



Addiction Leadership Day Te Whanganui-a-Tara

Evaluation report for March 2025 event

Addiction Leadership Day Te Whanganui-a-Tara 2025

Snapshot of post-event evaluation findings



Theme of the day

Me whakahangaia e tātou, he ao
mo āpōpō | Shaping tomorrow,
together

114

Event attendees

45%

Response rate

35%  **90%**

Respondents rating their knowledge
about sector changes as 'good' or 'very
good' increased by 56% post-event.

Percentage of respondents who rated the statements as 'good' or 'very good'

Overall value of the day



Relevance of the day to the
addiction work



Expansion/deepening of the
professional networks



Collaboration with other
attendees



89%

Respondents plan to use the information
from the day in their mahi.

Key take-home messages

"SMART recovery was amazing"

"The importance of communication, collaboration, and relationship"

"Introduction of new initiatives and services, such as crisis cafes and better
treatment options"

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Background

The Addiction Leadership Days are held annually in three locations: Te Whanganui-a-Tara | Wellington (March), Tāmaki Makaurau | Auckland (July), and Ōtautahi | Christchurch (November). Organised by the National Committee of Addiction Treatment (NCAT) and supported by Te Pou, these events serve as a crucial platform for sector leaders and decision-makers. These one-day events provide an opportunity to deepen professional networks, share sector updates and research, and strengthen and develop leadership.

This report, prepared by Te Pou, summarises feedback from the leadership day held in Te Whanganui-a-Tara | Wellington on 27 March 2025. The theme of the day was **Me whakahangaia e tātou, he ao mo āpōpō | Shaping tomorrow, together**. The evaluation, based on post-event survey responses, aims to inform and guide the planning of future Addiction Leadership Day events.

Methods

Attendees were invited to provide feedback via an online survey through SurveyMonkey at the end of the event. Out of 114 participants, 51 individuals (45 percent) responded to the survey. This response rate provides a moderate degree of confidence that the responses accurately reflect the views of most attendees. The survey included both closed and open-ended questions. Quantitative data from the survey was analysed using Excel, while qualitative data was analysed using MAXQDA software.

Table 1. Number of respondents and response rate

Venue	Number of registrations	Number of attendees	Number of people who responded to evaluation	Survey response rate
Te Aro, Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington	130	114	51	45%

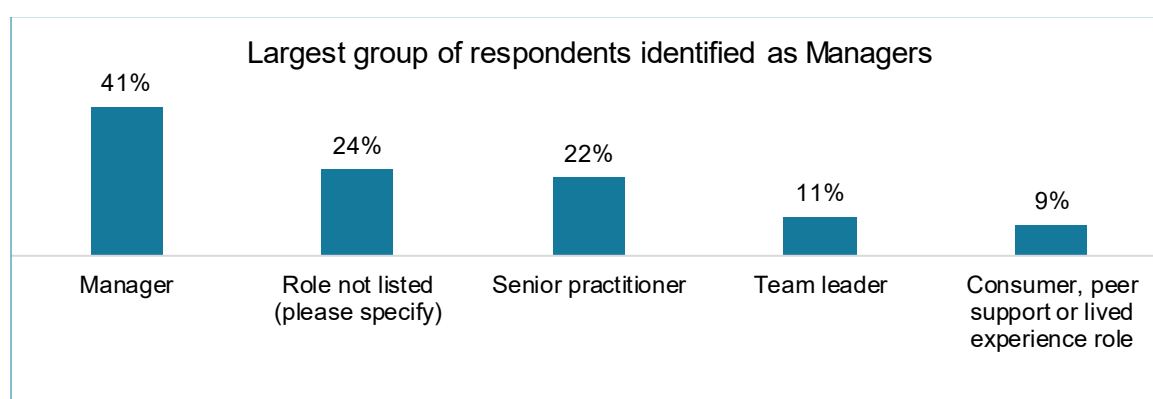
Results

Socio-demographics

Respondent's role

The respondents held a variety of leadership roles. Managers made up the largest group at 41 percent, followed by senior practitioners at 22 percent, team leaders at 11 percent, and those in consumer, peer support, or lived experience roles at 9 percent. Some respondents reported 'other' roles, including roles such as president of a professional body, sector engagement lead, policy analyst, consumer advisor, project lead, and district lead. For a detailed breakdown, refer to Figure 1.

