote Aboriginal communities.

- Domestic and Family Violence – an additional \$30.9 million across the following initiatives:
 - o \$11.7 million to establish two new Family and Domestic Violence One Stop Hubs (to provide wraparound services);
 - o \$15.5 million for an electronic monitoring trial to monitor high-risk domestic violence offenders;
 - o \$2.1 million to deliver training to frontline police officers and to develop a family violence Code of Practice;
 - o \$1.1 million of continued funding for the Kimberley Family Violence Service; and
 - o \$415,000 of continued funding for the Pets in Crisis program.

- Mental Health:
 - o An investment of more than \$22.4 million in capital funding over the next three years to establish further community mental health step up/step down services;
 - o \$15.6 million for a new 20-bed secure mental health unit at Fremantle Hospital - the second secure unit is expected to open in 2022 and will boost the total mental health beds on site to 84;
 - o \$8.9 million for the continuation of the Mental Health Court Diversion Program;
 - o \$8.1 million for suicide prevention programs; and
 - o \$3 million of additional funding for comprehensive planning to decommission Graylands Hospital and reconfigure mental health services to reflect contemporary and more appropriate models of care.

Links

- MHC Budget Bulletin https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/2626/mhc_budget_bulletin_2019.pdf
- WA State Budget Papers <https://www.ourstatebudget.wa.gov.au/>
- \$42.5m Investment in Alcohol and Other Drug initiatives <https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2019/05/McGowan-Government-takes-action-on-methamphetamine-issues.aspx>

Overview of State Government Investment in Response to the Methamphetamine Action Plan Taskforce Final Report

The State Government's response to the Methamphetamine Action Plan Taskforce Final Report included \$42.5 million in additional funding to address harms associated with alcohol and other drug use. The funded initiatives are listed below. Where available, WANADA has incorporated further information contained within the Budget Papers.

| |
|--|
| <p>- \$4.83 million to establish a 10-bed crisis centre in Midland. This service, which WANADA understands could be provided by an NGO, would provide stabilisation, assessment and referral into alcohol and other drug services. Services referring to this crisis centre may include the Mental Health Police Co-Response teams, Emergency Departments, etc.</p> <p>\$200,000 in new funding has been allocated for the 2019/20 financial year, increasing to approximately \$1.5 million per annum over the forward estimates.</p> |
| <p>- \$200,000 towards planning for short-term safe places for compulsory critical intervention. This new funding has been allocated for 2019/20 financial year.</p> |
| <p>- \$200,000 to plan for the expansion of the Mental Health Police Co-Response model to regional areas and to include dedicated support for alcohol and other drug issues. This funding has been allocated for the 2019/20 financial year.</p> |
| <p>- \$9.2 million towards the development of a comprehensive alcohol and other drug youth service in the Kimberley. This initiative resulting from the Kimberley Service Planning Undertaken in 2017/18. This service will respond to the complex needs of young people and their families, including low-medical withdrawal, residential rehabilitation and post residential support through a ten bed youth service and day program. \$212,000 is allocated for the 2020/21 financial year, increasing to \$3.05 million in 2021/22 and \$5.95 million in 2022/23.</p> |
| <p>- \$2.34 million for four low medical withdrawal beds in the Kimberley. This initiative resulting from the Kimberley Service Planning Undertaken in 2017-18. \$172,000 in new funding is allocated in 2019/20, increasing to approximately \$700,000 per year across the forward estimates.</p> |
| <p>- \$631,000 to expand the existing Transitional Housing and Support Program (THASP), which will assist an additional 20 people each year. This equates to approximately \$155,000 per annum. This funding is in addition to the approximate \$660 per annum allocated to continue THASP across the forward estimates.</p> |
| <p>- \$20.1 million towards the North West Drug and Alcohol Support Program. This funding will ensure the continuation of the program across the forward estimates.</p> |
| <p>- \$914,000 for alcohol and other drug training for Aboriginal workers through the Strong Spirit Strong Mind program. This funding will support the continuation of the program across the forward estimates.</p> |
| <p>- \$614,000 towards alcohol and other drug training for frontline workers such as psychologists, social workers and counsellors. This funding will support the continuation of the program across the forward estimates.</p> |
| <p>- \$457,000 for the Meth Peer Education Program which focuses on harm reduction and health promotion. This funding will support the continuation of the program across the forward estimates.</p> |
| <p>- \$1.05 million for alcohol and other drug education programs in schools with a focus on at-risk students. This funding is additional and will support the continuation of the program, including evaluation.</p> |
| <p>- \$1.52 million to expand the needle and syringe exchange program in high-demand regional areas including the Great Southern and Bunbury. This funding is to support expanded programs.</p> |

- | |
|--|
| - \$300,000 to expand the Hepatitis WA nurse-led program which supports GPs to provide brief interventions to meth users. This funding will support the continuation of the program across the forward estimates. |
| - \$150,000 towards raising awareness of the community Needle and Syringe Exchange Programs . This is newly allocated funding. |

In addition, a further \$21.2 million has been allocated to the WA Police Force for the Meth Border Force.