

**"We have to accept that not everybody's gonna have an abstinence outcome":  
Exploring the views of funders, treatment providers and service users on  
performance measurement**

ROBERT STIRLING<sup>1,3</sup>, ALISON RITTER<sup>2</sup>, SALLY NATHAN<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies (NADA), Sydney, NSW, Australia, <sup>2</sup> Drug Policy Modelling Program, Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW, Sydney, NSW, Australia, <sup>3</sup> School of Population Health, UNSW, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Presenter's email: [robert@nada.org.au](mailto:robert@nada.org.au)

**Introduction and Aims:** Performance measurement is an important approach for enabling health system accountability and improvement. The development of performance measures should respond to the needs of multiple stakeholders - funders, treatment providers and service users. This study sought to understand what importance these diverse stakeholders place on different measurement types and specific measures.

**Design and Methods:** Ten focus groups were held including with service users (n=5), treatment providers (n=4) and funders (n=1). As part of the groups, a quantitative prioritisation process was used to identify the measurement types and specific measures which were most important to each group and to guide further discussion. Subsequent analysis was then used to understand concordance and disagreement across different types of stakeholders.

**Results:** Overall participants rated measures of access, experience and outcomes as most important, with input and output measures rated least important overall. There was agreement across all stakeholder groups that measuring reduction in substance use should not be done in isolation of other outcomes. There was also agreement on the importance of measures that assess person-centred care. However, there was not agreement across all measurement types, with service users valuing structural aspects such as the importance of workers with lived experience more than providers and funders.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** The focus group findings provide valuable insights into what is important to measure to assess the performance of AOD treatment services. Whilst there was consensus that access, experience and outcome measures are the most important measurement types, structural measures were also important to service users and warrant future exploration.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** The themes identified in this study should be used to develop a range of future performance measures to assess the overall performance of AOD treatment services.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:** This research is supported by the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship. RS is employed by the Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies, which is supported by the NSW Ministry of Health and Australian Government Department of Health. AR is supported by an NHMRC Senior Research Fellowship (APP1136944).