

# FACT SHEET

## Improved Services for People with Drug and Alcohol Problems and Mental Illness

The *Improved Services for People with Drug and Alcohol Problems and Mental Illness* (Improved Services) initiative aims to build the capacity of non-government drug and alcohol treatment services to effectively address and treat coinciding mental illness and substance abuse. It forms part of the Commonwealth's component of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) *National Action Plan on Mental Health 2006 - 2011*.

The Improved Services initiative is providing approximately \$20 million per annum to 2011-12 to fund non-government drug and alcohol treatment organisations to improve services for clients who also have a mental health problem.

The Improved Services initiative is being rolled out with two key components:

1. Grants of up to \$500,000 over three years to individual non-government alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment services to undertake a range of service improvement activities to build their organisation's capacity to respond to comorbid clients. These might include, but are not limited to:
  - the implementation or enhancement of quality improvement processes, policies or procedures that support the assessment and management of clients experiencing comorbidity
  - the introduction of appropriate workforce training, professional development and / or clinical support
  - the development of sustainable partnerships with the broader health network, particularly primary care and mental health services, and
  - better data collection to support continuous improvement.

On 28 September 2007, funding totalling \$29.9 million was announced as part of the first tranche of funding under the capacity building grants component of the Improved Services initiative. A total of 87 non-government drug and alcohol treatment services across Australia will benefit from this funding, which commenced from 1 January 2008.

In July 2008, the Australian Government approved grants of a further \$14.9 million for a second tranche of funding. 35 non-government drug and alcohol treatment services across Australia will benefit from this funding, which will commence from July 2008. This brings the total funding for capacity building grants under the Improved Services initiative to \$44.8 million over three years, supporting 122 treatment services nationally.

2. A second component of the initiative is the Cross Sectoral Support and Strategic Partnership (CSSSP) project. The CSSSP project complements the capacity building grants program and involves funding state-based support organisations to assist services to build partnerships with the wider health sector, identify workforce development and training opportunities and to undertake service improvement activities. These organisations were initially provided 12 months funding from January 2008. The Department is currently assessing proposals to continue this component.