Our Patrons

Penington Institute is grateful for the support and wisdom of its Patrons.

Emeritus Professor
Sir Gustav Nossal AC
CBE, Chief Patron

Emeritus Professor
David Penington AC

Professor Margaret
Hamilton AO

The Hon. Michael
Kirby AC CMG

Drug use developments and markets move faster than research and policy responses. With outreach to the front line, we are well-placed to know and understand the realities of how drugs are impacting communities well before published literature identifies significant issues. Penington Institute is flexible and responsive, building and sharing knowledge as trends emerge and knowledge gaps become apparent.
Our mission

*Penington Institute advances health and community safety by connecting substance use research to practical action.*

Translating research to policy and practice, our workforce development and community education activities aim to:

» **Empower individuals, families and communities** to better manage substance use issues through enhanced awareness and community education

» **Reduce the burden of death, disease and social problems** related to problematic substance use by promoting rational, integrated responses to the health, social and economic drivers of drug-related harm

» **Respond effectively to the needs of those experiencing problematic drug use** by increasing the capacity of front-line workers with workforce training and development
Penington Institute was launched this year and named in honour of Emeritus Professor David Penington AC.

The launch of Penington Institute reflects the expansion of our work to include research, policy, community education and expanded workforce development.

Penington Institute has been established in its current form after a long and accomplished history, beginning as the Needle Exchange Workers Network in the early 1990s.

In 1995, we incorporated as the Association of Needle Exchanges (Anex) Inc, to provide the Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) sector with support and development opportunities. Anex organised regular service provider meetings, an annual conference and publication of the highly regarded Bulletin. Increasingly, Anex became involved in translating relevant research and contributing to policy debates.

Penington Institute is named in honour of Emeritus Professor David Penington AC, a leading Australian public intellectual. Professor Penington has been committed to evidence-based and compassionate approaches to drug issues. We are honoured that he lent us his name.

Penington Institute was launched at an event on 28 April 2014, attended by more than 250 people committed to improving drug policy and practice, including our Chief Patron Sir Gustav Nossal AC CBE and the then Victorian Minister for Mental Health, Hon. Mary Wooldridge MP.
Message from our namesake

It is an honour to have my name associated with the Institute, whose commitment to harm reduction I have admired from its inception. I have enjoyed working closely with CEO John Ryan over the years and greatly respect him both as a person and in his capacity to lead and guide the Institute.

Under his leadership, the Institute has continued to gain necessary support for NSPs, which has saved many lives through curbing HIV and hepatitis C transmission from shared needles and syringes. NSPs across Australia have benefitted from ongoing advice and professional support from the Institute, despite the Commonwealth recently withdrawing its support for the widely distributed Anex Bulletin, which is important in serving this function. The Institute’s recent Conference addressing ice attracted national attention and served as an important staff development event for alcohol and other drug personnel and NSP practitioners.

Importantly, John has shown a capacity to work with politicians, regardless of their party affiliations, to achieve necessary outcomes for the community in the difficult and controversial area of licit and illicit drugs. This has played an important role in bringing the attention of governments in Victoria to these problems.

Looking to the future, I have no doubt the Institute will continue as a national champion of harm reduction. It will continue to emphasise the importance of overdose awareness internationally. It will urge enhancement of the way we reduce dangerous recreational drugs use to reduce risk of addiction, causing physical harm to individuals as well as damage in our communities.

While we have seen many successes this year, which I am excited for you to read about, there is still work to be done within Australia. We need to learn from other countries where overdose death rates have been reduced to be far lower than ours. We need to engage in public debate to achieve necessary changes in Australia to this end.

As a Patron, I welcome my association with the Institute, skillfully lead by an able CEO with a small, but committed staff, and responsible to a very capable Board. I remain a person with independent views, and enjoy the journey as we learn from each other while tackling new and challenging situations.

Emeritus Professor David Penington AC
With the World Health Organisation (WHO) releasing new guidelines recommending increased access of naloxone, there is much to be done in many countries to decrease the estimated 69,000 annual global deaths from opioid overdoses.

These guidelines support models such as ours, and Penington Institute was invited as a keynote speaker at the guidelines launch in Geneva.

