

Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform

committed to preventing tragedy that arises from illicit drug use

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MEDIA RELEASE

Abbott Government fails first test on drug policy

The Abbott Government, with no consultation or explanation has recklessly defunded the peak body, the Alcohol and Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA)

"Axing all funding for ADCA without consultation and in pursuit of a false claim of fixing the debt shows up the Federal Government as unprincipled and evidence free", said Brian McConnell, President of Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform. "This peak body provides the best evidence based advice and guidance to all drug and alcohol service providers throughout Australia. It has also provided that advice to past governments. This Government may not like unbiased reliable advice but the service providers have found it to be invaluable for the provision of their services."

"The loss of central coordination that follows this ill-advised cut will be a severe blow to all who are seeking help for their problematic drug use. It will mean that service providers will follow their own random paths and not apply best practice. The end result will be adverse social consequences for their clients and that will cost future governments dearly and will run contrary to the agreed harm minimisation policy of all Australian Governments."

"Financial cuts to this peak body that provides high quality policy advice, resources and guidance will ultimately affect the standard of services provided especially to those who most need the service - the poor, the homeless, the socially marginalised, and the indigenous."

"ADCA was established in 1966 and has been a well-respected by all governments since that time. To defund so swiftly and without explanation is incorrigible", said Brian McConnell. "And Drug Action Week organised throughout Australia by ADCA has provided an excellent week for the AOD sector to publicise its services to the public".

Without this organisation those in the AOD sector will be left floundering for information and support.

Mr McConnell urged the federal government to reconsider this poor short-sighted decision.

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