



Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders report tabled

The House of Representatives Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee has tabled its report into Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) today. The report *FASD: The Hidden Harm* is available at www.aph.gov.au/fasd

The Committee examined FASD prevention strategies, intervention needs and management issues, and made 19 recommendations.

The primary recommendations are for a National Plan of Action for the prevention, diagnosis and management of FASD and for the establishment of a specialised FASD Reference Group to provide advice and oversight of the National Plan of Action.

'We don't yet know the true rates of FASD in Australia, but we are convinced that this is an important public health matter that should be managed consistently across all state and territories,' said Mr Perrett.

As part of the Committee's focus on FASD prevention, recommendations have been made to:

- promote awareness of FASD and the risks of drinking alcohol when pregnant,
- improve the training of health professionals,
- immediately roll-out a national FASD diagnostic and screening tool,
- mandate health warning labels on alcoholic beverages and packaging,
- develop a National Alcohol Sales Reform Plan taking into account the impacts of current pricing, availability and marketing of alcohol, and
- include FASD in the List of Recognised Disabilities and ensure access to support services for those affected by FASD and their carers.

The Committee Chair, Graham Perrett MP, said that FASD is an entirely preventable but incurable consequence of prenatal alcohol exposure. Preventing FASD is the key, but measures must also be put in place to assist and support those who are born with the life-long condition.

'The social, emotional and financial costs of FASD to individuals, their families and the community are devastating,' he said. The report includes recommendations to enable people disabled by FASD and their carers to access government support.

The Committee will hold a press conference on Thursday 29 November at 3.30pm in Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra, to outline the findings and recommendations of the report.

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Graham Perrett MP, on (07) 3344 2622 or 0434058200, .
For advice on timing of tabling, please contact the **Secretariat of the Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs**:

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