



# AODCCC

Alcohol and Other Drug  
Consumer & Community Coalition

## AODCCC Membership Survey Report 2022-2023

*...beyond stigma*



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## Acknowledgement of Country

AODCCC acknowledges that we are on Nyoongar country and extends our respect to the Traditional Custodians, the Wadjuk people, their Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise the strength, resilience, and capacity of all Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and First Nations cultures.

## Recognition of Lived Experience

We would like to acknowledge the individual and collective expertise of those with a lived or living experience of alcohol and or other drug issues. We also acknowledge the emotional labour and vulnerability that is present in this space. We also recognise the work of those who came before us to build the foundations to enable this work to actually take place.

## About AODCCC

The Alcohol and Other Drug Consumer & Community Coalition (AODCCC) is the emerging peak body for alcohol and other drug consumer advocacy in Western Australia. Our aim is to empower the voices of consumers, their families and supports, ensuring the health and wellbeing of our community. The AODCCC was incorporated in June 2018 in response to the need and support for an alcohol and other drug specific consumer advocacy body. We have received funding from the Mental Health Commission in order to progress our establishment.

AODCCC would like to acknowledge the ongoing support from the Mental Health Commission of Western Australia for funding our organisation to date.



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# 2022-23 Annual Member Survey Report

Welcome all to the inaugural AODCCC membership survey report for 22-23.

As the saying goes, from little things big things grow. Much like building a house, our organisation has continued to take steady steps in building a solid foundation in which to grow from, with all the operational and governance structure any sustainable organisation requires. In addition to this, it is essential that the voices of our members are present to guide us along the way, and more specifically to inform the systemic advocacy agenda of the organisation and live up to our mission “to promote the interests, education and welfare of those impacted by alcohol and other drugs”.

This survey is one part of that process, as we aim to build this over time with the goal for it to be a go- to within the sector. It will be a grass roots account in order to tap into the lived experience of our members, to address the needs, and build upon and champion the strengths of our community.

As our membership grows (389 as of 03/08/22), we will continue to engage and report on the views shared directly from the membership and will publish these via this annual survey report. This will directly inform our advocacy initiatives.

We would like to thank the 47 members that participated in this inaugural survey, and the AODCCC reference group members that provided input into its development. I know we can build on this over time and I encourage all of our members to take the time to engage in this survey when it comes around again next year.

I am confident in our collective ability to seek out change, address stigma and improve the wellbeing of our community. I would like to acknowledge those that came before us in advocating and establishing our organisation and to those with lived experience that forge a path forward, at times at their own personal cost for the well being of our community. We hope you find this report informative and helpful to motivate the change so needed in our community.

Yours Sincerely,

Alex Arpino

AODCCC Development Coordinator

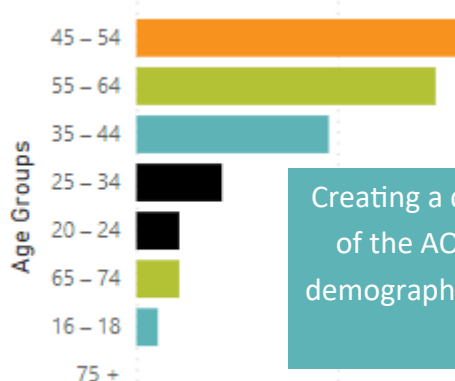
# 2022-23 Annual Member Survey

AODCCC conducted its inaugural annual membership survey in 2022 (closed Tuesday 7th June 2022). Thank you to everyone who participated in this process.

The survey aimed to inform us on the broad perspectives of our membership and clarify and drive our advocacy work for the 2022-2023 financial year ahead.

## About the participants...

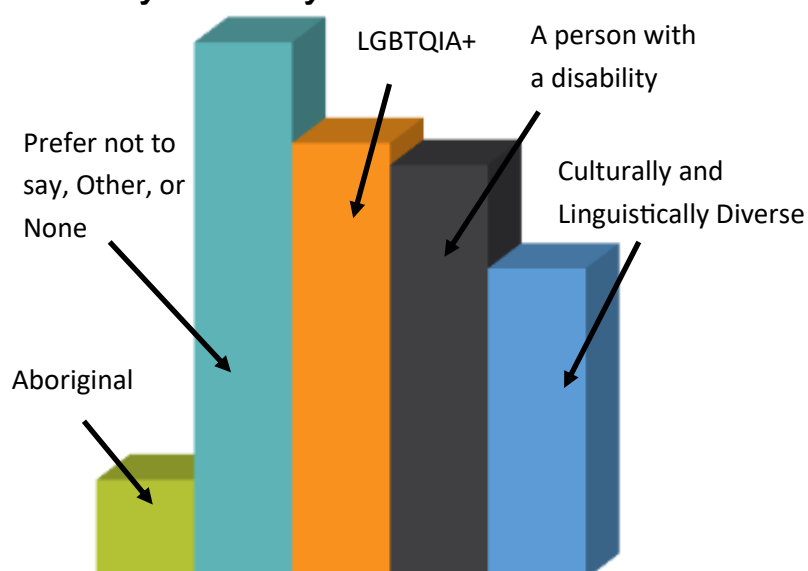
### How old are you?



