



CAAAPU

Strategic plan

2025-2030



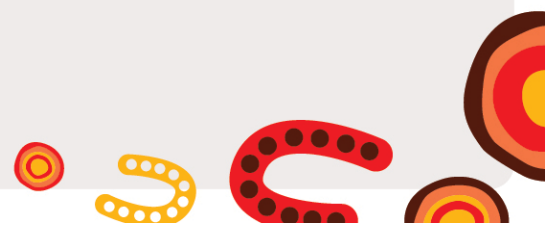
Central Australian Aboriginal Alcohol Programs Unit



Acknowledgment of Country

CAAAPU acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands across Central Australia and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

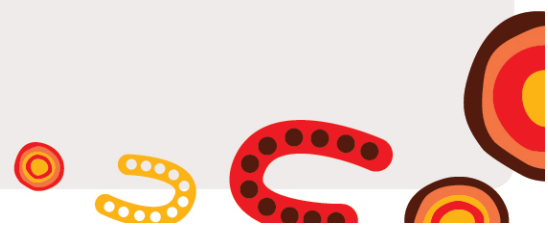
We recognise Aboriginal people as the first healers of this land.





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About us

CAAAPU has been operating since 1991 on traditional Arrernte lands as a place of hope and healing for Aboriginal people in Central Australia who have been impacted by alcohol and other drugs.

At CAAAPU, our use of best practice support walks hand-in-hand with traditional Aboriginal healing, creating a unique pathway to recovery that is strong in culture and grounded in innovation. Together with our partner Aboriginal agencies and other agencies, CAAAPU continues to deliver responsive and culturally safe rehabilitation services that restore wellbeing, strengthen resilience and empower individuals, families and communities to thrive.

Location and connection to place

We are located on a four-hectare property just outside Alice Springs. Our native gardens and cultural spaces allow us to share traditional knowledge and ensure our programs nurture connection to culture, Country and community.

Organisational governance

CAAAPU is an Aboriginal Corporation that is community controlled. This means we are governed by local Aboriginal people and are under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006. We are committed to strong cultural leadership, transparency and accountability at all levels of the organisation.

The governance structure of CAAAPU includes an independent Board of Directors and a highly skilled management team. Our governance and management teams work together to ensure that all CAAAPU's operations and actions align with our vision, purpose and values.

Our robust governance framework includes strategic planning, bi-monthly Board meetings, internal reviews, external audits and a comprehensive system of annual reporting.

Board of Directors

Our Board structure includes five Member Directors and two Non-Member Directors. At the time of this strategic plan publication in 2026, we have four Member Directors and one Non-Member Director.

Chairperson: Michael Liddle

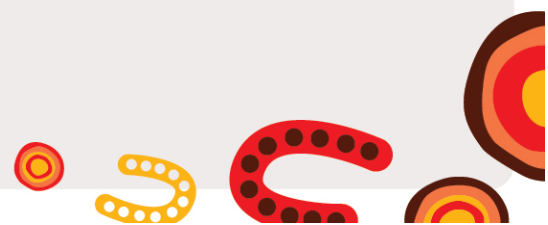
Director: Quinton (Que) Kenny

Director: Dawn Ross

Director: Justine Swan

Independent Non-Member Director: Dr Jeff Brownscombe

CAAAPU's future growth will be guided by Aboriginal self-determination, community control and cultural leadership, ensuring that growth strengthens the organisation's Aboriginal identity and purpose.





Management team

The CAAAPU management team leads the day-to-day operations of the organisation and supports program delivery and workforce professional development. Our management team ensures that our service delivery model aligns with our vision, purpose and values.

The management team structure includes a Chief Executive Officer, Treatment Manager, Business Administration Manager and Intake and System Manager. The Chief Executive Officer reports directly to the CAAAPU Board.

CAAAPU is a member driven organisation with over 100 members. Our members ensure our programs are responsive to emerging local needs and are a key accountability measure for the quality of our services. CAAAPU membership is confirmed annually at our Annual General meeting.

Vision

Our vision for the future is one where Aboriginal people, their families and communities are safe, healthy and supported to live free from the harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs.

