

Intensive Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program (IDATP)

WHAT IS IDATP?

IDATP stands for Intensive Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program.

It is a program for people in prison who have issues with drug addiction or have committed offences relating to drug use and addiction. The program runs on the John Morony Correctional Complex in both Outer Metropolitan Multi-Purpose (OMMPCC) and Dillwynia Correctional Centres. The male participants are housed at OMMPCC and the female participants are housed at Dillwynia. The IDATP is staffed by a multidisciplinary team including Services and Programs officers, Psychologists and Prison Officers.

The main aim of IDATP is to help participants reduce their chances of returning to Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) use and crime, which will help to reduce reoffending (returning to prison). It is a group program that has multiple phases. Participants are able to progress through these phases as they show they are committed to changing their old harmful behaviours and anti-social attitudes. The program can last from 6 to 8 months. The length of time needed to complete the program depends on how long it takes participants to successfully work through the phases.

IDATP group sessions are held in private group rooms within the prison. At the

start of the phases, group members make and agree to keep a set of strict rules and guidelines. This helps our groups become a safe space to share difficult things in confidence.

Prison-based residential therapy programs are run as modified Therapeutic Communities (TC). In a TC, residents and staff participate in the management and operation of the community, contributing to a psychologically and physically safe learning environment where change can occur. The TC is a unique way to provide therapy that allows for real-life application of working together, relaxing together, decision-making, problemsolving, empathising, reaching out, helping and teaching to build a prosocial and positive environment.

HOW DOES IT HELP?

IDATP offers participants the opportunity to learn new coping skills, communication skills and to learn more about themselves. The program helps participants to think about problems in new ways and offers tools and techniques to help them practice living a different way of life.

When a participant has progressed through all treatment phases and is preparing for graduation, it means they have shown significant changes i.e.: they are able to be abstinent from drugs and

can demonstrate positive, healthy behaviours and attitudes.

When a participant graduates from IDATP, they continue to have contact with our team of support staff and in particular, our re-integration team. This team works with IDATP graduates to connect them to services in the community that can provide further support, learning and assistance after graduates have been released from prison.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP WHILE MY LOVED ONE IS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM?

People who have participated in IDATP have said that they want their family and friends to know that they are trying to change, that it is a difficult process and they would like encouragement to keep doing well and praise for their successes.

They also wanted you to know that they are learning new ways to communicate and are trying to practice those with you. Many of them feel ashamed and guilty for what they have done and struggle with feeling unloved or that they don't belong.

The support and encouragement you give to your family or friends participating in IDATP can be of great assistance. Change never comes easily and the more that positive communication becomes a part of their life, the more supported they will feel during these changes.

If they slip up in the program, there will be consequences for their actions. This is a part of being in prison. Your continued

support can help your loved one pick up and try again. It may be a long road, but the reward at the end will be worth the effort to get there.

Please help us keep contraband out of our prisons, it may seem helpful at the time, however contraband, especially drugs in the case of IDATP, can pose serious health and safety risks and can cause your loved one to stop progressing in the program. They can also face serious penalties that will stop or reverse their progression in classification. Help others to understand how unhelpful and dangerous enabling behaviours like this can be for your loved ones in prison.

Recovery from AOD use and living a drug-free life takes time, sometimes a person will have many attempts at their recovery before they can maintain abstinence for any significant period of time. A participant can lapse or relapse after they have been through an intensive program but with positive support from family and friends a person can continue on their own personal journey of achieving and maintaining abstinence from AOD use and crime.

WHEN MY LOVED ONE COMES HOME

IDATP is a stepping stone to change and a better way of living. Success in the program is measured by each individual. Many of the skills learned in IDATP are new and different; however it can be easy to revert to old habits.

We encourage you to speak openly with your loved one. They have done a lot of

soul searching in the program – they have learned more about who they are. Speaking about what they have learned can build healthy bonds between you that may make the journey ahead easier for everyone.

Our reintegration team is available for support even after release. If your loved one is on parole, we will work with Community Corrections to put them in contact with appropriate service providers and keep in contact where possible to check on their progress.

Many participants will still struggle with feelings of shame and guilt. There are many fears and anxieties they may have about coming home. Discuss these with your loved one and discuss the goals and plans they have made during the program. You can remind them of these during difficult times.

ARE YOU AN IDATP GRADUATE?

The IDATP reintegration team run maintenance groups in the community as well as in prison for IDATP graduates. These are held one evening a month at the Blacktown Community Corrections Office. These are available to male and female graduates. You can contact the IDATP reintegration officers for more details about this meeting. Research indicates that you will have greater success in being able to stay drug free and away from returning to prison if you continue to access the reintegration and maintenance services offered.

Our reintegration team can also help to put you in contact with services that give support and help for housing, education, employment, health, continued AOD treatment and addiction recovery. You can contact our reintegration team using the details provided to you on your release from prison, or contact the correctional centre where you participated in IDATP and ask for the IDATP reintegration team.