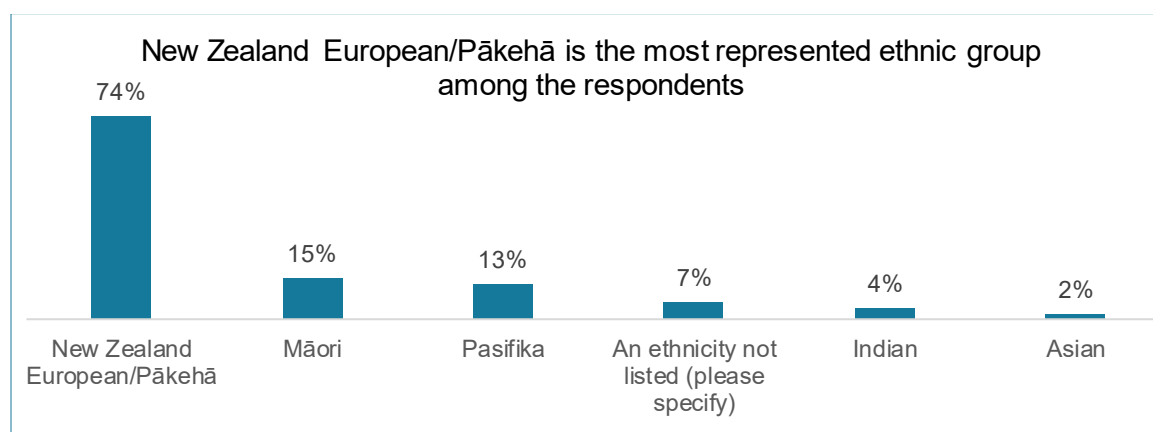
Figure 1. Respondent's role (35 respondents)



Ethnicity

The respondents were largely New Zealand European/Pākehā (74 percent), followed by Māori (15 percent) and Pasifika peoples (13 percent). Four percent identified as Indian, and two percent as Asian. Other ethnicities, including Australian Aboriginal and British, made-up seven percent, as shown in Figure 3.

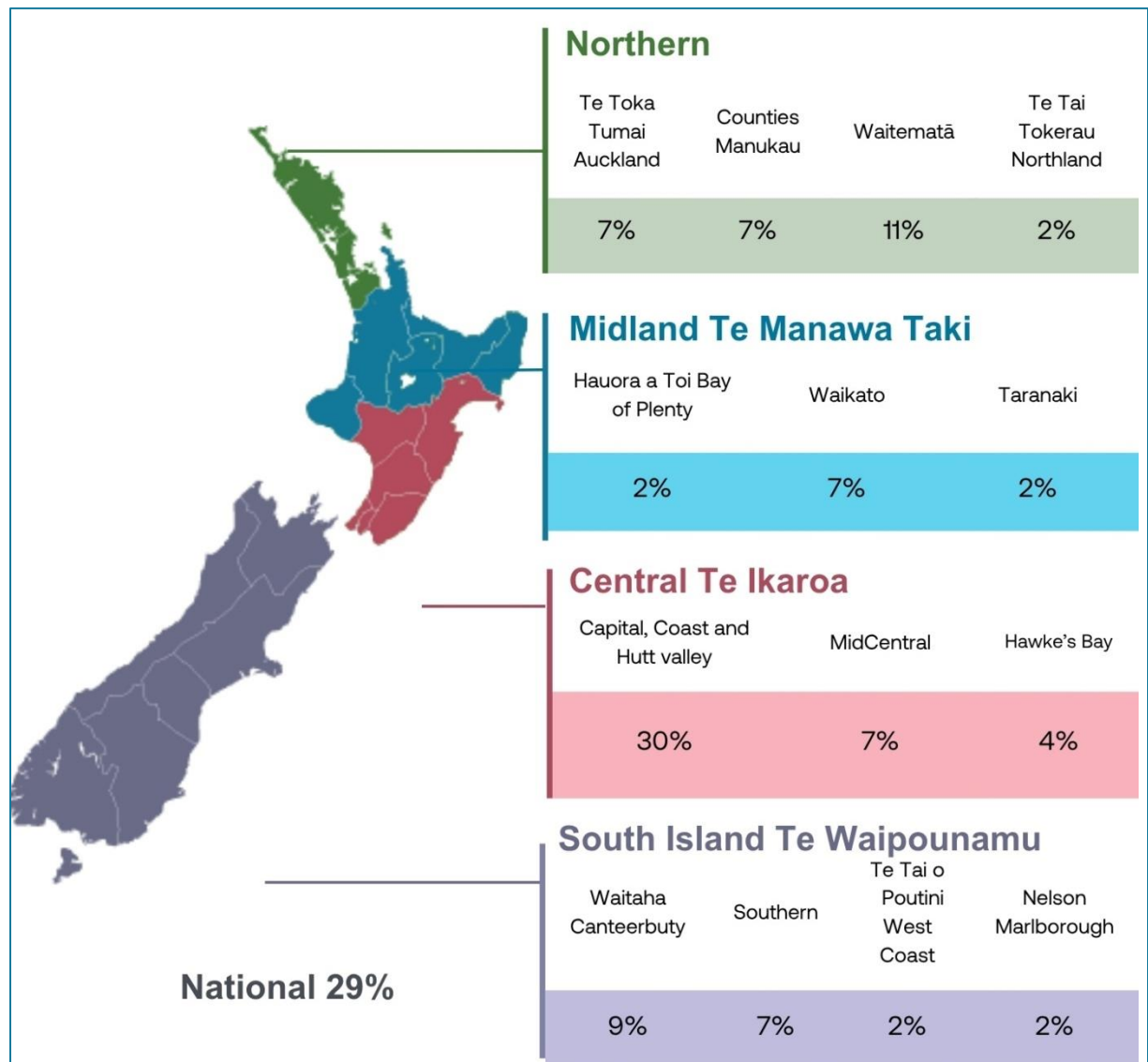
Figure 2. Ethnic Composition of Respondents (multiple choice option, 46 respondents)



Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora district

Attendees were asked to indicate the Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora district they work in, with the option to select multiple districts. Since the event was held Te Whanganui-a-Tara, the largest percentage of people were from Capital, Coast, and Hutt Valley (30 percent); 29 percent of respondents worked nationally. See Figure 3 for the distribution.

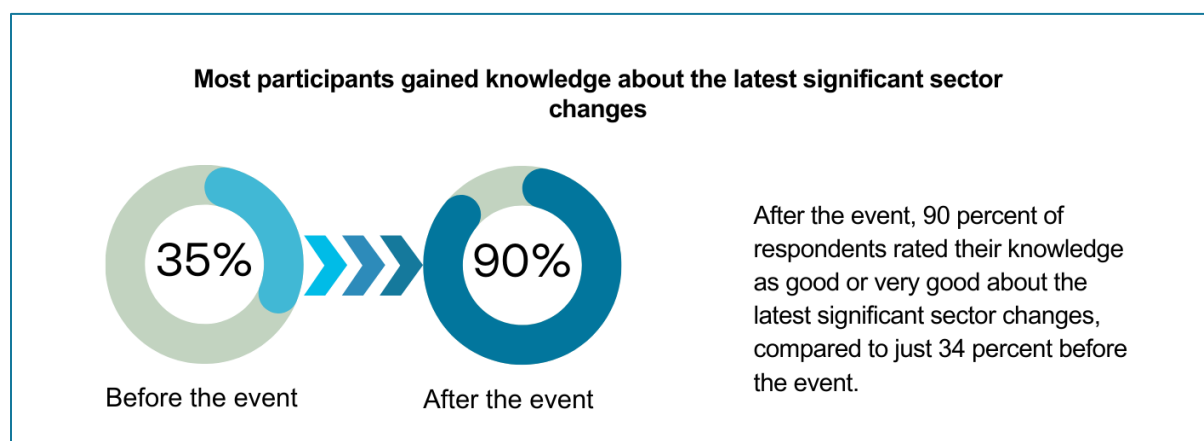
Figure 3. Distribution of respondents across Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora districts (multiple choice option, 46 respondents)



Level of knowledge about the latest significant sector changes

Before the event, 35 percent of respondents rated their knowledge of the latest significant sector changes as good or very good, while 49 percent were neutral. After the event, 90 percent rated their knowledge as good or very good. See Figure 4.

