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Welcome to WHOS NEWS February 2026

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Message from the Executive Director

To start a New Year, I want to begin by thanking all our staff and Board of Directors for their commitment to WHOS and to our TC residents and Day Program clients, our great outcomes simply wouldn't exist without their dedicated participation in our programs.

It was a year ago that I signalled there were some potential big announcements for WHOS coming in 2026, as you will see below, WHOS has received approval for its development application (DA) to build a new multi-purpose drug, alcohol and community facility in the Penrith (Western Sydney) LGA at Kingwood NSW.



The capital infrastructure of this building is being funded by the NSW Government's **Western Sydney Infrastructure Grant Program** along with significant co-contributions from WHOS. Works will commence in 2026 and if all goes well, we will be expected to open its doors for admissions early 2027.

This new facility will also provide much needed specialist AOD services for Western Sydney communities and

complement the work of the Nepean & Blue Mountains Local Health District and the Nepean & Blue Mountains Primary Health Network.

Of course, while this has been happening, WHOS continues its work across its many sites to meet the needs of the general community including hosting several international and local delegations to promote the work done by WHOS and our wider sectoral colleagues.

I also want to especially thank the many corporate sector members in Australia who support the work of WHOS. The level of assistance, advice and donations in 2025 we received from our numerous supporters is simply astounding. I need to particularly mention our good friend **Mark Calvetti** at **William Buck**. Each year Mark and his team help prepare and serve a spectacular Christmas lunch for over 150 staff and residents at our Lilyfield campus. It is an act of generosity that is greatly appreciated.

On behalf of the WHOS Management and WHOS Board of Directors I wish you all the best for 2026.

Please enjoy this Special Edition of WHOS NEWS, and as you may already know, WHOS takes its custodianship of heritage buildings and grounds very seriously and are always pleased to share some of the images we discover of Callan Park's history (see image below) and other sites where we operate.

As always, your feedback and contributions are welcome.

Garth Popple
Executive Director



New Western Sydney Facility to be Built in 2026

WHOS recently received approval from Penrith City Council for its development application (DA) to build a multi-purpose AOD and community facility. WHOS would like to specifically thank the NSW Government that funded this new build via its Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants (WSIG) program.

The new building will be located in Kingswood, nearby to Nepean Hospital and public transport (bus and trains) to ensure accessibility for those needing the range of services that WHOS provides. Our services at this new centre will include a day program, transitional housing and potentially broader residential services, as well as community facilities for a range of health, welfare and social service organisations requiring access to meeting rooms and other facilities.

WHOS has further committed itself to providing a greater level of AOD services for Western Sydney communities by contributing significant resources of its own to expand the capacity of the new facility.

Please see some artist impressions of the new facility below and we look forward to updating on its progress throughout 2026.



OSTAR 25 Year Anniversary



Recently, WHOS OSTAR® (Opioid Substitution to Abstinence Residential) celebrated 25 years of service with a gala event in the community hall attended by over 100 staff, residents and supporters. It was followed by a festive 'picnic' on the grounds in Broughton Hall complete with an array of food prepared by the WHOS Cafe team, a fairy floss machine and a photo booth to record memories.

WHOS OSTAR® in Lilyfield uses the TC model of care (modified) to assist residents reduce off opioid substitution treatment while participating in the TC program. Located in the Broughton Hall campus of Callan Park, OSTAR is a mix-gender 24-bed TC, with residential aftercare and associated support programs.

WHOS OSTAR® supports over 100 clients annually as they reduce or cease opioid substitution treatment, whilst under the supervision of WHOS Nursing staff in consultation with external OTP providers.

WHOS was the first federally funded non-government organisation in Australia to offer a dedicated residential program for clients seeking to reduce off their opioid substitution treatment.

WHOS entered negotiations with NSW Health to secure a licence to dispense opioid substitution treatment allowing for onsite dispensing to WHOS clients whilst in residence.

A state-of-the-art iris recognition and an electronic dispensing system is being used for the provision of opioid substitution treatment.

WHOS has been a leader in more recent initiatives re the provision of opioid substitution treatment. While some residents still prefer methadone, there has been an increase in Buprenorphine depot as the preferred treatment.

"The staff at OSTAR are always here to support me wherever necessary, they have been really helpful through my treatment as have my fellow peers. Through the TC program I have learnt the importance of a strong foundation for recovery. I reached my first goal of withdrawing from methadone and now I intend to move through to the WHOS aftercare program."

– WHOS OSTAR Resident



BOARD PRESIDENT SPEECH

Friends and colleagues,

As President of the Board, it is my honour to reflect on what 25 years of service really means. It means stewardship through good times and tough times. It means holding true to values of dignity, safety, accountability, and compassion. It means trusting our staff and leadership and ensuring governance that protects both our clients and our organisation.

