

MEDIA RELEASE

Peak Body calls on all sides of government to stay focused

Thursday, 14 November 2019

Following the passionate discussion in parliament today about the merits of pill testing, the Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania is calling on all sides of government to remain focused on the one thing they all agree on – implementing strategies at Tasmanian festivals and events that reduce the harm of illicit drugs.

“Our organisation stands behind our position that there is sufficient evidence to support the trial of pill testing / drug-checking services at Tasmanian festivals and events and we welcome Minister Rockliff’s commitment to consider the forthcoming independent pill testing evaluation from the Australian National University,” Ms Lai said.

“It is evident that this topic continues to be very divisive and there’s a clear need for continued discussion and debate to increase awareness of the evidence and address the ongoing misunderstandings that persist about how the health services works.

“In the meantime, it is of key concern to us is that while this debate continues, it may be potentially distracting the government from considering what other measures could or should be put in place to minimise the harm of illicit drug use during the upcoming festival season, which is just weeks away.

“We are aware that Falls Festival, alongside their medical team have been exceptionally proactive in preparing for this year’s event and we commend them for the forward-planning that they’ve undertaken.

“We are mindful that the decision by the festival to fine-tune and bolster their existing processes will result in additional costs to the festival, and we will be calling on the Tasmanian Government to consider how they can assist with those costs.

“The independent review from the Australian National University is due to be released in the coming weeks.”

Media Contact: Alison Lai, CEO – 0450 517 017

The ATDC’s position on pill testing can be viewed in more detail [here \(updated 14 November 2019\)](#)

The ATDC’s position on pill testing is echoed by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine, the Rural Doctors Association of Australia, the Australian Medical Association, the Australian Nursing Midwifery Association, the National Australian Pharmacy Students’ Association, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, the Forensic and Clinical Toxicology Association, the Public Health Association of Australia, Family Drug Support Australia, and the Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation. At the local level, it is also supported by Tasmanian community organisations including Health Consumers Tasmania, the Youth Network of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and Community Legal Centres Tasmania. A trial is also supported by the Hobart City Council.



No Harm, No Discrimination

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Who are the ATDC? The Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania is the peak body representing and supporting community organisations, and the people they assist, to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harm for all Tasmanians.

Our vision is a Tasmania without alcohol, tobacco or other drug related harm or discrimination.

LANGUAGE MATTERS – Language is powerful, especially when discussing alcohol and other drugs and the people who use them. Stigmatising language reinforces negative stereotypes. “Person-centred” language focuses on the person, not their substance use.

When reporting on people who use alcohol and other drugs....	
Try this 👍	Not this 👎
Substance use, non-prescribed use	Abuse, misuse, problem use, non-compliant use
Person who uses drugs	Drug user, drug abuser
Person with a dependence on....	Addict, junkie, druggie, alcoholic
Person experiencing drug dependence	Suffering from addiction, has a drug habit
Person who has stopped using drugs	Clean, sober, drug-free
Person with lived experience of drug dependence	Ex-addict, former addict, used to be a...
Please see the attached Language matters resource attached or at: www.nada.org.au/resources/language-matters/	



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