Purpose

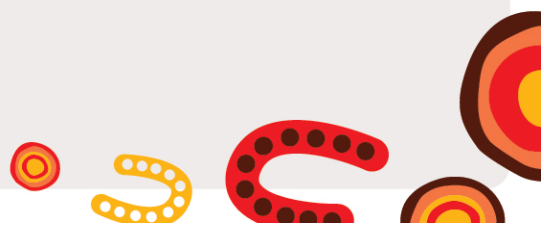
To achieve our vision, we provide a place of hope, cultural safety and healing that ensures Aboriginal people's voices and strengths are central in how we respond to alcohol and other drug issues.

Model of care

Our model of care is founded in Aboriginal healing that is holistic and includes connection to Country, culture and identity, family and kinship, Elders and Cultural Authority, and social and emotional wellbeing.

Our model of care reflects the core elements of the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Residential Rehabilitation Network (ADARRN) model of care. Our approach to healing is guided by five interrelated pillars.

1. Supporting behavioural change and personal growth, including supporting Aboriginal people to develop resilience, emotional wellbeing and stronger, healthier relationships
2. Connecting people to culture and enabling cultural healing through promoting a deeper connection to culture, Country, family and Elders
3. Helping people with long term pathways, including engaging with education, training and integration into community
4. Providing alcohol and other drug use and clinical treatment through our provision of therapeutic modalities: supported accommodation, skills development, case management and counselling, supported by Primary Health care services
5. Connecting to stakeholders and support networks, including family, community supports, referral agencies and ongoing care providers, as a key component of successful recovery and transition





Aboriginal workforce development and leadership pathways

A sustainable Aboriginal workforce is critical to maintaining CAAAPU's future capability and cultural integrity. We prioritise Aboriginal workforce development and leadership pathways through:

- Employing and developing the local Aboriginal workforce
- Working with Aboriginal people to build employment opportunities and leadership pathways
- Mentoring Aboriginal people and promoting professional development, including supporting staff to gain skills and qualifications
- Prioritising Aboriginal people in succession planning
- Creating pathways into employment for people participating in our programs

Services provided

- Best practice residential alcohol and other drug rehabilitation services
- Culturally responsive treatments and supports that include the development and maintenance of strong local cultural links
- Supported access to withdrawal services and primary healthcare
- A suite of treatment interventions that recognise individual stages of change and priorities, and is based on proven motivational interviewing, harm minimisation and relapse prevention principles
- Provision of individual and group based counselling and other psychosocial supports, for example, addressing life skills, relationship skills and broader behaviour change goals
- Case management and shared care with partner services
- Pre-program and aftercare support
- Vocational training and support for workforce participation
- Community engagement, outreach, and honest and hopeful messaging

Why we are needed

At CAAAPU, we acknowledge that Aboriginal people across Central Australia are walking in two worlds and that this can create complex challenges. The way we work at CAAAPU is to acknowledge historical harms at the same time as supporting people to take responsibility for creating the conditions for change, growth and healing.

We recognise the overwhelming need for culturally safe and effective support services for Aboriginal people who are impacted by significant health, social and economic disadvantage. The alcohol and other drug use landscape in Central Australia is dynamic. We are continually confronted by emerging issues which require proven solutions and continual innovation to tackle them effectively.

We embrace these opportunities and work to support people in our care. We understand that our work matters to families and the broader community and helps to improve the overall health and wellbeing of people in our communities. We are committed to driving policy responses that will effect





meaningful change at a local level. When we inspire and successfully help people, this impacts not only their life, but they carry those strengths and new opportunities back to their families and communities.

Our mandate is to facilitate both individual and community transformation. We work to support people to break harmful patterns of behaviour by combining the key elements of social and emotional wellbeing with what works in western best practice alcohol and other drug treatment models. Through our work, we guide people to live safer, healthier and more connected lives.

Organisational guiding values

CAAAPU understands the importance of local people leading change in their own communities and we value local responses to the complex challenges impacting people who live in Central Australia.

Our program's governance is guided by our organisation's values, our quality care standards, the social and emotional wellbeing framework, and principles of community development and harm reduction. We employ assertive engagement and follow up. We provide continuity of care by working in close partnership with health, social, justice and vocational services across the region.

