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Alcohol & other Drugs Sector Supports NSW Premier's Fight on Alcohol

The National and New South Wales (NSW) Peak alcohol and other drugs (AOD) organisations today urged NSW Premier Nathan Rees to engage with them in the development of a “fundamental shift in alcohol policy at the State level”.

The Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA) and the Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies in NSW have joined forces to strongly support Premier Nathan Rees who has been reported as having confirmed that the NSW Government would soon be acting on excessive alcohol consumption.

ADCA CEO David Templeman and NADA CEO Larry Pierce said they believed Premier Rees was correct in identifying “there is a mood in the public for a proper debate on alcohol and the drinking culture”.

“Many of the agencies our organisations represent are registering alarm at the increase in presentations for alcohol treatment, and subsequent harmful impacts risky and dangerous drinking are having on individuals, families and the community,” Mr Templeman and Mr Pierce said. “We are very keen to work with the NSW Government on the development of evidence-based policy and effective interventions.” Mr Templeman also highlighted new figures released by the Salvation Army which show one in five people have had arguments with family members who were influenced by alcohol, while one in 10 have had fights with relatives.

“Added to this, the Salvation Army Roy Morgan poll confirmed children are affected by problem drinking, with 12 per cent reporting being embarrassed or scared by family members affected by alcohol,” Mr Templeman said. “Then there are the relationship breakdowns, health problems or financial stress experienced by up to 15 per cent of those surveyed.”

Mr Templeman and Mr Pierce expressed concern that while Premier Rees was to be applauded, once again action was being initiated in a “siloes environment” – such action needs to be across all States and Territories.

“While we will continue to advocate for a joined-up approach to Australia’s alcohol problems, and for AOD practitioners and policy experts to be included in discussions, all actions taken to support harm minimisation are to be applauded,” they said.

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NADA is the peak body for non government drug and alcohol services across NSW.

Visit www.nada.org.au for further information.