

ANCD given role to turn drug research into practice

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The Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD) has welcomed today's announcement by the Prime Minister that it will be responsible for producing a national magazine to bridge the gap between research and practice in the drug and alcohol field.

Chairman of the ANCD, Major Brian Watters, said "The unprecedented level of financial support given by the Federal Government to reduce the level, impact and harm from drug use has been well documented and rightfully applauded. Whilst this support has led to a significant expansion of the drug and alcohol sector, we must now ensure that the work being done at the coal face reflects the knowledge and information we are constantly gaining through the growing body of research on drug and alcohol issues. The ANCD is thus very pleased and excited to be given the task to promote and facilitate this important process of turning what we learn through research into what we practice at drug and alcohol centres".

The new magazine will be a quarterly publication that targets both service providers and academia in the drug and alcohol field. It will focus on providing easy to read and accessible information on latest trends, practices and knowledge. An independent editorial board with representation from the non-government, government, treatment and research sectors will also be established to oversee the magazine's content.

In relation to the Federal Government release of information from the ongoing evaluation of the National Illicit Drug Campaign, Major Watters said, "A number of Council members have been actively involved in the development and implementation of the Federal Government's National Illicit Drug Campaign, particularly with regard to the television commercials and booklets. Today's release of preliminary evaluation results showing that the campaign had an outstanding impact on the levels of knowledge and awareness of drug issues amongst parents and children is very encouraging. The strong criticism directed at the campaign when it commenced has been shown to be unwarranted and ill informed. No public national campaign should be expected to meet every need or accommodate every view that can exist in our community in relation to drugs. These campaigns do however remain a vital component in a comprehensive strategy to tackle drug use problems. The reality is the campaign has meant that 78% of parents started to speak with their kids about illegal drug use, and this was always the main goal of the campaign. The success it has to date in reaching well beyond this group is a real bonus".

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The Australian National Council on Drugs is the peak advisory body to Government on drug policy established by the Prime Minister in 1998.

For further information, please contact:

Major Brian Watters (Chairman) 0400 780 509

Mr Gino Vumbaca (Executive Officer) 0408 244 552