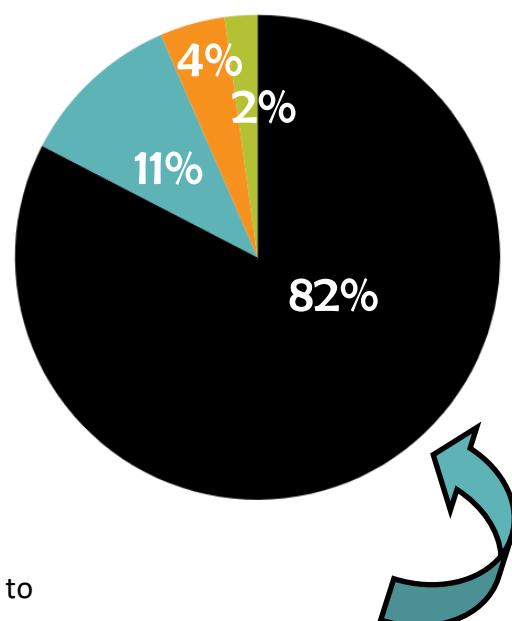
**47 participants** took part in this survey over a 2 month period.

Creating a diverse, dynamic and interactive community of peers is one of the AODCC's strategic focus areas. This was reflected within our demographic data which directly revealed diversity in age, location and identity across our participants.

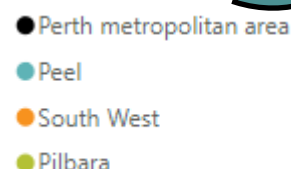
### How do you identify?



### Where in Western Australia do you live?



Participants were provided with several identifiers, and were able to select from more than one area. Individuals were also able to self-specify how they chose to identify. Out of our 47 survey participants, 1 participant identified as Aboriginal, 13 as LGBTQIA+, 12 as a person with a disability, and 5 as Culturally and Linguistically diverse.





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Our aim is to empower the voices of consumers, their families and supports, ensuring the health and wellbeing of our community. Given this, it was positive to see that our survey participants represented a diverse cohort of current and previous users of Alcohol and Other Drugs, as well as family members, significant others, workers and mentors within this space. This variety is important in ensuring that we capture all levels of experience in order to inform areas for advocacy, and systemic change/s, across the sector.

Do you think there is adequate and accessible information available on treatments and services that are available to consumers, their families and significant others?

Yes

Unsure

No

The majority of our participants responded 'No' to this question. Optional comments provided by individuals noted that whilst lots of information is available, it is not always easily found. The need for an easily accessible collective source, which lists all of the available services, within the sector was suggested. Additionally, a lack of cross-service communication was highlighted. It was mentioned that service ratings/reviews, by consumers, are not provided, and would be helpful, in considering individual treatment options.

**Do you think there is adequate and accessible general information available on alcohol and other drugs?**



Over half of our participants responded 'No' to this question.

Some of the comments provided raised;

- A desire for family-specific resources
- Issues with accessibility for individual's in 'crisis'
- Minimal lived-experience input
- The need for more information on the relationship between Trauma and Alcohol and Other Drug use



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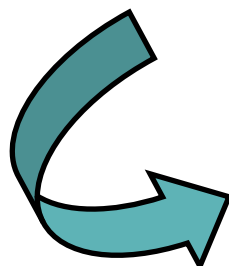
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Members listed themselves and/or their family members/significant others accessing the following types of Alcohol and Other Drug services within the past 5 years.

We were interested in hearing whether or not there were any other alternative therapies and supports which our participants found helpful, that aren't commonly available from an Alcohol and Other Drug services/treatment. Several suggestions were provided which indicated a potential to explore the need for increased diversity in treatment approaches.



Whilst there were a mixture of positive remarks, participants raised the following gaps in accessing services and/or how they were delivered...

"Workers need to present all available options to consumers, not just government funded models".

"... refused family contact which had significant effects on our loved one and family members"

"At times waiting list for detox can be quite long, when people are in chronic addiction a few weeks is often too long. Generally services are well delivered and accessible."

