



ROBYN LAMBLEY MLA | **Member for ARALUEN**
MINISTER FOR ALCOHOL REHABILITATION

MEDIA RELEASE

EARLY WINS FOR ALCOHOL MANDATORY TREATMENT

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More than 100 problem drinkers have been referred to the Alcohol Mandatory Treatment system in its first quarter of operation.

In another success, the Federal Coalition Government has confirmed it will transfer income management powers to the AMT Tribunal, supporting welfare quarantining for problem drinkers.

Minister for Alcohol Rehabilitation Robyn Lambley said the Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Act came into effect on 1 July this year with the first patient admitted to an assessment service on 12 July.

“In the first three months, 101 people have been taken from the revolving door of police protective custody and referred to our mandatory treatment system – a remarkable achievement,” Mrs Lambley said.

“Assessment and treatment services are operating in Darwin, Nhulunbuy, Katherine and Alice Springs with 61 people undergoing treatment at the end of the first quarter. The remaining 40 people are at varying stages of the system including assessment, aftercare or have been given release orders.

“Already, the system is helping people clear the fog of alcoholism and supporting them to change their lives.”

Mrs Lambley said it was also encouraging to hear Labor’s support for the Government’s policy when Delia Lawrie on radio last week stated it was “good to see people getting rehab”.

“For years, Labor promised mandatory rehabilitation, it took the Country Liberals to deliver it,” she said.

In addition to the success of this program, Minister Lambley recently gained support from Federal Minister for Social Services Kevin Andrews for the tribunal to receive income management powers.

“I congratulate Mr Andrews for his no nonsense approach. Unlike his Labor predecessor who put politics ahead of policy, the tribunal will now get the powers it needs. This decision means people may have their welfare payments quarantined to limit their purchase of alcohol,” Mrs Lambley said.

“As well as treating chronic alcohol abuse, AMT has helped patients with significant health problems, reconnected people with their families, and provided employment and skills development to get their lives back on track.

“I applaud all the people who have contributed to the system’s success – the police, watch house nurses and staff, the assessment service clinicians and staff, the tribunal members and registry and the treatment service providers.”

In order to ensure reliable, consistent and transparent data, the figures relating to Alcohol Mandatory Treatment in the Northern Territory will be reported quarterly at www.health.nt.gov.au

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