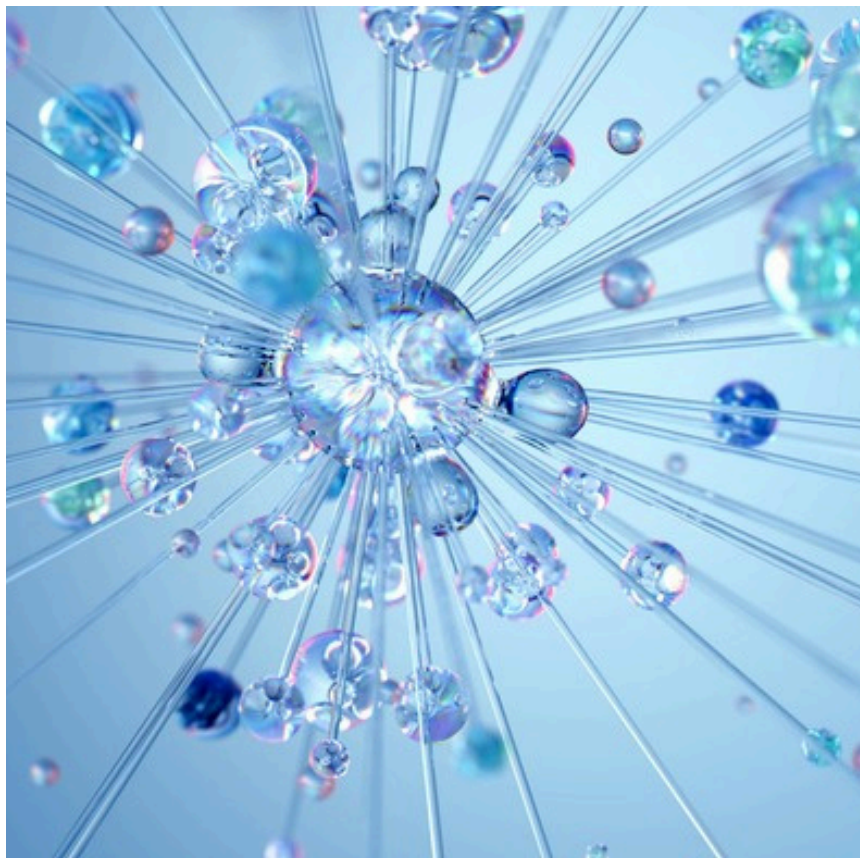


2025 NDARC Annual Research Symposium



Friday, 26 September 2025 | Wesley Conference Centre



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Event handbook



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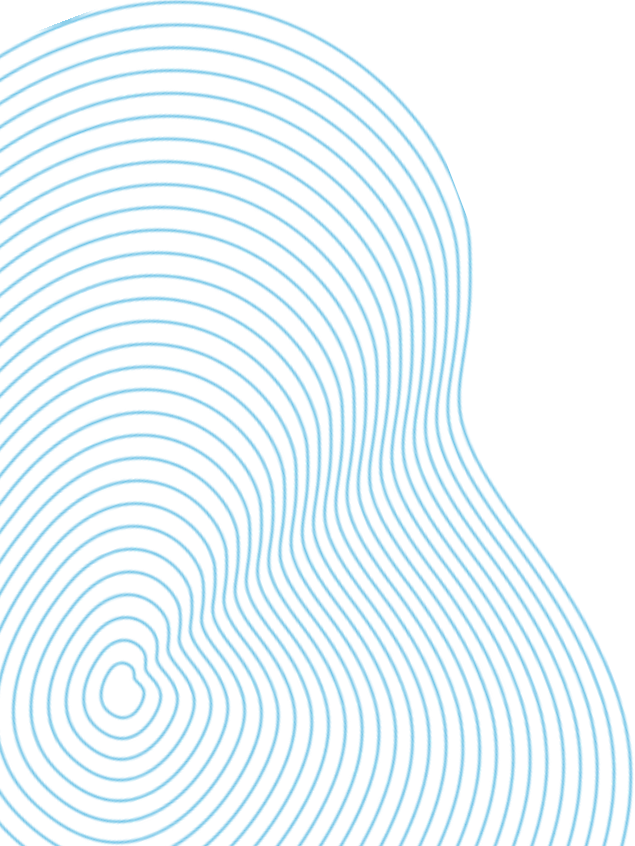


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Acknowledgement of Country

The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Sydney acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we gather. We recognise that sovereignty was never ceded, and we pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge and honour the enduring connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this land, to culture, to community and to Country. As we meet today, let us reflect on the knowledge and stories that have been shared on this land for thousands of generations and commit to walking together in a spirit of respect and understanding.

