



Listen to People Who Use Drugs:

More Injecting Rooms & More Peer Leadership!

We express our deep disappointment at the announcement by the Victorian Government to reject a second injecting room in the Melbourne CBD. The lack of safe spaces to consume drugs is driving overdose rates and resulting in significant harms to our community.

The government has instead announced a [“State-Wide Action Plan To Save Lives and Reduce Drug Harm”](#), that includes a range of measures to address overdoses across the state; including more pharmacotherapy, naloxone and “care and support”, as well as starting the development of a statewide AOD strategy. Essentially implementing all of the recommendations in the Ken Lay report, “except for one” - a second injecting room.

“These are welcome investments; although they would be more effective alongside an injecting room. We will be watching closely to ensure that people who use drugs; the actual community of people directly affected by this issue; are meaningfully included in the design and implementation of all of these new investments.” Sione Crawford, CEO of Harm Reduction Victoria.

We know that operating large, Medically Supervised Injecting Rooms, such as the one in North Richmond, is an expensive and logistically complicated operation. We know that the Victorian Government was unable to convince businesses and residents in the CBD to overcome their fear and stigma around these services.

But what we also know; is that these injecting rooms don’t have to be so large, so expensive and so medically supervised. Successful examples from around the world involve fewer medical staff, less clinical oversight and an expanded role for peer support and community-based harm reduction interventions. These are ultimately less expensive and more effective.

“The Government’s new State-Wide Action Plan and forthcoming drug strategy must include many, smaller, peer-based safer drug consumption spaces. This will reduce the burden on amenity in surrounding areas and truly empower people who use drugs to keep ourselves, our friends and our communities safe from overdose and drug-related harms.”

For further comment, contact Harm Reduction Victoria: **(03) 9329 1500**



SCAN ME