



## ATCA WEBSITE GOES LIVE!



### The new ATCA website to be launched THIS WEEK!

The ATCA website has been some months in the development, and is now ready to be launched. Thank you to all our members who have contributed to its development with program updates and Stories of Hope. The stories are an important new feature of our site and will provide tremendous encouragement to others who are on their own recovery pathway, as well as to the families and friends who are supporting them.

Another new feature is the way in which information on our members is now presented. Member pages are now listed under 'Referrals'. Clicking onto this link will take you to the link for each of the States and Territories, where you will find members listed. Most members have been able to provide a summary of services, together with contact details, with a link to each of your own sites. This will facilitate direct referrals. If you haven't yet provided your information, photos and link, there is still time – there are many features of the site which we will continue to roll out over the coming weeks and months, so please let me have the information as soon as possible.

It is interesting how many people – including those looking for help for themselves, family members and others (including General Practitioners and other health professionals) access our site or call me for advice and referral information. Providing information on each of our members will mean that potential residents and those who are referring will be able to access information and can be directed to TCs through the ATCA website.

Also included on the website are a number of resources and research papers. Once again, these will be updated regularly, and if you have any resources you would like to share with other members, please email these to me. Research papers are particularly important, and with more papers now being published on TC treatment outcomes, these provide a valuable resource to support our important work.

### Invitation - Research and Practice Roundtable: Tuesday 19 March at WHOS Sydney

As part of our commitment to continual quality improvement and research into TC treatment outcomes, **you are invited to send a representative to participate in a Research and Practice Roundtable on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March.**

This will be held at the **WHOS campus at Rozelle**, and will bring together a number of researchers who are already involved in working with our TCs, as well as a number of other researchers and practitioners - representing 10 universities across

Australia, and TC staff involved in data collection and research.

The objective for the day is to discuss the development of an ongoing research project which will examine the effectiveness of TC treatment outcomes, and will also gather information on the different models in place in both Australia and overseas. Ultimately, we would like to develop the resources to support TC research, including a research PhD scholarship to allow someone to work with us over the next three years.

We are increasingly seeing the emergence of new TC models – including short-term residential programs and day programs. These are exciting developments, and ones which we would like to support as an association. It is important however, to ensure the integrity of the TC model is not lost.

As some of these models have had a longer history in Europe, research into their effectiveness is now beginning to emerge. Very importantly, whereas research into TC effectiveness has traditionally focused on reduction in substance use and criminal behaviour as the key indicators of success, there is a growing body of literature looking at quality of life and other psychosocial outcomes – including improvement in mental and physical health, employment, housing and relationships.

This also brings us to think more about the factors that are predictive of treatment outcome. This means looking more at therapeutic engagement, and indicators of change, development of recovery capital, things that are likely to support sustained behavioural change.

I have just completed my own PhD research. I specifically looked at outcomes for residents in five of our TCs who received the treatment intervention that James Pitts and I developed and distributed to our members in 2009, compared with treatment as usual in seven matched TCs. As well as providing information on the effectiveness of the treatment intervention, the data collected has provided some rich information on TC populations, including some predictors of early treatment drop-out.

As we begin to unpack the information around retention, we can start to see more clearly how we

may need to develop interventions with particular client characteristics in mind.

The first stage in any effective research is making sure we have the right measures in place to collect the information we need. We explored this a little in Launceston with the presentation by Dr Richard Chenhall and Dr Peter Kelly, both of whom are involved in working with a number of our members.

We have huge potential for an Australasian research project that will add greatly to the research literature and provide a weight of evidence to governments on the effectiveness of TC treatment.

Around 9,000 people access our residential services on an annual basis. A further 23,000 undertake some form of outclient services.

While there is some uniformity in the collection of data across TCs, necessitated through the NMDS, all of our members have a variety of measures in place that are being used to collect information for different purposes – measures of mental health and wellbeing, alcohol and other drug use, severity of dependence and so on. Some have also included TC-specific measures which have been developed by George De Leon. However, without uniformity in data collection it is difficult to compare outcomes. There is also currently no way of bringing that information together for further analyses and publication.

As the first stage in this process, we are conducting an audit of outcome and psychometric measures currently in use in our TCs. This will be the first step in looking at which measures ‘speak’ to each other. For TCs that have had research in place for some time, we understand you will be wanting to maintain these as you have likely collected material over a considerable period of time. It is not the aim of this project to make more work for everyone.

The first step is finding out what measures are in place, what information you are gathering, and the purposes of the data collection (e.g., contractual arrangement, organisational research etc). In the next couple of days you will receive by email a form which we would like you to complete and

return by Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March. This will provide us with the details of measures that you currently have in place and help us to understand what information you are gathering and why, and where the overlaps and gaps are in the collection of data.

For instance, there are now a number of Quality of Life measures which would be extremely useful to include in any data collection systems. Others which pick up on the issue of retention would also be useful to include.

Please also consider attending the Research and Practice Roundtable, or sending your member of staff who is involved in research within your TC.