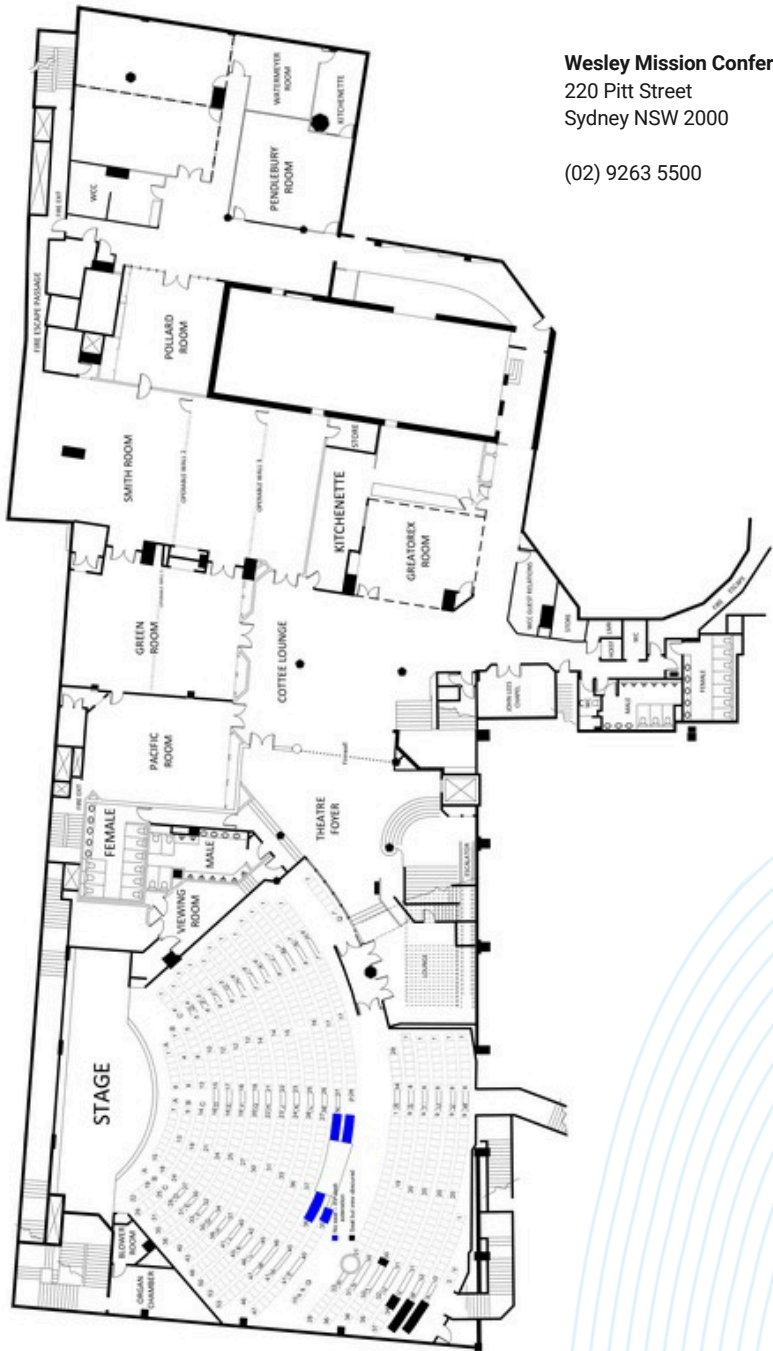


Venue map

Wesley Mission Conference Centre
220 Pitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000

(02) 9263 5500

LOWER GROUND FLOOR



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Got a question?

Submit your questions for any of today's presentations via Slido. Scan the QR code opposite or use this link to participate:

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Thank you to our funder, the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. The Department's vision is to deliver better health and wellbeing for all Australians, now and for future generations.

Event schedule

Please note this program may be subject to change.

Time	Activity
8.30am–9am	Registration
9am–9.07am	Welcome to Country Craig Madden Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council
9.07am–9.10am	Director's welcome Professor Michael Farrell Director, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), UNSW Sydney
Session one 9.10am–10.30am	<i>Policy, practice and monitoring</i> Session chair: Dr Norman Swan AM Journalist and physician
9.15am–10.15am	<i>National Drug Strategy Panel Discussion: 40 Years of Policy and Practice</i> Moderator: Dr Norman Swan AM Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Mel Miller, Chair, NDARC Advisory Board • Associate Professor Robert Ali AO, Public health physician and specialist in addiction medicine • Dr Mary Harrod, Chief Executive, NUAA • Associate Professor Michael Doyle, Health researcher, University of Sydney
10.15am–10.30am	<i>Emerging trends in drug use, harms and markets: Findings from Drug Trends 2025</i> Dr Rachel Sutherland Senior Research Fellow, NDARC, UNSW Sydney
10.30am–10.50am	Morning tea
Session two 10.50am–12.15pm	<i>Alcohol policy and NDARC spotlight presentations</i> Session chair: Professor Nadine Ezard Director, National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED)
10.55am–11.25am	Keynote address: <i>Importance of an evidence-based approach to eliminating HCV and implications for tackling wider drug-related harms in Scotland</i> Professor Sharon Hutchinson Professor of Epidemiology and Population Health, Glasgow Caledonian University
11.25am–11.40am	<i>How can monitoring off-premise alcohol pricing inform best practice alcohol policy in Australia? Findings from a pricing surveillance program</i> Associate Professor Amy Peacock Deputy Director and Drug Trends Program Lead, NDARC, UNSW Sydney

