



STUART GRIMLEY MP

Member for Western Victoria
State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party

MEDIA RELEASE



Grimley Asks for AOD Specialist Funding for Colac Area Health

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State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party, Stuart Grimley, has asked the Minister for Health, the Hon Martin Foley, for funding for an Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Specialist at Colac Area Health.

The Colac area desperately needs this funding, as there has been a lack of assistance for those recovering from addiction in the area.

In 2011, healthcare reforms changed the way regional health centres are funded. Due to these reforms the Colac Area Health has been worse off. When the state recommissioned AOD services in 2014, funding for these services had been stretched throughout regional Victoria, with some areas struggling to improve or expand their services.

These new funds will enable Colac Area Health to employ a full time staff member to initiate alternative therapies that are proven to help people recover from alcohol and drug addiction. Programs such as Nature Therapy – where recovering users are taken on nature walks and similar - could be used to help people recover from their crippling addictions.

Potential funding could also go towards helping client's kick-start their new lives, by providing a once-off cleaning service at a client's home or a one-off payment of a client's pharmacy bill. These services, albeit minimal to some, are often an important first step in helping a person recover from a debilitating addiction.

Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

"As a former police officer I often saw the destruction addiction had on families and communities. In some cases people who were suffering from addiction couldn't receive the help they needed in their own community. If more AOD services were available, particularly in rural Victoria, a lot of heartache could have been prevented.

Derryn Hinch's Justice Party has been a long-time advocate for expanded AOD services. There is a real need, across all of Victoria, for expanded support for those suffering from addiction. Alternative services, such as Nature Therapy, are at the forefront of a new era of addiction recovery.

It's not fair that regional Victorians need to travel outside of their community to seek help for addiction. It is imperative that the government can fund these new services for Colac Area Health. The addition of an AOD specialist will give the service a stronger ability to help locals recover from addiction in their own town. However I'd like to congratulate Colac Area Health on the great work they do with the limited funding resources available.

I look forward to receiving a response from the Minister in due course. Derryn Hinch's Justice Party will always advocate for improved services for Victorian's suffering from addiction."

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