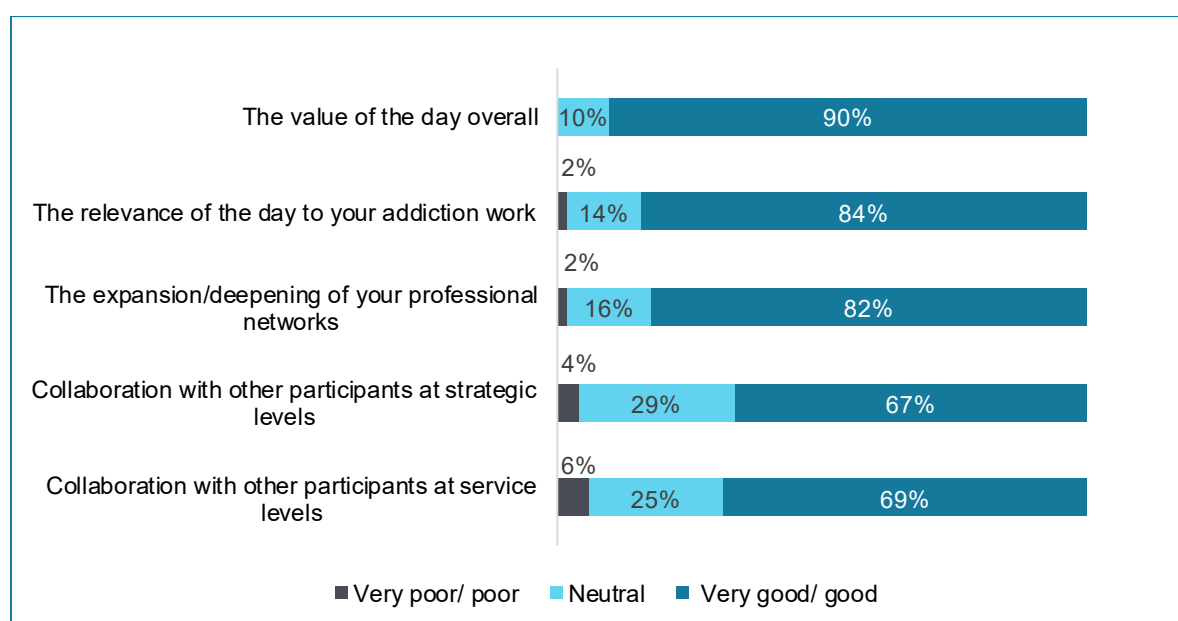
Figure 4. Respondents rating their level of knowledge as 'good' or 'very good' before and after the event (51 respondents)



Value of the day

Most respondents (90 percent) rated the event as good or very good in value. A majority (84 percent) found the event highly relevant to their addiction work, and 82 percent appreciated the professional networking opportunities. Collaboration with other participants at strategic levels was rated positively by 67 percent, while 69 percent rated service-level collaboration positively. Refer to Figure 5 for further breakdown of information.

