

## WHERE IS IT?

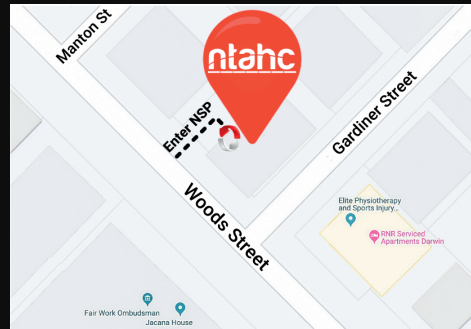
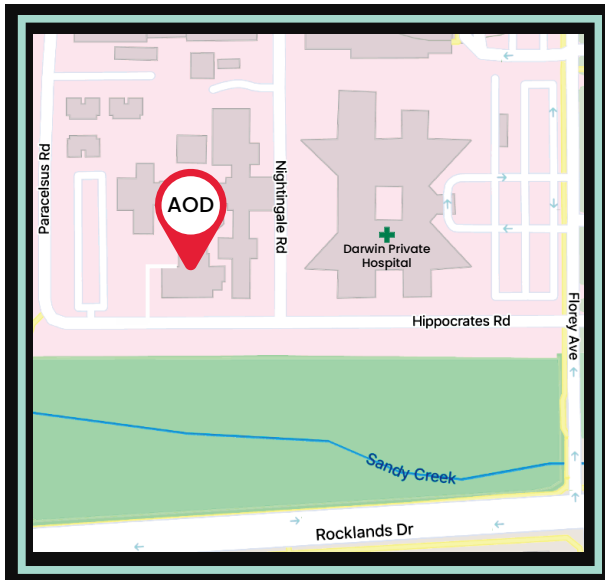
In the Top End the OPP is run by the Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) unit at Royal Darwin Hospital (RDH). You can contact the AOD unit by:

- a) Phone on: 08 8922 8399
- b) Walk-in: Ask the receptionist to book you an appointment.

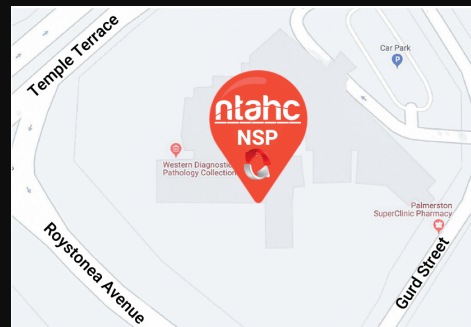
### AOD is Building 9 at RDH:

Turn into the first left after taking the hospital turn-off from the main road.

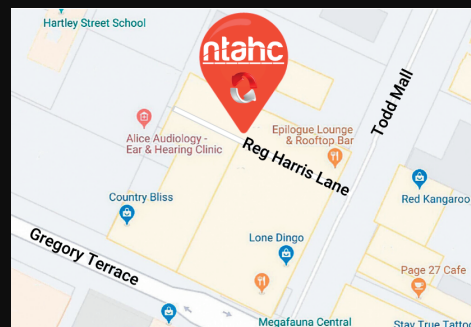
AOD is part of the Cowdy Ward building but to the left hand side.



Darwin Office - 46 Woods Street  
Ph: (08) 8944 7777  
Monday - Friday 9 - 5:30pm



Palmerston NSP - Palmerston Health Precinct  
Ph: (08) 8934 3676  
Monday - Friday 9:30 - 5:30pm  
Closed for lunch 1-1:30pm



Alice Springs Office - Reg Harris Lane  
Ph: (08) 8953 3172  
Monday - Friday 8:30-5pm  
Closed for lunch 12 - 1pm

## OPIATE PHARMACOTHERAPIES PROGRAM (OPP)

**SO YOU'RE  
THINKING OF  
GOING ON  
"THE PROGRAM"?**

**ntahc**

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## WHAT IS IT?

**The Opiate Pharmacotherapy Program (OPP), aka the "Methadone Program", is a replacement therapy (substitute) for people who have difficulty managing their use of opioids, e.g. morphine or heroin.**

Available treatment options are:

- Methadone/Biodone
- Suboxone Film (Buprenorphine and Naloxone)
- Subutex (Buprenorphine)

\*Methadone is prescribed to people with chronic pain issues.

\*Subutex is only prescribed to people with an allergy to Naloxone.

## THE PROCESS

**You may experience some withdrawal symptoms during the initial induction process.**

**Remember: This is YOUR treatment so you have a say in how it progresses.**

- 1. Contact the AOD Unit at RDH** and let the receptionist know that you would like to go on the methadone program (OPP). They will arrange an assessment appointment with a Triage Officer.
- 2. The Triage Officer will ask:**
  - a) Why you want to go on OPP
  - b) About your substance use in detail, including alcohol and marijuana, as well as use of other illicit's
  - c) Personal and private questions e.g. your living arrangements and your relationship status

There are a lot of questions and it can take over an hour to complete them all.

Some important appointments will be made for you during your assessment. The sooner you attend to these the sooner you will be able to start treatment.

### **3. The Triage Officer will take your case to the OPP team, that consists of:**

- Management
- Case worker
- Doctor

They meet weekly to make decisions regarding your assessment and treatment. If the team think OPP is appropriate for you, the next available appointment with the resident AOD Doctor will be made for you.

### **4. You will be given a referral to Western Diagnostics Pathology to provide a "Urine Drug Screen" (UDS).**

- The UDS is to check for opioids (morphine or heroin) in your system, as well as testing for any other illicit drugs before being started on OPP.
- You will have to provide a urine (piss) sample while being watched by a worker at Western Diagnostics Pathology.
- It is important that you test positive for opiates otherwise you will not be accepted for treatment.

## WHEN YOU ARE ACCEPTED FOR OPP

- AOD doctor will write an initial prescription for the first 2 weeks of your induction.
- You will have to attend AOD at the RDH between 9am and 11:45am each day to stabilise on your dose.
- You will be given a lower dose to start with and observed for 1 hour each visit.

- This dose will be increased daily until you are at the dose the doctor wrote as a ceiling dose.
- This can be increased if it does not hold you well enough and you still feel the urge to use.
- Once stabilised you will need to dose at AOD for up to 4 weeks or more, between 10am and 11:45am and provide regular UDSs to check that you aren't taking any other illicit drugs such as morphine, crystal meth, etc.
- Once the OPP Team is satisfied that you are compliant and stabilised you can apply to dose at the nearest 7-day pharmacy close to where you live that provides dosing. This will most likely be the same chemist you go to for dosing on a Sunday when AOD is closed.

## TAKE-AWAY DOSES

- It can be months until you are prescribed a take home dose, i.e. a dose for the next day you can have at home and not have to attend the pharmacy.
- You can build up to 5 take-away doses.
- These will be offered or applied for by your AOD team dependant on your progress, stabilisation and number of clear UDS's.
- It can be very difficult to travel without take-away doses. You will have to provide flight bookings, an address where you will be staying and a pharmacy that you agree to dose at while away.
- Your case worker and doctor (plus your case manager) will assess each occasion where you need take-aways on its own merit. If there is no pharmacy where you can dose nearby you may be afforded take-aways for the short spell you are away from town.