Hosting a Fresh Start Morning Tea - Things you might like to speak about with your employees

**Introducing the morning tea:**  
A Fresh Start Morning Tea event is an opportunity ~~for us~~ to enjoy each other’s company and reflect on the support within our community to reduce the harms of addiction. It is an easy way to opening up conversation about the effects of addiction in an open and non-judgemental space so we can foster a safe environment for our friends and colleagues who may be struggling with their own or a loved one’s addiction.

Fresh Start is a not-for-profit organisation that provides holistic and evidence-based addiction treatment and recovery that is affordable and accessible to all. We provide support people struggling with addiction as well as their families and the community. We work hard to prevent overdose by supporting people who were once high risk to now live a substance free lifestyle.

**Facts and Insights about addiction and substance use disorders:  
What is addiction?**   
Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions between the brain, genetics, the external environment and an individual’s life experience. It is an uncontrollable, compulsive behaviour that negatively impacts all aspects of the person’s life. The use continues despite the serious and harmful consequences, because will-power just isn’t enough by itself. - [link](https://www.asam.org/quality-care/definition-of-addiction/glossary-of-addiction)

**Is addiction a choice?**  
For many years before addiction was properly researched, most people would have said yes, because they believed it was a choice to use the substance in the first place. However, recent research has shown that a person’s brain chemistry can change after using only once. Once this change has occurred, sheer “will power” cannot free someone from this disease. It is important ~~for us~~ to know that addiction and substance use disorders ~~is~~ are categorised as a mental health ~~and~~ medical condition.  
Support for the illness is regulated by the West Australian Mental Health Commission.

Let’s celebrate the work of Fresh Start, a not-for-profit addiction and substance use disorder treatment and recovery program that supports people and their families getting treatment to free themselves from the effects of addiction. - [link](https://cciwa.org/is-drug-addiction-a-choice-or-disease/) - [link](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/addiction/is-addiction-disease#:~:text=Is%20addiction%20a%20choice%3F%20No%20one%20chooses%20to,the%20very%20pleasurable%E2%80%94but%2C%20alas%2C%20short-lasting%E2%80%94reward%20of%20dopamine%20surge.) - [link](https://arizonaaddictioncenter.org/addiction-is-a-disease-not-a-choice/#:~:text=Scientific%20studies%20are%20focused%20on%20deciding%20whether%20addiction,nothing%20to%20do%20with%20an%20individual%E2%80%99s%20personal%20choice.) - [link](https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/getting-help/residential-services-for-alcohol-and-other-drugs/) - [link](https://psychcentral.com/addictions/is-addiction-a-mental-illness)

**Who does addiction affect?**  
In 2021, 1 in 20 Australians suffered with addiction. Now in 2024 it is predicted that over 2 million Australians struggle with addiction. That is 1 in 13 Australians! In addition to their own suffering, the families, friends and community are all impacted. It is estimated that for each ~~one~~ person with addiction, 5 others are impacted, estimating a further 10 million people who feel the impacts of addiction - [link](https://www.addictionhelp.com/addiction/australian-statistics/) - [link](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/substance-abuse)

**Where do people go for help?**  
37% consider turning to their friends or colleagues.

This morning tea provides a great opportunity to start a conversation, be a friend, lend a hand and be part of the solution for people and community you care about.

[link page 11](https://cdn.adf.org.au/media/documents/Family_and_Friends_Survey_Report__April_2022.pdf)

Don’t forget to let your team know how much you raised at the end of the day or week!