



# Bronwyn Bishop MP

*Chairman*

House of Representatives Standing Committee on  
Family & Human Services

## MEDIA RELEASE

8 February 2007

# Bishop launches inquiry into the impact of illicit drug use on families

Chairman of the House of Representatives Family & Human Services Committee, Bronwyn Bishop, today announced a parliamentary inquiry into the impact of illicit drug use on families.

Mrs Bishop said that the committee would report on how the Australian Government can better address the impact on families of the importation, production, sale, use and prevention of illicit drugs.

The most recent national data on the use of illicit drugs in the community found that in 2004, more than 2.5 million Australians aged 14 years and older (one in six, 15.3 per cent) had used an illicit drug in the last 12 months. One in ten (11.3 per cent) had used marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months. The drugs next most commonly used were pain-killers/analgesics (5.5 per cent), ecstasy (3.4 per cent), meth/amphetamines (speed) (3.2 per cent) and injected drugs (1.9 per cent).

"Illicit drug use can have a devastating impact on families," Mrs Bishop said. "Mothers, fathers and children are on the front line in dealing with the effects of illicit drug use by a family member."

Families can be a key source of support for family members using illicit drugs and are a significant source of referrals to professional counselling and rehabilitation services. In 2004-05, more than 7,300 users of drugs of concern were referred by families and friends to professionals for treatment.

"Families need to be adequately supported so that they can help prevent family members using illicit drugs," Mrs Bishop said.

The Committee invites public submissions by 23 March 2007 on:

- the financial, social and personal cost to families who have a member(s) using illicit drugs, including the impact of drug induced psychoses or other mental disorders;
- the impact of harm minimisation programs on families; and
- ways to strengthen families who are coping with a member(s) using illicit drugs.

**For media interview:** Please contact Damien Jones on **0409 147 247** at the electorate office of the Committee Chairman the Hon Mrs Bronwyn Bishop MP.

**For further information on making a submission:** contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4566 or email [fhs.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:fhs.reps@aph.gov.au) or visit the website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/fhs/illicitdrugs/index.htm>