

# MEDIA STATEMENT

## Pill Testing discussions with Tasmanian Government

Friday, 6 September 2019

Over the past two days the Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania has facilitated discussions between Pill Testing Australia and members of the Tasmanian Government.

The purpose of these discussions were to provide an opportunity for representatives from all major parties to meet and talk with Gino Vumbaca, President of Harm Reduction Australia and co-founder of Pill Testing Australia.

As previously communicated, these meetings included a range of parliamentary representatives such as the Premier, the Minister for Health, Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing, Minister for Police, the Tasmanian Speaker of the House of Assembly and the Tasmanian Greens and Tasmanian Labor Party.

ATDC chief executive, Alison Lai has provided the following statement:

"All of the discussions that were held over the past two days were incredibly productive, and we're very grateful to the members of parliament who met with us.

"The Tasmanian Government's current position is that they do not support a trial of pill testing and we respect that this position has not changed as a result of these discussions.

"It was never our aim to try and persuade the Tasmanian Government to reverse their position, rather it was always our hope that through these meetings we could ensure that all key members of parliament had the opportunity to receive information from, and ask questions directly to, Pill Testing Australia on how pill testing services are delivered.

"We believe we achieved this, and we are incredibly pleased with how each discussion was received.

"It is essential that the development or introduction of any new drug policy focuses on the evidence, and involves robust discussions across community, particularly when considering strategies aimed at reducing the harms of illicit drug use.

"Pill testing is receiving a significant amount of national attention and we express our thanks to all members of parliament for giving up time to participate in these discussions.

"The ATDC, alongside the rest of the nation is eagerly awaiting the release of the NSW coronial inquiry into music festival deaths, and the results of the Australian National University's independent review of the ACT Government's trial of pill testing at the 2019 *Groovin the Moo* festival.

"Both these reports are due by the end of this year, and their findings will be incredibly important for any future consideration of pill testing trials, not just in Tasmania but in other states and territories across the country.

"Following the release of these reports, the ATDC will likely seek further discussions with the Tasmanian Government, and in the meantime we will continue to provide advice and support as required to the Tasmanian Government and community on this important matter."

[ENDS]



*No Harm, No Discrimination*

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Click [here](#) to view Pill Testing Australia's recently launched community service announcement.

**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: <a href="http://www.nada.org.au/resources/language-matters/">www.nada.org.au/resources/language-matters/</a>	



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