

Dear forensic drug treatment partners,

Welcome to the first of ACSO's communiqués to our forensic drug treatment partners to assist with the process of transition into a newly reformed drug treatment services sector. Our goal via these regular communiqués is to address your questions regarding COATS and forensic clients.

#### **COATS current processes**

Currently ACSO provides specialist Forensic AOD assessments for a range of justice services including Community Corrections, Courts and the Adult Parole Board. Assessment services for Youth Justice, Drug Courts, and Diversion Programs such as Police Drug Diversion, CREDIT, CISP and ARC are currently provided by several sources included Drug Treatment Services with brokerage for treatment for these clients administered through the COATS program. Treatment providers currently receive COATS funding through a mix of "Retainers" and fee for service brokerage.



**From the 1<sup>st</sup> of September** ACSO will continue to undertake the majority of forensic intake and assessment services for forensic clients, in particular clients referred through Community Corrections, Courts and the Adult Parole Board. Assessments will be undertaken within 2-5 days of referral according to identified levels of risk and need.

ACSO will be using a forensic version of the Department of Health's standardised Screening and Assessment tool which will be made available to treatment agencies via the Penelope Portal to ensure clients do not have to tell their story twice.

#### **Question: How will COATS work with the new catchment based Intake and Assessment services?**

**Answer:** From 1st September ACSO will make referrals for COATS clients directly to providers and sites in each catchment across Victoria as needed. ACSO will provide the new Intake and Assessment providers with a regular summary of all referrals and to which treatment type in order for them to be able to manage local demand.

Intake and assessment will be expected to provide the screening, assessment and brief intervention services from 1 September 2014 for diversion clients such as those referred by the Drug Diversion Appointment Line (DDAL), CREDIT program and other referrals sources such as clients historically considered under the Rural Outreach Diversion and Koori Drug Diversion worker programs. This is expected to be 10% of the total DTAUs for this function. Intake and assessment providers will need to complete a TCA for each assessment via the Penelope portal. ACSO will provide training, information and support to intake providers regarding this role in the coming months.

#### **Question: How will out of scope services work from 1st September?**

**Answer:** If you are an existing Aboriginal Controlled Health Service, Youth service or Residential Services provider whose services were out of scope in stage 1 of the recommissioning process you will continue to receive referrals and communicate with COATS in the same way as you do now from 1st July.

From 1st July:

- You will receive your annual retainer (If you had one) and any pre-payments agreed with the Department of health as per the normal process.
- ACSO will continue to manage forensic referrals to you as we do now through the Penelope portal system.
- Providers will complete a TCA through the Penelope portal upon completion of treatment.

- ACSO will reconcile all services provided against retainers, providing you with monthly financial reports. Once your retainer has been expended, ACSO will make fee for service payments for all additional services delivered against that retainer.
- ACSO will be running Penelope training for any new staff during August and September and you will be required to complete a new user agreement for any new staff.

**Question: How will services in scope work from 1st September?**

**Answer:** Non residential counselling; withdrawal; care and recovery co-ordination.

From 1st September ACSO will make referrals for COATS clients directly to providers and sites in each catchment across Victoria based on demand. The Department of Health has specified that 20% of all treatment DTAUs will be for forensic clients. This replaces the retainer. In addition to this all forensic clients referred by ACSO will receive an additional 15% price loading. There will no longer be specific reconciliation or payment made for non-attendance as this has been built into the unit pricing and 15% loading.

From 1st September:

- ACSO will manage forensic clients through the Penelope portal system.
- ACSO will make referrals directly to the sites nominated by each provider (or consortium).
- All forensic clients are expected to commence treatment within 2-5 working days of assessment by ACSO depending on need, risk and prioritisation identified by ACSO.
- ACSO will provide the new Intake and assessment providers with a regular summary of all referrals and to which treatment type in order for them to be able to manage local demand.
- Providers will complete a TCA (treatment completion advice) through the Penelope portal at the completion of treatment.
- All approved providers of non-residential withdrawal, counselling and care and recovery coordination are expected to dedicate annually 20% of their DTAU funding for the treatment of forensic clients and to report against this target.
- Once the Agency or consortium DTAU allocation has been expended, ACSO will make fee for service payments for all additional services delivered.
- ACSO will provide a monthly reconciliation of referrals against the DTAU allocation to each approved provider (lead agency in a consortium).
- ACSO will be running Penelope training for all new staff during August and September and you will be required to complete a new user agreements for any new staff.

