

EMERGENCY ACTION IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC

COVID-19 demands action and provides the opportunity to get the most disadvantaged and needy out of prisons.

FFDLR CALLS FOR

1. The establishment of clinics in the community providing Heroin Assisted Treatment which would:
 - reduce the flow into the prison of people suffering from opiate dependency who have failed existing pharmacotherapies like methadone; and
 - facilitate the early release of detainees from the overcrowded prisons.

Added important benefits would be the:

- virtual elimination of accidental overdose deaths;
 - stabilisation of many detainees suffering from co-occurring mental health problems; and
 - reduction in drug-related crime.
2. Other reforms to drug policy concerning misuse of other drugs that would promote justice reinvestment and further reduce the risk factors of poor health and disadvantage that explain the high prevalence of indigenous incarceration.
 3. A national forum to consider and recommend other changes to drug policy that promote health and well-being.

The complete paper will be available on ffdlr.org.au

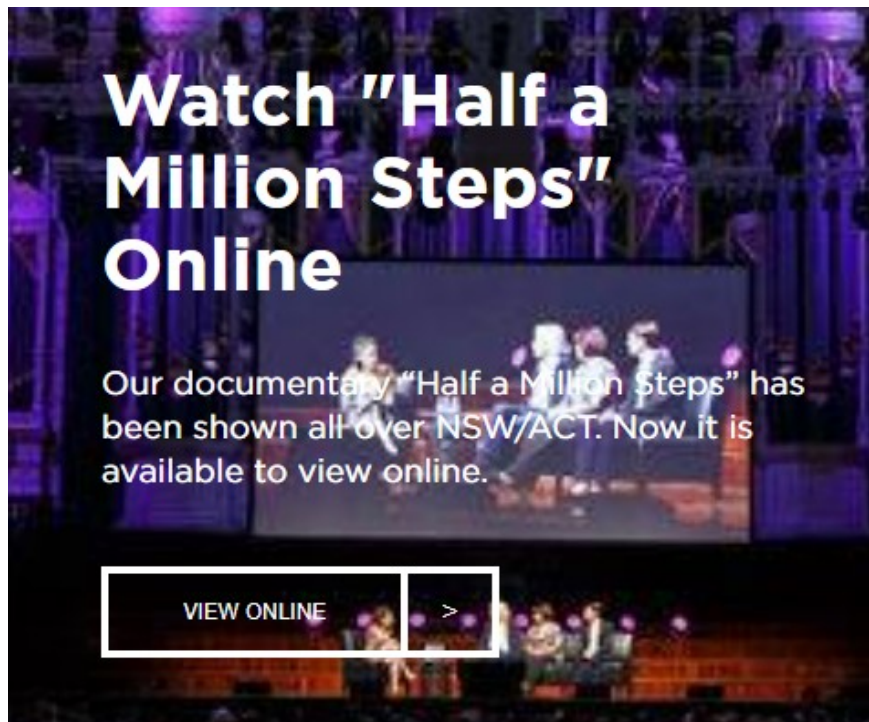
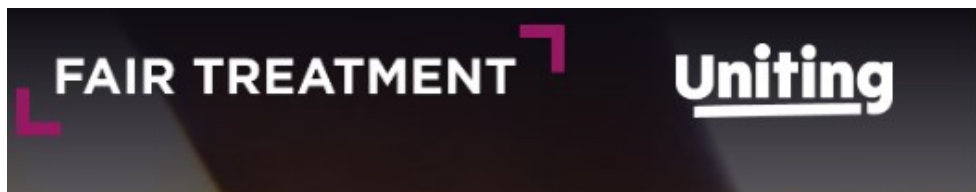
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MEETINGS—ZOOM??

It is unfortunate that we have not been able to organize a meeting in recent times. If the social distancing continues we will consider holding a meeting via Zoom. This could actually be popular as it would allow members outside Canberra to join. Let us know if you might be interested.

We have not sent out membership reminders but will do so soon.



View online at fairtreatment.org AND take the pledge

Seeking Fair Treatment on drug law reform

We all want to live in a world where no-one dies of drug use, and everyone can get the treatment they need. How can you help? Sign up for an online team!