Over 25 years, our OSTAR program has grown from a small unique service, into a respected, evidence-informed, community-based organisation whose impact is felt across both state, federally and within our sector.

To our pioneer supporters and advisors for this unique service — thank you.

To the WHOS Board and Executive Director and his team — thank you.

To our fantastic OSTAR staff — thank you.

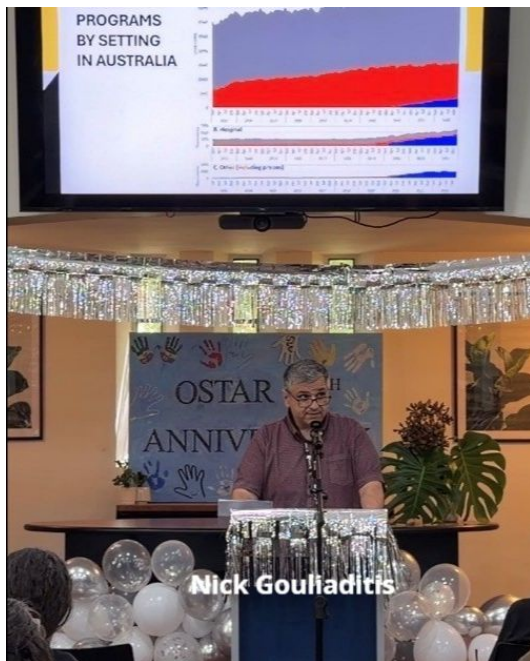
To all who placed their trust in us — we honour you today.

The Board commits itself to ensuring that the next 25 years are even stronger, safer, and more impactful.

Congratulations to everyone who has contributed to this milestone.

Frank Kay - WHOS President

For inquiries, please call Nick Gouliaditis on 8572 7461 or email ostar@whos.com.au



Supporter in Focus - FF&3



WHOS recently hosted many of its supporters for lunch at its Lilyfield campus cafe. The event was co-ordinated with the FF&3 team (Clayton, Ashley, Hamish, Nina and others) who have single-handedly helped deliver goods and services worth of tens of thousands of dollars every year to WHOS sites across NSW. We simply can't thank them, their partners and their clients enough for their support.



Goulburn Chapel Clean Up

Community spirit shines in chapel garden courtyard makeover

The chapel garden courtyard area of Goulburn Base Hospital has undergone a makeover thanks to the generous efforts of volunteers from WHOS Mandala House.

As part of WHOS's community outreach program, the initiative aimed to restore the courtyard to its former beauty and create a peaceful space for staff and visitors. The area had become overgrown with weeds and cluttered with debris.

Our volunteers arrived early in the morning and spent several hours clearing weeds, trimming hedges, sweeping pathways, and removing litter.

WHOS Mandala House is a residential Therapeutic Community located in Goulburn, dedicated to helping individuals overcome alcohol and other drug dependence and improve their lives.

This project is part of WHOS's ongoing efforts to give back to the community, highlighting the importance of community involvement and the positive impact it can have on local spaces.



The chapel garden courtyard before the clean-up



The chapel garden courtyard after the clean-up

International Training Provided by WHOS

South Korea



WHOS ties with South Korea grow stronger every year after our two-week formal on-site imbedded training on the history, development and implementation of the therapeutic community (TC) model for AOD treatment was recently provided to 14 colleagues from across South Korean services.





A subsequent delegation of psychologists working on AOD issues in South Korea also undertook a 3-day schedule at our Lilyfield Campus to gain a better understanding of the TC model and its implementation.



Thailand

WHOS has a long-standing relationship with the Princess Mother National Institute on Drug Abuse Treatment (PMNIDAT) and regional Thanyarak hospitals system, having trained many of their AOD and medical staff on the therapeutic community model. Currently, PMNIDAT is aiming to extend AOD rehabilitation services to every province in Thailand. Our support of their efforts to improve the lives of Thai people with AOD issues was

recently further strengthened when Executive Director, Garth Popple joined senior PMNIDAT officials in Bangkok for discussions.



The Kingdom of Tonga

WHOS recently hosted two delegations from the Kingdom of Tonga as they pursue a strong desire of the King to build their first therapeutic community service to deal with rising AOD issues. Health staff from the Kingdom were provided with opportunities to view and discuss the requirements, operational aspects and development of the WHOS model with both staff and residents. We look forward to providing further assistance on this important journey of our colleagues in Tonga.



