

MEDIA RELEASE

2020 Budget Submission

2nd September 2020



Harm Reduction Australia (HRA) acknowledges the significant work of the Federal Government in improving health services for all in the community, both during the COVID-19 pandemic and prior.

Investments in mental health, increased hospital funding, national action plans are all welcomed.

However, now it's time to remove the financial discrimination all governments are imposing on one sector of the community; a community already stigmatised, and a community that has watched too many coronial inquiries recommend changes to the affordability of access to treatments that might have prevented tragic loss of life.

As part of its 2020-21 Budget Submission, HRA has asked for the Government to:

1. Standardise the payments charged for access to Medicated Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependency Treatment Program medicines consistent with monthly PBS script co-payments;
2. Recognise those payments as a co-payment for the purposes of the National Health Act 1953 and therefore to count towards a consumer's annual PBS safety-net;
3. Consider supporting any ongoing subsidy of additional services pharmacy consider are not covered by the PBS co-payment as part of the \$1.2B in programs funded under the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement, consistent with the Government's support of direct funding for Dose Administration Aids, Medicine Reviews and other similar services.

Given the continuing tragic number of lives lost and adverse impact of drug related harms on individuals, families and communities the need for reform is paramount.

The full submission is available at [HRA Submissions](#)

HRA would also like to acknowledge our members, partners and supporters in providing much needed assistance and advice.

Contact: Gino Vumbaca, President of Harm Reduction Australia on 0408-244-552

Harm Reduction Australia is a national organisation for individuals committed to reducing the health, social and economic harms potentially associated with drug use. HRA takes a non-judgmental approach to drug use within society and recognises the key role people with current and past drug use experience must play in any effective drug policy solutions. As well as working collaboratively to ensure reform to current drug policy with the primary aims of ending imprisonment, stigmatisation, discrimination and human rights violations against the people who use or have used drugs.

We are dedicated to reducing the harmful impact of drug use in Australia through evidence-based, sensible and safer drug policies.



www.harmreductionaustralia.org.au