11.40am–11.55am	<p><i>Evaluating the impacts of the repeal of the Northern Territory Minimum Unit Price policy on off-premise alcohol pricing</i></p> <p>Mia Miller Public health researcher, NDARC, UNSW Sydney</p>
<p>NDARC spotlight presentations 11.57am–12.15pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stassi Kypri: <i>Insights from Australian drug alerts in 2024: High-dose MDMA and the challenge of alert thresholds</i> • Lily Palmer: <i>Associated risk factors when injecting alone, among national samples of people who regularly inject drugs, 2020-2025</i> • Dr Nicola Man: <i>Does the trend in methamphetamine load in wastewater predict methamphetamine-related hospitalisations and deaths?</i> • Dr Duong (Danielle) Tran: <i>Does the use of quit-smoking medicines in early pregnancy increase the risk of adverse outcomes for the mother or baby? A multi-national cohort study</i>
12.15pm–1.15pm	Lunch
1.15pm–2.30pm	Breakout sessions
<p>Breakout session one: Methamphetamine treatments 1.15pm–2.30pm</p>	<p>Session chair: Professor Steven Shoptaw Professor Emeritus and Vice Chair for Research, Department of Family Medicine, UCLA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Nadine Ezard: <i>Lisdexamfetamine in the treatment of methamphetamine dependence</i> • Professor Jonathan Brett: <i>PsiMA trial of psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy for methamphetamine use disorder</i> • Dr Krista Siefried: <i>Oral naltrexone bupropion combination pharmacotherapy for methamphetamine use disorder – a pilot trial in the Australian context</i> • Professor Rebecca McKetin: <i>The Tina Trial: A phase 3 randomised double-blind placebo-controlled trial of mirtazapine as a pharmacotherapy for methamphetamine use disorder</i> • Dr David Goodman-Meza: <i>Semaglutide for methamphetamine use disorder: A pilot randomized trial</i> • Dr Brendan Clifford: <i>Ketamine-assisted psychotherapy for methamphetamine use disorder: A pilot study</i> • Dr Liam Acheson: <i>Study protocol for a randomised controlled trial of lisdexamfetamine for the treatment of acute methamphetamine withdrawal</i>

Event schedule (continued)

Breakout session two: Policy and policing 1.15pm–2.30pm	<p>Session chair: Mr Daniel Madeddu Executive Director, Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs, NSW Ministry of Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Don Weatherburn: <i>Does diverting minor drug offenders reduce recidivism? Cannabis cautioning in Australia</i> • Dr Michala Kowalski: <i>Characterising same-day alcohol delivery sales in New South Wales</i> • Lucy Flood: <i>Evidence-based practice in the Australian alcohol and other drug workforce: A cross-sectional survey</i> • Dr Tom Santo Jr: <i>Health, social and recidivism outcomes among people who have been incarcerated in New South Wales, Australia: The Prison Outcomes Study (POST)</i> • Masako Araki: <i>Trends in prescription benzodiazepine and z-hypnotic use in Australia: A nationwide analysis (2014-2024)</i>
Breakout session three: NDARC and collaboration showcase 1.15pm–2.30pm	<p>Session chair: Carmel Tebbutt Chief Executive Officer, Odyssey House NSW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Emily Deans and David Kelly: <i>Preventing and reducing harm for parents and children through a family-based residential rehabilitation service in NSW</i> • Lucy Tran: <i>The association of mental disorders on OAT retention: A systematic review and meta-analysis</i> • Dr Peter Gates, Dr Emily Deans, Dr Skye McPhie, Craig Martin, Dr Sara Farnbach: <i>Capacity for change: How is capacity considered when preventing substance use and harms in communities?</i> • Dr Christel Macdonald: <i>Are methamphetamine users at increased risk of physical violence? Results from a nationally representative sample</i> • Dr Catherine Foley, Nirekha De Silva and Teguh Syahbahar: <i>Working with multicultural communities to advance equity in alcohol and other drug (AOD) service delivery: Practice-based insights from Western and Southwestern Sydney</i>
2.30pm–2.50pm	Afternoon tea
Session three 2.50pm–4.15pm	<p><i>Current treatments and NDARC Director's reflections</i> Session chair: Professor Matthew Hickman Professor of Public Health and Epidemiology, Bristol Medical School</p>
2.55pm–3.25pm	<p>Keynote address: <i>Toward evidence-guided strategies for whole-person treatment for methamphetamine use</i> Professor Steven Shoptaw Professor Emeritus and Vice Chair for Research, Department of Family Medicine, UCLA</p>