This is testament to the value of our efforts over the past year in relations to overdose. Our work has encompassed global awareness raising; destigmatisation of those affected by drug use; advocating for increased accessibility and ease of use for naloxone; and education of frontline workers.

The growing concern of ice use within communities has demanded extensive work with government, communities and frontline services to ensure we are facing up to the challenge the high purity drug presents. It requires us to respond quickly to gather new research and promote best practice amongst our colleagues.

Penington Institute recognised this need and brought together key stakeholders at our 2014 Australian Drugs Conference. We have also increased our hands-on work in metropolitan, but also increasingly, regional and rural areas.

The challenge for us all is that the current drug market is extremely dynamic and moves much quicker than government systems, health and law enforcement systems. There are many untapped but excellent opportunities to address drug use more effectively, especially at the local community level.

Now, more than ever, comprehensive and collaborative responses to drug use are required. It is for exactly this reason that Penington Institute was launched in 2014, to acknowledge our responsibility not only to build capacity within workforces and communities, but also to help shape policy and undertake research to identify new trends and better ways of addressing substance use issues.

On behalf of the Board of Penington Institute, and the communities with whom we work, we extend our utmost thanks to the numerous supporters, colleagues and collaborators who advise and assist us.

We hope you enjoy reading about our 2014 achievements.
Patrons and Board members at the Penington Institute launch: Back row L-R Terry Scanlon, Scott Wilson, John Ryan, Professor Steve Wesselingh, Dr Ingrid van Beek AM, Hon. Robert Knowles AO. Front row L-R Hon. David White, Emeritus Professor Ian Gust AO, Emeritus Professor David Penington AC, Kathryn Greiner AO, Emeritus Professor Sir Gustav Nossal AC CBE. Not pictured: Professor Margaret Hamilton AO and Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG.

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**Our Board of Directors**

*Penington Institute is governed by a Board of Directors with broad expertise, knowledge, skills and networks.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professor Steve Wesselingh</strong>&lt;br&gt;(Chair)</td>
<td>Executive Director of the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI)&lt;br&gt;Member of the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ms Kathryn Greiner AO</strong></td>
<td>Former City of Sydney Councillor&lt;br&gt;Chair of NSW Ministerial Advisory Committee on Ageing, Bio Tech Capital and Loreto Kirribilli School Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emeritus Professor Ian Gust AO</strong></td>
<td>Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne&lt;br&gt;Inaugural Director of the Macfarlane Burnet Centre for Medical Research (now the Burnet Institute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hon. Robert Knowles AO</strong></td>
<td>Former Victorian Minister for Health, Housing and Aged Care&lt;br&gt;Chair of Royal Children's Hospital, the Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia, and the Victorian Health Innovation and Reform Council</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mr Terry Scanlon</strong></td>
<td>Founder and former Managing Director of Lifestyle &amp; Rehab&lt;br&gt;Chair of Penington Institute's Finance, Risk and Audit Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dr Ingrid van Beek AM</strong></td>
<td>Director of the Kirketon Road Centre, Sydney&lt;br&gt;Conjoint Associate Professor, School of Public Health and Community Medicine at the University of NSW</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hon. David White</strong></td>
<td>Former Victorian Minister for Health</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mr Scott Wilson</strong></td>
<td>Director of the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council (ADAC), South Australia&lt;br&gt;Deputy Chair of the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee</td>
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Thank you to our supporters

*Penington Institute’s ability to expand its impact relies on much needed funding and support, for which we are very grateful.*

**Government**
- Australian Government Department of Health
- Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- Victorian Department of Health
- Victorian Department of Human Services
- Victorian Department of Justice

**Trusts and Foundations**
- Bell Charitable Fund
- Lord Mayor’s Charitable Foundation
- Reichstein Foundation
- Telematics Trust
- The Ian Potter Foundation
- The RE Ross Trust
- William Buckland Foundation

**Organisations**
- Commission for Children and Young People
- Leadership Victoria
- Russell Barrett Architects
- Stepping Up Consortium
- Swinburne University
- Terumo Pty Ltd
- UCB Australia

**Individuals**
- Ms Shanelle Ainscow
- Mrs Andrea Evans
- Archbishop Denis Hart
- Ms Emanuela Harting
- Mr Eddie Kutner
- Professor Richard Larkins AO
- Mr Geoff McInnes
- Emeritus Professor David Penington AC
- Mr Greg Perry
- Ms Shaylyn Rose
- Ms Ruth Rosh
- Mr Geoff Slade
- Ms Jane Shirley Stewart

We would also like to thank the many community members and frontline workers who keep us informed and linked to the real world challenges of drug use.
Penington Institute is grateful to the many volunteers around the world who provide invaluable support towards achieving our goals.