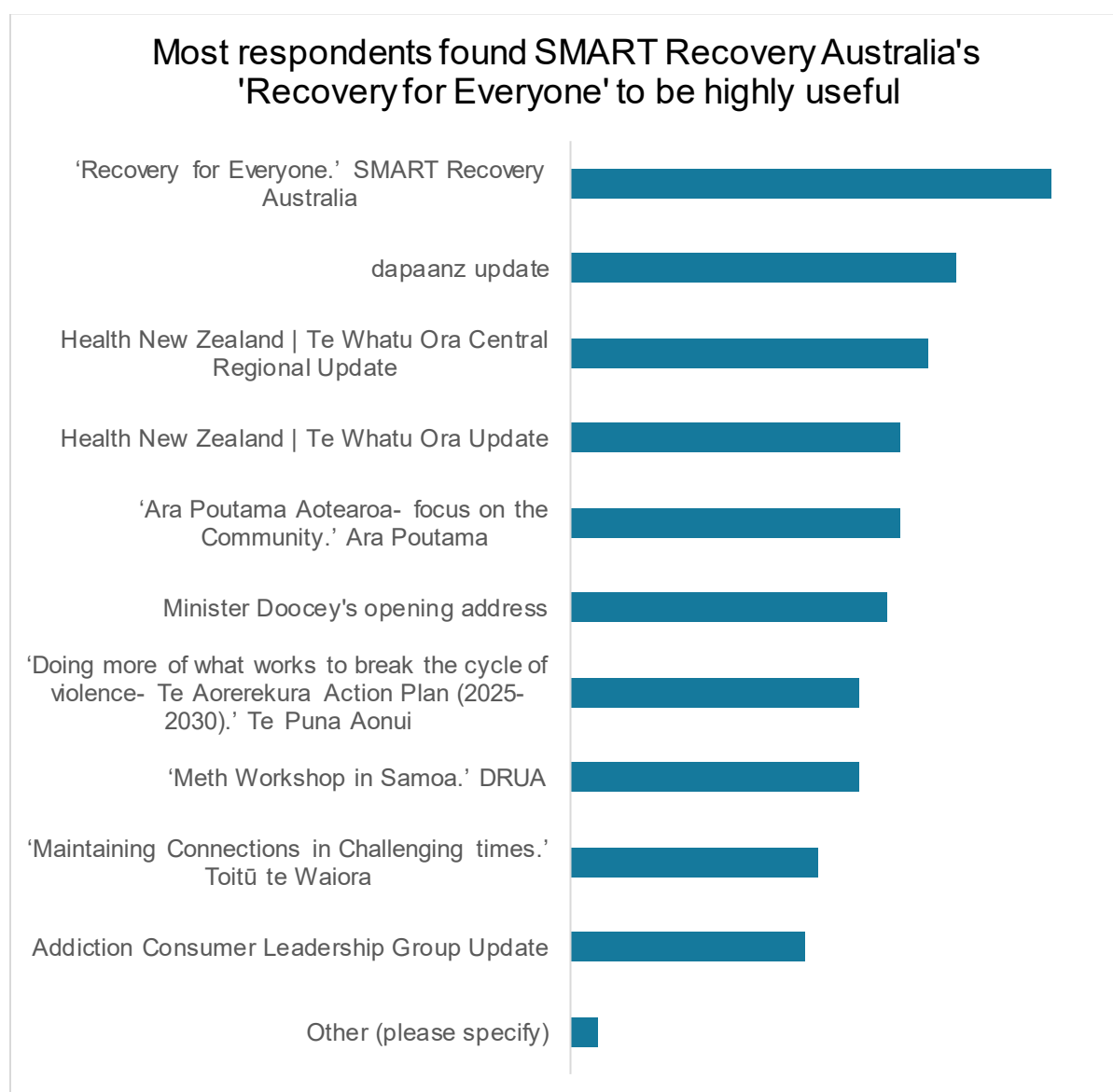
Figure 5. Distribution of respondents rating the event statements (51 participants)



Most useful part of the event

Participants were asked to rate the most useful parts of the day (see agenda in Appendix A), with the option to select multiple choices. 'Recovery for Everyone' by SMART Recovery Australia was highly rated by 73 percent of respondents, followed by the update from dapaanz (58 percent) and the Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora Central region update (54 percent). A few respondents (4 percent) selected "others" and mentioned that the entire day was generally useful. New initiatives, including harm reduction, the update from dapaanz, and regional updates, were some of the topics recommended at the last leadership day held in Ōtautahi, and the appreciation for these topics is reflected in the figure below. See Figure 6 for further breakdown.

Figure 6. Percentage of respondents rating event sessions as most useful (48 respondents, multiple choice)



Using the information from the event in their mahi

Most respondents (91 percent) expressed their intent to use the information from the event in their mahi. When asked how they plan to use the information, 48 respondents provided open-text comments. From these responses, four key themes emerged (refer to Figure 7 for details on the use of information).

Figure 7. Using the information at work (51 participants)

