



MEDIA RELEASE

TREATMENT CHALLENGES FOR RESPONDING TO ICE & AMPHETAMINES ABUSERS

The Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA) supports the position paper on methamphetamines released by the Australian Medical Association

Therapeutic Communities (TCs) in Australia & New Zealand have been successfully treating amphetamine dependence for over 30 years but we need to respond differently and strategically for ICE users seeking help from this destructive drug. The increase in aggressive and psychotic behaviours is creating chaos and disruption for treatment providers.

The Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association supports the call for a review of how the health system deals with this very difficult drug problem.

Janice Jones the Executive Officer of ATCA said today, "We need strategic planning and targeted responses so we avoid any knee jerk reactions that result in scarce funds being inadvertently misdirected."

The ATCA also supports the recommendations made by the AMA calling for all emergency departments to have a specialist drugs liaison officer to engage and support methamphetamine and other drug users.

But said Janice Jones, "these officers also need to be trained in the range of mental health conditions that ICE users can present with. They also need to be aware of what services are out there that are experienced in treating the complex needs of these people".

Therapeutic Community operators already cope with co-morbidity. At least 70% of residents today suffer from mental health issues as well as their addiction. This is our area of expertise but we need an increase in beds and qualified staff to cope with this disturbing trend.

For more information contact:

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