Our values:

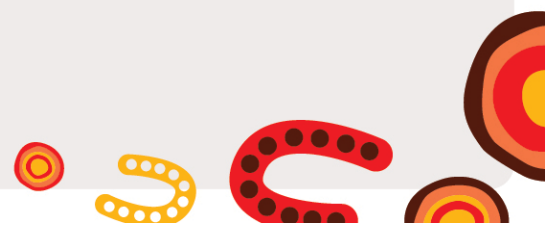
- We value local Aboriginal and community governance and leadership
- We recognise and respect the strengths inherent in Aboriginal culture, history and identity
- We empower people to lead happier, healthier and more connected lives
- We support people to make their own decisions, identify their goals and priorities and achieve meaningful outcomes
- We deliver our services with respect, cultural safety, equity, fairness and dignity
- We are accountable to the people who access our services and the communities they live in
- We provide best practice care and have processes for ongoing improvement
- We act in partnership with other services to ensure we provide holistic care
- Our service user engagement does not end when people complete the program

Description of operations

There are 48 Aboriginal communities in Central Australia located across regional council areas, including MacDonnell, Central Desert and Barkly Shire. These communities are key referral points to our services, although we support Aboriginal people from across Australia.

While CAAAPU has operated as a self-referral based service, the majority of current referrals are received from the justice system. This shift reflects the changing needs of the communities and the increasing rate of complex health, social and legal issues being experienced by the people who require our support.

CAAAPU runs two residential programs: a nine bed women's program and a 20 bed men's program. Both involve 24 hour care in a culturally safe, healing environment. Both focus on providing individualised, structured support, helping to re-establish healthy daily routines and facilitating access to cultural activities, wellbeing programs and therapy.





Both programs provide culturally informed, person-centred care that supports both physical and emotional wellbeing at every stage of recovery.

Men and women participating in our programs are encouraged to take part in creative and reflective activities such as Aboriginal painting, bush walks and group yarns to help restore balance and strengthen identity.

Program facilities include a gym, music and recreation spaces, and outdoor areas for reflection and connection.

All people entering our programs are comprehensively assessed across the domains of alcohol and other drug use and physical, psychological, cultural and social circumstances, which ensures that they receive a treatment plan that is designed to meet their individual needs and recovery goals.

CAAAPU's stakeholders

Our stakeholders include:

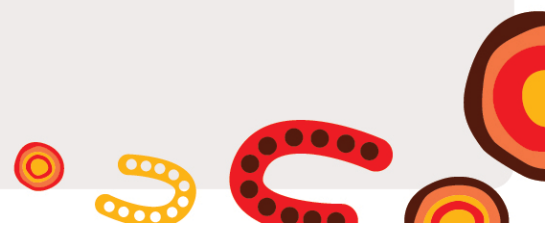
Service users	Men and women seeking treatment and support for their alcohol and other drug use
CAAAPU's organisational representatives	Board of Directors, management and workforce
Local communities	Families living and working in local remote communities
Decision makers	Politicians, policy makers and public servants
Local service providers	Service partners who provide specialist services
Funding bodies	Government bodies who provide funding to CAAAPU for delivering our treatment and behaviour change programs
Referrers	Justice and health services and people who self-refer into our programs

Service partners

We work with a range of partner organisations to provide holistic care and ensure that service users can access relevant specialist services. These service partnerships strengthen our capacity to respond to the needs of Aboriginal people and ensure they are well linked into broader community supports.

Central Australia Aboriginal Congress (Congress)

CAAAPU has a long term formal partnership with Congress to deliver an integrated model of care that incorporates three streams of care: psychological, medical and social/cultural. Our partnership with Congress means that our service users have access to medical, psychological and education programs while they are in our care. Ingkintja provides a men's behaviour change program to men participating in our program that focuses on the use of alcohol and its effects on domestic violence.





Sandstone Therapy Centre

Sandstone provides counselling and support services to CAAAPU service users as a core element of their treatment program.

Flinders University

We have a student placement partnership agreement with Flinders University and support research projects where appropriate

Charles Darwin University (CDU)

CDU provides training opportunities for both service users and staff, including literacy, numeracy and vocational programs. We have a student placement partnership agreement with CDU.

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)

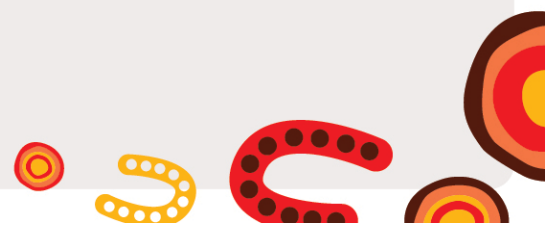
RMIT provides a Diploma in Community Services – Alcohol and Drugs and an Advanced Diploma in Community Sector Management. All senior staff at CAAAPU are required to hold a minimum Diploma in Community Services. Several have advanced to postgraduate education through RMIT.

Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Residential Rehabilitation Network (ADARRN)

ADARRN is a key sector partner that plays a significant role in workforce development, sector representation, advocacy and professional training.

Association of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies NT (AADANT)

AADANT is a key sector partner that plays a significant role in workforce development, sector representation, advocacy and professional training.



Our impacts

Strategic actions

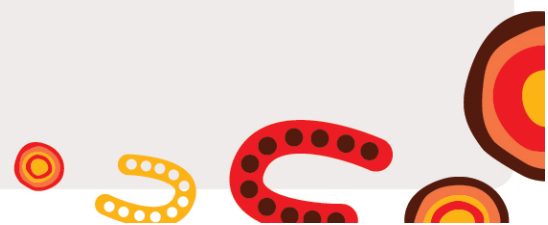
We use our position of community leadership to change the conversation about alcohol and other drug use in Central Australia. By telling positive stories about our impacts with local people and their communities, we demonstrate that change is happening and better outcomes are possible for Aboriginal people and their families and communities through their involvement with CAAAPU. We ensure these stories balance honesty with hope.

Our strategic principles are:

- **Increasing our impact:** We work to increase our funding and expand the number of service users and communities we reach
- **Doing what works:** We provide effective care, referrals and linkages, aftercare and vocational pathways
- **Delivering positive messages:** Our involvement in media and social media focuses on honest and helpful messaging
- **Demonstrating our accountability:** We monitor our outcomes and report transparently
- **Meeting people where they are at:** We engage in community outreach and assertive engagement
- **Developing strong partnerships:** We partner with local services that share our values and objectives
- **Being an employer of choice:** We provide supported and valued career pathways
- **Future growth and sustainability:** We have expanded our priority areas to include prevention, early intervention, healing initiatives, outreach, community, research, evaluation and advocacy

Strategic objectives

- To provide an effective place of healing
- To improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people
- To make a difference by helping people and communities make positive changes
- To raise the awareness and guide the conversation about alcohol and other drug use in Central Australia
- To get in early with prevention, health promotion and early intervention
- To work collaboratively with our partners to strengthen community capacity to respond to the needs of Aboriginal people and their families
- To build a skilled local workforce by prioritising employment of local people

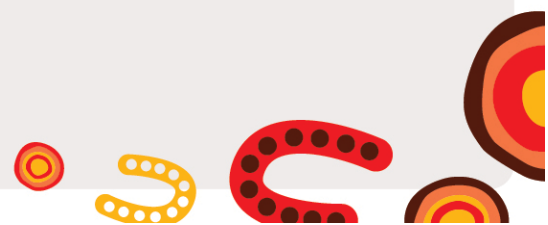




CAAAPU aspires to be an employer of choice. We prioritise the employment of local people and contribute to positive impacts in community by providing employment and deeper local connections. We prioritise local people by educating people in our programs about the harms associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs and associated behaviours. We facilitate education and training of the local workforce where able.

