



27 September 2012

**MEDIA RELEASE – WITHDRAWAL OF FUNDING SUPPORT FOR THE ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG  
SECTOR WILL HAVE LONG TERM REPERCUSSIONS**

The Newman government's haphazard approach to funding cuts will only cost Queenslanders more in the future.

Executive Officer for QNADA, the peak body for the Queensland non-government Alcohol and other Drug Sector Rebecca MacBean said that any short-term savings created by the recent funding cuts to the sector would be outweighed by the long-term costs they would create.

"What the community needs to know is that many of these services ultimately save the state a great deal of money by keeping people out of emergency departments and from clogging the court system", she said.

The diverse Queensland Non-Government Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) sector provided a huge range of services aimed at reducing not only the terrible personal cost of alcohol and drug misuse to individuals and their loved ones, but also the massive financial cost to the community, Mrs MacBean said.

"Every year the cost of alcohol, drug and tobacco use and misuse costs Australia tens of billions of dollars as a burden on the health system, lost workplace productivity, road accidents and crime," Mrs MacBean said. "Reducing funding to critical services such as Drug Court is counter-intuitive to achieving long term savings to the state's bottom line".

The AOD sector had been extremely disappointed at recent announcements by Attorney General Jarrod Bleijie and Health Minister Lawrence Springborg of significant funding withdrawals from the non-government AOD sector, she said. "As a sector we wholeheartedly agree that it is the government's responsibility to ensure the taxpayers are getting the best value for their money".

"However the Newman Government's approach to this review appears to have only considered the bottom line. The sector has been left guessing, as nothing about the services being provided or the goals being achieved seems to count, and certainly the Newman Government has not been interested in any input from the people who work in the sector," Mrs MacBean said.

QNADA members had made repeated unsuccessful attempts to ensure the Newman Government had the best possible understanding of what work was being undertaken with State government funds, Mrs MacBean said.

"It is not prudent to cut programs based purely on finances", she said.

"The services should have been properly reviewed and input should have been gathered from the many highly regarded professionals in this sector to find the best way of making cost savings while minimising the harm done to the community."

The Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies (QNADA) is the peak body supporting frontline AOD services and has also been affected by the funding cuts.

**Enquiries and requests for further information should be directed to Rebecca MacBean, Executive Officer, QNADA on 0408 669 590 or [Rebecca.MacBean@qnada.org.au](mailto:Rebecca.MacBean@qnada.org.au). Further information about the work of QNADA and our members can be accessed via our website [www.qnada.org.au](http://www.qnada.org.au).**