

A guide to using the checklists

To assist Indigenous AOD workers and organisations to appropriately address some of these issues it's important to take a broad workforce development (WFD) approach. To this end, the following checklists have been developed as a user-friendly tool.

These checklists explore Indigenous AOD worker issues. Two checklists have been developed: one for Indigenous workers in Indigenous organisations, and another for non-Indigenous organisations. The checklists are broad ranging, but not exhaustive. They incorporate some questions which may assist consideration of cultural competencies.

Separate checklists have been developed for Indigenous AOD workers depending on whether they are employed within an:

1. Indigenous organisation or
2. Non-Indigenous organisation.

There are broad questions relating to workforce development which are relevant to both groups. Questions relating to cultural competencies are presented in the context of the workplace.

Checklist No.1, for Indigenous workers in Indigenous organisations may be useful to:

- Discuss existing workplace policies in regard to bereavement, ceremonial, and cultural leave
- Evaluate cultural accountability of non-Indigenous staff to Indigenous staff
- Identify relevance of training, ongoing professional development
- Assess levels of organisational and managerial supports for Indigenous workers
- Determine whether Indigenous ways of working and knowledge are being incorporated into Indigenous AOD practice
- Identify factors which may impact on Indigenous workers stress and burnout.

Checklist No.2, for Indigenous workers in non-Indigenous organisations, may be useful to:

- Open up discussion about the need for policies relating to bereavement, ceremonial, and cultural leave for Indigenous employees within non-Indigenous organisations.
- Evaluate cultural accountability of non-Indigenous staff to Indigenous staff
- Determine supports for Indigenous workers with regard to community consultation, and incorporating Indigenous ways of working
- Assess levels of organisational and managerial supports for Indigenous workers
- Identify factors which may impact on Indigenous workers' stress and burnout.

There may be other workforce development issues of particular relevance to specific situations. Nonetheless, these checklists provide a useful jumping off point in the development of positive comprehensive cultural practice and approaches. The checklists are also a useful workforce development training tool and can be used to instigate initial discussion and plans.

Talking Stones

The Talking Stones depicted on the cover were used in NCETA's Indigenous worker wellbeing workshops to allow people to speak freely and to share what was on their mind, you only speak when you hold the Talking Stone, anything that is personal must stay in the circle, the more you use the talking circle the energy will become very strong it will be very powerful, trusting and sacred.

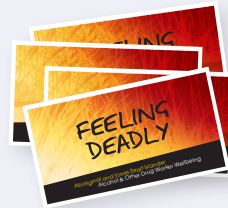
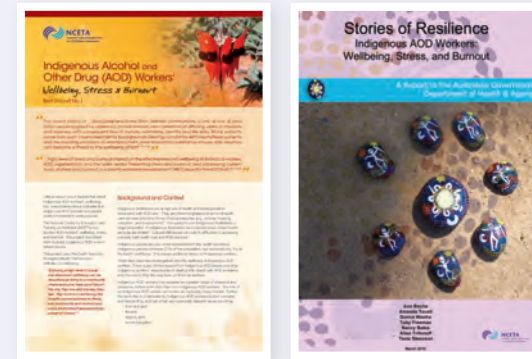
The person that is running the talking circle acknowledges the ancestors and traditional owners of the land, always pass the Talking Stone to the person on the left.

Resources

Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health
www.craah.org.au/publications

Council Remote Area Nurses Australia
Crana.org.au
Confidential 24hr Support Line - Phone 1800 805 391

NCETA'S Indigenous AOD Worker Wellbeing Resources.



Examples of NCETA'S resources on AOD workforce development include the following.



www.nceta.flinders.edu.au

National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction, Flinders University

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An Indigenous Workforce Development CHECKLIST for the AOD Field

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Little is known about factors that effect Indigenous AOD workers' wellbeing, but, anecdotal evidence indicates that Indigenous AOD workers are placed under considerable work pressure. The National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) has studied Indigenous AOD workers' wellbeing, stress, and burnout and has identified some of the contributory factors. This document is part of a suite of resources that has been produced by NCETA to enhance Indigenous worker wellbeing and to reduce work-related stress.