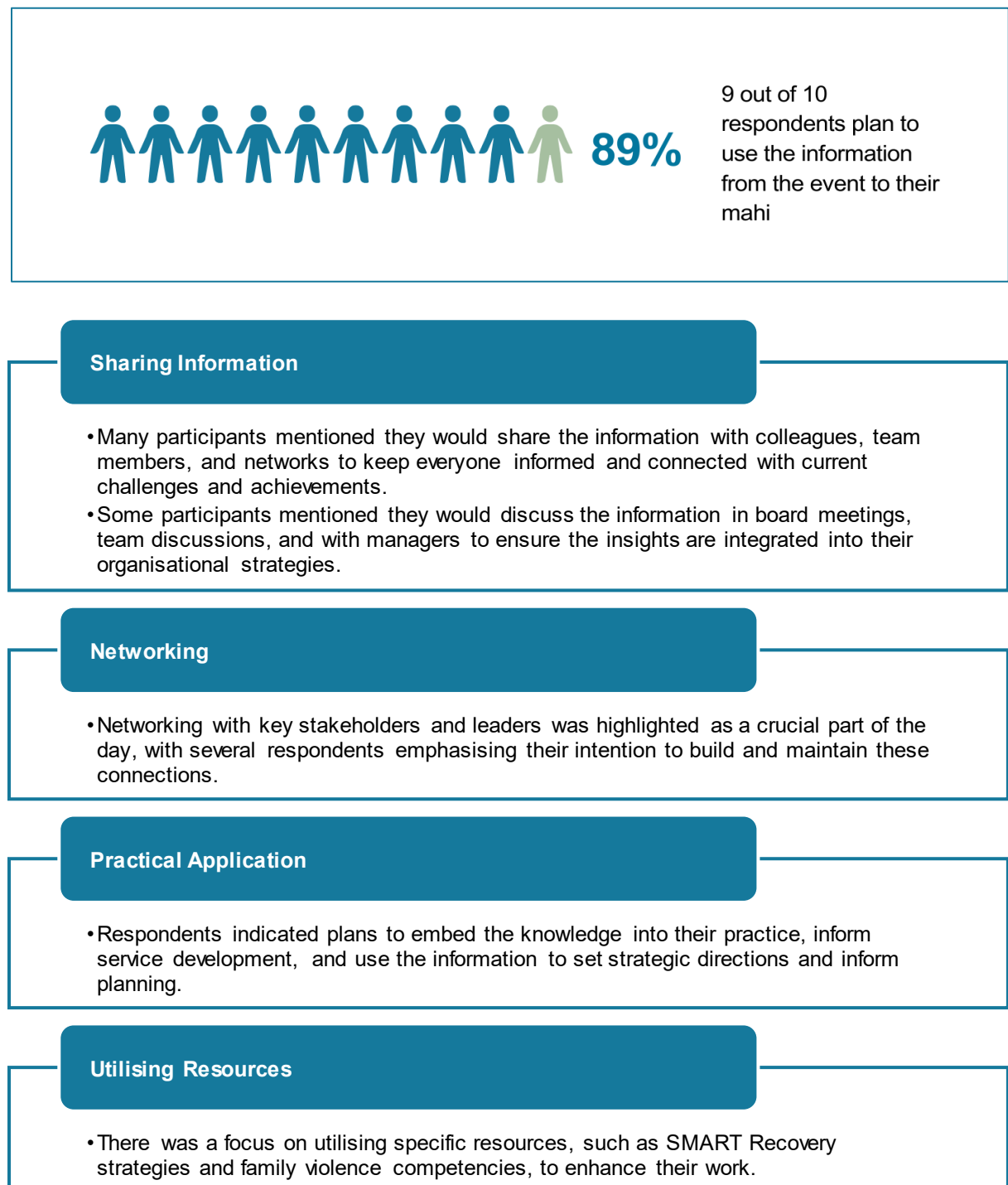


Figure 8. Respondents' key take-home messages (48 respondents)



"SMART recovery will be useful."

"Importance of connection with the sector."

"Networking is valuable."

Government and sector updates

Key takeaways for some attendees were updates from the sector and government.

Comments included:

"Government plan to increase funding to addiction sector."

"Workforce Development Council changes and how these might affect qualifications available to the emerging workforce."

"Te Ara Poutama treatment reviews."

"Lived experience revolution"

Mental health and addiction pressures

Respondents' comments reflected the recognition of the challenges faced by the sector, including funding and resource challenges. Comments included:

"There are many pressures in the Mental Health and Addiction space."

"The sector is under significant pressure with austerity."

"Funding instability."

"Challenges with Funding and impact on Services."

New actions

Some respondents shared their key takeaways regarding new initiatives and services.

Comments included:

"Crisis cafes are coming."

"New better matched treatment coming to corrections."

"Introduction of new initiatives and services, such as crisis cafes and better treatment options."

"Local areas can use their data to identify strategic direction."

"The good news for those incarcerated on remand: services will be commissioned to support timely support, and DAPAANZ will be supporting accreditation for corrections workforce."

