

Labor for Drug Law Reform

Victoria

In 2018 increasing public awareness of the limitations of existing approaches to alcohol and drugs policy prompted a wholesale re-examination of all laws and regulations relating to drug law by the Victorian Parliament.

The Inquiry into Drug Law Reform conducted by the Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee of the Victorian Parliament last year outlined a number of key recommendations in relation to this critical public health issue.

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The Victorian Labor Government has responded to these recommendations with a wide-ranging the record investment of \$259.9 million in 2018/19 into ATOD services. Critical examples include:

- The Drug Rehabilitation Plan that include \$53.2 million directed towards new rehabilitation beds across Victoria including Lower Plenty, Healesville, Maryknoll, Bendigo and St Albans and \$9.7 million towards additional facilities in Gippsland, Barwon and Hume regions in the 2017/18 budget.
- Initiatives to address Victorian hotspots for overdose and ATOD related harm, notably the establishment and \$7.2 million upgrade to the North Richmond Safe Injecting Centre.
- The facilitation and creation of local jobs and facilities as part of the medical cannabis industry and is making it available to treat those suffering with extreme pain or terminal illness.
- Naloxone training, ATOD pathways, Safescript and Crisis Hubs are all additional initiatives that signal a brave move towards a health, harm reduction and community safety model of ATOD treatment.

These initiatives were strongly backed by voters, as our Liberal/National opposition took high profile policies to the election to go exactly the other way, doubling down on a failed 'war on drugs' approach, roundly rejecting evidence and action by the State Labor Government that saved lives. In turn they were rightly rejected by the voters.

We need to continue this important work toward medical ATOD and drug harm reduction. There is much more to do to ensure that Victoria moves away from having the very people the ALP represents, workers and their families, suffering the burden of a law and order focussed ATOD policy – the human costs and the costs to the state are far too great.

The State Labor government must be applauded for starting a journey toward evidence based ATOD policy and we need to continue this journey rather than continuing the failures of the past.

Who are we?

Labor for Drug Policy Reform VIC builds on the highly effective LEAN model and is bringing together a coalition of Labor members, harm reduction workers, unions and experts to advocate within the Victorian Labor Party.

Our Platform

- Immediately repealing all public drunkenness laws in Victoria and Queensland as recommended by 1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.
- The immediate establishment of the Ministerial Council on Drugs Policy and the Advisory Council on Drugs Policy.
- A commitment to continue the North Richmond Medically Supervised Injecting Centre after the trial has finished.
- A formal inquiry into alcohol and drug roadside testing with the aim of establishing a regime focused on impairment limits/thresholds.
- The introduction of workplace health and safety regulations, in coordination with relevant trade unions and other organisations, that prioritises harm reduction for employees. The allocation of funding for associated education and support programs.
- An inquiry into personal privacy during police searches and the effectiveness of sniffer dogs in public, or at music festivals.
- A reallocation of funding available. Harm Reduction services inside the Harm Minimisation scheme (including programs such as Harm Reduction Victoria, and the DASA model from NT) should receive increased funding.
- The establishment of a front-of-house drug testing facilities available in Melbourne CBD and at leading Victorian social events.
- The establishment of ‘back-of-house’ drug testing facilities that work in coordination with an early warning system.
- The evaluation of current scheduled substances associated with ‘vaping.’

Get Involved

- Join our community
- Sign our petition for pill-testing
- Pass motions relating to our policy platform at local Labor branches
- Get in touch with us to discuss other ways to help make Victoria the leaders in our health, education and legal systems.