



Health Care Consumers Association Inc
100 Maitland Street, Hackett ACT 2602
Phone: 02 6230 7800 Fax: 02 6230 7833
Email: adminofficer@hcca.org.au
ABN: 59698548902

Implementation of a Needle and Syringe Program at the Alexander Maconochie Centre

Balancing access and safety

Meeting the Challenge of Blood Borne Viruses in Prison

Health Care Consumers' Association (HCCA) of the ACT was formed in 1978 to provide a voice for consumers on local health issues and now provides opportunities for health care consumers in the ACT to participate in all levels of health service planning, policy development and decision making.

HCCA involves consumers through:

- consumer representation
- consultations
- training in health rights and navigating the health system
- community forums
- information sessions about health services
- advocating for issues of concern to consumers.

HCCA welcomes the opportunity to respond to the ***Moore Report – Implementation of a Needle and Syringe Program at the Alexander Maconochie Centre***. We have engaged our membership and networks in preparing our response.

We agree that this is an important issue. While it impacts only a small proportion of our community, the effects of blood borne infections, such as hepatitis, are far reaching. Anyone who contracts these infections increases the likelihood of them being transmitted across our whole community.

There are a broad range of views within our membership, as indeed there are within the wider community, on the issue of establishing a needle exchange program in the Alexander Maconochie Centre. We are very supportive of the

recommendations of the Report in terms of public health and preventative measures, as well as evidence based interventions.

HCCA firmly believes in the importance of service users being involved in developing solutions to challenges in service delivery. We are very pleased to see the extensive involvement of former prisoners and their advocates in considering these matters.

We are supportive of Models 3A and 3B which provide capacity to enable education and health promotion activities in promoting safe injecting practices and vein care and which minimise the transmission of blood borne viruses.

We support the notion that prisoners are entitled to the same standard of evidence-based health care to that which is provided in the general community.

We are satisfied that the outcomes and recommendations of the Report are firmly based on evidence and the experience of stakeholders, which will improve the health of prisoners and not compromise institutional safety or security.

We are also supportive of the flexibility and adaptability that is implicit in the proposal.

While outside the scope of this report, we would like consideration be given to infection control procedures for tattooing, body piercing and barbering in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adele Stevens". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Adele Stevens PHD
President

