



ONE IN EIGHT
MEN AGED 60-70
DRINK DAILY,
AND 7.2% HAVE
RECENTLY USED
ILLICIT DRUGS¹

OSTAR

WE HELP OURSELVES: OPIOID SUBSTITUTION TO ABSTINENCE RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

We Help Ourselves (WHOS) run therapeutic programs for those recovering from alcohol and other drug dependencies. The Opioid Substitution To Abstinence Residential (OSTAR) program is a live-in program designed to help people reduce their dependencies on methadone and other opioid addictions. Using a Therapeutic Community model, clients receive drug reduction treatment and counselling, and attend workshops to develop the skills needed to live a drug-free life. OSTAR is supported and funded by WentWest.

Eli is a 66-year-old man with a history of drug and alcohol use and intermittent periods of abstinence. When Eli entered the OSTAR program, he struggled with multiple comorbidities and the negative impacts of drug and alcohol misuse on his health and wellbeing. Eli was living with depression which had been compounded by feelings of isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. He was also struggling to master the three flights of stairs out of his apartment.

Eli participated in the Therapeutic Community (TC) program and received methadone and buprenorphine reduction treatment to help with his alcohol, cannabis and heroin addictions. Since joining OSTAR, a multi-disciplinary team of staff have supported Eli, including social workers from the Access and Support Team (AST). AST staff have advocated for Eli to apply for a housing transfer to a ground floor flat and support service referrals as part of his discharge plan.

Eli has reconnected with his mum, who lives in a nursing home, and has contacted other family members to develop his social network. He has had access to other allied health staff, and there has been a marked improvement in his physical and mental health.

Having attended weekly sessions and completed his drug reduction plan, Eli is now preparing for discharge from the OSTAR program. Staff are helping with the transition by empowering Eli to write a relapse prevention strategy and set social goals to fill his time upon completion of the program. He has expressed an interest in volunteer work to grow his social connections in the future. Eli's positive attitude and commitment to the program have empowered him to achieve a better quality of life for himself, which is in stark contrast to his situation only months ago.

For more information about how WentWest supports Western Sydney, visit www.wentwest.com.au.

*Name has been changed to protect the identity of this client.

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2019), *2019 National Drug Strategy Household Survey*