Uniting's Fair Treatment campaign has team leaders across NSW and the ACT who would love for you to join their online campaign activities. To join, please visit Fair Treatment and (1) sign the pledge and (2) check out the "Join a Team" section which will connect you with a leader near you. While at the website you can also listen to a podcast on the history of the Supervised Injection Centre (which just recently celebrated its 19th anniversary!) and watch our documentary "Half a Million Steps".

Together we can modernise our drug laws and look after those who are most vulnerable. We look forward to seeing you online!

CANBERRA DRUG POLICY SERIES with Helen Clark and Geoff Gallop

Please be sure to like and follow us on **Facebook** – where we'll be announcing soon an "online Town Hall" with the Hons Helen Clark and Dr Geoff Gallop of the Global Commission on Drug Policy for a date TBD in mid-late June. This is a part of Fair Treatment's partnership with the **Canberra Drug Policy Series**.

GLOBAL PREMIERE: Enforcement of drug laws – Refocusing on organized crime elites.

In this first report of the decade, the Global Commission on Drug Policy outlines how the current international drug control regime works for the benefit of transnational organised crime. It highlights how years of repressive policies targeted at nonviolent drug offenders have resulted in mass incarceration and produced countless adverse impacts on public health, the rule of law, and social cohesion.

It can be downloaded at <https://www.globalcommissionondrugs.org/>

Drug testing site could be added to safe injection room plans— Daniella White, Canberra Times April, 26

Extract from this report:

Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith has said a medically supervised injecting room is at the top of the government's drug harm minimisation plans. This month it has paid the Macfarlane Burnet Institute for Medical Research \$207,680– to consider whether the territory needs such a facility.. FFDLR needs to encourage the Health Minister in these endeavours.

National Drug Research Institute—Curtin University Media Release: The cost of opioid use to Australia: \$15.7 billion and 2203 deaths

The 'extra-medical' use of opioids is costing Australia around \$15.7 billion and causing more than 2200 deaths a year. 'Extra-medical' opioid use includes the illegal use of heroin and the misuse of pharmaceutical opioids (use 'not as prescribed').

Released today, the new national estimate on the social and economic costs of opioid use to Australia shows that, in the 2015-2016 financial year, 'extra-medical' opioid use was responsible for:

- \$5.6 billion in direct tangible costs, including healthcare costs, reduced productivity and worker absence, crime, and road traffic accidents; and
- \$10.1 billion in intangible costs, due to the premature death of 2,203 people and over 70,000 years of life lost.

FAMILIES AND FRIENDS FOR DRUG LAW REFORM

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[@FFDLR](https://twitter.com/FFDLR)

Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform began in March 1995 following the death by overdose of eight young people in Canberra. At the request of one father, Michael Moore, then Independent Member of the ACT Legislative Assembly, called a meeting to include families who had been affected. Forty people attended this first meeting which was the beginning of Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform. All in attendance believed that the drug laws were more the problem than the solution and called for change. They wanted laws and policies that caused less harm. They wanted addiction to be treated as a health and social issue not a law enforcement one. They believed that the huge profits made by the illegal trade made drugs more available to their kids. Their efforts continue today. If not already please consider becoming a member via the website ffdlr.org.au or sign in as a supporter.

Global commission on drug policy, Enforcement of drug laws: refocusing on organized crime elites, report 2020

- The legal regulation of drugs offers an unprecedented opportunity to move drugs markets out of criminal control.
- States must consider the legal regulation of drugs as the responsible pathway to undermine organized crime.
- States must acknowledge the negative consequences of repressive law enforcement

Our governments need to listen to the wise words of the Global Commissioners.

Many former heads of state are or have been represented on this commission including Kofi Annan, Fernando Henrique Cardoso (Fmr President of Brazil), Sir Nicholas Clegg (Fmr Dep Prime Minister of the UK), Ruth Dreifuss (Fmr President of Switzerland), Jose Ramos-Horta, (Fmr PM and President of Timor-Leste), Jorge Sampaio (Fmr {resident of Portugal).

Helen Clark, Fmr PM of New Zealand and Geoff Gallop, Fmr Premier of WA are also Commissioners. They will be the speakers at a Fair Treatment and ATODA Zoom event in June.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.—Margaret Mead

