



# Media Release

## New Grog Guidelines to Assist Treatment

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New *Alcohol Treatment Guidelines for Indigenous Australians* and associated resources will be the focus of a series of workshops in Alice Springs this week.

The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing contracted Flinders Consulting Pty Ltd who in partnership with the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council SA and Drug and Alcohol Services SA and under the guidance of a National Clinical Reference Group, consisting of experts in the drug and alcohol field to develop the Guidelines.

The Guidelines will assist general practitioners, drug and alcohol workers and other health professionals to understand issues regarding alcohol consumption, patterns of drinking and related risks to health and wellbeing and assist them to manage alcohol-related problems with their Indigenous clients and families. They were developed from pre-existing publications, literature review and consultations with Indigenous community members and a range of specialist and non-specialist health practitioners. They are an evidence-based, user-friendly resource to assist health professionals identify and manage alcohol problems.

According to project director, Professor Charlotte de Crespigny, the implementation of the Guidelines is a timely addition to efforts to reduce harmful drinking levels in Northern Territory Aboriginal communities.

"The Workshops are aimed at doctors, nurses and Aboriginal Health Workers and other health professionals working in Aboriginal community controlled health services, remote clinics, general hospitals, community health and specialist services such as mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, diabetes management and education, sexual health, and alcohol, tobacco and other drugs," said Professor de Crespigny. "The Guidelines are currently being rolled out across Australia and I'm confident they will make a big difference to the effectiveness of treatment of Indigenous clients with alcohol related physical illnesses and social and emotional wellbeing problems associated with alcohol consumption."

The Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health (CRAH) has welcomed the roll out of the Guidelines.

"Much of Government efforts to reduce alcohol damage in our communities have been concerned with reducing the supply of grog and there has been a serious problem with the end of the equation; reducing demand and I am extremely pleased with this new initiative," said CEO Mick Gooda. "Our people are nearly 2 ½ times more likely to die from alcohol related causes and grog is a major factor in the injuries, diseases and serious health complications that we suffer from."

"If we are going to really start making inroads into grog then we must have effective treatment and rehabilitation services. The new guidelines are a very welcome step in that direction."

The Project team will be in Alice Springs on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> August and Tennant Creek on 24<sup>th</sup> August and will be presenting a Workshop at the Drug and Alcohol Services Association on the afternoon of 22<sup>nd</sup> August; and a morning and afternoon workshop at the Centre for Remote Health on 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

### For further information:

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**Editors note: Attached facts sheet on Alcohol and Indigenous Australians**

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