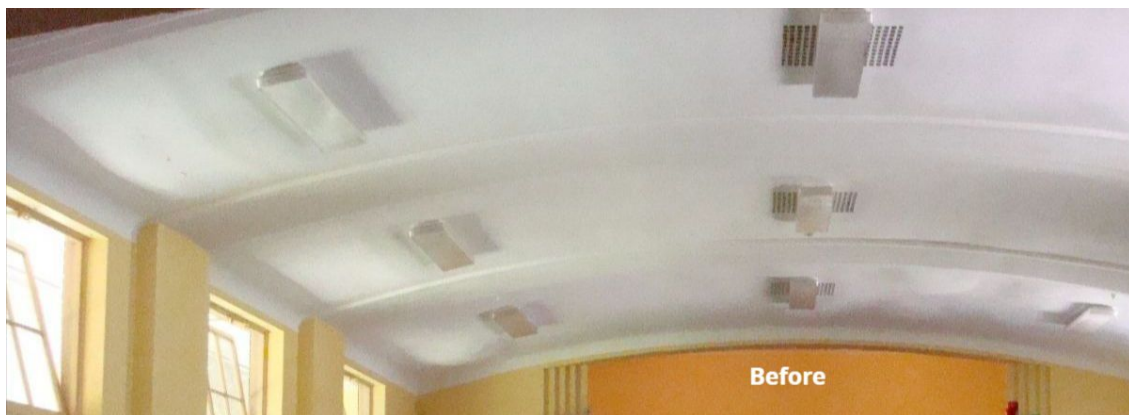
WHOS Work Recognised



WHOS often receives thanks, appreciation and at times formal acknowledgement on the quality of work and assistance it provides to the communities it serves. The most recent examples include formal appreciation from the NSW Department of Corrective Services for the work of the WHOS Penrith Day Program and Kobi Shetty, MP for Balmain formally recognising WHOS work in a speech to the NSW parliament.



WHOS would also like to thank Kobi for her support in WHOS gaining a 2025 Community Building Partnership grant from the NSW Government to install air conditioning in the Broughton Hall Community Recreation Hall used by several groups and organisations in the community - see the before and after images below.



WHOS Leadership Training

A core group of WHOS staff (along with staff from other AOD organisations) recently completed a Diploma of Leadership and Management course, with pathways for experienced and emerging leaders. The course was delivered by the Centre for Community Welfare Training, and funded by the NSW Ministry of Health, Centre for AOD.



Yabun 2025

The Yabun Festival is an annual celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture held every year on Australia Day (January 26th) on the traditional lands of the Gadigal people at Victoria Park in Broadway in Sydney. Yabun translates to 'music to a beat' in the Gadigal language and for several years WHOS has participated in the Yabun Festival. As the 2026 festival quickly approaches, here are a couple of photos from the WHOS 2025 booth.



NAIDOC Awards

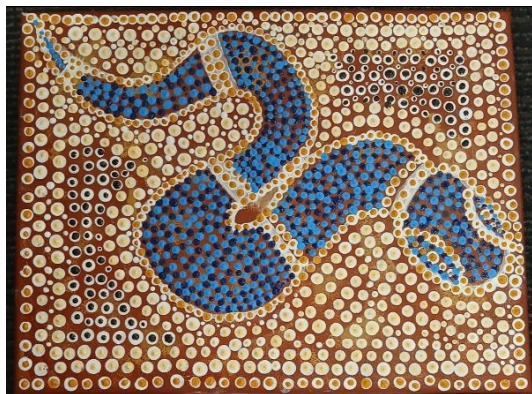
WHOS was honoured to receive numerous awards as part of NAIDOC celebrations in 2025 and we want to congratulate some of our winners:



WHOS Penrith Day Program was recognised for its culturally inclusive approach at a recent Department of Communities & Justice NAIDOC event in Penrith, and Gail a proud Gumbayngirr / Wiradjiri woman who is the Aboriginal Engagement Worker at Penrith Day Program, accepted the award on behalf of herself and the Penrith Day Program.

Brent, our Hawkesbury Day Program Aboriginal Engagement Worker, was awarded and recognised as the Emerging Aboriginal Man of the Year 2025.

Some of residents and clients also received awards for their stunning artwork contributions - see some of the winner's artwork below.



Client Stories



2025 Client Story – RTOD Drug Court client

My name is Troy. I have struggled with addiction for all my life. I'm 49 and have been in the drug scene for decades. I have tried to get drug free several times but never managed it.

I found myself homeless on the streets and destitute. I was alone, alienated from my family and constantly sick. I turned to crime to support my addiction, and for me jail was often the only safe place I could be drug free. When I ended up in jail again in 2023, I decided I had to do something different. I have had family members in recovery, including my father, and wanted the type of life they had achieved.

In 2024 I was fortunate to be allowed to join the Drug Court program, which I saw as my only path out of the cycle of addiction and crime. While in custody, I recommenced Buprenorphine injections and Drug Court said I had to attend residential treatment. They gave me various options, but I chose WHOS because my dad and nephew had come here, and because the other inmates in my pod said it was a good place.

