

Brisbane 2005 meeting communiqué

The Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD) recently convened in Brisbane for its third meeting of 2005. As part of the meeting the ANCD conducted an open forum with Brisbane based drug and alcohol service, police and other frontline staff to discuss issues affecting the sector, clients and people in the surrounding areas. During the forum some specific issues, namely: chroming, treatment services for women with children, post release services and a lack of funding and support for non-government services in the State, captured the ANCD's attention. 

Forum participants told the ANCD that chroming, particularly by young people, was becoming more prevalent in the area and there was a lack of services and adequately trained personnel to respond to those children in crisis.

The ANCD noted that it was evident from the various accounts made by police, juvenile justice, education and treatment provider representatives here today that chroming is prevalent in the area and is causing significant health and social problems for Brisbane's youth. This issue was a particular area of attention of the ANCD's National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee, who had provided advice to inform the national directions on inhalant abuse.

In relation to treatment services for women with children, the ANCD particularly noted how important it is to assist those parents who are problematic drug users by providing treatment services and programs with an emphasis on family preservation. Keeping the family together wherever possible removes barriers that currently exist for parents wishing to enter treatment and provides stability for those children who may suffer further anxiety by being separated from their parents.

The ANCD closed the Forum by acknowledging that it had been well attended by a broad range of representatives from the policy, treatment/service provider, law enforcement, research and education sectors. Mr Vumbaca, the ANCD's Executive Officer said, "Given the evident commitment in the State by people here today to address drug issues, the ANCD would ask you to consider the establishment of a representative peak drug and alcohol body, as exists in many other States across the country, to further represent and advocate responses to issues particular to Queensland. Communicating and liaising with such an organisation will only strengthen both the policy and program responses of the Queensland Government."

4 October 2005

The ANCD is the principal advisory body to Government on drug and alcohol issues.

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