3.25pm–3.45pm	<i>Vaporized nicotine products for smoking cessation among people experiencing social disadvantage: A randomized clinical trial</i> Associate Professor Ryan Courtney NDARC, UNSW Sydney
3.45pm–4.15pm	<i>Director's reflections and closing remarks</i> Professor Michael Farrell Director, NDARC, UNSW Sydney
4.15pm–5.30pm	Networking event
5.30pm	Symposium ends

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Poster listings

Name	Title of Abstract	Poster #
Agata Chrzanowska	<i>Understanding trends in GHB-related hospitalisations in Australia</i>	2
Antonia Karlsson	<i>Associated risk factors when injecting alone, among national samples of people who regularly inject drugs, 2020-2025</i>	3
Stassi Kypri	<i>Insights from Australian drug alerts in 2024: High-dose MDMA and the challenge of alert thresholds</i>	4
Dr Nicola Man	<i>Does the trend in methamphetamine load in wastewater predict methamphetamine-related hospitalisations and deaths?</i>	5
Damian O'Neil	<i>Geospatial analysis of deaths due to alcohol, other substances or suicide across Australia, 2012-2021</i>	6
Emily Symes	<i>Substance use in trans and gender-diverse Australian adults: A secondary analysis of the Private Lives 3 survey</i>	7
Dr Duong (Danielle) Tran	<i>Does the use of quit-smoking medicines in early pregnancy increase the risk of adverse outcomes for the mother or baby? A multi-national cohort study</i>	8
Lucy Tran	<i>Is there a predictive association between methamphetamine use and depression?</i>	9
Bianca Varney	<i>Opioid analgesic use during pregnancy and risk of adverse outcomes</i>	10
Julia Uporova	<i>Knowledge of decriminalisation legislation among samples of people who regularly use illegal drugs in Canberra, 2023-2024</i>	11

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TAKE THE SURVEY



2025 NDARC Annual Research Symposium

Meet our speakers

Keynote speakers



Professor Sharon Hutchinson

Sharon Hutchinson is a Professor of Epidemiology and Population Health at Glasgow Caledonian University and Honorary Consultant with Public Health Scotland. Her epidemiological research (involving population-based surveys, data-linkage studies and statistical/economic models) focuses on the evaluation of interventions to prevent blood-borne viruses and related harms among people who inject drugs. Her work has guided Scotland's public health response to hepatitis C and HIV. In 2023, she was awarded the honour of Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) for Services to Public Health Research.



Professor Steven Shoptaw

Steven Shoptaw PhD is Professor Emeritus and Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Family Medicine at UCLA. He co-directs the Big South/West Node of NIDA's Clinical Trials Network, where he leads randomised controlled trials on new medications for stimulant-use disorder. Dr Shoptaw jointly leads research, clinical and policy efforts to bring novel and high-impact strategies for persons affected by addictions and HIV. He works internationally with colleagues in Australia on medication development trials, and promotes testing and scaling up of addiction treatments in low- and middle-income countries.



Professor Michael Farrell

Professor Michael Farrell has been the Director of NDARC since 2011. Before that, he was Professor of Addiction Psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry at Kings College London. His extensive research interests include treatment evaluation and national and international drug policy, and he also has a long-standing interest in drug dependence, comorbidity and drugs in the wider criminal justice system. Professor Farrell is the Chair of the International Consortium on Health Outcome Monitoring Substance Use Working Group and Editor of the Cochrane Drug and Alcohol Group. He has been a member of the WHO Expert Committee on Drug and Alcohol Dependence since 1995.

Session chairs



Dr Norman Swan AM

Dr Norman Swan co-hosts RN's *Health Report* and the popular *What's The Rash* podcast. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he co-hosted *Coronacast*, which had monthly downloads in the millions. Dr Swan, a Gold Walkley award-winner, is also a reporter and commentator on the ABC's *7.30*, *Midday*, *News Breakfast* and *Four Corners*. He created *Invisible Enemies* on pandemics and civilisation for the UK's Channel 4 and SBS, which was subsequently broadcast in 27 countries, and has authored three books, including bestsellers *So You Think You Know What's Good For You?* and *So You Want To Live Younger Longer?* Dr Swan has been awarded the medal of the Australian Academy of Science, an honorary MD from the University of Sydney, a Fellowship of the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences, and the Medal of the Order of Australia (AM). He trained in medicine and paediatrics in Aberdeen, London and Sydney before joining the ABC.