We thank our many International Overdose Awareness Day volunteer event organisers whose vision and dedication resulted in more than 100 events on four continents.

While there are too many to name individually, we would like to acknowledge all of the members of the following advisory committees:

» Australian Drugs Conference Reference Group
» Harm Minimisation in Prisons Committee
» International Overdose Awareness Day Australia Committee
» Research Advisory Committee
» Victorian Community Naloxone Provision Reference Group

We are also thankful to the 2014 Australian Drugs Conference volunteers whose logistical and strategic support enabled us to respond to the need for new strategies and shared knowledge in regards to the increased prevalence of ice.
2014 at a glance

More than **2100** workers in VIC received training on drug trends and how to effectively respond.

**3300** attendees at over 20 community forums were provided information on ice across Victoria.

Over **100** IOAD events on **4** continents were held to raise awareness of overdose and provide a supportive place for loved ones to grieve.

**16000** NSP workers across the country read the Anex Bulletin, receiving workforce training and up-to-date research.

**276** Needle and Syringe Program staff received formal and informal education and training.
96 frontline staff from 16 COPE pilot agencies have been trained to teach potential witnesses how to recognise and respond to an opioid overdose.

Over 3800 social media followers engaged about drug policy, overdose issues and new research findings.

300 workers and community members attended and shared their learnings at the 2014 Australian Drugs Conference: Ice and Altered Realities.

A potential audience of 20 million people received health and community safety messages through print, television and radio.

Deadly drug habits were held to provide networking and learning opportunities for frontline employees.
Responding to ice use

Crystal methamphetamine, commonly known as ice, has become an increasingly problematic and complex issue across Australia, requiring a comprehensive and strategic response. With levels of purity rising from approximately 20% in 2010–2011 to over 75% in 2012-2013 and accessibility increasing, rates of ice use have grown dramatically.

Penington Institute has been at the forefront of much-needed policy, workforce and community responses spanning the health, welfare and justice systems. In 2014, ice use was addressed in almost every aspect of our work, supporting affected communities across metropolitan Melbourne as well as regional and rural Victoria.

» Since 2012, Penington Institute has been working with local service providers to provide 1654 frontline workers from diverse workforces across Victoria with access to 91 training events.

» We provided information on ice to 3300 people at more than 20 community forums across Victoria in 2014. Our extensive engagement with local media also helped to communicate the facts, rather than myths, about drug use to communities.

What are you doing on ice?

Ice is a highly addictive drug that ruins lives.

Visit ice.vic.gov.au for facts and help.

This campaign was developed by the Victorian Government, in partnership with Penington Institute.
Penington Institute contributed extensively to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Methamphetamine, as their findings have the potential to greatly improve policy settings.

We worked in partnership with the Victorian Government to research and develop the multi-media public education campaign, “What are you doing on ice?”

The 2014 Australian Drugs Conference theme of Ice and Altered Realities, addressed the need for up-to-date research and education for workforces providing information on developing drug trends.

In 2014, Penington Institute was also engaged by various government departments to build workforce and community capacity, delivering training and capacity building events to over 450 participants and nine multi-sector local forums with over 300 participants.

Penington Institute worked with the Victorian Department of Justice to host a series of stakeholder forums across nine regions in Victoria, deliver four community forums, and provide training to over 150 staff from correctional facilities across Victoria.

Training was delivered to the Commonwealth Department of Human Services’ – Centrelink staff to increase frontline workers knowledge of ice and strategies to respond to its use.

We delivered a key note address to a meeting of Aboriginal community leaders from across Victoria on ice and community.