This project uses the NACCHO definition of Aboriginal Health: **"Aboriginal health"** means not just the physical well-being of an individual but refers to the social, emotional and cultural well-being of the whole Community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being thereby bringing about the total well-being of their Community. It is a whole of life view and includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life.

Background and Context

Indigenous Australians are at high risk of health and social problems associated with AOD use. They are often marginalised in terms of health care services and other forms of social inequities (e.g. income, housing, education, and employment). Compared to non-Indigenous Australians, a larger proportion of Indigenous Australians live in remote areas where health services are limited. Cultural differences can add to difficulties in accessing culturally safe health care and AOD services.

Indigenous people are also under-represented in the health workforce. Indigenous people comprise 2.5% of the population, but represent only 1.8% of the health workforce. This places additional stress on Indigenous workers.

There have been few investigations into the wellbeing of Indigenous AOD workers. There is also limited research on Indigenous AOD issues including Indigenous workers' experiences of dealing with clients with AOD issues and the impact that this may have on them as workers.

Indigenous AOD workers may experience a greater range of stressors and pressures in their work roles than non-Indigenous AOD workers. The role of an Indigenous AOD worker can involve an especially heavy burden. Further, the work that is undertaken by Indigenous AOD workers is often complex and demanding, and can entail very personally relevant issues including:

- loss and grief,
- trauma,
- stigma, and
- social disruption.

Indigenous Workforce Development

The primary aim of Indigenous workforce development is to facilitate and sustain the Indigenous AOD workforce by targeting organisational issues so that cultural needs and Indigenous knowledge are transferred into workplace policy and practice. Furthermore, Indigenous AOD workers require structures that acknowledge their commitment to family and community.

“Indigenous workforce development is about taking a multi-faceted approach to address the range of historical and cultural factors impacting on the ability of the Indigenous workforce to function with maximum effectiveness in responding to alcohol and other drug related issues. Indigenous workforce development should have a systems focus, targeting individuals, their families and communities, as well as organisations and structural factors rather than just addressing education and training of individual Indigenous workers.”

A multi-level approach is needed as illustrated in NCETA's 6-level model shown in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows how each of these levels of Indigenous WFD intervention involve inherently different issues. The 6-level model comprises:

- the individual
- the family
- the community
- the team
- the workplace
- the organisation.



Figure 1. Multiple levels of Workforce Development intervention required to achieve work practice change

An Indigenous Workforce Development Checklist No.1 Indigenous AOD Workers in Indigenous Organisations

	Yes	No	N/A
1. Do you regularly consult with Elders in your community?			
2. Does your workplace consult with community to identify current AOD trends within specific Indigenous communities?			
3. Does your workplace assess community needs and invest in developing services accordingly?			
4. Do you feel your workplace is well accepted by the community ?			
5. Are Indigenous ways of working incorporated into AOD programs in your workplace?			
6. Are you involved in workplace planning , and community development processes?			
7. Does your workplace have strategies to incorporate Indigenous knowledge into policy and procedures ?			
8. Does your organisation facilitate access to culturally relevant training / professional development ?			
9. Does your workplace have policies and procedures to ensure worker safety in working with clients?			
10. Do you have an adequate bereavement / compassionate leave policy in your workplace?			
11. Do you have an adequate ceremonial leave policy in your workplace?			
12. Do you have an adequate leave policy in your workplace to participate in NAIDOC week celebrations?			
13. Do your managers/supervisors support networking, building and maintaining community relationships ?			
14. Do your clients have access to culturally appropriate AOD services ?			
15. Does your workplace have grievance procedures to deal with worker and/or client complaints ?			
16. Are you able to access cultural healing practices for clients and workers?			
17. Do your managers/supervisors understand and support community obligation ?			
18. Does your workplace have policies and procedures to address racism ?			
19. Does your workplace give recognition to Indigenous knowledge, and lived experiences of Indigenous AOD workers?			
20. Does your organisation have mandatory cultural awareness training for non-Indigenous workers?			
21. Does your workplace have processes to recruit appropriate non-Indigenous staff?			
22. Does your workplace have policies to ensure confidentiality ?			
23. Do have policies to employ culturally safe practices within your workplace?			
24. Do you incorporate gender appropriate practices in your organisation?			
25. Does your workplace have an Indigenous specified positions ?			
26. Does your workplace support/create career paths for Indigenous AOD workers?			
27. Does your workplace have EAP (Emergency Assistance Program) for Indigenous AOD workers to access counselling services?			
28. Does your workplace have a high rate of staff turnover ?			
29. Does your workplace regularly evaluate programs and cultural work practices?			
30. Do you have flexible work arrangements ?			
31. Do you participate in clinical supervision ?			
32. Do your supervisors/managers recognise signs of work stress in Indigenous workers?			
33. Do your managers/supervisors encourage self-care activities to enhance worker wellbeing ?			
34. Do you have access to mentoring ?			
35. Does your job specification accurately reflect the task you undertake in your role?			
36. Are you adequately supported by non-Indigenous co-workers ?			
37. Do you feel your salary is adequate for the work you do?			
38. Do management/supervisors have realistic expectations of your work?			
39. Do you have a manageable workload ?			
40. Do you regularly undertake performance appraisals ?			