Professor Nadine Ezard

Dr Nadine Ezard is an addiction medicine specialist and a founding fellow of the Australian Chapter of Addiction Medicine. She is a Professor and the inaugural Director of the National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED) at UNSW. Also, since 2012, she has been the Clinical Director of the Alcohol and Drug Service at St Vincent's Hospital Sydney, which serves people with a variety of substance-use disorders in inpatient, outpatient and community settings and strives to embed innovation in practice. Previously, she worked for the World Health Organization, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime.



Daniel Madeddu

Daniel Madeddu PSM is the Executive Director of the Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs at the NSW Ministry of Health. He has been working in Alcohol and Other Drugs policy since 2016. Prior to that, Daniel spent most of his adult life working in the HIV response across different settings such as the Ministry of Health, in Local Health Districts, for clinical epidemiology and social research organisations within the University of NSW, and in NGOs such as ACON and the Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men's Health Centre.



Carmel Tebbutt

Carmel Tebbutt is the Chief Executive Officer of Odyssey House NSW, one of the state's leading alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment and rehabilitation services. Prior to joining the not-for-profit sector, Carmel had a distinguished parliamentary career, holding senior ministerial portfolios including Health, Education and Community Services. She has made significant contributions to public policy, including serving as Co-Chair of the 2024 NSW Drug Summit, and brings extensive expertise across the mental health and AOD sectors. Carmel is deeply committed to reducing the harms caused by alcohol and other drugs, with a strong focus on early intervention, integrated service delivery, and reducing stigma for individuals, families and communities.



Professor Matthew Hickman

Professor Matthew Hickman is a Professor in Public Health and Epidemiology at Bristol Medical School, University of Bristol, at NDARC, UNSW and Glasgow Caledonian University. Professor Hickman is the co-director of the UK NIHR Health Protection Research Unit in Evaluation and Behavioural Science, with active research grants on the prevention of the hepatitis C virus, prevalence estimation and drug-related mortality.

National Drug Strategy discussion panellists



Associate Professor Robert Ali AO

Associate Professor Ali is a public health physician and specialist in addiction medicine. Currently, he holds an emeritus Senior Research Fellow position at the University of Adelaide. Until October 2016, he was the clinical director of Drug & Alcohol Services South Australia; a role he held for 30 years. A/Prof Ali was a member of the Australian National Advisory Council on Alcohol and Drugs, has served on the WHO Expert Advisory Panel on Drug Dependence and Alcohol Problems, and was the Director of a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre based at the University of Adelaide. In 2023, he was awarded Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to medical and health research, particularly drug and alcohol dependence, and to education and training.



Professor Mel Miller

Professor Mel Miller is Chair of NDARC's Advisory Board. She has been involved in the development of public policy in the health and human services sector for more than 40 years, in particular, that relates to alcohol and other drug-related harm and has led evaluations of the National effort on two occasions. She has both clinical and organisational psychology expertise and qualifications, a PhD in Social and Preventative Medicine and is now a Professor of Health, Social Policy, Economics and Evaluation in the Centre for Applied Health Economics at Griffith University and an Adjunct Professor of Psychology at the University of Queensland. Professor Miller has been a Member of the NDARC Advisory Board for over 15 years and became Chair in 2023.



Dr Mary Harrod

Mary Harrod is the CEO of the NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA), a peer-based organisation that delivers harm-reduction services across alcohol and other drugs and blood-borne viruses in New South Wales. Under her leadership, NUAA has expanded services, strengthened the peer workforce and pushed practical reforms that reduce stigma and improve access to care. Mary works with government, health services and community partners to champion lived and living experience partnerships as essential to safer health systems.



Associate Professor Michael Doyle

Associate Professor Michael Doyle is a Bardi man and leads First Nations health research at the Edith Collins Centre, Sydney Medical School, at The University of Sydney. He has worked in Aboriginal health since 1998. Michael is a mixed-methods researcher, and his PhD (completed in 2018) was the first by an Aboriginal person to focus on prison-based rehabilitation programs. He is currently leading the development of a new culturally informed social and emotional wellbeing program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison.

Speakers



Dr Rachel Sutherland

Dr Rachel Sutherland is a Senior Research Fellow at NDARC, UNSW Sydney and currently holds an NHMRC Investigator Fellowship (2021-2025). Her research programme is focused on monitoring systems for detecting trends in illicit drug use, including new psychoactive substances, and developing and evaluating novel responses to emerging drugs of concern. Dr Sutherland is currently Deputy Program Lead for Drug Trends, and Program Lead of the Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) and Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS).



Associate Professor Amy Peacock

Dr Amy Peacock is an Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC) at UNSW, and an Adjunct Researcher in the School of Medicine, University of Tasmania. She is a National Health and Medical Research Council Emerging Leadership Fellow. Dr Peacock is currently the Program Lead for Drug Trends, comprising the Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS), Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS), National Illicit Drug Indicators Program (NIDIP) and the Drug and New Technologies (DNeT) projects. She also coordinates the Australian Parental Supply of Alcohol Longitudinal Study.



