



STIGMA

People who have problems with drug and alcohol use, and their families commonly experience stigma and shame.

Negative stigma can be a barrier to people looking for and receiving help.

Stigma, shame and judgemental attitudes can cause isolation and exclusion, which can impact on mental and physical health.

Most people recover from problems with drug and/or alcohol use and go on to be fully contributing members of their community. Negative attitudes must be reduced to allow people to get help and recover.

BEYOND ICE

Beyond Ice is a Wangaratta initiative using facts to fight the myths and misconceptions of methamphetamine use. It's an information campaign to help us know what to do if we, or someone we know has a problem with drug use, and to help them with issues that arise as a result of problematic drug use.

The Beyond Ice initiative and Wangaratta's Local Drug Action Team is supported by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation.



FAMILIES & SUBSTANCE USE

People commonly use a variety of substances that influence our mood and behaviour. These may include medications, caffeine, tobacco, alcohol, or illicit drugs. We use substances for many reasons, sometimes with unwanted outcomes. As a family member you may be concerned about someone's substance use and want to help them. The aim of this pamphlet is to link you with some ways to help.

Families have an important role in supporting a person with problematic substance use. Often the people with good family support recover the quickest. When someone develops a problem with substances their families can be faced with many challenges.

These can include

- finding reliable information
- having useful conversations,
- accessing treatment,
- caring for oneself and other family members dealing with stigma.

FINDING RELIABLE INFORMATION

Finding reliable information is often one of the most helpful things a family can do. Unfortunately, some of the things written and commonly believed about substance use issues can be inaccurate and unhelpful. We recommend any of the links in the Helpful Contacts section overleaf as a starting point.

WANGARATTA FAMILY SUPPORT KIT

Fact Sheet #3

FAMILY SUPPORT

FAMILIES DEALING WITH SUBSTANCE USE CONCERNS



INFORMATION ABOUT

- TREATMENT SERVICES
- FAMILIES & SUBSTANCE USE
- FINDING INFORMATION
- USEFUL CONVERSATIONS
- SELF CARE
- STIGMA

TREATMENT SERVICES

Each person has different needs and there is no one size fits all treatment option. The time to recovery is also different for everyone.

Asking for help is the first step to understanding the problem and what might be needed. The best option is to first contact your GP for advice.

To make sure you get the best treatment for your needs, you need to go through an intake process. Your GP can refer you or you can ring directly.

The Wangaratta intake provider for people over 18 is Australian Community Support Organisation (ACSO). For people aged from 12 – 25, the provider is Headspace Albury Wodonga. The intake provider will then refer you to the right service for assessment and treatment.

The main Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) treatment provider in Wangaratta is Gateway Health who provide many AOD services including counselling and support, withdrawal assistance and rehabilitation. Gateway has AOD youth workers and a family support worker and is able to link people to other in-house health services. Telephone and online counselling can also be helpful for many people.



HELPFUL CONTACTS

INFORMATION:

AUSTRALIAN DRUG FOUNDATION DRUG INFO

Info line: 1300 85 85 84

www.adf.org.au/drug-facts/

FAMILY SUPPORT:

WANGARATA NORTH EAST FAMILY SUPPORT

Support from families with similar experiences
0499 537 818

FAMILY DRUG SUPPORT

1300 368 186

www.fds.org.au

FAMILY DRUG HELP

1300 660 068

www.sharc.org.au/family-drug-help

TREATMENT:

AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANISATION REGIONAL ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG INTAKE

1300 022 760 (M-F, 9-5)

This is for referral for assessment to Gateway Health

www.acso.org.au/aod-mh-support

GATEWAY HEALTH

45-47 MacKay St, Wangaratta

03 5723 2000

ALBURY WODONGA ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE

AoD Counselling outreach in Wangaratta

02 6040 1200

ODYSSEY CIRCUIT BREAKER MOLYULLAH

Residential rehabilitation

03 5766 6399

DIRECTLINE

Phone, online counselling and referral

1800 888 236 (24 hr)

www.directline.org.au

USEFUL CONVERSATIONS

Often we hope to communicate with the person we care for in such a way that they change their behaviour. Sometimes our worries get in the way of effective communication and we don't have the conversations we want to. Tips for effective communications include:

Choose the right time to have a conversation – not when the person is substance affected

Listen attentively

Be non-judgemental – avoid lecturing

Reflect back what you are hearing - check that you are understanding accurately

Focus more on what the person is feeling rather than what they are doing

SELF CARE

Having a family member with a substance use issue can be very stressful and recovery may take time so it is critical that family members take care of themselves and each other.

It is important to continue to do the things that you enjoy and to make time to talk with your friends and supports about your feelings and experiences.

Many people have found it beneficial to talk with a counsellor or to join a support group of people affected by similar issues (see Helpful Contacts)

