

## **WORKING WITH GANG MEMBERS: SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH AUCKLAND'S GANG COMMUNITY**

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### **Background:**

A year long project was developed and completed in February 2018, which focused on improving knowledge of Auckland's gang community for CADS staff and establishing suggestions for working with gang members and gang associates who access CADS for substance abuse issues.

### **Approach:**

A literature review was completed with focus on the development of gangs in New Zealand and outcomes from six gang-specific and gang-inclusive programmes in New Zealand were collated. A retrospective audit was then undertaken looking at issues presented by gang members and associates at first contact with CADS. Results from the review and audit contributed to the development of an information sheet and workshop for CADS staff, with cultural teams (Maori and Pasifika) providing cultural input throughout.

### **Outcomes:**

The gang community will be best served by an approach that allows for working with gang-specific issues, especially for members fully embedded in a gang-centric lifestyle. CADS and other AOD clinicians need to utilize a gang-informed approach to enhance the therapeutic relationship and facilitate long-term engagement.

### **Conclusions:**

The information sheet and workshop will be useful for other community-based services regularly working with gang members and associates. The permanency of the gang scene, despite historical prevention-based and suppression-based interventions, highlights the need for all health workers to develop a robust method of working with the gang community.

### **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

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