Mia Miller

Mia Miller is a public health researcher with experience in alcohol and other drugs research. She has a background in working for the Australian Government Department of Health and the National Health and Medical Research Centre (NHMRC) in both cancer screening and infectious diseases policy. She is a mixed-methods researcher working on alcohol policy research at NDARC, with a focus on alcohol pricing and marketing, and no- and low-alcohol beverages (NoLos). She convenes the International Research Network on NoLos, which comprises more than 40 researchers across five continents.

Speakers (continued)



Stassi Kypri

Stassi Kypri is a research assistant and doctoral student at the National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED), UNSW Sydney. His doctoral research explores the collection and subsequent integration of community-based information into Australian drug monitoring and early warning systems.



Lily Palmer

Lily Palmer is a Research Officer with the Drug Trends Program at NDARC, UNSW Sydney, where she coordinates the NSW Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS) and the Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS). She previously worked as the Perth-based Research Officer on the Tina Trial, a national clinical trial of mirtazapine for methamphetamine dependence. Lily brings strong skills in participant engagement, team support and data management, and is passionate about harm reduction, reducing stigma and creating positive outcomes for people who use drugs.



Dr Nicola Man

Dr Nicola Man is currently a Research Fellow on the Drug Trends Program at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. She has an interest in the collection and statistical analysis of data from a variety of sources, including linked administrative data and household surveys. She was involved in a cross-jurisdiction data linkage project investigating the impact of the National Emergency Access Target (NEAT) policy on emergency departments in Australia. Dr Man has also collaborated on research projects involving hidden and marginalised populations vulnerable to HIV in low- and middle-income countries, health financing and equity in low- and middle-income countries and a prevalence study on parents with intellectual disability.



Dr Duong (Danielle) Tran

Dr Duong (Danielle) Tran is a medically trained epidemiologist and a Research Fellow at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. She has over 15 years' research experience in the utilisation of medicines, health services and health outcomes, leveraging 'big data' in real-world settings. Dr Tran leads multinational studies investigating the use and safety of prescription medicines for smoking cessation, mental health and substance-use dependence in pregnant people. She also conducted a study to assess how the Health Care Home primary care model affects the quality of care and patient outcomes for people in the community with chronic health conditions, the findings of which contributed to the reform of Australia's primary care. Dr Tran played a crucial role in developing the 'Join Us' research participant register, the first national research resource to engage Australian adults in health and medical research.



Professor Jonathan Brett

Professor Jonathan Brett is a senior staff specialist in clinical pharmacology, toxicology and addiction medicine at St Vincent's Hospital and a clinical toxicologist with the NSW Poisons Centre. He is a conjoint Associate Professor at St. Vincent's Clinical School and a Senior Research Fellow with the Medicines and Health Intelligence Unit at the School of Population Health, UNSW. His research areas span neuropsychopharmacology, drugs of abuse and medicines use in pregnancy, and he has expertise in large-scale observational studies using linked data, clinical trials of psychedelic assisted psychotherapy and clinical service evaluation.



Dr Krista Siefried

Dr Krista Siefried is Clinical Research Lead and Deputy Director of the National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED) and Senior Lecturer at NDARC, UNSW Sydney, and St Vincent's Hospital Sydney Alcohol and Drug Service. She is a leader in clinical research and clinical trials in populations at risk of harms due to substance use disorders. Dr Siefried has extensive experience in clinical research, healthcare and clinical project management. Her broad clinical research interests include pharmacotherapies, comorbidities and treatment outcomes in people living with methamphetamine dependence.

Speakers (continued)



Professor Rebecca McKetin

Professor Rebecca McKetin leads a research programme into stimulant use epidemiology and interventions at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. Her current research involves the online delivery of psychological help for people who use stimulants, the trialling of new pharmacotherapy options for methamphetamine dependence, and the development of novel responses to methamphetamine use in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Professor McKetin established the three-year-long Methamphetamine Treatment Outcomes Study of 501 methamphetamine-dependent individuals, demonstrating the impact of community-based treatments. She has also estimated the number of dependent methamphetamine users in Australia and contributed to regional drug monitoring systems in the Asia Pacific. Her work has quantified the risk of psychosis, violence and other mental health outcomes related to methamphetamine use. She holds the position of Senior Editor for *Addiction*, consults for the UN and is a Member of the Australian Institute of Policy and Science.



Dr David Goodman-Meza

Dr David Goodman-Meza is a Senior Research Associate at the Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney. He is a clinician-scientist with expertise in infectious diseases and substance-use disorders. He has expertise in using methods from artificial intelligence to identify people who inject drugs and evaluate clinical outcomes in electronic health records, as well as experience in conducting clinical trials. Prior to moving to the Kirby, he was based in the United States and received several research grants from the US National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).



