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# ODYSSEY HOUSE

## ODYSSEY HOUSE, AOD TRANSITION

Odyssey House works with people from all ages and walks of life to help them break cycles of dependence on alcohol and other drugs (AOD). The Western Sydney Primary Health Network funds Odyssey House to provide free treatment, counselling, peer groups, education and aftercare support to help community members build sustainable healthy habits, recognise negative thought patterns and build support networks. Odyssey House also offers CALD-specific AOD care, including one-on-one and group support in partnership with multicultural community organisations.

Sharon\* is a 48-year-old female with long-term problematic alcohol use that has escalated in recent years. She discussed in counselling her dependency on alcohol to manage her moods, and that she felt unable to stop drinking once she had started. She felt ashamed of how her physical health and appearance had changed as a result. Sharon also shared the challenges she was having with interpersonal relationships and family conflict, and that she had low self-esteem, disrupted sleep and constant thoughts of drinking throughout the workday. She felt she was not present in her daily life as she was constantly distracted by alcohol cravings, and this was disrupting her opportunities for career and learning development. She had not had any significant period of abstinence from alcohol and said she could not imagine herself not drinking at social events.

The Odyssey House offered Sharon counselling interventions tailored to her needs. The team provided education on the physiological, mental, and behavioural effects of heavy alcohol use, and helped Sharon to evaluate the genetic, environmental, social and mental health factors that might be contributing to her alcohol use. Through Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Odyssey

staff supported Sharon in addressing her beliefs about alcohol use, including her thoughts around moderation, permission, and necessity. The team helped her to identify patterns of usage and create strategies to change the cycle and adopt healthier responses to triggers.

Sharon has had the longest period of abstinence in her adult life, has engaged in an outpatient detox service, and has commenced pharmacotherapy support. Sharon reports improved relationships with her family and that she feels better equipped to manage distress. She has noticed a change in her physical appearance and now has a positive and proactive outlook for a healthier future.

For more information about how WentWest supports Western Sydney, visit [www.wentwest.com.au](http://www.wentwest.com.au).