

2 Scope of the AODTS–NMDS

It is critical that service providers know which of their component services are included in the AODTS–NMDS collection. Agencies may provide treatment activities that fall both inside and outside the intended scope of the national data set. In these situations, only the information recorded for clients accessing a treatment activity that falls within the intended scope should be forwarded to a health authority for inclusion in the AODTS–NMDS collection.

Furthermore, some agencies providing treatment services or other forms of assistance to people with alcohol and/or other drug problems are not included in the scope of the national collection (e.g. treatment services based in prisons).

The following information describes which agencies, clients and activities are to be included/excluded from the AODTS–NMDS collection.

2.1 Which agencies?

Included

- All publicly funded (at state and/or Commonwealth level) government and non-government agencies that provide one or more specialist alcohol and/or drug treatment services, including residential and non-residential agencies. Acute care hospitals or psychiatric hospitals are included if they have specialist alcohol and drug units that provide treatment to non-admitted patients (e.g. outpatient services). Aboriginal or Mental Health Services may also be included if they provide specialist alcohol and other drug treatment.

Excluded

- Agencies that provide primarily accommodation or overnight stays such as ‘halfway houses’ and ‘sobering-up shelters’.
- Agencies that provide services concerned primarily with health promotion (e.g. needle and syringe exchange programs).
- Treatment services based in prison or other correctional institutions.
- Agencies whose sole function is to prescribe and/or provide dosing for methadone maintenance treatment.
- Alcohol and drug treatment units in acute care or psychiatric hospitals that only provide treatment to admitted patients.

Services that provide pharmacotherapy maintenance treatment only are currently excluded because of the complexity of the service delivery structure and the range of agencies and practitioners in private and general practice settings. In the future, consideration will be given to expanding the coverage of the national collection to include methadone and other pharmacotherapy treatment data, prison-based treatment services and other programs.

2.2 Which clients?

Included

- All clients assessed and accepted for one or more types of treatment for their own, or another person's, alcohol and other drug problem from an alcohol and other drug treatment service (see the data element *Main treatment type for alcohol and other drugs* and the data element *Client type – Alcohol and other drug treatment services*).

Excluded

- Clients who are on a methadone maintenance program and who are not receiving any other form of treatment.
- People who seek advice or information but have not been formally assessed and accepted for treatment.
- Admitted patients in acute care or psychiatric hospitals.
- Clients treated in agencies that are excluded from the collection.

2.3 Which activities?

Treatment activities can range from an early, brief intervention to long-term residential treatment. The NMDS intends to cover a wide variety of treatment interventions and, among others, includes detoxification and rehabilitation programs, and pharmacological and psychological treatments.

Included

- All closed treatment episodes for the types of treatment specified in the data element *Main treatment type for alcohol and other drugs*, which have been completed within the 2002–03 financial year (see the data element *Date of cessation of treatment episode for alcohol and other drugs*).

Excluded

- Any methadone dosage and/or prescription received by a client where no other treatment type is received.
- All treatment episodes that are still open.
- Needle and syringe exchange activities.