Dr Brendan Clifford

Dr Brendan Clifford is a Senior Research Fellow with the National Centre for Clinical Research in Emerging Drugs (NCCRED), and a Clinician Researcher who uses interdisciplinary methods to further health equity and enhance access to evidence-based healthcare. He has a broad clinical background having worked in nursing in Ireland, the UK and Australia, mainly in emergency department settings. In addition to undertaking clinical research in alcohol and other drugs, he has also held roles in inclusive health innovation and lectured in public health and social science.



Dr Liam Acheson

Dr Liam Acheson is an early career researcher with the National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED), with a focus on clinical trials of pharmacotherapies for the treatment of substance use disorders. Dr Acheson's current research program is broad, including clinical trials, the intersection of sleep and substance use, sexual health and qualitative investigation of client/participant experiences. Dr Acheson serves as the Deputy Chair of the St. Vincent's Hospital Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee.



Professor Donald Weatherburn

Professor Donald Weatherburn is a Professor at NDARC, UNSW Sydney and was formerly Executive Director of the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. Prior to that appointment, Professor Weatherburn was foundation Research Director at the Judicial Commission of New South Wales. He has published on a wide range of topics including sentencing, criminal justice administration, crime prevention, drug law enforcement, harm reduction, and program evaluation. He has authored or co-authored 229 publications, including four books, over 100 peer-reviewed journal articles, nine book chapters, and 121 reports.



Dr Michala Kowalski

Dr Michala Kowalski is a Postdoctoral Fellow at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. She was awarded her PhD in 2025 for her mixed-methods study of alcohol policy in New South Wales, which examined the role of evidence in policy, the leading problematisations in alcohol policy, and analysed overlooked effects of alcohol policies in the state. Dr Kowalski's current research program concentrates on alcohol policy, cannabis policy, evolving drug markets and harm reduction. She is an active member of the Global Cannabis Cultivation Research Consortium and the Drug Policy Modelling Program Network, and co-convenor of the Safe(r) Supply Network in Australia.

Speakers (continued)



Lucy Flood

Lucy Flood is a research nurse and clinical trial coordinator of the KAPPA Trial, an open-label safety and feasibility pilot trial of ketamine-assisted psychotherapy for methamphetamine use disorder. Lucy coordinates appointments, administers ketamine and monitors participants through both the GORMAN inpatient detox unit (OLAM) and the Stimulant Treatment Program at St Vincent's public hospital in Sydney.



Dr Thomas Santo Jr

Dr Thomas Santo Jr is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at NDARC, UNSW Sydney, focusing on the epidemiology and treatment of drug dependence in prison and community settings. His research aims to reduce health and social harm related to drug dependence, particularly those in the criminal justice system, by supporting evidence-based policy and improving treatment access. Dr Santo is currently leading the Global Reviews of Injecting Drug Use in Prisons as part of the Global Consortium to Advance Data on the Epidemiology and Health Impacts of Illicit Drug Use, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of Drugs & Crime, World Health Organization, and other international partners. Additionally, he plays a leading role in the Prison Outcomes Study (POST), which examines health and recidivism outcomes for formerly incarcerated individuals in NSW, and also leads the NSW Opioid Dependence Survey, which assesses and improves access to treatment and harm reduction services for people with opioid dependence.



Masako Araki

Masako Araki is a PhD student at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. With a background in medicine and specialisation in psychiatry, her PhD research focuses on informing the quality use and safety of benzodiazepines and z-drugs in Australia by leveraging large-scale administrative and survey health data.



Dr Emily Deans

Dr Emily Deans has worked within the gambling and alcohol and other drug (AOD) fields for the last seven years. Dr Dean's experience lies within qualitative inquiry and her research focus is on understanding the environmental/structural influences on risk decisions and health behaviours. She has worked with non-profit AOD services to build capacity to conduct research to inform practice and feasible evaluation designs. Dr Deans is passionate about using research as a medium to advocate for the needs of client groups, using focus groups and interviews as a platform to hear other's perspectives and experiences, and to embed these into the design of appropriate health service infrastructure.



David Kelly

David Kelly is the Executive Director - Programs at Odyssey House and an Adjunct Lecturer at NDARC. David has worked in the AOD sector for more than 22 years and has worked across a range of treatment and support services, particularly around NSW, including working within Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. David has a strong background in supporting the partnership between research and practice, most recently working on a range of projects focused on improving program access and reviewing and improving outcomes for those accessing services.



Lucy Tran

Lucy Tran joined NDARC, UNSW Sydney, in February 2018 and is currently working as a Research Officer. She has a strong interest in the mental health and drug and alcohol fields, and has worked on a series of systematic reviews that investigated mortality associated with stimulant and opioid use, as well as reviews looking at various interventions for drug use and mental health conditions. Lucy completed a Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) at the University of New South Wales in 2017 and a Masters of Clinical Psychology at the University of Tasmania in 2022.

