



NADA MEDIA RELEASE

National Health Reform – Considering the health of all Australians?

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The Network of Alcohol and Other Drugs Agencies (NADA) believes that reform to Australia's health system is necessary but urges the Federal Government to consider the health of all Australians in the reform process including consumers who access health services beyond hospitals and General Practitioners (GP) and consumers with complex health issues such as drug and alcohol and mental health problems.

NADA supports comments made by the Alcohol and Other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA) about the importance of not overlooking the significant costs of alcohol, drugs and mental health disorders. Equally, it is important not to overlook the full range of health services in Australia that includes community and allied health and non government organisations as well as hospitals and GP services.

NADA CEO, Larry Pierce says, "The services provided by specialist drug and alcohol non government organisations address a range of complex health needs as well as drug dependency. The severity of these clients' needs cannot be dealt with simply in the context of general practice."

NADA also believes there needs to be a broader investment in the health workforce, particularly in allied health and community services. It is concerning that of the \$643 million announced by the Government this week for Australia's health workforce, only \$11 million will be directed towards allied health professionals whilst \$632 million will be spent on training doctors.

Mr Pierce says, "This is disappointing as major attention needs to be directed towards growing and maintaining the specialist workforce as well."

As noted by the Prime Minister in numerous interviews, the COAG meeting on 19 April 2010, is a "once in a generation opportunity to get health and hospitals reform right." NADA calls on the Federal Government to make the changes necessary to curb the unsustainable growth of the public hospital system and expand health promotion and treatment in the community and primary care sector.

Contact Larry Pierce, NADA CEO on 0411 747 106 or larry@nada.org.au

The Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies Inc (NADA) is the peak organisation for the non government drug and alcohol sector in NSW.

NADA's goal is to support non government drug and alcohol organisations in NSW to reduce the alcohol and drug related harm to individuals, families and the community.

www.nada.org.au