



The Hon. Jacinta Allan MP  
Premier of Victoria  
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Dear Premier

As you may be aware, Harm Reduction Australia (HRA), which also convenes the Pill Testing Australia (PTA) consortium, is currently involved in piloting Australia's first ever fixed site pill testing service in Canberra with Directions Health & CAHMA and the support of the ACT Government.

Given the numerous coronial reports regarding the critical need for pill testing services to be available at festivals in Victoria, we would welcome your consideration of an offer by our organisation to provide a trial of our pill testing services at a festival.

Specifically, we want to demonstrate what we have already successfully delivered in the ACT but at a Victorian event so it may provide Victorian specific information and data for your government to consider.

We already conduct Australia's only pill testing services at festivals, which provided the ACT Government with an evidence-base and thus the confidence to proceed with our fixed site pill testing service.

Accordingly, we now offer the Victorian Government a cost-free trial of our public health-based pill testing service at an event of your choice with an independent evaluator of your choice. Some of the other aspects of our offer to consider include:

- We will liaise with relevant local service providers with whom HRA & PTA have ongoing working relationships.
- Although the staff of PTA is comprised of volunteers, we only allow appropriately qualified professionals to participate in the delivery of the service – including experienced medical emergency physicians, chemical analysts, and specialist festival harm reduction peer educators.
- We provide our own insurance coverage and equipment.
- We already have a series of policy, procedures, and training manuals in place to ensure the highest quality of service delivery.
- We are willing to provide the participating festival with a letter of indemnity.

In assessing our offer, we encourage you to contact the ACT Health Minister, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, for an independent view on the ability of HRA & PTA to deliver a professional and public health-based pill testing service.

As you know, pill testing services have been shown to significantly reduce the harms from drug use by providing accurate information and advice directly to people contemplating the consumption of illicit drugs. Too many Australian young people lose their lives each year due to the use of unknown illicit substances at festivals and events, and pill testing, along with a range of other harm reduction strategies, can help reduce that risk.

HRA is aware that at times there is a misunderstanding that somehow our service will provide a “green light” to drug use. Our response to this is best encapsulated by the recent statement made by Pill Testing Australia Ambassador, Jen Ross-King, who tragically lost her only child to a drug related incident at a music festival:

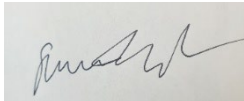
*"When MPs tell me about pill testing giving the green light to drug use, I correct them and tell them it actually gives a red or amber light because it asks people to pause and take time to discuss what they are about to do with qualified health professionals."*

We look forward to your response and remain at your disposal for any further advice or details on our standing offer to help inform the deliberations of your government on this important program.

Yours sincerely



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