

Addressing Illicit Drug Use By Offenders

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES

Illicit Drug Use

Drug use is the single largest factor impacting on the lives of offenders with studies showing a strong correlation between drug use, criminal activity and reoffending.

On admission into custody, most offenders report they have used illicit drugs in the community with a significant number reporting intravenous drug use.

Serious infectious diseases including hepatitis C can accompany intravenous drug use. Left untreated, drug-dependent offenders risk taking drug-related behaviour and infection back into the community.

Safer Communities

The Department of Corrective Services is committed to safer communities and understands the need for the reintegration of unaddicted offenders back into the community and the provision of safe correctional environments where drug-related incidents are minimised.

THE DEPARTMENT AIMS TO:

- deliver services which understand the realities of drug-taking behaviour;
- integrate supply reduction, demand reduction and harm minimisation strategies to address drug-related behaviour effectively;
- humanely confront offenders to accept the realities of their illicit drug use;
- recognise the links between the complexities of an offender's personal life and their illicit drug use; and
- develop and implement intervention methods which encourage and support offenders to take responsibility for their health and rehabilitation.

Priorities

The *Addressing Illicit Drug Use by Offenders Action Plan* supports the Queensland Government's priorities of safe and supportive communities and a better quality of life.

THE ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO:

- improving personal and public safety;
- delivering services that enable all Queenslanders to maintain and improve their quality of life;
- addressing the causes of crime through targeted, coordinated and consultative initiatives; and
- developing a more coordinated criminal justice system to improve integrated Government services, preventative measures and efficient, consistent responses to crime.

The Action Plan also supports the whole-of-Government policy, *Beyond a Quick Fix, Queensland Drug Strategic Framework 1999/2000 to 2003/2004*.

World-Class Corrections System

The Department of Corrective Services is committed to being a world-class corrective service and acknowledges the need to minimise drug supply while maximising the chances of rehabilitation.

This best practice policy reflects an understanding of the realities of illicit drug use behaviour. The circumstances of illicit drug use are so pervasive that effective action requires a total approach to achieve a safe and secure, offender-centred correctional system with a healthy environment and responsible rehabilitation programs.

Addressing illicit drug use in the State's corrections system represents major challenges for the Department of Corrective Services, challenges that are being met head on.

For a copy of the Department of Corrective Services *Addressing Illicit Drug Use by Offenders Action Plan*, contact 3227 7235 or email melissa.morris@dcs.qld.gov.au

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