An Indigenous Workforce Development Checklist No.2 Indigenous AOD Workers in non-Indigenous Organisations

	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is consultation with Elders facilitated in your workplace?			
2. Does your workplace consult with community to identify current AOD trends within their local Indigenous communities?			
3. Does your workplace assess local community needs and develop services accordingly?			
4. Do you feel your workplace is well accepted and accessed by the community ?			
5. Are Indigenous ways of working incorporated into AOD programs in your workplace?			
6. Are you involved in workplace planning , and community development processes?			
7. Does your workplace have strategies to incorporate Indigenous knowledge into program development for Indigenous clients ?			
8. Does your organisation facilitate access to culturally relevant training / professional development ?			
9. Does your workplace have policies and procedures to ensure worker safety when working with clients?			
10. Do you have an adequate bereavement / compassionate leave policy in your workplace for Indigenous workers?			
11. Do you have a ceremonial leave policy in your workplace for Indigenous workers?			
12. Do you have a leave policy in your workplace for Indigenous workers to participate in NAIDOC week celebrations?			
13. Do your managers/supervisors support networking, building and maintaining community relationships ?			
14. Do your clients have access to culturally appropriate AOD services ?			
15. Are you able to access cultural healing practices for clients and workers?			
16. Do your managers/supervisors understand and support your commitment to community ?			
17. Does your workplace have policies and procedures to address racism ?			
18. Does your workplace give recognition to Indigenous knowledge, and lived experiences of Indigenous AOD workers?			
19. Does your organisation have mandatory cultural awareness training for non-Indigenous workers?			
20. Does your workplace have processes to recruit and retain appropriate non-Indigenous staff in Indigenous focuses AOD programs?			
21. Does your workplace have policies to ensure client confidentiality ?			
22. Do have policies to implement and evaluate culturally safe practices within your workplace?			
23. Does your workplace understand gender appropriate practices for Indigenous clients?			
24. Do you regularly undertake performance appraisals ?			
25. Does your workplace have an Indigenous employment strategy ?			
26. Does your workplace support/create career paths for Indigenous AOD workers?			
27. Does your workplace have EAP (Emergency Assistance Program) for Indigenous AOD workers to access counselling services?			
28. Does your workplace have a high rate of staff turnover ?			
29. Do you evaluate and report on cultural work practices within the organisation?			
30. Do you have flexible work arrangements ?			
31. Do you participate in clinical supervision ?			
32. Do you have access to mentoring ?			
33. Do your managers/supervisors encourage activities to enhance worker wellbeing ?			
34. Does your workplace have grievance procedures to deal with worker and/or client complaints ?			
35. Does your job specification accurately reflect the task you undertake in your role?			
36. Are you adequately supported by non-Indigenous co-workers ?			
37. Do you feel your salary is adequate for the work you do?			
38. Do management/supervisors have realistic expectations of your work?			
39. Do you have a manageable workload ?			
40. Do you regularly undertake performance appraisals ?			