

The Way Forward

Resolutions from the Inaugural National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference

The first National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference (NIDAC 2010) brought together over 550 delegates in Adelaide (June 16-18, 2010). Based on a theme of Listening, Learning and Leading the Conference agreed that the future health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander's in co-operation with the wider community and governments.

Accordingly, the following resolutions were agreed:

1. That the appalling over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in juvenile justice centres and adult prisons be addressed as a matter of urgency. This can be achieved by introducing a justice reinvestment strategy that incorporates the recommendations of the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee's report *Bridges and Barriers: Addressing Indigenous Incarceration and Health* (Canberra: Australian National Council on Drugs, 2009) which can be accessed at: http://www.nidac.org.au/images/PDFs/nidac_bridges_and_barriers.pdf
2. That the current preventative health and chronic disease agendas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people include a substantial focus, as well as specific funding, for addressing substance use.
3. That greater resources be provided to increase the level of ongoing training and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers in the substance use sector.
4. That government's at all levels recognize that one-off projects and pilot projects are not sustainable and therefore increase the provision of recurrent funding for culturally appropriate, evaluated, evidenced-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drug (AOD) services and that wherever possible AOD services should be provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations.
5. That there is an urgent need for accessible up-to-date Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific data on substance use issues.
6. That the widespread diversity of need and location (remote, rural, regional and urban) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people is recognised by appropriate funding being provided for Aboriginal and Torres Strait drug and alcohol services in all settings.
7. That there needs to be a separate National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AOD Strategy (currently the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Complementary Action Plan 2003 – 2009*) which is supported with clearly identified funding.
8. That as injecting drug use is increasing at a concerning rate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations there is a need for increased attention to address the risk of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C transmission amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
9. That the Government be called on to use the most effective interventions available to reduce alcohol related harm amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, by adopting: a tiered volumetric taxation system; minimum floor pricing; restrictions in advertising and promotions; restrictions on licensing and the introduction of labeling on alcohol products.
10. That a quarantined levy be placed on all alcoholic beverages to fund the implementation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander developed alcohol management plans as well as appropriate services to reduce the harms caused by alcohol use.
11. That greater investment is provided for a wider variety of sports and other cultural activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.
12. That Federal legislation be implemented that potentially compels retailers to make Opal fuel available in sites of strategic importance. Such legislation is supported by the recent *Cost Benefit Analysis of Legislation to Mandate the Supply of Opal Fuels in Regions of Australia* which was commissioned by OATSIH and carried out by the SA Centre for Economic Studies (http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health_oatsih_opalfuel_legislation).