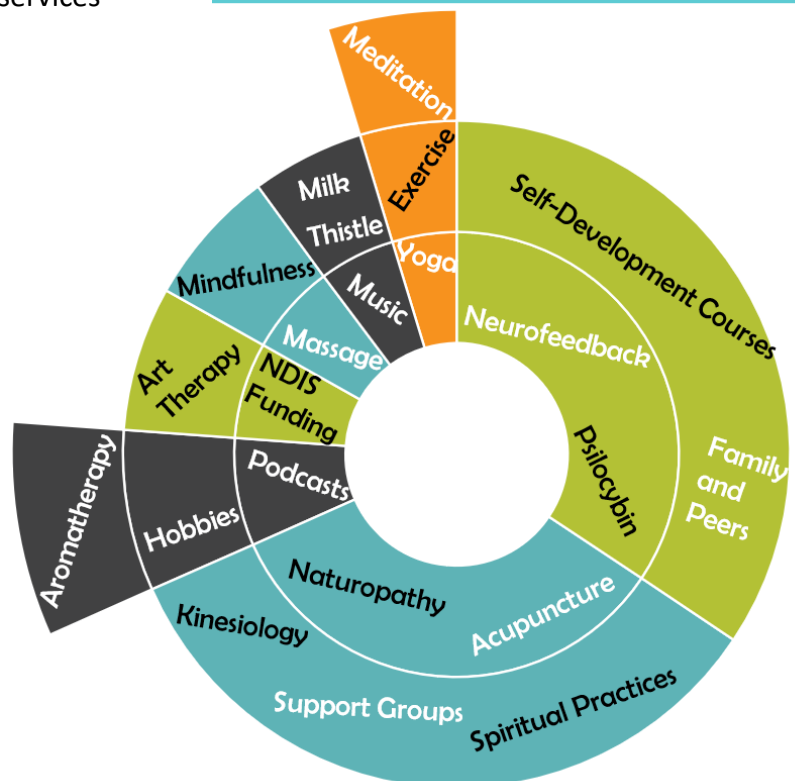
"Family not so well informed to be able to feel they could help."

"not enough knowledge about co-morbidity"

"lack of support for co-occurring trauma and/or Mental Health issues"

"Medication dispensing protocols are in need of major reform"

"Long waitlists, lack of interim support"







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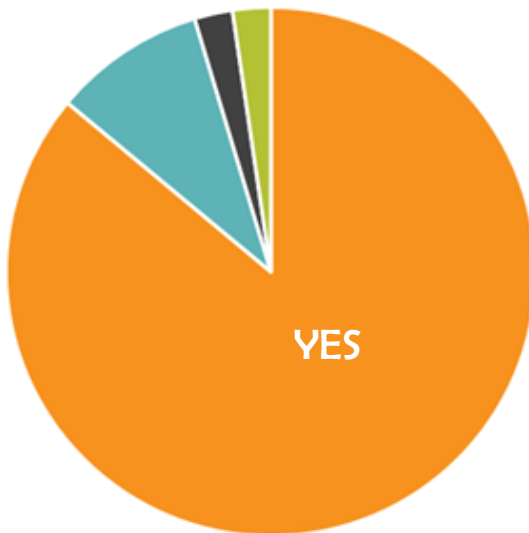
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## Experienced stigma/discrimination?

86% of our participants reported that either themselves, or a significant other had experienced stigma/discrimination as a person with a living or lived experience of Alcohol and Other Drug Use. Comments provided by participants reported feelings of judgement, shame, accusatory looks, disregard and a lack of compassion.

Furthermore, it was discussed that their current and/or historic Alcohol and Other Drug Use presented as a barrier to being provided with appropriate support and/or care for other co-occurring health and/or housing needs. Additionally, participants expressed concern regarding employment opportunities, and the impact of discrimination due to background screening. There was also mention of this discrimination occurring within the 'using' community whereby individuals with tobacco, alcohol and marijuana use were discounted in comparison to other substances, such as methamphetamine.



