



Pru Goward

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Medical Research

Assistant Minister for Health

Minister for Women

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday, 9 August 2015

MORE TREATMENT SUPPORT FOR ICE ADDICTS

Assistant Minister for Health Pru Goward today delivered on the NSW Government's \$11 million election commitment to help those using crystal methamphetamine 'ice' and fighting addiction, by revealing the locations of new stimulant treatment services and the expansion of existing services.

\$7 million will be invested in new services based in Western Sydney, Illawarra Shoalhaven, Mid North Coast and Northern NSW, as well as adding extra capacity to the existing services at St Vincent's Hospital and Newcastle.

Ms Goward said the new treatment services will build on the work of the effective treatment models to deliver appropriate services and more interconnected pathways of care across the health system, including NGOs, that will support people to get help.

"We know these models work, but each community faces its own challenges, that is why each location will have a targeted focus on identified high-risk groups including young people, pregnant women, aboriginal people and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Ms Goward said.

Over the past six years there has been a 7-fold increase in emergency department presentations where the use of methamphetamines, including ice, was a factor.

"What isn't reported is that we are not necessarily seeing an increase in the number of people using ice, but users are using more frequently and they are using a more pure drug that is easy to access and cheap," Ms Goward said.

"Regional and remote communities are telling me they need more support to tackle the scourge."

"That is why the Government will invest \$4 million to support NGOs in rural and regional communities to enhance the local response to ice."

The increased investment in the NGO sector will mean more coordinated, better targeted care for users including once they leave specialist treatment services to help reduce the chances of them ending back in emergency departments.

"This insidious drug does not discriminate; it affects people of all ages in all communities of all social standings. Don't let occasional recreational use become a

harmful habit; seek help early before it takes over,” Ms Goward said.

Anyone concerned about how ice is affecting themselves or a loved one are encouraged to seek help by speaking with a GP, calling the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) on (02) 9361 8000 (metro) 1800 422 599 (regional/rural) or getting further information from www.yourroom.com.au