



COONAMBLE ALCOHOL AND DRUG INITIATIVE

Newsletter

July 2015

CADI KICKS OFF IN COONAMBLE

Coonamble Alcohol and Drug Initiative (CADI) is a community driven initiative that will focus on tackling drug and alcohol issues in the Coonamble Shire. The Initiative began with workers from local organisations looking for a different way of approaching drug and alcohol issues. The Coonamble Alcohol and Drug Advisory Committee identified that doing the same old things will get the same results – which are clearly not working!

A project team consisting of Council, Coonamble Aboriginal Medical Centre and Uniting Care kicked off the CADI project which began with a series of community consultations. The team gathered current community views on local drug and alcohol issues and what people think needs to be done about them.

What did the community say? Everyone wished for a safe and happy environment and agreed that the impact of drug and alcohol abuse on our community is extremely harmful. Everyone agreed something needs to be done. BUT when it came to answering the question “what should be done?” people had different ideas.

Often in communities, this is where the action stops. Working groups can't agree on what direction to take and people talk in circles until eventually they lose energy and the momentum is lost.

So how is CADI different? This initiative involves different groups working in different areas *but all working towards a shared goal*. Action groups have been formed to develop solutions around their issue of interest. The groups are made up of community members and agency representatives and will be supported by Council's Community Services department.

If you would like to be involved in a group, or learn more about CADI please speak with Lianne Tasker, Director Community Services, Coonamble Shire Council.

CADI is a community driven initiative taking a different approach to addressing drug and alcohol issues. CADI's shared vision is-

**To improve the wellbeing
of the Coonamble
Shire community through
reducing harms
caused by Drug and
Alcohol Abuse**

Action Groups

Five CADI Action Groups have formed around community priorities—

- Crime and Justice
- Children and Young People
- Parental Responsibility
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment
- Services and Support

How we gathered information

This first phase of the CADI initiative involved developing an understanding of the issues and impacts by listening to the views of a broad range of community. A forum was held in April 2015 involving business, government and non-government groups, as well as community interest groups.

Further consultation was held for community members throughout June. During the process information from other sources was also captured, including a Youth Forum held in Gulargambone with sixty two young people and twenty five client interviews by local agencies.

Fifty participants attended the forum and thirty one residents came along to the community consultations.

What the community said

The effects of alcohol and drug abuse reach into every aspect of our community. The main issues raised involved :

- Harm caused to children and young people
- Impacts of crime on the community and justice system responses
- Drug and alcohol treatment and support
- Parental responsibility
- Data collection and availability of accurate local statistics and information

Feedback and action

Forum feedback meetings provided the opportunity for all interested people to hear the information gathered throughout the process and elect to join the initiative in moving forward.

Forty two people attended the forum feedback meetings with thirty two people electing to join an action group.

As a result of the information presented at the forum feedback meeting, action groups have formed and have elected a group leader. The groups vary in size and are "open" groups in terms of membership. If you would like be involved contact Lianne Tasker at Coonamble Shire Council.

There is no quick fix for complex social problems and CADI members recognise that work towards change will take patience, hard work and long term commitment.

What is

Collective

Impact?

The CADI initiative is guided by emerging international thinking about new ways in which communities, government and business can work together to address complex social issues. The *Collective Impact* framework involves moving away from groups working in isolation with a focus on a common agenda, shared measurement and activities that are aligned to a population level goal.

The approach involves cross-sector action groups working on projects with the support of a backbone organisation. The backbone organisation is responsible for the guidance and overall coordination of the action groups.

An advisory group will also be established to assist the backbone organisation.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has".

Margaret Mead