

Committee Secretariat
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Families of Addicts Support Group

Sent Via Email: le.committee@aph.gov.au

22nd May 2015

Dear Mr Craig Kelly MP & Senator the Hon Lisa Singh

Re: Inquiry into Crystal Methamphetamine

In relation to the strategies to reduce the high demand for methamphetamines in Australia; and other related issues, our Support Group have met with local MP's, SAPOL, Pangula Mannamurna Inc Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service, Living Without Barriers, and other Social Emotional and Wellbeing agencies within the Mount Gambier community to raise awareness from personal family experiences in relation to Chrystal Methamphetamine and other drug abuse.

During our group consultations and discussions we would like to propose the below outcomes that we all feel very passionate about:

- The Commonwealth should make penalties higher for anyone that is making crystal methamphetamine in laboratory situations.
- They should also make access to the chemicals used to make methamphetamine harder to acquire, only businesses or personnel with registered authority to purchase these items are able to do so and a national register to be maintained at purchase point of collection. These records must be available to authorities at all times.
- Police should do more raids of dealers to keep methamphetamines off the streets.
- Customs Coast guard should do more checks on boats coming into Australia, including regular check of commercial fishing and charter boats and shipping containers checked mandatory prior to distribution.
- Customs should check commercial and non-commercial aircrafts landing at any airport in Australia.
- Police should do regular random dog sniffer and/or searches on bikes, cars and trucks.
- The Justice system needs to sell assets of the convicted drug dealer/s and use the money to put back into the rehabilitation of addicts and also help addict's families with counselling, education and coping skills including mental health issues that come from methamphetamine abuse.
- The Commonwealth need to address drug education through mandatory year 8 or equivalent inductions for parents/caregivers and students prior to starting secondary school to be repeated in year 10 and year 12. School counsellors to be extensively trained in drug and alcohol issues relating to adolescent behaviours Australia wide, including cultural barriers.
- Commonwealth need to change laws pertaining to first and second offenders (depending on seriousness of offence) ie; Offences committed under the influence of drugs to obtain and purchase more drugs due to escalating addiction, to be rehabilitated (see recommendation on page 3).
- Centrelink need to incorporate drug testing for known drug users previously offended and convicted by the Court of Law.

- Government need to provide schemes to upskill low level entry people convicted of drug offences. ie; Work for the Dole (minimum 25 hours per week) to assist offenders in good work ethics and work towards improved social, emotional and wellbeing behaviours.
- Australian Government need to stop sending aid to other countries while Australia is in the grips of Ice Epidemic.
- Mandatory drug laws need to be with no negotiation, example, should any person be caught with 2 grams equals rehabilitation Centre, above 2 grams and up to 500 grams 10 years imprisonment etc.
- All Australian airports and ports of entry into Australia are to have signs stating Australia's drug legislation and penalties if breached.
- Australia's Prisons need to have a resident sniffer/drug dog to carry out checks on staff changeovers, visitors, contractors and prisoners.

In closing please find attached our recommendations that we feel are the most important to achieve excellent outcomes for everyone.

Our beautiful Country is being overtaken by drugs and we need to work collaboratively together as one to eradicate this catastrophic issue and get back to cleaner, healthier, happy living environments for all.

Yours Sincerely
Karen Judd
Acting on Behalf of
Families of Addicts Mount Gambier
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Att.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The below recommendations are based on full Government Funding, to enable access from all levels of income earners.

- **Complex Rehabilitation Centre Incorporating:**
 - Crisis Centre for Drug Psychosis Episodes.
 - Detox Centre for users/addicts.
 - Family Drug Educators/courses available in family coping skills.
 - Mental Health Services pertaining to drug abuse.
- **Changes to Detainment Laws, involving drug addicts:**
 - Patients to be held for 48 - 72 hours in crisis centre (evaluated during this time)
 - A team of professionally trained 24 hour On Call Intervention & Removal specialists, available to families and Emergency Services, for psychotic episodes.
 - Offences committed under the influence of drugs, sentence time to be served in full in Rehabilitation Centre.
 - On completion of rehabilitation/sentence, mandatory regular drug screening as follow up from rehabilitation. For these clients they are to have drug testing for Centrelink payments.
 - More on the spot drug testing by the Police, inc foot patrol in public places and events. If test is positive, charged and referred to drug court for further assessment and intervention.
- **Education:**
 - On entering Year 8 education level, information nights should include and be mandatory for students and parent/caregiver to attend a specifically designed drug education session. To be repeated in Year 10 and Year 12.
 - Regular Ice/drug information sessions held in public places in the Limestone Coast.
- **Prison Drug Issue Intervention:**
 - To stop drugs being traffic into prisons, a resident drug sniffer dog to sniff all employees on shift changes and prisoners visitors and any other public entries into the prison. Dog to do regular cell checks.