When I came to WHOS I was made to feel very comfortable. Staff were great, and it was good to be at a rehab with other clients on OTP. It was hard at first for me to start dealing with my issues and talk about my past. I struggled to trust my peers and leave my old behaviours behind. But with support from peers and staff I've now come to see the benefits of the WHOS program and enjoy mentoring new residents who once struggled as I did.

I'm completing the re-entry stage of the program next week and am completing the program next week. The best part of my journey has been the ability to build connections with peers and community members in recovery, especially others on OTP. We support each other every day. During my time here, I've also been able to get my teeth replaced, my mental health sorted, and obtain housing. These were all major goals of mine, and massive barriers to staying off drugs. I also have better relationships with my family for the first time in ages.

Joining Drug Court and WHOS is the best thing I've ever done.

Acknowledging 18 Years of Assistance

Dr John Harris from Nambour Clinic Family Medicine has been providing for the general health and wellbeing of our Najara (Qld) clients for 18 years, almost as long as we have been operating on the Sunshine Coast. Dr Harris delivers fantastic medical and mental health support to everyone in our program.

In 2025 we attended a special morning tea at his clinic to celebrate and acknowledge his dedication to Najara and take a moment to remind his colleagues at the clinic of the great work he has participated in, providing help to hundreds of people who have come through our doors struggling with AOD issues.

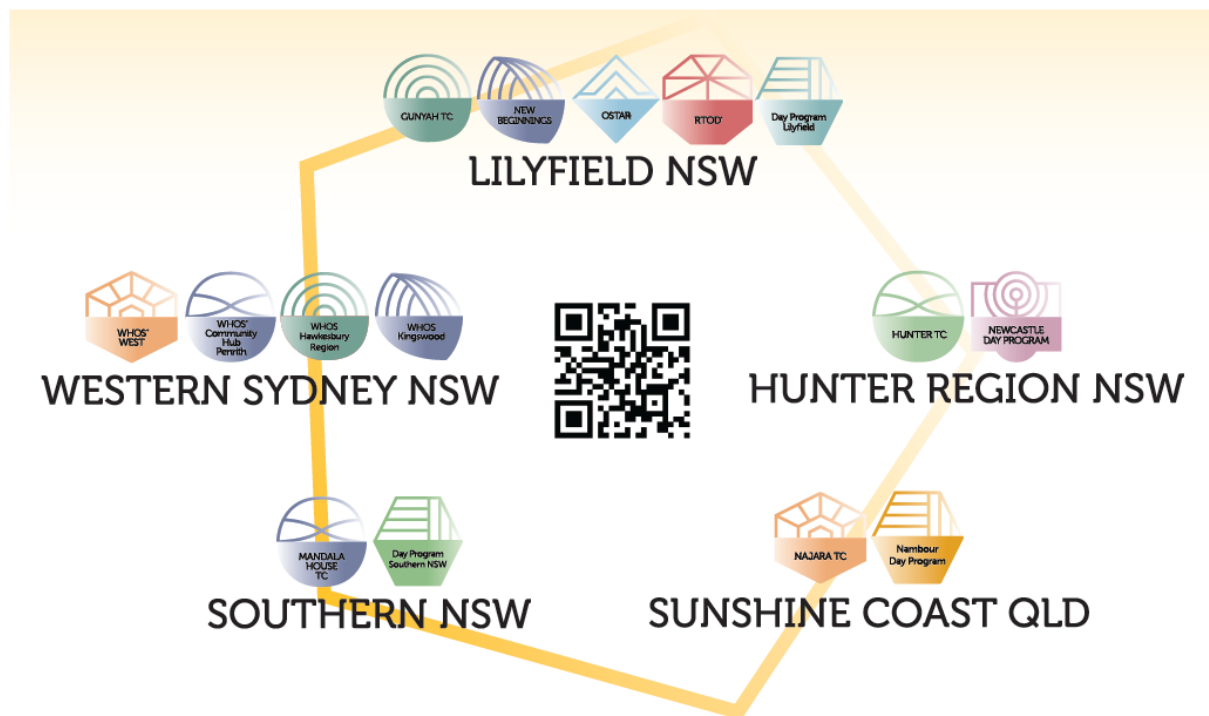


New Life Member of the Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA)

After 13 years as the director of Higher Ground, the AOD rehabilitation organisation based in West Auckland, New Zealand, Johnny Dow has retired and to commemorate his incredible work within the therapeutic community movement he was presented with Life Membership of the ATCA by current Life Members, Garth Popple and Dr Lynne Magor-Blatch.



WHOS Centres



Our Corporate Sponsors and Supporters



As we enter a new year, we would like to publicly thank and acknowledge all our corporate sponsors and supporters over the years - their support and assistance has been invaluable.







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