



The leading voice in Indigenous drug and alcohol policy advice

National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee

DECEMBER MEETING COMMUNIQUÉ 2011

As part of its commitment to provide high level advice to government, the Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD), with the support of the Australian Government, established the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC) to provide advice to government on ways to address harmful drug and alcohol (AOD) use amongst Indigenous Australians.

NIDAC comprises members from non-government and government organisations with specialist expertise and knowledge from around Australia.

Committee meetings and consultations with people working with Indigenous drug and alcohol issues are held in a different State or Territory every four months. Through these meetings and consultation forums, NIDAC is able to ensure that the views of the sector are considered as part of its advice.

At the end of November and early December, 2011, NIDAC:

- ❖ Conducted an agency and community consultation forum in Perth, Western Australian, at the Holiday Inn
- ❖ Conducted its regular meeting (tri yearly) where it received presentations from :
 - Ms Billie Webb and Ms Sasha Casey of the Western Australia Drug & Alcohol Office, Aboriginal AOD Programs section: *Strong Spirit Strong Future: Promoting Healthy Women and Pregnancies*, including associated campaign and various resources; and
 - Professor Neil Thomson of the Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet: update of Health InfoNet's free on-line website resource tools including the website's Substances and Prisons sections
- ❖ Conducted a workshop for the new NIDAC Strategic Plan 2012 – 2014
- ❖ Conducted a NIDAC 2012 Conference Program planning meeting
- ❖ Conducted a one day workshop to work on the Indigenous adaptation to the National Drug and Alcohol Clinical Care and Prevention (DA-CCP) Modelling Project

NIDAC Consultation Forum

The new NIDAC membership held its first public community consultation forum which was attended by over 70 people with a number of issues being raised for discussion and debate. Key issues discussed included:

- ❖ The new flexible funding grants from the Department of Health and Ageing
- ❖ Co occurring issues – clarification was sought on how government is addressing this and concerns were raised over alcohol and other drug issues not being prioritised
- ❖ The need for a professional body that provides full membership for Indigenous drug and alcohol workers
- ❖ The need for much more emphasis on drug and alcohol treatment services for Indigenous youth including youth involved in the justice system
- ❖ The need to reinvest funding from detention centres and prisons to treatment services to enable alternative options to become a reality
- ❖ The potential impact of recent changes to cannabis laws in WA on Indigenous people

- ❖ A copy of the draft WA Aboriginal Men's Health Policy was provided to NIDAC

NIDAC Meeting

NIDAC discussed and debated a number of issues at its meeting which included the following:

- ❖ The specifications of an economic modelling project it has developed, which if commissioned will look at justice reinvestment in Indigenous incarceration and the health care alternatives
- ❖ Release of NIDAC's position paper on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)
- ❖ The Northern Territory Stronger Futures legislation, which applies across all of the NT population
- ❖ The need for clarification on the process for Indigenous AOD services under the new flexible funding grants arrangements, including recognition on some of the difficulties for these organisations to compete with major mainstream NGOs in the development of submissions
- ❖ Improving the level of consultation with key stakeholders
- ❖ Progress on the 2nd Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference which is being held in Fremantle, WA, from 6th – 8th June, 2012, and discussion on the six key note speakers have been confirmed to date

DA-CCP project

- ❖ A sub-committee comprising of NIDAC Members, met for a final one-day workshop to provide expertise and input into the National Drug and Alcohol Clinical Care and Prevention (DA-CCP) Indigenous adaptation of the national model, which NIDAC have been engaged to undertake by NSW Health on behalf of the Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs (IGCD). The sub-committee identified unique variances between Indigenous needs and that of regular mainstream for the delivery of cultural specific treatment, and also a need to innovate additional unique packages. The final report will be submitted by NIDAC in December

NIDAC Conference Program Workshop

- ❖ The Conference Program sub-committee met to review abstracts submitted, and to co-ordinate program structure preliminaries

Strategic Planning Workshop

- ❖ NIDAC held a workshop to discuss and develop the new NIDAC Strategic plan for the 2012 - 2014 term. The workshop provided an insight into NIDAC's future areas of focus and approach. It is anticipated that this plan will be completed and publically available by the end of January 2012

Next Meeting - Brisbane, 28th & 29th March, 2012

For information on Indigenous specific alcohol and other drug issues, NIDAC priorities and activities – visit www.nidac.org.au

To contact the NIDAC Secretariat (02) 6166 9600 or email nidac@ancd.org.au