A total of 250 frontline workers were hosted at four Department of Health & Human Services regions at one day practice forums focused on family violence, cultural competency and ice.

With the Victorian Department of Early Education and Childhood Development, a seminar was hosted for 23 Statewide Apprenticeship Support Officers (ASO), increasing their capacity to support apprentices, focussing on ice.

Responding to the increased use of ice, our diverse work in 2014 has informed and educated communities and built frontline service capacity, protecting community health and safety.
Identifying and responding to emerging trends

Drug use problems are complex, and require proactive research and strategic policy. Research helps us disentangle some of the social, biological and economic factors behind problematic drug use, better suggesting responses to benefit affected individuals, families and communities.

Penington Institute’s work is evidence-based, drawing upon research from around the world to inform our practice. We undertake research to help identify and inform policy and practical responses to specific substance use problems.

Improving practice and policy

Penington Institute encourages government and workforce policy best practice.

In 2014, we:

» Gave one written and two verbal submissions to the Victorian Parliament’s Law Reform, Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee, Inquiry into the Supply and Use of Methamphetamine in Victoria, supporting the need for a balanced approach and local community capacity building

» Made a submission to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee to place new hepatitis C treatments on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)

» Drafted a paper on the impacts of opioid maintenance therapy consumer co-payments and consulted on the issue with key stakeholders, supported by the Reichstein Foundation

» Responded to the Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs’ (IGCD) analysis of the arrangements and possible changes to opioid maintenance therapy provision

» Contributed to Harm Reduction International’s publication, the Global State of Harm Reduction 2014*

» Provided comments on National HIV and hepatitis strategies, including recommending greater support for NSPs in regional, rural and remote areas and improved NSP access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who inject drugs

» Assisted the Australian Capital Territory develop its plan to introduce sterile needle provision in prison

» Assisted the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to develop the Handbook for Starting and Managing Needle and Syringe Programmes in Prisons and other Closed Settings
Facilitating shared knowledge, research and action

In 2014, a community assessment on the impacts of ice was produced for the Victorian Department of Health, as response systems are not yet able to fully cope with ice-related health, corrections, housing and family support issues.

In partnership with the University of South Australia’s Professor Jason White, sewage treatment plant samples were tested for traces of methamphetamine use within Melbourne, two regional cities and a small country town. It was a first for Victoria, and the Victorian Government has since announced that sewage epidemiology will become a permanent addition to drug use monitoring systems.

Additional research has been undertaken into contemporary injecting practices, uncovering changes in drug using cultures in order to improve service system responses.

Penington Institute’s Australian Drugs Conference brings together frontline workers, researchers, police, policy makers, medical professionals, drug users and other community members to highlight and discuss such information and new findings.

2014’s Conference, Ice and Altered Realities, was in response to the need for more information to improve efforts to address the impacts of rising ice purity and the vast array of new synthetic drugs.

300 people shared their experiences, heard about the latest research, and networked with their national and local colleagues during the two-day conference at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).
Empowering communities through education & awareness

Problematic drug use can affect anyone, and too often, individuals, families and communities feel helpless to respond.

This year, Penington Institute saw a vast increase in communities reaching out for information on commonly used drugs such as ice, and how they can effectively respond to the signs and symptoms of drug use. These requests came from throughout the Melbourne metropolitan area, but also increasingly from rural and regional areas.

Penington Institute spent the year working hands-on with communities, while also using media engagement as an education tool, ensuring the general public is receiving up-to-date and accurate information.

Ice education through community forums

In both rural and metropolitan areas there has been much publicity and discussion regarding methamphetamines generally, and ice in particular. In response, Penington Institute works with local communities to organise community forums where people can learn how ice works and why it is vital to support affected people, especially families.

Penington Institute offers education, information and active participation from local services with the aim of informing various stakeholders on the fundamentals of ice use. Community forums promote prevention and harm reduction messages, participation of local services, and potential strategies to implement in order to reduce harm to the community and the individual.

These forums aim to meet the particular needs of each community and are designed to be interactive.

Community forums in demand

220 people were at the local sporting club in Tooleybuc NSW, a rural town with a population of only 170. More than 3300 people have attended 20 of our community forums in 2014. Forums were in high demand as people sought to be informed about ice and its potential impact on the community.
Addressing emerging issues with community programs

Penington Institute seeks funding from various organisations to undertake new community education projects each year, in response to new drug markets and emerging trends.

