



Dangers of drinking when pregnant highlighted at Indigenous alcohol inquiry

The House Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs will hold a public hearing in Canberra on Thursday 14 May 2015 for the inquiry into the harmful use of alcohol in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (NOFASD) is the peak body in Australia representing the interests of individuals and their families who live with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS).

The Committee Chair, Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP, said that “The entirely preventable Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, including FAS, are of increasing concern across all Australian society and globally. “

“Alcohol exposure in the womb, particularly in the early stages, can have devastating effects on a child’s brain and other development and the Committee shares the concern of groups such as NOFASD that there is still a lack of recognition of the seriousness of drinking when pregnant.” Dr Stone stated.

“The dangers of drinking when pregnant are rarely recognised in popular culture and the media and this needs to change. Every Australian woman needs to be aware that not drinking alcohol when pregnant is the recommendation of the National Health and Medical Research Council as the safest option for their babies.” she added.

Details of the hearing are as follows:

When Thursday, 14 May 2015
Time 11.40am – 12.15pm
Where Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra

Members of the public are welcome to attend all hearings.

The terms of reference and full programs are available at www.aph.gov.au/indigenousaffairs

The proceedings will be audio webcast live on: www.aph.gov.au/live

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair Dr Sharman Stone MP on (02) 6277 4477. **For background information**, contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4559 or indigenousaffairs.reps@aph.gov.au