**Research and Practice Roundtable  
Tuesday 19 March 2013  
commencing at 9.30am (coffee and  
registration from 9am) and  
concluding at 4.15pm.**

**WHOS Rozelle – Building 128  
Church St Lilyfield NSW 2040.**

**RSVP essential for catering  
purposes – email Lynne –  
[atca@atca.com.au](mailto:atca@atca.com.au)  
by Wednesday 14 March.**

**We look forward to seeing you.**

### **Dates for ATCA Conference announced!**

In 2013 we are returning to **Queensland** and the **Gold Coast** for our Annual Conference, which will take place at the **Mercure from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October (site visits) to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October (professional development workshops)**. The main conference program will therefore take place from **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October**. Mark these dates in your diary NOW!

Mitchell Giles and the Conference Organising Committee have announced this year's theme as **Building Communities**. The theme provides an opportunity for focus on the TC community, the

wider community of which we are a part, and the communities of people which we are building.

We have also contracted with **I Am Events** and Michelle Bordignon, the Event Manager, will shortly be releasing the first calls for abstracts and opportunities for sponsorship. Over the last four years we have seen a growth in interest for the ATCA Conference, both from within our TC ranks, and from the wider AOD and welfare community, with a corresponding increase in numbers attending.

This year's conference promises to be a fantastic event, and we therefore encourage you to attend and to bring with you as many of your staff as you can. It is especially important to enthuse younger members of your team, as these will be the staff members who will carry the TC forward in the coming years.

The Conference Organising Committee is also delighted to announce **Rowdy Yates** as the keynote speaker.



Rowdy is Senior Research Fellow and facilitator of the Scottish Addiction Studies group in the Department of Applied Social Science, University of Stirling. He has worked in the drugs field for more than thirty-five years and, prior to this appointment, he was the Director and co-founder of the Lifeline Project; one of the longest established drug specialist services in the UK.

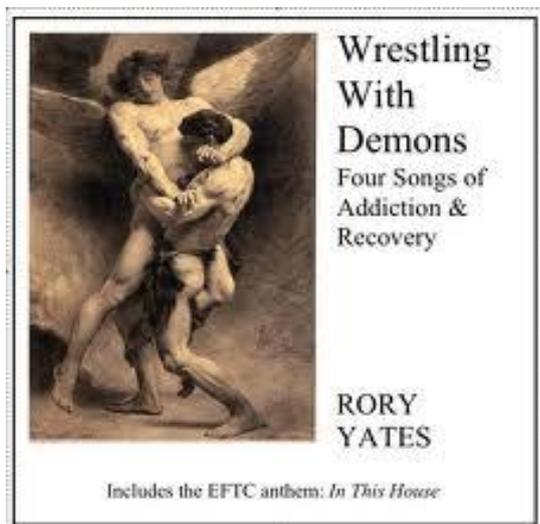
He has published widely on addiction issues; including an edited book (with Barbara Rawlings) on drug-free therapeutic communities, a handbook on the purchasing and management of drug and

alcohol services and a chronicle of drugs, music, and popular culture since the 60's.

He is currently editing a book recalling the lives and legacy of a group of European pioneers of the therapeutic community movement. He is the current Executive Director of EWODOR (the European Working Group on Drugs Oriented Research), Vice-President (Teaching & Research) of the EFTC (European Federation of Therapeutic Communities) and Chair, Addictions Advisory Group, Royal College of Psychiatrists (Community of Communities).

In 1994, Rowdy was awarded the Order of Member of the British Empire (MBE) for services to the prevention of drug misuse. However, Rowdy would probably say that one of his most prized awards is the one received recently (pictured above) when he was made an Honorary Graduate of Phoenix Futures.

Rowdy is a wonderful friend and advocate for TCs – we are really looking forward to welcoming him as our keynote speaker.



Rowdy is also a singer and musician, with a recently released CD, *Wrestling with Demons*, which you can hear at the following website - <http://uk.myspace.com/571624689>

Rowdy is very keen to get involved with TCs and residents – including workshops and music. As he will be flying in and out via the West, there is also the opportunity to organise some events in Perth following the conference, as well as in Queensland and Sydney.

We are currently working with Rowdy on his itinerary, so if you are interested in hosting an event, please let Mitchell Giles, Chair of the Organising Committee, know as soon as possible.

## New ATCA Member Welcomed

The ATCA family has a new member. Arcadia House, which provides a short-term (eight week) transitional TC program, was accepted as a Provisional Member by the ATCA Board at its meeting in December. Arcadia is managed by DIRECTIONS ACT, which provides a number of community-based services. The Arcadia House program was developed from a seven-day detox to the transitional program under the guidance of Mackenzie Clare, who has a good knowledge of TCs and has worked in the field for a number of years. Current manager is Hannah Dawes.

We look forward to seeing our new members - Arcadia House, BRADAAG (Tennant Creek) and Hope House (Bateman's Bay), who were both welcomed in October, at ATCA events in the coming months.

## ATCA to Seek New Funding to Continue its Support to Members

In 2013 we will be making an application to DoHA for continued funding. Since 2006, with the establishment of the ATCA Secretariat, the association has been able to achieve a great deal on behalf of its membership, and has seen a corresponding increase in membership numbers.

### We now have 40 members operating 63 TCs!

The ATCA Standard is now nearing the point of certification with JAS-ANZ, which will then mean it will become available under licence to be used by Certifying Accreditation Bodies (such as ISO). This will allow TCs and other residential programs to apply the ATCA Standard to their residential facility, while also undertaking ISO for their business management systems accreditation process. This would mean only one accreditation process/visit, which can incorporate all aspects of an organisation's business. We will keep you updated on progress.