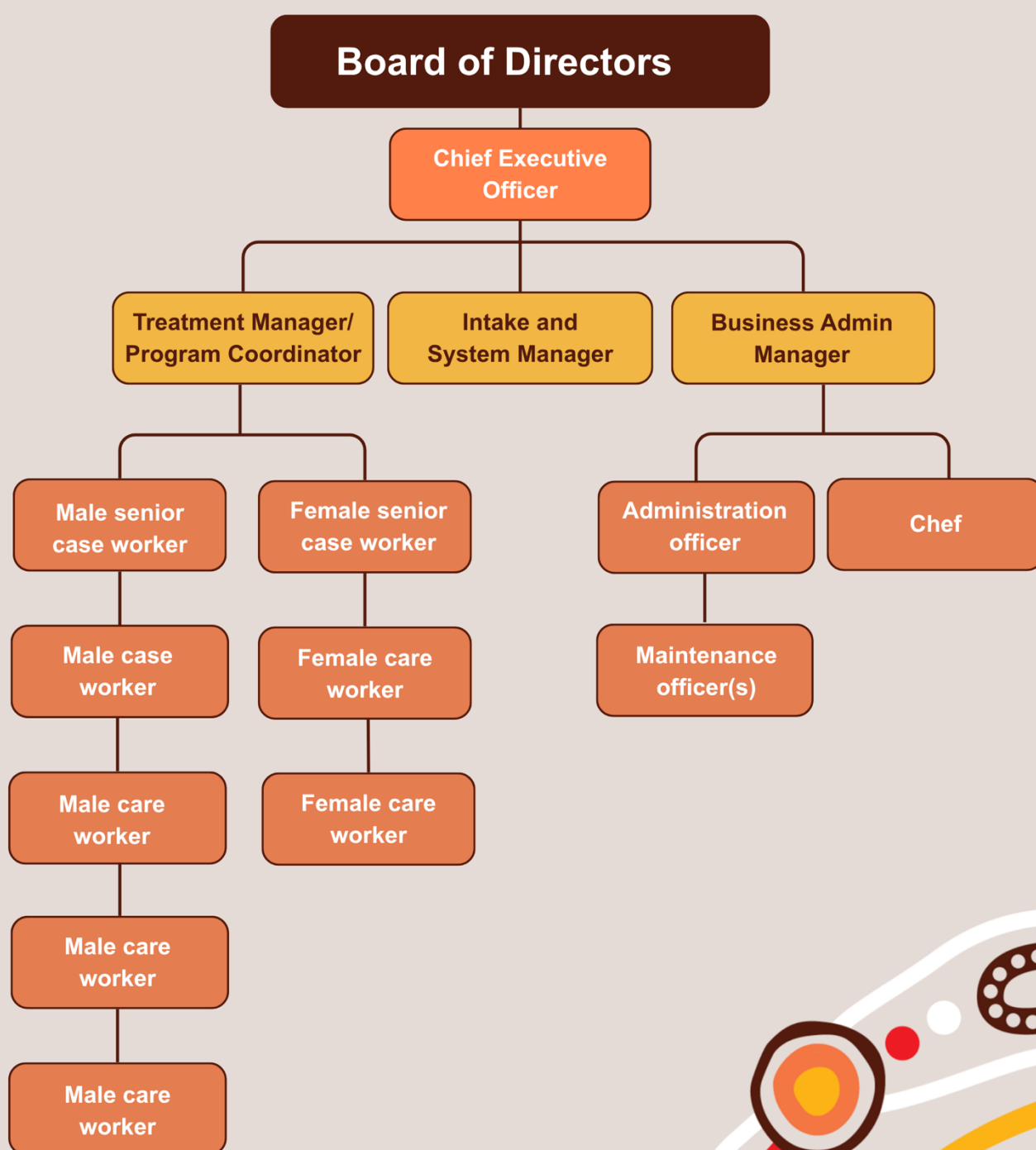
Where possible, we monitor impacts and outcomes beyond the residential rehabilitation program, to include:

- Improved wellbeing
- Strengthened cultural connection
- Successful and safe transition back to family and community
- Engagement with employment and education
- Family involvement and strengthening
- Reduced alcohol and other drug harm within communities



Appendices

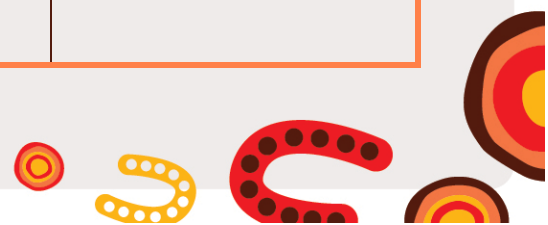
Organisational chart



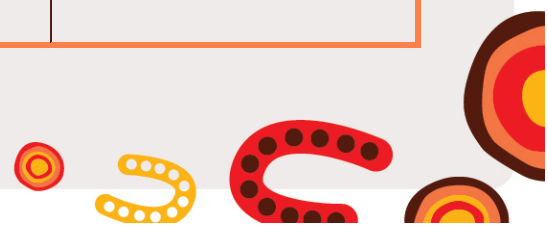
Defined success, strategies, performance indicators and risks

This table outlines our indicators of success, the strategies that we will use to achieve them, the performance indicators that help to assess if we are achieving them and the risks that we may experience on our journey.

