



Western Australian Network of
Alcohol & other Drug Agencies

Letter to the Editor
The Sunday Times
letters@sundaytimes.com.au

15 February 2017

Dear Letters Editor,

Re: 'It's Meth Madness'

Tom Percy QC is right. Alcohol and other drug issues are primarily a health and social concern that is best dealt with by health and human services.

This approach isn't a radical alternative: WA has professional and effective alcohol and other drug treatment and support services. These services are proven to make a difference to thousands of individuals, families and communities state-wide every year.

The WA Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (WANADA) has welcomed recent political party commitments to increase funding for treatment services and to trial innovative responses. These services, however, will need to approximately double in size over the next eight years to meet the current and growing community demand for support and treatment, and respond to the hard reality of methamphetamine related issues.

With more needing to be done to address alcohol and other drug problems across the State, it is important to support solutions that are cost-efficient and provide sustainable outcomes. Adequate treatment will result in reduced offending and recidivism. Alcohol and other drug treatment services are uniquely placed to deliver this.

If both parties continue to insist on introducing mandatory sentencing for drug using offenders, then at the very least this should be accompanied by a much greater financial commitment to effective treatment programs delivered in the justice system.

Services are constantly required to demonstrate the effectiveness of their services. Political parties should be required to demonstrate the same standard when it comes to effective public policy making. Public policy will only be effective in making a difference if it is informed by evidence.

We encourage all Western Australians to consider the major parties' positions on alcohol and other drugs in the lead up to the state election, and to make the long-term health and wellbeing of our community a priority.

Yours sincerely,

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CEO, WANADA

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