

# Feeling Deadly, *Working Deadly*



NCETA  
Australia's National Research Centre  
on AOD Workforce Development



## ABOUT THIS KIT

The '*Feeling Deadly: Working Deadly*' Resource Kit is aimed at reducing stress and burnout and enhancing wellbeing amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander<sup>1</sup> alcohol and other drug (AOD) workers.

The Kit has been developed by the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) and was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing. It forms part of NCETA's program of work on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worker wellbeing.

Copies of resources developed as part of the *Feeling Deadly: Working Deadly* Kit are available for download from the NCETA website: [www.nceta.flinders.edu.au](http://www.nceta.flinders.edu.au)

A DVD-Rom containing copies of all the resources is included with this kit.

### Who is the Kit for?

This Kit is intended for use by Indigenous AOD workers, their managers and supervisors. Mainstream AOD workers and managers may also find the Kit useful. The Kit aims to reduce the risks of stress and burnout among this critically important, but vulnerable, group of workers.

<sup>1</sup> The terms Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander and Indigenous are used interchangeably throughout this document. We understand that some people have a preference for using one term over the other and we have used the terms interchangeably to be sensitive to these differing perspectives.

### Rationale

Indigenous AOD workers find aspects of their jobs very rewarding, including helping their people, enhancing community services and improving Indigenous health outcomes and life expectancies.

Nevertheless, Indigenous AOD workers face many unique stressors. These include:

- Heavy work demands resulting from working with clients who have complex health and social problems
- Defining roles and boundaries with their clients
- Role stigmatisation stemming from negative attitudes towards AOD work and from racism towards them and their client group
- Translating mainstream work practices to match the needs of Indigenous clients
- A lack of cultural understanding and support from non-Indigenous health workers
- Isolation when working in remote areas.

Many Indigenous AOD workers also carry heavy personal loads in terms of economically dependent children, parents, elders, and other family members, as well as broader community commitments. Hence it is very likely that their personal situations will impact on them as workers.

As a result of these pressures, it is important to have measures in place to protect the wellbeing of Indigenous AOD workers and enable them to undertake their valuable work.

## The Kit's Content

The Kit contains the following components.

<b>2 DVDs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. A DVD containing all of the Kit's written resources.</li><li>2. A video resource which takes a humorous look at a day in the life of an Indigenous AOD worker.</li></ol>
<b>Handbook - Staying Deadly</b>	The Handbook of strategies for preventing stress and burnout among Indigenous AOD workers.
<b>7 Theory Into Practice (TIP) Sheets for managers and supervisors</b>	<p>These TIP Sheets are targeted specifically at managers and supervisors of Indigenous AOD workers to help them enhance the wellbeing of their staff. They can be used either as a package or individually. The supervisors' TIP Sheets address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>S1. The complex personal lives of Indigenous AOD workers</li><li>S2. Indigenous ways of working</li><li>S3. Rewarding workers</li><li>S4. Mentoring</li><li>S5. Recruiting and retaining workers</li><li>S6. Clinical supervision</li><li>S7. Developing teams.</li></ol>
<b>4 Theory Into Practice (TIP) Sheets for Indigenous AOD workers</b>	<p>These TIP Sheets are targeted specifically at Indigenous AOD workers to help them enhance their wellbeing and help prevent stress and burnout. They can be used either as a package or individually. The workers' TIP sheets address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>W1. Worker wellbeing – A Guide For Workers</li><li>W2. Mentoring – A Guide For Workers</li><li>W3. Clinical Supervision – A Guide For Workers</li><li>W4. Goal setting – A Guide For Workers.</li></ol>
<b>5 Case Studies</b>	The Case Studies are designed to act as discussion starters concerning problems faced by Indigenous AOD workers.
<b>A Talking Circle Guide</b>	A guide for conducting talking circle discussions which can be a very useful way to bring staff together to identify and address issues that can contribute to stress and burnout in the workplace.
<b>A Workforce Development Checklist</b>	An Indigenous Workforce Development Checklist for the AOD field.
<b>Online Directory of Worker Resources</b>	Provides Indigenous AOD workers with easy and user-friendly access to worker wellbeing resources throughout Australia. To access a copy of this Directory go to the <a href="#">NCETA website</a> . A copy of the Directory is also available on the DVD-Rom accompanying this kit.
<b>Other Resources</b>	Bookmark.

## How to use the Kit

The Kit has been designed as a flexible, practical, user-friendly resource that can be used by managers, supervisors and workers in a variety of situations. The Kit can be used in its entirety or individual components can be used as needed for specific purposes.

For example, the Kit and/or its individual components may be used:

*By Indigenous supervisors and managers to:*

- enhance staff wellbeing and help prevent stress and burnout
- assist workers to enhance their wellbeing and reduce work-related stress
- conduct professional development activities – both within their own organisation and with other organisations
- inform workplace human resource policies and procedures.

*By Indigenous workers:*

- As a means of debriefing with colleagues
- To better understand *their* own personal stressors and ways to manage them
- To identify what aspects of *their* work environment could be changed to make it less stressful and to provide a basis for workers to negotiate for such change.

*By non-Indigenous workers and managers:*

- To guide communication in staff/team meetings
- To address relevant HR issues for Indigenous staff in their mainstream service.

## NCETA's Worker Wellbeing Program of Work

This Kit is part of a broader program of work undertaken by NCETA which aims to enhance the wellbeing of Indigenous AOD workers. Findings from the other components of the program of work are presented in separate reports:

Gleadle, F., Freeman, T., Duraisingam, V., Roche, A., Battams, S., Marshall, B., Tovell, A., Trifonoff, A., and Weetra, D. (2010). *Indigenous Alcohol and Drug Workforce Challenges: A literature review of issues related to Indigenous AOD workers' wellbeing, stress and burnout*. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide SA.

Roche, A., Tovell, A., Weetra, D., Freeman, T., Bates, N., Trifonoff, A., and Steenson, T. (2010). *Stories of Resilience: Indigenous Alcohol and Other Drug Workers' Wellbeing, Stress, and Burnout*. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide SA.

Duraisingam, V., Roche, A.M., Trifonoff, A., and Tovell, A. (2010). *Indigenous AOD Workers' Wellbeing, Stress, and Burnout: Findings from an online survey*. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide SA.

Roche, A.M., Duraisingam, V., Trifonoff, A., and Tovell, A. (2013). The health and wellbeing of Indigenous drug and alcohol workers: Results from a national Australian survey. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* 44 (1), 17-26.

NCETA has also undertaken work to minimise stress and burnout among the broader AOD workforce. Publications from this work include:

Skinner, N., & Roche, A. (2005). *Stress and Burnout: A prevention handbook for the alcohol and other drugs workforce*. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide SA.

Duraisingam, V., Pidd, K., Roche, A.M., & O'Conner, J. (2006). *Satisfaction, Stress and Retention among Alcohol and other Drug Workers in Australia*. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide SA.

Duraisingam, V., Roche, A.M., Pidd, K., Zoontjens, A., & Pollard, Y. (2007). *Wellbeing, Stress, and Burnout: A national survey of managers in alcohol and other drug treatment services*. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide SA.

A Workforce Development TIPS kit for the broader AOD field is also available from NCETA:

Skinner, N., Roche, AM., O'Connor, J., Pollard, Y., & Todd, C. (Eds). (2005). *Workforce Development TIPS (Theory Into Practice Strategies): A resource kit for the alcohol and drugs field*. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide, SA.

Copies of these resources are available from NCETA. For details of these and related projects visit the NCETA website: [www.nceta.flinders.edu.au](http://www.nceta.flinders.edu.au)

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