

Communique - March 2014

The Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD) is the principal advisory body to the Prime Minister and Federal Government on drug and alcohol policy and plays a critical role in ensuring the views of the many sectors involved in addressing drug and alcohol problems, as well as the community, are heard. 

The ANCD membership and Terms of Reference for the 2011-2014 term were announced in 2011 by the Prime Minister and includes people from the non government and government drug, alcohol and related sectors including treatment, medicine, research, law enforcement, Indigenous health, local government, education, mental health, consumers, and the magistracy from around Australia. The full membership can be found at: [ANCD Members & Terms of Reference](#).

The ANCD met in Canberra in late March 2014 and members discussed and determined action on a number of matters. These included:

- This is expected to be the final meeting of the current Council members, with a new membership for the 2014-2017 term likely to be announced in coming months.
- Members expressed their sincere thanks to Dr John Herron, who has chaired the ANCD for the past 8 years and has advised of his likely retirement from the position of Chairman at the end of the current term.
- There was discussion of a number of current and continuing important alcohol and drug related issues in Australia. The Council agreed to prepare an 'End of Membership Term' briefing paper in order to provide their collective expertise and advice on these key issues to Government and the members of the next ANCD term.
- The AIDS 2014 Conference, a major event to be held in Melbourne in July this year. And the opportunities for an increased focus on the success of Australia's response to date on injecting drug related HIV issues and the importance of achieving a lasting and positive legacy from the conference.
- The recent Commission on Narcotic Drugs meetings held in Vienna and attended by ANCD member Professor Steve Allsop. The members welcomed reports of the focuses at these meetings including responses to new psychoactive substances (NPSs) and a shift away from an exclusively law-enforcement focused response to drug use internationally.
- The impact of the recent release of the ANCD's School Principals Survey along with an information Sheet for schools on AOD policies and programs.
- Plans to release a number of reports in coming months, including:
 - Exploring Child and Family Sensitive Practices in AOD Services
 - Alternative Medication Treatment Options for ATS Users
- Several position papers which the ANCD has been progressing, and which will be finalised and released in coming months.
- Members received an update on the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC). Highlights included NIDAC's recent meetings with representatives from AOD bodies in Queensland and Victoria; preparations for the upcoming NIDAC Conference to be held in Melbourne, 4-6 June 2014; NIDAC's forthcoming paper on AOD treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; a current survey of amphetamine type substance use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples developed by NIDAC in conjunction with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health

Organisation (NACCHO); and recent meetings of NIDAC with Mr Warren Mundine, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council.

- Members received an update on the Asia-Pacific Drugs and Development Issues Committee (APDDIC). Highlights included preparations with United Nations agencies for the third roundtable on compulsory centres for drug users; the 1st Asia Pacific Congress on Drug and Alcohol Issues to be held in 2015; and positive meetings with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Brett Mason and his staff.
- Members received an update on Of Substance Magazine. Due to the need to update its database, those wishing to continue receiving the magazine will need to re-subscribe over coming months. A new online 'search' facility by topic is currently being developed and a number of new features are being developed for the website.

As previously agreed with the Prime Minister, the ANCD will provide a report on the outcomes and discussions of each ANCD meeting.

Further information on the ANCD's work and activities can be found on the ANCD websites:

[Australian National Council on Drugs](#)

[National Indigenous Drug & Alcohol Committee](#)

[Of Substance & Jobs of Substance](#)

[Asia Pacific Drugs and Development Issues Committee](#)

[Positive Stories](#)

For any further details on this communiqué please contact the ANCD Secretariat on ancd@ancd.org.au or (02) 6166 9600