

Evidence-Backed Recovery Patient-Empowered Success

Your partner in supporting people
with addictive behaviours



INTRODUCTION TO SMART RECOVERY

What is SMART Recovery?

SMART Recovery is an evidence-based recovery method grounded in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Motivational Interviewing that supports people with addictive behaviours to lead a more balanced life.^{1,2,3}

The free, group-based program is unique, with tools and techniques informed by science-backed principles and strategies. Sessions are led by people with lived and living experience, as well as clinicians and frontline healthcare workers, who facilitate discussion and foster mutual aid and support for all types of addictive behaviours.



Unlike other support group programs for substance dependencies or addictive behaviours, SMART recovery is secular and focuses on mutual aid and harm minimisation strategies rather than abstinence as the only goal.

SMART Recovery's program takes into consideration the health complexities of people living with addictive behaviours, supporting integrated and wrap around holistic care.

As the program can be accessed independently by the participants as they need, it allows a healthcare provider to focus on the clinical needs of their patients whilst encouraging self-managed support.

Addiction impacts on wellbeing in Australia:

1 in 4

Australians will experience issues with alcohol, drugs, or gambling in their lifetime.⁴

1 in 20

Australians suffers from addiction or substance use disorder.⁵

12 years

Australians wait an average of 12 years before seeking treatment for mental health and substance use disorders, with some never reaching out at all.⁶

THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF SMART RECOVERY

What is SMART Recovery?

SMART Recovery's 4-Point Program is a structured, evidence-based approach designed to help individuals overcome addictive behaviors. The four points are:

- 1 Building and maintaining motivation**
Encouraging individuals to recognise the benefits of recovery and stay committed to change.
- 2 Coping with urges**
Providing tools and strategies to manage cravings and triggers effectively.
- 3 Managing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors**
Helping participants develop healthier ways to cope with emotions and life challenges.
- 4 Living a balanced life**
Supporting long-term recovery by promoting lifestyle changes that foster well-being and fulfillment.

This program is based on cognitive-behavioral principles and encourages self-empowerment, personal responsibility, and a non-linear approach to recovery.

The SMART Recovery 4-Point Program

SMART relies on the 4-Point Program to teach critical recovery skills. Each point of this plan uses specific cognitively oriented techniques, including:



Why SMART Recovery works for patients

In Australia, SMART Recovery has been supporting the community for over 20 years, with experience of **supporting over 4,500 patients a week across 455 weekly meetings - 115% increase in 2 years.**⁵

90% of SMART Recovery participants felt supported, had an opportunity to contribute to discussions, felt the groups were well facilitated, and took away practical strategies.⁵

In a survey of over 4,000 participants, over **80% left a SMART Recovery Meeting with a 7-day plan.**⁵

SUPPORTING SMART RECOVERY

How you can support patient-empowered success

Healthcare providers play a crucial role in supporting their patients' recovery journey. Referring patients to SMART Recovery is an excellent way to enhance care and provide a holistic, structured approach to addiction treatment. As a healthcare professional, you can:

- 1 **Assess patients** for addiction-related issues and discuss the importance of recovery and Refer patients to local SMART Recovery meetings and online resources.
- 2 **Provide education** about SMART Recovery's evidence based program.
- 3 **Integrate Smart Recovery** into a broader treatment plan.



How HCPs can support SMART Recovery?

Referring patients to SMART Recovery

- **Recommend meetings:**
Direct patients to both in-person and online SMART Recovery options.
- **Provide educational resources:**
Share information about SMART Recovery's self-empowerment approach.
- **Encourage family involvement:**
Introduce families to SMART's Family & Friends program to support their wellbeing.

Getting involved as an HCP

- Take advantage of training programs on how to integrate SMART principles into your practice.
- Connect with SMART Recovery to collaborate on community outreach and patient support.
- Help increase access to our programs through our easily downloadable clinic resources.

Resources & contact information

Our free services and peer support recovery groups are inclusive and accessible to everyone regardless of location throughout Australia.



Download the SMART Recovery App

(24/7 support in the palm of your hand)
smartrecoveryaustralia.com.au/smart-recovery-mobile-app



Find a meeting

<https://smartrecoveryaustralia.com.au/smart-recovery-meetings>



Contact us

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References

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2. Gray RM, et al. 2020. A qualitative exploration of SMART Recovery meetings in Australia and the role of a digital platform to support routine outcome monitoring. *Addict Behav.* doi:10.1016/j.addbeh.2019.106144
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4. Rethink Addiction and KPMG, Understanding the Cost of Addiction in Australia (2022) Rethink Addiction, Richmond, Victoria (Available at: <https://www.rethinkaddiction.org.au/understanding-the-cost-of-addiction-in-australia>)
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6. Birrell L, Prior K, Vescovi J, Sunderland M, Slade T, Chapman C. Treatment rates and delays for mental and substance use disorders: results from the Australian National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing. *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences.* 2025;34:e8. doi:10.1017/S2045796025000034

Join a community of healthcare professionals already supporting their patients through a stigma-free, science-based approach to SMART Recovery. Make a difference today.