

APPENDIX A

Submissions and comments

We have consulted with DH, DFFH, Odyssey House Victoria, Eastern Health, Youth Support and Advocacy Service and Bendigo Community Health Service, and we considered their views when reaching our audit conclusions. As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, we gave a draft copy of this report, or relevant extracts, to those agencies and asked for their submissions and comments.

Responsibility for the accuracy, fairness and balance of those comments rests solely with the agency head.

Responses were received as follows:

DH	35
DFFH	38
Odyssey House Victoria	39



Secretary

Department of Health

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Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Victorian Auditor-General's Office
Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Greaves

Proposed Report: *Victoria's alcohol and other drug treatment data – quality and intended benefits*

Thank you for your letter of 2 September 2022 and for inviting a response from the Department of Health for inclusion in the final audit report into *Victoria's alcohol and drug treatment data – quality and intended benefits*.

I would like to acknowledge the collaborative approach between your office and the department throughout the audit process. Your consideration of recommendations in the context of the department's key reform agendas, including our commitment to delivering the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, is greatly appreciated.

The department agrees with the principles of your findings and accepts the recommendations put forward in the report. I do note however, that the contribution of service providers and peak body representatives was instrumental in developing the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Collection (VADC). The department's consultation with the sector continues to be fundamental in improving data quality now and into the future.

I am pleased to attach the department's action plan in response to the recommendations identified in the audit report (**Attachment 1**).

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Nicole Brady
Acting Secretary

19/ 09 /2022

cc: [REDACTED] Director, VAGO



Department of Health action plan to address recommendations from the audit *Victoria's alcohol and other drug treatment data*

No	VAGO recommendation	Action	Completion date
1	<p>The Department of Health revises the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Collection specification and user guides in consultation with service providers, clinicians and vendors to minimise the burden of collecting data by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • justifying why the specification includes each data element and validation rule beyond those required for national reporting based on use and need • developing supporting material that explains data elements and validation rules in non-technical language • developing training to improve the consistency of service providers' skills in meeting their data reporting requirements • doing user testing and consultation to make sure that service providers can easily understand supporting material, including data elements and validation rules • ensuring that requirements are aligned with contemporary alcohol and other drug clinical practices and workflows 	<p>The Department of Health (the department) will undertake a review of the VADC and other related Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) collections. Following the completion of the review and the establishment of a minimum data set, the department will revise specifications, user guides and training processes.</p> <p>This work will be guided by an expert advisory group and undertaken in accordance with an action plan cognisant of relevant sector reforms.</p>	December 2023
2	<p>The Department of Health establishes a minimum set of functional requirements for a Victorian-Alcohol-and-Drug-Collection-compliant client management system and explores options to work directly with vendors to ensure they comply with these requirements.</p>	<p>The department will establish a minimum set of functional requirements that reflects service arrangements and is informed by the data review. The department will work directly with services and vendors to support greater compliance with the functional requirements.</p>	December 2024
3	<p>The Department of Health advises the Minister for Health on options and recommendations to amend the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Collection's data collection model so all service providers are supported to effectively and efficiently meet the specification's requirements. In developing options, it should consider:</p>	<p>The department will brief the Minister for Health on options and recommendations to improve the AOD data collection model based on the considerations outlined in the recommendation.</p> <p>Initial work on new contemporary information architecture for the mental health and wellbeing system (in response to the <i>Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System</i>) will aid in identifying options that may be leveraged.</p>	July 2023

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• prioritising inclusion of the alcohol and other drug sector in its planning for the new data collection system for the mental health sector in response to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.• developing and administering an opt-in client management system or data entry portal for service providers to use.		
4	The Department of Health manages the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Collection in line with the Department of Premier and Cabinet's <i>Data Quality Guideline: Information Management Framework</i> , including maintaining an up-to-date data quality management plan and data quality statement.	The department will manage the VADC in accordance with its Data Quality Policy. This includes undertaking a compliance stocktake and incorporation into a VADC Data Quality Management Plan. A further review and resultant adjustments will be actioned after the completion of the data collection review and development of the minimum data set.	July 2023 December 2024

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Secretary

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BAC-CO-30467

Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
Victorian Auditor – General's Office
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Dear Mr Greaves

Thank you for your letter dated 2 September 2022 enclosing the proposed performance audit report on *Victoria's alcohol and other drug treatment data*.

Thank you also for confirming that the matters raised through the provisional draft process have been addressed and represent the context fairly. This audit has provided my department with useful insights.

Although the proposed audit report does not have specific recommendations for the department, we will continue to engage with our Department of Health colleagues to support any data collection enhancements that will improve performance monitoring processes.

Should you require any further information please contact Paul Knowles, Acting Director, Service and Delivery at email: [REDACTED] or telephone [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Brigid Sunderland
Secretary

16/09/2022



OFFICIAL



16th September, 2022

Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor General
Victorian Auditor General's Office
Level 31/35 Collins Street Melbourne VIC 3000

RE: Audit of the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Collection (VADC) dataset

Dear Mr. Greaves,

Thank you for giving Odyssey House Victoria the opportunity to participate in the Performance Audit of Victoria's alcohol and other drug treatment data. We commend the work undertaken by the Victorian Auditor General's Office on this audit, and the professional way in which we were engaged in the process. Communication by the audit team was exceptional and we believe the context of the audit and information we provided were both fairly represented.

Accurate capture and high-quality reporting of data for the Victorian Alcohol and Other Drug service system is critical in understanding the changing needs of those seeking help in Victoria. It is also critical to ensure outcomes are measured and proper planning and performance management is possible.

We agree with the findings that the VADC system is overly complex and has not yet achieved its intentions for high-quality data. We also agree that it does not fully or accurately reflect all the work done by AOD services for their clients.

Whilst acknowledging that DH and DFFH have made some progress towards addressing these issues, we support the recommendations contained in the audit report, believing these will simplify the VADC system, help all service providers to submit complete and accurate data, and ultimately lead to higher quality decision making and planning to support some of Victoria's most vulnerable people.

We look forward to further assisting in the implementation of these recommendations.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr. Stefan Gruenert
Chief Executive Officer



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