

MEDIA RELEASE

State Budget priorities for alcohol and other drugs questioned by peak body

Thursday 12 November 2020

Today's announcement of \$4.9 million of new funding over the next two years for the Tasmanian alcohol, tobacco and other drugs sector has sent a strong message that the Tasmanian Government is committed to reducing the harms associated with alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.

However, ATDC chief executive Alison Lai has said that despite the large investment, the majority of the funding has been allocated into bolstering or delivering new reforms through the Tasmanian Government's own services, with little funding allocated to the community managed sector in comparison.

"This is the largest single injection of funds into our sector for some time, but the announcement has left us scratching our heads to why it is so unbalanced and skewed towards the government's own services," Ms Lai said.

"While a small number of our members have been provided with assurances that funding for their existing programs will be guaranteed until 30 June 2021, this pales in comparison to the funding allocated to the government's own services who have been provided a commitment of funding over two years.

"We don't wish to downplay the importance of investing in new reforms, but unfortunately this budget has prioritised investment into programs to be delivered by the government over providing funding continuity to community organisations currently delivering programs to Tasmanians, and this doesn't make sense.

"We are also confused as to why new funding has been injected into trialling a new home detox treatment service in southern Tasmania when our organisation, and our members, have been strongly advocating for the establishment of medically supervised detox services in the north and north-west of Tasmania, where there are community options available to establish this service.

"We are incredibly pleased to see the injection of funds into the Tasmanian Government's Alcohol and Drug Services, because they have also been significantly underfunded for a considerable period of time.

"But our members are also working under an incredible amount of pressure that has only risen due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this budget announcement unfortunately offers little comfort or additional funding support to the work that they do.

"We have many questions including whether the funding will address the waiting lists for Tasmanians seeking access to the pharmacotherapy program, and whether it will fund the continuation of the free take-home naloxone trial that the government introduced as a COVID19 response measure.

"These are questions that we know are very important to Tasmanians and their families seeking support.

"We appreciate that the funding provided is part of a 10-year reform agenda, and given the announcements today we will be looking to see the imbalance rectified in the 2021-22 State Budget to ensure that the government and non-government alcohol and other drugs sectors are equally supported to deliver services to Tasmanians in need.

ATDC Media Contact:

Alison Lai, CEO – 0450 517 017



No Harm, No Discrimination

Suite 1, Level 1, 175 Collins Street, Hobart, Tasmania 7000
PO Box 4702 Bathurst Street PO, Hobart TAS 7000
9am – 5pm Monday to Friday | P 03 6231 5002
E admin@atdc.org.au | atdc.org.au

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/	



No Harm, No Discrimination

Suite 1, Level 1, 175 Collins Street, Hobart, Tasmania 7000
 PO Box 4702 Bathurst Street PO, Hobart TAS 7000
 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday | P 03 6231 5002
 E admin@atdc.org.au | atdc.org.au