

MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON DRUG POLICY MEETING

*Tuesday 14 June 2005, 7:30pm – 8:46pm
Beehive Room 5.5, Parliament Buildings Wellington*

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Ministers Present:

Hon Jim Anderton (Chair) – Associate Minister of Health
Hon Damien O'Connor – Associate Minister of Health

Apologies:

Hon Paul Swain – Minister of Corrections
Hon Phil Goff – Minister of Justice

In Attendance:

Hon Lianne Dalziel – Member for Christchurch East
Judge Unwin – Liquor Licensing Authority

Officials Present:

Ashley Bloomfield – Health
Chris Laurenson – Health
Kellee Koia – Health
Megan Larken – Health

Kayleen Katene – Health

Mike Webb – Police
Mike Wotherspoon – Customs
Patrick McCabe – Justice
Simon Davidson-Hood – Justice
Wendy Moore – ALAC
Chris Arcus – Education

Alan Smith – Customs
Peter Carr – MYD
Bronwyn Donaldson – Corrections
Heather Jones – Office of Hon Jim Anderton
Simon Wallace – Office of Hon Damien O'Connor

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes from the previous meeting on 15 February 2005 were agreed as a true and accurate record and authorisation was given for the minutes to be placed on the NDP website.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM 15 FEBRUARY 2005 MEETING

3.1 Youth Drug Court

Health officials provided members with an update on the progress of Odyssey House in relation to the Youth Drug Court. Overall the programme was running well and Odyssey was aiming to increase accommodation from four to eight beds by 1 July 2005. Significant increases in building and compliance costs have meant that there would

be a capital shortfall. Health officials advised that they were working with the DHB and Odyssey House to find a way through the shortfall.

Hon Anderton directed Health officials to keep him informed of the capital requirements for Odyssey House.

4. REPORT ON LICENSING TRENDS

Members were provided with the paper entitled Alcohol: Licensing, consumption and Enforcement Trends. Judge Unwin from the Liquor Licensing Authority (LLA) gave a presentation to members on his experience of regulating the alcohol industry. The following issues were raised:

- Confusion over the trading hours on days such as Good Friday and Easter Sunday.
- Number of premises that LLA deal with – Judge Unwin advised that the LLA only dealt with 1% of approximately 15,000 licensed premises.
- Position of local city councils in setting trading hours and other conditions for licensed premises.

5. ALCOHOL ADVERTISING

Members were provided with a paper on the options for a review of alcohol advertising policy. The possibility of the outcomes of a proposal from SHORE to the NDP Discretionary Grant Fund being taken into account in the review was discussed. Officials advised they would be able to provide a scoping report by the end of July.

Agreed:

- 1. That there is a need for a Government-led review of the regulatory framework for alcohol advertising.***
- 2. That the preferred type of review is an officials review***
- 3. IACD would provide more details about such a review by the end of July.***

6. THE IMPACT OF EXCISE INCREASE ON SPIRIT-BASED DRINKS

Members were advised that overall there was a reduction in the litres of alcohol being removed from Customs Control. There was a general feeling by members that the tax had achieved what it set out do.

Customs officials advised that the term 'Ultra-light' was not a market term but used in the report to help members distinguish between spirits containing between 14% and 23% alcohol with spirits containing less than 14% alcohol.

7. NDP DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUND

Members were advised that twenty applications had been received for the 2005/06 round of the NDP Discretionary Grant Fund. The IACD recommended that eight applications be funded at an amount of \$759,213.85, with possible funding of another application at \$85,932.00.

