

## Media Release

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### **SMART SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE IMPACTED BY ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS**

Harm from drug and alcohol misuse affects every member of our community, either directly or indirectly, through productivity losses, traffic accidents, crime and health care costs.

In the South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network region, hospitalisations of over 1,800 women and 2,300 men in 2014-15 were attributable to alcohol and nearly 500 hospitalisations in 2016-17 were related to methamphetamine. (HealthStats NSW)

“For those directly impacted – individuals affected by alcohol and other drug issues and their families – it is important that they know the services available to them and can seek help when ready,” Pathways Eurobodalla Team Leader, Glenda McCarthy explained

Directions Health Service’s Pathways Eurobodalla provides services for people wanting to cease or reduce their drug or alcohol use.

Throughout the region, Pathways provides treatment and support services, including counselling and case management, for adults and young people in a non-judgemental and respectful manner. Based on a harm minimisation approach, Pathways recognises that every person has different goals and is at a different stage in their recovery journey.

“What many people in the Eurobodalla area may not realise is that Pathways believes it is just as important to support family members and friends impacted by someone else’s substance use,” Ms McCarthy said.

“Support and counselling can help family members to better look after their own well-being and support the person in their life struggling with substance use. I would urge anyone impacted by a loved one’s substance use to come and talk to us, even if their family member is not yet ready to access help.”

Pathways will shortly be offering a new service on the south coast: a weekly SMART Recovery Group in Narooma.

“Our Narooma SMART Recovery will start on 1 August and we welcome people living in and around Narooma who want to cease or reduce their use of drugs or alcohol to come and see how this program may suit them,” Ms McCarthy said. “SMART runs from 11 am to 12.30 pm every Wednesday at Monty’s Place. People don’t need to commit to attending every week, but regular attendance is encouraged, depending on the individual’s needs.”

SMART Recovery is a free, group-based support service focused on motivation to abstain or maintain a safe level of use, coping with urges, lifestyle balance and problem solving.

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“Group-based support can help an individual feel less alone in their recovery, learn from others and build a support network they can turn to when needed,” Ms McCarthy said.

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