atdc
Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council Tasmania

MEDIA RELEASE

ATDC Election Statement

26 June 2025

The Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council Tasmania (ATDC) is seeking commitments from all political parties and independent candidates in the 2025 state election to prioritise policies to reduce alcohol and drug-related harm in Tasmania.

ATDC CEO Dr Jackie Hallam said alcohol and other drug community-managed services are continuing to shrink across the state, but particularly in regional Tasmania.

“Community-managed services continually have to make difficult decisions directly linked to inflation and cost pressures, as well as unsustainable funding models” she said.

“Just this year we have seen staff laid off in a critical service in Burnie, with several more jobs in Devonport, Launceston and Hobart currently in jeopardy.

Critically, some of the positions that we are about to lose offer the most opportunity to make our service system welcoming and responsive to Tasmanians. These are our innovative peer worker positions, that which the Tasmanian Government funded through a grants program and then suddenly dropped in the recent budget”.

“Then there was the scrapping of half the funding for proven public education campaigns that support Tasmanians to quit smoking and prevent youth uptake alongside no continued investment in urgently needed campaigns to support youth to quit vaping in the recent budget.”

“All of this is against the backdrop of increasing demand for service and greater wait times for Tasmanians to get the assistance they need.”

In times when the government is wanting to tighten its belt and reign in health spending, the community sector presents a range of viable solutions to ensure that Tasmanians have the services they need, where they need them. All of our services are accredited and use evidence based approaches, we have the capacity to scale up and innovate and also importantly, to put programs in place to prevent and limit alcohol and other drug harm from occurring in the first place.

Dr Hallam said " Tasmanian rates of alcohol and other drug use in Tasmania are above the national average, and the cost to the health system and the wider community is significant. We heard recently from Tasmanian Police that alcohol and other drugs are among the Big Five drivers of road accidents."

“Research shows that evidence-based alcohol and other drug treatment, support and education lowers harm across the community, and helps people to be healthier and connected” she said.

No Harm, No Discrimination
Suite 1, Level 1, 175 Collins Street, Hobart, Tasmania 7000
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"In the context of a stretched state budget, community-managed programs are cost effective and these programs reach into our communities, often in areas where there is a lack of other health services such as bulk billing GPs."

"These services are doing the heavy lifting in our communities and need urgent support."

The ATDC is therefore calling on Tasmanian political leaders to show courage, compassion and to commit to recognising the contribution of community-managed alcohol and drug services. This means providing the funding required to drive positive change across the state.

"There are abundant opportunities for the next Government that will be showcased at the upcoming Tasmanian Alcohol and Other Drugs Conference," Dr Hallam said.

The Tasmanian Alcohol and Other Drugs Conference 2025 will be held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Hobart on 25 and 26 June.

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What is the ATDC?

The Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania is the peak body representing and supporting community organisations, and the people they assist, to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harm for all Tasmanians.

Our vision is a Tasmania without alcohol, tobacco or other drug related harm or discrimination.

Language matters

Language is powerful, especially when discussing alcohol and other drugs and the people who use them. Stigmatising language reinforces negative stereotypes. "Person-centred" language focuses on the person, not their substance use.

When reporting on people who use alcohol and other drugs….	
Try this 👍	**Not this** 👎
Substance use, non-prescribed use	Abuse, misuse, problem use, non-compliant use
Person who uses drugs	Drug user, drug abuser
Person with a dependence on….	Addict, junkie, druggie, alcoholic
Person experiencing drug dependence	Suffering from addiction, has a drug habit
Person who has stopped using drugs	Clean, sober, drug-free
Person with lived experience of drug dependence	Ex-addict, former addict, used to be a…
Please see the *Language matters* resource at: www.nada.org.au/resources/language-matters/ Mindframe for Alcohol and other Drugs: https://mindframe.org.au/alcohol-other-drugs The Power of Words: https://adf.org.au/resources/power-words/	

Add help-seeking information

Always include help-seeking information alongside any story about alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.

Help and support for alcohol, tobacco or other drugs in Australia (24 hours 7 days a week):

- Alcohol and Drug Information Service - 1800 811 994
- Counselling Online - counsellingonline.org.au
- Family Drug Support - 1300 368 186

Tasmanian alcohol, tobacco and other drug support services including face-to-face services:

- ATDC Service Directory atdc.org.au/service-directory

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