Speakers (continued)



Dr Peter Gates

Dr Peter Gates is a Postdoctoral Fellow at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. He has worked on projects investigating alcohol use in young Australians, leading to the introduction of the Australian Alcohol Treatment Outcome Measure for dissemination across non-government health organisations. Dr Gates conducted research on the potency and contamination content of Australian cannabis prior to commencing employment with the National Cannabis Prevention and Information Centre (NCPIC) at its inauguration in 2008. Following the defunding of NCPIC in 2016, Dr Gates worked in paediatric medication safety and mental health with Macquarie University. He is currently leading the 'Communities' stream for the SUSTAIN group within NDARC, which aims to identify communities struggling with alcohol and other drug harms, support these communities to implement and evaluate best-evidence primary prevention strategies.



Dr Skye McPhie

Dr Skye McPhie is the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's (ADF) Research and Evaluation Manager. Her applied research and evaluation career has spanned a range of settings, including community, academic and commercial environments. At the ADF, Skye leads a team of evaluators and oversees the evaluations for all the ADF's national and statewide programs, pilot projects and campaigns. She is passionate about meaningful data collection to inform decisions, ensure quality and demonstrate impact. Dr McPhie's areas of interest include health psychology, prevention programs and evaluation capacity building.



Craig Martin

Craig Martin is Head of Evidence & Innovation at ADF. Craig has more than 20 years of clinical, leadership and management experience in drug and alcohol and mental health promotion, prevention, early intervention and treatment services, and has worked across academic, government, not-for-profit and commercial sectors. Craig has extensive clinical and management experience and expertise in mental health and AOD prevention, the synthesis of research, knowledge management, program design through co-design methodologies, implementation and evaluation of innovative, evidence-based policy, guidelines and digital and non-digital programs.



Dr Sara Farnbach

Dr Sara Farnbach is Program Lead, RISE Team (Research, Innovate, Strengthen, Embed) at NDARC, UNSW. She has passion for partnering with priority populations to enhance health and wellbeing through evidence-based health services and health programs tailored to local needs and priorities. Her research program is focused on preventing harms from alcohol and other drugs in rural and regional NSW. She is a registered nurse, has a Masters of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and has worked in the Asia-Pacific region on several programs including communicable disease control and maternal and child health. In 2023, Dr Farnbach was awarded the Early Career Award for excellence in research relative to career opportunities by The Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs.



Dr Christel Macdonald

Dr Christel Macdonald is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. She completed her PhD in March 2024 at NDARC. Her thesis explored factors related to court diversion for offenders with a mental illness or cognitive impairment. Christel has worked in research in the drug and alcohol space at NDARC since 2019, with a particular focus on treatment and intervention for people coming into contact with the criminal justice system.



Dr Catherine Foley

Dr Catherine Foley is a Psychologist and Researcher at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. She has a clinical background in mental health, substance use and trauma. Her research is focused on working alongside communities and health providers in diverse locations to co-design and evaluate holistic health services.

Speakers (continued)



Dr Nirekha De Silva

Dr Nirekha De Silva is a Research Officer and Counsellor at Odyssey House NSW, and Adjunct Lecturer at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. With a PhD in Healing Cultures and a career spanning child protection, gender affairs and trauma-informed practice across South and Southeast Asia, she brings deep expertise in culturally responsive AOD treatment. Dr De Silva leads research and program evaluations to strengthen services for multicultural communities, blending academic rigour with compassionate, client-centred care. Her work champions equity, evidence-based practice and culturally tailored approaches that improve treatment outcomes for diverse communities.



Teguh Syahbahar

Teguh Syahbahar is the Manager of Multicultural Programs at Odyssey House NSW, overseeing Odyssey's CALD Specialist AoD Program, which includes primary prevention initiatives, early intervention, treatment and community support for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. He is also an Adjunct Associate Lecturer at NDARC, contributing to CaLD AoD research. Teguh is a member of the Ministry of Health's Quality in Treatment (QiT) committee, Drug and Alcohol Program Council (DAPC) and NADA's Practice Leadership Group (NPLG), representing the broader CALD population in NSW. Teguh is deeply committed to improving long-term health and promoting sustained recovery outcomes among marginalised communities, to ensure equitable access to comprehensive support services and fostering resilience through culturally responsive approaches.



Associate Professor Ryan Courtney

Associate Professor Ryan Courtney is currently Associate Professor and National Heart Foundation Future Leader, and previous National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Career Development Fellow (CDF) in health behaviour science at NDARC, UNSW Sydney. A/Prof Courtney's published work includes research on smoking cessation, in particular tobacco smoking in low socio-economic status and disadvantaged populations. His research has a strong focus on the relationships between social disparities, including socio-economic inequalities and health behaviours and outcomes.



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