

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **EVALUATION AND MONITORING**

#### **6.1 NATIONAL DRUG STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

Monitoring and evaluation strategies are required to determine whether the objectives and priorities of the National Drug Strategic Framework are being met and whether specific strategies identified in the National Drug Action Plans are effective. A comprehensive National Drug Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy is being developed by the National Drug Strategy Unit, under the direction of the Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs and the Australian National Council on Drugs, and in collaboration with representatives of Commonwealth, State and Territory government agencies, community based organisations and research institutions.

A Monitoring and Evaluation subcommittee of the IGCD has been established to advise on the development of the Strategy and KPMG have been contracted to assist in this process. The four primary objectives of the strategy are to:

- measure the National Drug Strategic Framework's performance against its objectives and priorities, using the best available medical, social and epidemiological data;
- provide timely and accurate information on National Drug Strategy program performance, for the purpose of programme management and for Commonwealth, State and Territory annual reporting purposes;
- identify emerging challenges and changing trends in harmful drug use, including the emergence of new drug-related harms; and
- communicate to all levels of government and the wider community the successes, problems and challenges of the National Drug Strategy.

In addition to the development and implementation of an evaluation strategy for the National Drug Strategic Framework, all jurisdictions participate in the presentation of an annual monitoring report to the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy dealing with the implementation of the National Drug Strategic Framework. The report on the first year of operation of the National Drug Strategic Framework is expected to be available at the next Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy meeting in July 2000.

#### **6.2 NATIONAL ILLICIT DRUG STRATEGY**

An evaluation of the National Illicit Drug Strategy, which forms the next major phase of the National Drug Strategy, is being developed to feed into the evaluation of the National Drug Strategic Framework referred to above. Monitoring and evaluation activities have already been built into a number of key initiative under NIDS, and these will contribute to a comprehensive evaluation of the Strategy. Examples of these monitoring and evaluation activities include:

- *Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program.* A comprehensive range of monitoring and evaluation measures has been included in the funding arrangements for the Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Treatment Grants Program. These measures comprise:
  - data collection;
  - progress reports;
  - final reports; and
  - financial reports and statements of compliance.

The data collection measures are the key mechanism for providing information and demographic data on clients who have been treated by services funded under NIDS. They are also designed to provide a more strategic picture of service delivery, both within individual jurisdictions and across the Program more generally. Data includes the number of clients by gender; type of treatment and geographic location.

- *Community Partnerships Initiative.* The Department has established monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure that the policy underlying the Community Partnerships Initiative is based on the best available evidence and information.

Successful grantees under the Initiative are monitored through an evaluation form, submitted on a six-monthly basis. This monitoring and evaluation report is based on the World Health Organisation's model, which has been tested in 15 countries worldwide. It contains a series of questions aimed at encouraging the grantees to consider issues of effective project implementation and measurement of outcomes. This process is intended to:

- identify the activities undertaken in the program/project;
- identify problems experienced and how these were overcome;
- determine if the identified target group(s) have been reached through the project;
- identify areas of improvement with the project;
- ensure sound financial management of grant funds; and
- enable information regarding successful aspects of, or problems encountered in, a program to be disseminated widely.

Successful grantees are also required to submit a final report to consolidate and expand on the progress reports submitted under the grant.

In addition to the monitoring and reporting requirements for individual grants, the Department has recently gone out to tender for the development and implementation of a comprehensive evaluation of the Community Partnerships Initiative

### **6.3 NATIONAL TOBACCO STRATEGY AND ALCOHOL ACTION PLAN**

A consultancy will shortly be sought to develop evaluation plans for both the National Tobacco Strategy and the National Alcohol Action Plan which will report on the indicators identified in the Strategy and further develop high level outcome indicators. It will also develop an approach to monitoring and analysing data through existing data collections and develop guidelines for monitoring and reporting on implementation for all jurisdictions. This work will be done in conjunction with the monitoring and evaluation of the National Alcohol Action Plan.