Agreed:

- 1. That the entire budget for the 2005/2006 round of the Discretionary Fund (\$871,000) was allocated and that there was no need for a second round of applications for this round.**
- 2. That the following research applications be approved for funding:**
 - a. Cannabis ‘tinny’ Houses in New Zealand: Tracking Trends in the Purchase of Cannabis and other Illicit Drugs from Drugs Houses** – Centre for Social Health Outcomes Research and Evaluation (SHORE), Massey University.
 - b. “Legal Herbal Highs”: A Study of Young People (16 – 24)** – Alcohol and Other Drug Collaboration, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, the University of Auckland.
 - c. Exposure of Young People in New Zealand to Alcohol Advertising in Magazines and on Television** – Centre for Social Health Outcomes Research and Evaluation (SHORE), Massey University.
 - d. Treatment Evaluation of Alcohol and Mood (TEAM) Study** – National Addiction Centre, Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Otago.
 - e. Legal Party Pills in New Zealand: The Prevalence of Use, and Health Harms of Benzylpiperazine (BZP) and Related Substances** – Centre for Social Health Outcomes Research and Evaluation (SHORE), Massey University.
- 3. That the following intervention applications are approved for funding:**
 - a. Online Alcohol and Other Drug Intervention Service** – Richmond Fellowship Inc NZ.
 - b. Promotion of the Alcohol and Drug Helpline and Development of Drug Informational Resources** – Alcohol Drug Association New Zealand (ADANZ).
 - c. TaPasefika Alcohol and Drug Related Harm Reduction Initiative** – TaPasefika Health Trust.
 - d. Family/Whanau Intervention** – Rubicon Youth Alcohol & Drug Support Services Charitable Trust.

8. DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN

Members discussed measures to prevent children from being placed in a drug-endangered situation including what legal sanctions could be put in place.

Agreed:

That Justice and Health officials would lead further work to explore the scope for enhancing New Zealand legislation to more powerfully deter the exposure of children to drug-related risk situations and to report back to MCDP at its next meeting.

9. DRUG-RELATED PARAPHERNALIA

Ministers were informed about concerns that have come to light about the enforceability of the Misuse of Drugs (Prohibition of Cannabis Utensils and Methamphetamine Utensils) Notice 2003. In particular, there was discussion of the fact that, as the law currently stands, no offence is committed when drug-related paraphernalia are advertised or displayed/stocked for sale; rather an offence only occurs once a sale is made. Customs officials also advised that such paraphernalia were being imported in a disassembled state, and showed an example to Ministers of how this was done.

Agreed:

That Health, Police and Customs officials would identify any potential to improve the workability of the current prohibition notice, and to report back to MCDP at its next meeting.

10. ILLICIT DRUGS IN PRISONS

Agreed that the Minister of Corrections be invited to discuss this issue at the next meeting.

11. UPDATE ON PROJECTS 8 & 9 OF THE ACTION PLAN ON ALCOHOL AND ILLICIT DRUGS

Health provided members with an update on the assessment of the alcohol and other drug related problems of the general population (Project 8) and the review of the alcohol and other drug treatment in New Zealand (Project 9).

Members were advised of timeframes for the following initiatives regarding these two projects:

- Evaluation on the Practitioner in Court would be completed by December 2006

- Second Mental Health & Addictions Strategy would be launched by 30 June 2005
- The National Addiction Centre (NAC) Addiction Treatment Strategy would be completed by October 2005.

Agreed:

That the above timeframes be included in the Action Plan on Alcohol and Illicit Drugs.

12. ACTION PLAN ON ALCOHOL AND ILLICIT DRUGS – MONITORING REPORT

Project 12 (NDP Review) – Hon Jim Anderton directed Health officials to proceed with the NDP Review on the basis that MCDP would be able to sign-off out of session prior to SDC consideration of the consultation process.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Nitrous Oxide - Letter from Christchurch City Council

Hon Lianne Dalziel advised that she had received a letter from Christchurch City Council regarding the inhalation of nitrous oxide for psychoactive effects. Health officials advised that under the Medicines Act, nitrous oxide might only be sold as a prescription medicine. A number of actions have occurred, these actions included:

- Sending a letter to all known retailers
- Imports without evidence of legitimate use being stopped at the border
- Enforcement action with retailers
- Meeting with an exporter from Austria

Agreed:

That Health officials would prepare an update on nitrous oxide for the upcoming Local Government forum.

14. NEXT MEETING

The meeting would be arranged by the chair of MCDP's office, in consultation with other Ministers.