


Communique - May 2011

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, is heard. 

The ANCD membership for the 2011-2014 term was announced by the Prime Minister and includes people from both 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](#)

In May 2011, the ANCD met in Canberra at Parliament House for its first meeting of the new term where members initially discussed their key priorities before discussing and debating a number of issues of current and future importance to address drug and alcohol problems affecting Australian communities, these included:

- Ensuring that developing solutions to the many drug and alcohol issues affecting communities is high on the national agenda;
- The need for a greater level of recognition on the positive impact of treatment and support services for people affected by problems associated with drug and alcohol dependence ;
- The need to ensure timely access to treatment and in the context of waiting lists for treatment, for all governments, the corporate sector and the public to support the work of treatment and support agencies with significantly increased funding, including for staff and infrastructure needs;
- The need to address continuing problems associated with alcohol use with more effective policy and program responses;
- Regaining a strong focus on addressing problems associated with illicit drug use, particularly the need to act decisively to provide innovative treatment options and address the growing misuse of pharmaceutical drugs;
- The need to address the disproportionately long term impact of criminal convictions for drug use, especially in relation to employment opportunities. This is a particularly important issue for Indigenous people given their excessively high level of contact with the criminal justice system;
- Recognition of the role that early childhood plays in developing resilience or vulnerability to problems later in life and the implications of this for drug and alcohol prevention policies and programs;
- Identification of the importance of the justice system at every point including policing, courts and corrections and the potential points of entry for access to treatment for drug users;
Requesting all governments to commit to engaging in full and proper consultation with Indigenous communities and people on drug and alcohol issues;
Requesting the Federal Government to commit to Australia's obligation to assist and work within Pacific and Asian Regions on drug and alcohol issues;
- Stressing the importance of all three tiers of government (local, state/territory and Federal) working together to address the impact of drug and alcohol use;
- Congratulating the Federal Government on their world leading tobacco reduction policies;

- Congratulating the Federal Government and all political parties for their strong commitment and support of increased mental health funding.
- Developing a workplan to guide the work of the Council for the new term. It is expected that this will be finalised at the next ANCD meeting in September.

As agreed with the Prime Minister the ANCD will also be providing a report on the outcomes and discussions of each ANCD meeting.

The next meeting of the ANCD, including an agency consultation forum is scheduled for at Brisbane on the 20th – 21st of September 2011.

Further information can on the work and activities can be located at the ANCD websites:

[Australian National Council on Drugs](#)

[National Indigenous Drug & Alcohol Committee](#)

[Of Substance](#)

[Asia Pacific Drug Issues Committee](#)

[Jobs of Substance](#)

[Positive Stories](#)