Recommendations for future topics

Respondents made diverse range of recommendations for the next potential topics for the next Addiction Leadership Day ranging from technological advancements and policy updates to specific population needs and treatment approaches. The recommendations are summarised in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Recommendations of potential topics for next leadership day

Technology and innovation	Policy and sector updates	Specific populations needs	Treatment and care approaches	Leadership and workforce development
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AI in addiction services• NGO innovations• Emerging research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulatory framework updates• National Drug Policy• Te Whatu Ora update• Scope of practice changes• Prison service updates• Funding issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pacific models of care• Māori developments• Cultural competency and refugees• Lived experience• Youth practices and projects• LGBTQIA+ resources• Aged AOD care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trauma-informed care• Gambling harm• Drug harm reduction: OST, Meth• Medical interventions• Housing• FASD screening updates• Internal family systems• EMDR therapy• Harm reduction resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership talks• Sector leadership issues• Workforce qualifications• AoD clinician pathways

Overall comments

Seventeen attendees shared their overall experience of the event. Participants appreciated the opportunity to network and reconnect with colleagues, found the presentations informative, and praised the overall organisation of the day. However, some feedback indicated that regional updates were not relevant to all attendees. One respondent noted, "Having now sat through two different sessions of regional updates from Te Whatu Ora, these are probably interesting if you're in the region, but not really relevant if not - and given that there's no coordination, even less so." Additionally, there were concerns about presentations on violence, which were seen as critical but not fully engaging. Overall, the event was well-received, with suggestions for more networking opportunities. One attendee summed it up: "Awesome day, awesome people, awesome kai, and awesome korero."

Conclusion

The Addiction Leadership Day held in March 2025 in Te Whanganui-a-Tara was a key event for sector leaders and decision-makers. It provided an excellent platform for networking, sharing sector updates, and discussing new initiatives. Participants appreciated the

informative presentations and the opportunity to connect with colleagues. While the ratings for collaboration at both strategic and service levels were comparatively lower than other ratings and consistent with past events, this highlights an opportunity to further enhance these aspects in future events. Strengthening collaboration could lead to even more impactful outcomes and stronger connections within the sector. Further, the recommended topics made by respondents are encouraged to be considered in the planning of future leadership days. Overall, the event was well-received, with participants expressing satisfaction with the content and organisation

Appendix A



National Committee
for Addiction Treatment

Addiction leadership day

Whāia Ki Te Taumata – Pursuing our Excellences

Ko ngā mahi me ngā whakaaro ka whai wāhi ki to huarahi ki te hiranga;
nō reira, he mea nui ngā mahi iti katoa – Every action and thought contributes to
the journey towards excellence; thus, every small effort matters.

Wednesday 26 March, 9am to 3pm

Oceania Room, Level 3, Te Papa, 55 Cable Street, Te Aro, Wellington 6011

8:00am	Registration on arrival	
9:00am	Mihi whakatau welcome	
9:20am	Welcome and housekeeping	Deb Fraser-Komene, NCAT Co-Chair
9:30am	Opening address	Matt Doocey, Minister for Mental Health
10:00am	Te Whatu Ora update	Ian McKenzie, Co-Director Addictions, Te Whatu Ora Addictions Commissioning Team
10:15am	Te Whatu Ora Central Region update	Peter Carter, Regional Manager, Mentally Well, Te Ikaroa Central Commissioning, and Anna Tonks, Systems Design Manager, Addiction, Te Ikaroa Central Commissioning, Te Whatu Ora
10:30am	Morning tea	
11:00am	‘Doing more of what works to break the cycle of violence – Te Aorerekura Action Plan (2025–2030).’	Deborah Morris, Manager of Strategic Communications, and Mary Beresford-Jones, National System Practice Lead, Te Puna Aonui
11:30am	‘Meth Workshop in Samoa.’	Tugalua Paul Nonu, Dapaanz registered Addictions Practitioner, Mapu Maia and Misa Arona Aloaina, CADS Tupu AOD Clinician and Tupu Matua, DRUA
12:00pm	‘Recovery for Everyone.’	April Long, Chief Executive Officer and Trevor Pearce, National Trainer and Facilitator Yarn Smart, SMART Recovery Australia
12:30pm	Lunch	
1:30pm	‘Maintaining Connections in Challenging Times.’	Mark Ormsby, Poumatua, Toitū te Waiora

Turn over for the remainder of the agenda





National Committee
for Addiction Treatment

Addiction leadership day

2:00pm	'Ara Poutama Aotearoa – focus on the community.'	Sandie Finnigan, Manager, Addiction Services Team Ara Poutama, Dept of Corrections
2:30pm	Dapaanz	Sam White, Executive Director
2:45pm	Addiction Consumer Leadership Group update	ACLG Members
2:55pm	Closing remarks and evaluation	Deb Fraser-Komene, NCAT Co-Chair
3:00pm	Whakakape/Closure and farewell	

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