



Attachment 1: Terms of Reference – VSU Guideline Development Committee

Purpose

To produce an evidence-based, usable clinical practice guideline for volatile substance users in metropolitan, rural and remote communities, which would cover the following areas:

- identification
- assessment and diagnosis
- early and brief intervention
- treatment options (opportunistic users) and
- treatment and rehabilitation options (chronic users)

The role of the VSU Guideline Development Committee is to:

- develop a clinical practice guideline for the management of volatile substance use
- develop summary documents for the target audience
- determine the relevant clinical questions relating to identification; assessment and diagnosis; early and brief intervention; treatment and rehabilitation options; and palliation to be addressed in the guideline
- translate the evidence into recommendations using the NHMRC formal grading system
- use a formal consensus process to make recommendations where there is disagreement
- formulate the guideline and related documents, including plans for implementation, review and update
- ensure that the guideline is a useful and implementable resource for health and medical staff, and that the guideline is relevant to the Australian healthcare context
- provide a draft guideline to the First Assistant Secretary of the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH) and then NHMRC Council
- provide a draft guideline for public consultation and independent review and
- provide the final guideline to the First Assistant Secretary of OATSIH and then NHMRC Council and NHMRC CEO for approval.

Frequency of meetings

There will be up to six face-to-face meetings between September 2009 and September 2010. There is also provision for six teleconferences to be held during this period.

The VSU Guideline Development Committee will be a working committee and their expertise will be sought in determining the clinical questions and formulating the recommendations.



Quorum

The quorum of the VSU Guideline Development Committee will be 50% of appointed members, excluding the technical team. No business relating to the formulation of guideline recommendations may be transacted unless the meeting is quorate.

Deliverables

By the project completion date of January 2011, it is expected that there will be a VSU treatment guideline suitable for use in Australian health care settings.

While the guideline is being written, accompanying documents will also be developed from the guideline recommendations. It is envisaged by OATSIH that these will comprise:

1. A summary document for medical practitioners and nurses (as recommended by NHMRC NICS).
2. A discrete document for the combined use of Aboriginal Health Workers and Alcohol and Other Drugs Workers.

Other products may also be considered.

Remuneration

Section 39 of the NHMRC Act 1992 allows the Chief Executive Officer to establish and appoint working committees. Members of the committee are eligible for sitting fees:

08/09	Chair allowance	\$540 per day
08/09	Committee member allowance	\$366 per day

Members are **not eligible** for sitting fees if:

- they are in the service or employment of, or an authority of, the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory on a full-time basis, or
- they hold or perform the duties of an office or position established by or under a law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory on a full-time basis.
- This can include public hospital positions and employment at some universities.

Committee members' flights and accommodation will be paid by the NHMRC. Reimbursement for taxis can be arranged. Members travelling overnight will also be eligible for meal allowances.

Obligations

Whilst engaged as part of the NHMRC Section 39 committee, members are employees of the Australian Public Service and must abide by the APS Code of Conduct.



The APS Code of Conduct requires that an employee must:

- behave honestly and with integrity in the course of APS employment
- act with care and diligence in the course of APS employment
- when acting in the course of APS employment, treat everyone with respect and courtesy, and without harassment
- when acting in the course of APS employment, comply with all applicable Australian laws
- comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone in the employee's Agency who has authority to give the direction
- maintain appropriate confidentiality about dealings that the employee has with any Minister or Minister's member of staff
- disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with APS employment
- use Commonwealth resources in a proper manner
- not provide false or misleading information in response to a request for information that is made for official purposes in connection with the employee's APS employment
- not make improper use of:
 - a. inside information, or
 - b. the employee's duties, status, power or authority,in order to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or advantage for the employee or for any other person
- at all times behave in a way that upholds the APS Values and the integrity and good reputation of the APS
- while on duty overseas, at all times behave in a way that upholds the good reputation of Australia, and
- comply with any other conduct requirement that is prescribed by the regulations,

More information can be found at <http://www.apsc.gov.au/values/conductguidelines.htm>