

Identifying Opportunities for Alcohol and Other Drug Custodial Reform

WANADA notes there has been considerable activity within justice to advance alcohol and other drug service provision within, and linked to, custodial services over the last few years. The alcohol and other drug sector supports sound evaluation, expansion of the existing initiatives where evidenced, and development of dedicated alcohol and other drug initiatives within youth detention.

WANADA is aware of some initiatives recently announced by the Department of Justice, for example the review of the reintegration rehabilitation service provision, and the review of Banksia Hill's operational philosophy. These are welcomed by WANADA, and we are open to contributing in whatever way possible. We acknowledge there may be further initiatives that WANADA is not/less aware of.

Informed by sector feedback WANADA is supportive of:

- an independent evaluation of Wandoo, including consideration of the benefits that would be achieved through broadening the eligibility criteria, and potential re-purposing opportunities for other stand-alone alcohol and other drug treatment prisons across the state.
- an independent evaluation of the Casuarina alcohol and other drug prison programs (Mallee Rehabilitation Centre), and similarly identification of opportunities for inclusion of similar service models in other prison settings.
- a research inquiry into successful alcohol and other drug related service models for young people in juvenile detention. This would include the identification and assessment of relevant juvenile justice reform initiatives in other jurisdictions within Australia and internationally that work to reduce prison engagement, incorporate a therapeutic focus within detention settings to reduce recidivism, and engagement of family and community for effective re-entry.

WANADA made some initial enquiries with the Director of the National Drug Research Institute in WA (Curtin University). A number of independent researchers with specialist expertise in the youth and/or justice field were identified. For example Professor Stuart Kinner (University of Melbourne) chairs Australia's National Youth Justice Health Advisory Group and the World Health Organization's Health in Prisons Programme Technical Expert Group. He co-convenes the Justice Health Special Interest Group in the Public Health Association of Australia, serves on the Steering Committee for the Worldwide Prison Health Research and Engagement Network, and serves on the Steering Group for the WHO Health in Prisons Programme.

- a trial harm reduction initiative within a corrections setting, such as a needle, syringe and equipment exchange program to reduce transmission of hepatitis C and other blood borne viruses.

Given the significant impact of the justice system on Aboriginal communities, WANADA views Aboriginal community engagement in all of the above evaluations and planning as essential.

WANADA and the Western Australian alcohol and other drug sector would welcome the opportunity, and is well placed, to contribute to any planning processes.