■ Yes ■ No ■ Unsure ■ Prefer not to say

## Law Reform suggestions...

Participants voiced a need for Alcohol and Other Drug reforms in the following areas;

Decriminalisation of Alcohol and  
Other Drug Use

Mental Health Act

Advertising

Recovery and Treatment-Focused

Sentencing

Prescription Medications

Drink Driving

Participants were asked to share their perspectives on the current biggest issues faced by those with a lived, or living, experience of Alcohol and Other Drug Use. in our society...

discrimination  
ostracised  
financial insecurity  
weak character  
loneliness  
grief  
mental health issues  
education  
employment  
funding  
alcoholic  
knowledge  
housing  
disease  
shaming  
stress  
relationship issues  
isolation  
wait time  
ignorance  
relapse  
trauma  
stigma  
moral failing  
media  
culture  
negativity  
criminal  
blame  
rejection  
access  
problematic  
lack of compassion  
lack of early intervention  
poor understanding  
user not a person  
labelled an addict



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Where do you access information on what types of treatment and service options are available to you (eg. rehabilitation, counselling, harm-minimisation and abstinence services/programs, etc.)?

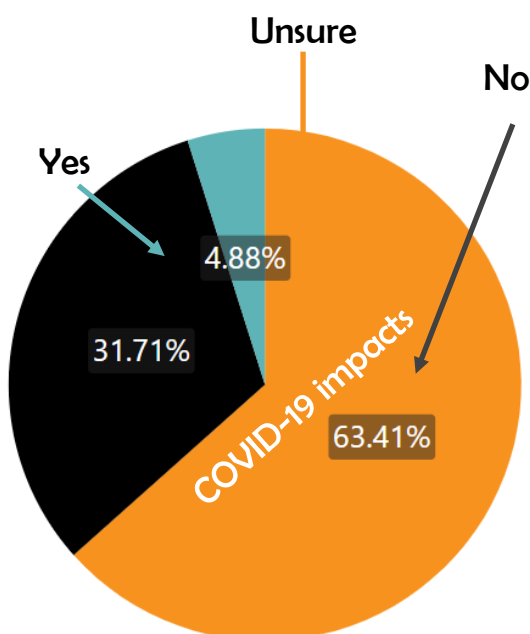
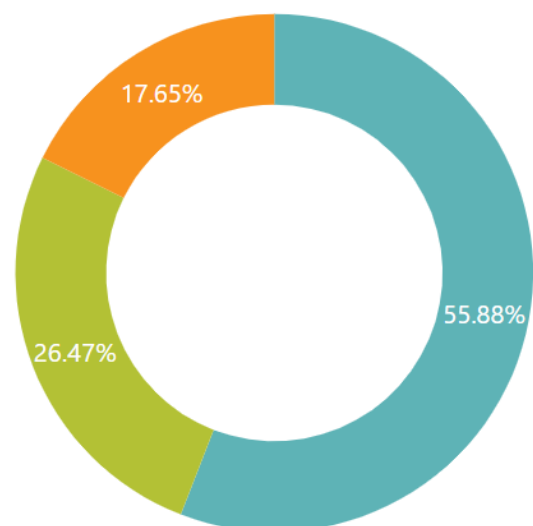


AODCCC member's would like to be involved in...



Do you engage with the AODCCC on social media?

● Yes ● No ● I don't have social media



When we asked our participants if they and/or family member/ significant others had been impacted by COVID-19, in relation to Alcohol and Other Drug Use, 63.41% responded 'No'.

Comments provided by participants expressed impacts such as increased social isolation, mask anxiety, the need to defer residential treatments due to health concerns, delays in face-to-face delivery, and a decreased supply/quality of substances. Positively, others voiced that they were able to continue accessing support via zoom or over the phone.





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## Looking Forward...

In closing, we would again like to extend our ongoing thanks to all of the individual's that have, and continue to, take the time to provide valuable input into the work we do here at the AODCCC.

Systemic Advocacy can be a challenging endeavour, which requires a delicate balance of both patience and perseverance, resulting in rewarding and significant outcomes.

Meaningful change in this space is dependent on ensuring consumers, their family members, and significant others, have a seat at the table, at all levels of decision making, within the sector.

As part of this survey process, we asked participants to provide suggestions to support us in effectively guiding our work for the year ahead.

It was encouraging to see that many of these proposals were continuations of activities which are already occurring here at the AODCCC. These included, 'providing an interface between consumers, health care providers and government agencies', 'sharing regular education/information sessions and lived experience employment opportunities' and ongoing 'membership engagement opportunities'.

Furthermore, we understand from your input that you'd like to see an increase in the AODCCC's media presence, membership group meetings, and have desires for future office expansion to the outer suburbs.

Looking to the year ahead, the AODCCC will continue to amplify the consumer voice across a diversity of spaces, and explore how we can best work towards implementing your invaluable feedback within the organisation.

We will continue to work at addressing the issues identified in this report. We wish you well and look forward to seeing and hearing from you at future events and online. Please contact us at any point to share your insights and suggestions.

Warm Regards,

AODCCC Team

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