



News release

Monday 7 December 2015

Primary Health Tasmania to help address ice harm

Tasmania's primary health network will work with communities, providers and peak bodies to come up with the best local solutions for tackling ice addiction.

Primary Health Tasmania CEO Phil Edmondson welcomed yesterday's announcement by the Australian Government that the country's 31 primary health networks (PHNs) will receive funding to commission addiction treatment for ice and other drugs.

"PHNs are well-placed to research local health needs and collaborate with experts to come up with solutions that will work with specific population groups in certain areas," Mr Edmondson said.

"We also have an important role in helping coordinate and connect services so they are as streamlined as possible for the Tasmanians who need them.

"While it appears that PHNs won't start commissioning treatment services until mid-2017, we will be wasting no time in starting discussions with the key stakeholders who have the knowledge, experience and expertise to know what the local priorities are and what will and won't work in Tasmania."

This includes peak bodies – such as the Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council Tasmania – as well as the State Government, non-government service providers and consumers.

"Consultation with Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations will be important to ensure treatment services are culturally appropriate and accessible as well as clinically fit-for-purpose," Mr Edmondson said.

The Australian Government Department of Health will continue to manage existing service contracts with drug and alcohol services until 1 July 2017, allowing for transition to the new model of funding through PHNs.

The Australian Government's response to the National Ice Taskforce Final Report is online at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/ice>. Its media release is online at <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/2015-12-06/new-action-plan-tackle-ice>

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Primary Health Tasmania is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation working to connect care and keep Tasmanians well and out of hospital. It was established on 1 July 2015 under the Australian Government's Primary Health Networks Program to support and enable a coordinated, primary care-focused health system.

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