

Video transcript: Victoria's Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Data

Audit objective

We assessed if the Department of Health's Victorian Alcohol and Drug Collection (or the VADC) dataset is high quality and achieving its intended benefits.

Who and what we examined

We audited the Department of Health, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and 4 service providers.

We looked at the quality of VADC data and how the Department of Health uses it to:

- plan alcohol and other drug treatment services in Victoria, and
- manage the performance of providers who run these services.

What we concluded

We found that data in the VADC isn't high quality because it doesn't accurately represent what service providers are doing for their clients.

The Department of Health is working to improve this. But there is a risk it won't fully address the root causes of the data quality issues.

Background

The VADC is a database of information about alcohol and other drug treatment services in Victoria.

It stores data that service providers send to the Department of Health about the treatments they give to Victorians.

Issue 1: The Department of Health's planning has led to ongoing data quality issues

When the Department of Health planned the VADC, it chose to create a detailed list of requirements for collecting data. All service providers need to follow these requirements using their own IT software.

The department didn't properly manage the risk that service providers wouldn't be able to do this accurately.

Not all service providers have the data skills and resources to collect and send high-quality data. The Department of Health's list of requirements is also difficult for them to understand.

Providers' different IT systems don't always make it easy for them to submit good data either.

Because of these issues, the VADC doesn't reflect the treatments that service providers give to their clients.

The Department of Health is working to improve the quality of VADC data. But this won't fix all of the problems because some service providers have limited data capabilities and capacities to meet the requirements and because of differences in their IT systems.

Issue 2: The VADC isn't achieving its intended benefits

When the Department of Health made the VADC, it wanted to use it to plan and manage alcohol and other drug treatment services across the state. But the VADC's data quality issues limit how it can use the data for these purposes.

This means that the Department of Health and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing can't use the data as intended to manage service provision.

What we recommended

We made 4 recommendations to the Department of Health about improving the quality of data in the VADC.

More information

For more information, or to read our full report, go to audit.vic.gov.au

To access the complete video, please go to <https://youtu.be/rPQolsMZiDc>