Defined success	Strategies	Performance indicators	Identified risks
All staff will have formal qualifications in alcohol and other drugs or a related area.	CAAAPU will engage with Registered Training Organisations who will provide accredited training to our workforce. Where able, training requirements will be modified to suit the learning needs of staff who have English as a second language. Consideration of training or qualifications achieved in other countries will be assessed for quality.	All staff at CAAAPU will, at a minimum, have existing Certificate IV qualifications or have either enrolled or commenced Certificate IV training.	People who have English as a second or third language may experience challenges with enrolling in local accredited courses.
All service users will attend rehabilitation, behaviour change and life skills programs.	CAAAPU will provide therapeutic and life skills program components. Programs will be delivered by qualified CAAAPU staff, accredited local service providers or trainers.	Service users will participate in programs and, when able, complete relevant skills based training while at CAAAPU.	Accredited training providers may have strict curricula that do not align with the needs of our service users. Changes to CAAAPU funding or an increase in service provider costs may impact course availability and course consistency and restrict service user numbers which could affect program completion rates.
CAAAPU will maintain occupancy rates above 80%.	CAAAPU will be a service of choice for Aboriginal people seeking alcohol and other drug treatment in Central Australia. CAAAPU will work closely with our service partners to ensure safe and secure pathways	Occupancy rates will remain at or above 80%.	Seasonal variations may affect occupancy rates.



	into our service. We will work to identify barriers to care with prospective and current service users.		
CAAAPU will provide employment opportunities for local Aboriginal people.	CAAAPU will adopt recruitment strategies that prioritise the recruitment of local Aboriginal people, special measures to promote and facilitate employment of Aboriginal people and development of training pathways for prospective staff.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants are preferred. CAAAPU will employ a minimum 60% Aboriginal people.	In a competitive employment market, there may be limits to the number of Aboriginal people who possess the skills and qualifications to take up the opportunity to work at CAAAPU in the context of the challenges related to the transient workforce in Alice Springs.
Our service delivery approach ensures service users are actively involved in determining their treatment outcomes.	CAAAPU develops case plans in partnership with service users and, if appropriate, families and significant others.	All case plans are 'codesigned' with service users and have individually relevant goals or outcomes.	In alcohol and other drug services, there are generally high numbers of service users exiting unplanned.
Partnership agreements are maintained with external service partners to ensure CAAAPU service users receive holistic care.	CAAAPU will develop MoUs with local service providers who can participate in shared care to ensure we meet the full range of service user needs.	Relevant agreements are in place with core and specialist service partners (for example, primary care, mental health, men's behaviour change and vocational training and employment).	There is high demand for culturally safe and skilled partner organisations who have the capabilities to work with CAAAPU service users.
People are effectively followed up while on the waitlist and supported beyond their residential stay through transition and continuing care.	CAAAPU assertively contacts people upon initial engagement, provides waitlist support as required and follows up via aftercare and shared care with external service providers.	People on the waitlist are provided with support. Assertive engagement and follow up efforts are noted in case files. Service users who exit the program are offered transition and aftercare engagement.	CAAAPU service users often live remotely which may limit rates of successful follow up. CAAAPU does not have dedicated funding for post follow up support which may impact consistent follow up capabilities.





Strategic plan

CAAAPU is actively engaged with families and communities in Central Australia.	CAAAPU will participate in community engagement sessions and media engagement to positively influence conversations about alcohol and other drug use. Families are offered involvement across the treatment journey.	CAAAPU maintains a schedule of community engagement activities. Families are involved at intake and exit from the program as appropriate.	CAAAPU may lack the resources to undertake community engagement activities. Remoteness of communities may limit levels of engagement. There is limited capacity to undertake family sensitive practice.
CAAAPU will build employment and workforce engagement pathways for Aboriginal people.	CAAAPU will develop workforce training, work experience and other workforce engagement components for the program, including via community training and work placement partners.	CAAAPU will record employment and workforce engagement goals and service user attendance at training and establish relationships with employment partners.	There is a lack of suitable employment and community training or work placement program partners.
CAAAPU will lead and participate in local alcohol and other drug, family and domestic violence, justice and housing policy responses.	CAAAPU will develop a strategy to lead and participate in local alcohol and other drug, family and domestic violence, justice and housing policy responses. CAAAPU will partner with local partners to progress these policy responses.	CAAAPU will record levels and types of participation in local alcohol and other drug, family and domestic violence, justice and housing policy responses.	CAAAPU may lack the time and resources to lead and participate in local alcohol and other drug, family and domestic violence, justice and housing policy responses.

