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Via email: Health.Reps@aph.gov.au

Dear House Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Disability members,

The AMA is pleased that the committee's inquiry into the health impacts of alcohol and other drugs in Australia has been re-referred by the Health Minister. We note all prior inquiry submissions from the previous Parliament will be considered. Our submission and its points included remain relevant ([submission 80](#)).

I am writing to reiterate the importance of this inquiry and to reaffirm the AMA's deep concern about the profound impact that harmful alcohol and other drug use has on individuals, their families, and the wider Australian community. Each year, updated [data](#) from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) underscores the urgent need for sustained and coordinated action to reduce these harms.

The AMA urges the Committee to consider our key recommendations—many of which are reflected in the views of other stakeholders and were highlighted in the Committee's March [issues paper](#):

1. Treat Substance Use as a Health Issue

Shift the national approach from criminalisation to compassionate, evidence-based healthcare and support.

2. Strengthen Primary Care and Workforce Capacity

Provide dedicated funding to support GPs and addiction medicine specialists, particularly in rural and remote communities.

Expand the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alcohol and other drugs (AOD) workforce to improve access and cultural safety.

3. Enhance Prevention and Harm Reduction Programs

Regulate alcohol marketing and mandate health warning labels.

Support evidence-based initiatives such as pill testing, medically supervised injecting centres, and comprehensive school-based education.

Invest in community-led programs such as Red Frogs, LDATs, and FORWAARD.

4. Rebalance Funding Priorities

Redirect a greater share of funding from law enforcement toward prevention, treatment, and harm reduction—where every dollar spent delivers measurable health and economic benefits.

5. Promote Cross-Sector Collaboration

Address the social determinants of health through coordinated policy action across education, housing, justice, and social services.

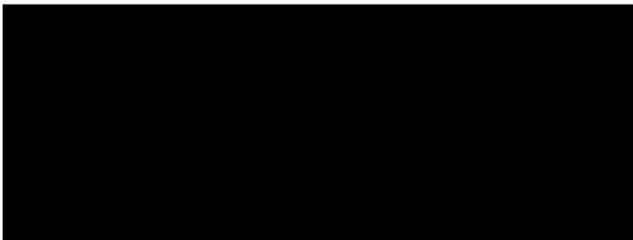
6. Improve Data Collection and Transparency

Ensure data is timely, consistent, and accessible to inform effective policy, program design, and evaluation.

The AMA welcomes the Committee's recommendation that the Department of Health and Aged Care (and now Disability) incorporate the evidence from this inquiry as it prepares advice to Government on revising the *National Drug Strategy*. This step is essential to ensure Australia's approach is comprehensive, coordinated, and health-focused.

The AMA stands ready to assist the Committee in advancing this work and contributing to a national framework that genuinely reduces the harms associated with alcohol and other drug use.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Danielle McMullen
President