



Many alcohol and other drugs services across NSW face closure due to looming \$21m cut in Federal funding

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A significant number of the state's already struggling alcohol and other drugs services face closure or radical cuts to their services in the wake of the Federal Government's failure to guarantee up to \$21m in funding to NSW.

The funding is part of the National Ice Action Strategy which is worth \$60 million nationally each year. The program was a key plank in efforts to respond to the surging use of methamphetamine (or 'Ice') and its impacts in families and communities across the country.

The program represents some 50% of the Federal Government's current investment in reducing demand for alcohol and other drugs and reducing the harms they cause.

"To date, the Federal Government has not confirmed the continuation of this funding. The loss of this money would lead to a significant number of services either closing or dramatically scaling back their services. This is at a time when services are already struggling with workforce shortages and fatigue," the chief executive officer at the Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies (the NSW peak body), Robert Stirling, said.

"To lose funding now will be disastrous. The Federal Government, at a minimum, should lock in this funding for future years in the March Federal Budget. Yet even this would only continue a situation where funding by State and Federal Governments for people in NSW needing alcohol and other drugs support is grossly inadequate."

Mr Stirling said the data indicated that harms related to methamphetamine use have been increasing across Australia. While daily and weekly use of the drug has doubled since 2010, from 12.4% to 29% in 2019. Last year, almost 30% of all treatment episodes for organisations that NADA represents were to support people who use methamphetamine.

In NSW, the government is still yet to release its response to the inquiry into 'ice' despite receiving the report more than two years ago.

Jennifer Duncan, CEO of the Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council (AADC) urged the Federal Government to work with the sector to ensure continuity of service through confirmation of funding. "We are keen to work with the government to secure this funding as quickly as possible so that we can provide certainty to service providers who are having to juggle staff retention, recruitment and service planning ahead of the June 30 deadline," Ms Duncan said.

The AADC is urging the government urgently move to confirm this critical funding. It is also calling for additional funding in the March Federal Budget to finally tackle the acute underfunding of alcohol and other drug services across the country. See the AADC's Budget submission [here](#).

Media contact: Robert Stirling, Chief Executive Officer, on 0421 647 099 or email robert@nada.org.au.

About NADA

The Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies (NADA) is the peak organisation for the non government alcohol and other drugs sector in NSW. We represent 100 organisational members that provide a broad range of alcohol and other drugs services including health promotion and harm reduction, early intervention, treatment and continuing care

programs. Together, we improve the health and wellbeing of people who use, or have used, alcohol and other drugs across the NSW community. For more information, please visit www.nada.org.au.

About AADC

The AADC is the national peak body representing the alcohol and other drugs sector. Its members, represents over 550 specialist health services more than 1600 specialist practitioners, researchers and policy specialists and people who use or have used alcohol and other drugs, and their families.