



MEDIA RELEASE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ACTION TO PREVENT FOETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

26 February 2015

REPORT ON FOETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

The Hon Kezia Purick MLA today tabled the Select Committee on Action to Prevent Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder report *The Preventable Disability*.

“This report highlights the devastating effect of FASD in the Territory. The impacts on sufferers and carers are lifelong” Ms Purick said. “The effects can be seen in schools, health services, policing and the courts. The personal, social and financial cost is immeasurable.”

FASD is caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy. “The sad reality is that FASD cannot be cured. However, it can be prevented”, Ms Purick said. “Better alcohol management is key to addressing this terrible problem. Indeed, it could be restriction of supply is a key plank in reform.

“The Territory has made progress in addressing alcohol abuse over the last 20 years. Annual consumption continues to go down, and there have been falls in alcohol related assaults in regional centres, but the level of abuse is still too high and risking future generations.

“We need to evaluate which initiatives are working so we can build on our successes, and continue to develop innovative policies that will prevent so many children being denied their potential before they are born.”

The recommendations also address FASD diagnostic services, early intervention services, early childhood support and education, support and referral programs for pregnant women including services targeting alcohol dependent pregnant women, training for health professionals, residential secure care, education and awareness campaigns on the dangers of alcohol while pregnant, and programs for children on sexual health awareness.

“The Committee thanks all those who have shared their time, experience and expertise. I also thank my fellow committee members for their work on the Committee and shared commitment to taking action to prevent FASD,” Ms Purick said.

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