

Controlled Drinking by Correspondence Program- Finalist for the 2005 National Drug and Alcohol Awards Excellence in Treatment

The National Drug and Alcohol Awards celebrate exceptional work in the field of alcohol and drug prevention and the Controlled Drinking by Correspondence Program has been selected as a finalist for the 2005 *Excellence in Treatment* awards category. The prestigious event provides the opportunity to encourage, recognise and celebrate Australian achievements to prevent and reduce drug use and associated harms. The awards are a collaborative effort of the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia, the Ted Noffs Foundation, the Australian Drug Foundation and the Australian National Council on Drugs.

Associate Professor Sitharthan Thiagarajan and his team at the Australian Centre for Addiction Research have developed a *world-first* innovative program. Instead of asking people to attend a treatment clinic, the Controlled Drinking by Correspondence Program takes the treatment to people's homes.

This program commenced in January 2004, and has, to date, recruited and treated over 1000 participants from rural and urban areas all over NSW and other states, making it the biggest alcohol treatment program in Australia. The program's 60% female participation rate also compares favourably with the traditional face-to-face treatment programs that typically attract 7-14% women. After completing the program, participants reported over 50% reduction in their drinking and an overwhelming majority (91%) found the program useful.

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