



Media Release

For Immediate Release

FASD CLINIC FUNDING: FARE AND NAAPA WELCOME STATE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

16 March 2015: Today's announcement that the Baird Government will invest in the prevention of harm to children from alcohol has been welcomed by the country's leading alcohol research and advocacy organisation and an alliance of 47 organisations working to promote evidence-based actions to prevent alcohol-related harms in NSW.

The NSW ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA) says the Baird Government should be commended for committing funds to the establishment of the *Centre for the Prevention of Harm to Children and Adolescents from Drugs and Alcohol*, which will incorporate a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Clinic.

The Centre will bring together a range of health and medical experts to assist children and young people affected by alcohol and drugs including children with FASD. The Centre will also support the training and up-skilling of health professionals so vitally needed in this field.

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) Chief Executive, Michael Thorn says the announcement is very welcome because it recognises the important work that Professor Elizabeth Elliott has led at the Children's Hospital at Westmead, where FARE supported the establishment of Australia's first FASD Clinic to pilot approaches for the diagnosis and management of FASD.

"I am pleased that the NSW Government is committing to ongoing funding for the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Clinic and an expansion of the Clinic's work to address alcohol's impact on children and young people," Mr Thorn said.

NAAPA, of which FARE is a founding member, called for \$1.2 million over four years to establish a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) clinic at the Children's Hospital at Westmead in Sydney in its recent [NSW Election Platform](#). Funding support for the clinic has now been committed to by both the NSW Government and Opposition.

"With this announcement today, we now have a commitment from both major parties to support the funding of a clinic for the diagnosis and management of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, a lifelong condition that affects too many Australians. This will make a significant difference to the lives of people affected by FASD, their parents and carers. We look forward to working with the NSW

Government to clarify the Centre's role, governance, operation and research priorities," Mr Thorn said.

NAAPA will shortly release a scorecard grading the State's parties on their commitment to alcohol policies ahead of this month's State Election.

Michael Thorn says that he looks forward to the Government's response to the scorecard.

"Today's announcement is very welcome and it is my hope that we will now see both major parties recognising the need to commit to a broad range of evidence-based policy measures ahead of the State Election," Mr Thorn said.

Ms Caterina Giorgi, Director, Policy and Research, FARE is available for comment.

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The **Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)** is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol. Alcohol harm in Australia is significant. Over 5,500 lives are lost every year and more than 157,000 people are hospitalised making alcohol one of our nation's greatest preventative health challenges.

For over a decade, FARE has been working with communities, governments, health professionals and police across the country to stop alcohol harms by supporting world-leading research, raising public awareness and advocating for changes to alcohol policy. In that time FARE has helped more than 750 communities and organisations, and backed over 1,400 projects around Australia.

For further information visit FARE's website: www.fare.org.au.

The **NSW ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA)** is an alliance of 47 health, community, law enforcement, emergency services and research organisations working to promote evidence-based actions to prevent alcohol-related harms in NSW and the ACT. For further information visit www.naapa.org.au.