**Question: What will ACSO do to help service providers be ready to operate COATS from 1<sup>st</sup> September?**

**Answer:** In the coming weeks in order to prepare for making referrals ACSO will contact each consortium lead provider or individual service provider to request the following information:

- Service locations and treatment types to be provided from that location
- Key contact details for COATS, including financial management for COATS

ACSO will provide each agency and consortium with a COATS orientation and information pack. This will include:

- A new Heads of Agreement (MoU) for the delivery of COATS,
- a licence agreement for each agency or consortium for the use of the Penelope system,
- individual user agreements for staff accessing the Penelope portal,
- access to training and support for Penelope,
- general information about COATS and reporting requirements.

**Question: What happens from 1st July – 31st August for providers delivering Non Residential COATS services?**

**Answer:** From 1st July until 31<sup>st</sup> August

- You will receive a pro-rata payment of your annual retainer (If you had one) and any pre-payments agreed with the Department of Health as per the normal process.
- ACSO will continue to manage forensic referrals to you as we do now through the Penelope portal system until 31<sup>st</sup> August. Current prices will remain the same.
- Providers will complete a TCA through the Penelope portal upon completion of treatment which will be reconciled against current treatment types and pricing.

- ACSO will reconcile all services provided against retainers, providing you with monthly financial reports during these 2 months. Should your retainer be expended, ACSO will make fee for service payments for all additional services delivered against that retainer.

**Question: How will forensic clients be supported during transition?**

**Answer:** Providers who are ceasing service provision for forensic services have the option of continuing to provide services for via a Fee For Service for clients currently engaged in counselling, who continue post 1st of September. If services are no longer able to provide treatment for continuing clients they should submit a variation form to COATS who will arrange for transfer of clients to new services.

COATS staff can assist clients, treatment agencies and justice services with any enquires about transition arrangements.

**Contacts for COATS**

Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further information or to discuss your concerns throughout this time. We look forward to continuing to work with you throughout the coming months.

<p><b>CEO</b></p>	<p>Over 25 years sector experience including in drug treatment. Current CEO of ACSO, responsible for driving the organisation’s vision and strategic goals.</p>	<p><b>Karenza Louis-Smith</b></p> 	<p>Responsible for the strategic direction and leadership of ACSO.</p> <p><b>Ph: 9413 7000 M: 0409 901 258</b>  <a href="mailto:Karenza@acso.org.au">Karenza@acso.org.au</a></p>
<p><b>Deputy CEO</b></p>	<p>Over 20 years sector experience including in youth justice, drug treatment and behaviour change programs.</p>	<p><b>Vaughn Winther</b></p> 	<p>Responsible for all ACSO services and operations.</p> <p><b>Ph: 9413 7000 M: 0439 651 852</b>  <a href="mailto:vwinther@acso.org.au">vwinther@acso.org.au</a></p>
<p><b>Director – Strategy &amp; Partnerships</b></p>	<p>Experience in disability, mental health &amp; community development specifically with leading change and new business transition.</p>	<p><b>Helen Killmier</b></p> 	<p>Executive lead of ACSO’s overall Transition implementation team, ensuring resources required are directed into the project to enable ACSO to be fully operational</p> <p><b>Ph: 9413 7043 M: 0408 593 638</b>  <a href="mailto:hkillmier@acso.org.au">hkillmier@acso.org.au</a></p>
<p><b>Senior Manager Transition</b></p>	<p>Over 10 years sector experience with expertise in dual disability, complex needs and challenging behaviours.</p>	<p><b>Lee-Arna Howle</b></p> 	<p>Responsible for leading the transition in teams across Regional Victoria for both community mental health and drug treatment services.</p> <p><b>Ph: 9413 7000 M 0457 536 264</b>  <a href="mailto:lhowle@acso.org.au">lhowle@acso.org.au</a></p>
<p><b>Senior Manager Metropolitan Services</b></p>	<p>Over 10 years experience in AOD working in a range of settings including forensic and community counselling and assessment, youth, outreach, residential withdrawal, supported accommodation.</p>	<p><b>Heather Carmichael</b></p> 	<p>Responsible for leading ACSO’s day to day operations of both community mental health and drug treatment services in Metropolitan Victoria. Key contact for COATS.</p> <p><b>Ph: 9413 7000 M: 0421 960 490</b>  <a href="mailto:hcarmichael@acso.org.au">hcarmichael@acso.org.au</a></p>
<p><b>Senior Manager Regional Services</b></p>	<p>With over 30 years sector experience including 10 years experience in the Drug and Alcohol field and five years as</p>	<p><b>Annie Trainor</b></p>	<p>Responsible for leading ACSO’s day to day operations of both community mental health and drug treatment services in</p>

a COATS clinician



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Alcohol & Other Drugs and  
currently completing a  
Bachelor Applied  
Management.

**Jenny Svoboda**  
Photo to come

We welcome our newest member  
of the Transition and Leadership  
team, Jenny Svoboda. Jenny will be  
the Regional Manager covering  
Hume, Goulburn Valley and  
Gippsland catchments

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