In 2014, The Ian Potter Foundation funded the creation of an effective community drug education resource on ice. This project is specifically targeted at individuals working with young adults. It will provide relevant training and information on possible intervention strategies. The project will be rolled out in 2015.

Additionally, Lord Mayor’s Charitable Foundation approved funding for a project to commence in 2015, addressing synthetic drug use among young people using digital media strategies.

Informing the public through media

Penington Institute is committed to ensuring the general public is well-informed about the use of licit and illicit drugs, and its potential impact on them and their communities. By sharing accurate and evidence-based information, communities receive the information they need in order to respond effectively.

This year, focusing on ice and the tragedy of overdose, media engagement included over 300 publications in print media outlets and numerous radio and tv interviews, reaching a potential audience of 20 million people. We worked with a range of outlets, from small country newspapers to national and international radio and television.

Highlights in Australia included stories in the Sydney Morning Herald, Herald Sun, The Age and A Current Affair. Internationally, coverage included the Huffington Post (USA) and CBC News (Canada).
Saving lives through overdose prevention

Fatal overdoses in Australia outnumbered the road toll for the second year in a row, with 1,427 overdoses to 1,338 road deaths.

Overdose claims an extraordinary number of lives each year and can also lead to prolonged hospitalization and high numbers of long-term disabilities such as brain damage, impacting heavily on health and community resources.

A drug overdose can happen to anyone, anywhere. Four times as many middle-aged Australian women die from accidental overdose than from car accidents, and the accidental overdose death rate is now higher in regional and rural areas than in our capital cities.

In Australia, pharmaceutical drugs cause more deaths than heroin and the detrimental mixing of drugs is increasingly common.

Penington Institute recognises that we can – and must – do far more to prevent the tragedy of overdose.

International Overdose Awareness Day

2014 marked the third year that Penington Institute auspiced International Overdose Awareness Day, an annual event held on 31 August. It spreads knowledge about how to prevent overdose and provides a safe space for people to remember loved ones lost to overdose.

This year, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime recognised the day for the first time. Worldwide media mentions to raise awareness of overdose amounted to almost 200 articles reaching communities throughout Australia as well as audiences from the USA to Ireland and Kenya. Many events were held, including 80 registered events in different countries across four continents.

With the support of the William Buckland Foundation a smartphone App (Overdose Aware) was created and launched to inform the community about how to respond to overdose. Additionally, a new website (overdoseday.com) was developed to provide campaign materials to event organisers, as well as provide a place for families and friends to memorialize loved ones.

Penington Institute is particularly thankful to the RE Ross Trust for its recurrent funding, and Swinburne University for their pro bono contributions.
Community Overdose Prevention and Education

COPE strives for the widespread use of naloxone as a standard first aid response to overdose, with a long-term vision of eliminating fatal opioid drug overdoses.

Opioids are involved in the majority of drug overdoses in Australia, but ultimately, these do not have to be fatal. Knowing the signs and symptoms of an overdose and using an opioid overdose reversal drug can quickly stop an overdose before it results in death. Naloxone is the drug used by paramedics and hospitals, and anyone can be trained to use it.

This year began the official roll out of COPE in metropolitan, regional and rural areas. COPE is building the capacity of the health system and other related agencies to reduce overdose mortality and morbidity. COPE is also educating frontline workers, including primary health providers and other professionals, on how to make naloxone available to potential overdose witnesses and train them to use it.

With funding support of the Victorian Government, we are working with 16 pilot agencies to ensure processes are in place for a diversified and comprehensive overdose prevention and response program. The program involves collaboration with key organisations including the Australian Medical Association, Victoria Police, Ambulance Victoria, the Pharmacy Guild and those in Victoria’s NSP and drug treatment sectors.

Informing the community about overdose reversal

Alongside the work of COPE, Penington Institute is taking additional measures to prevent overdose, ensuring that the community has ready access to knowledge about naloxone and how to use it.

In partnership with the Stepping Up Consortium, Penington Institute is producing an audio-visual resource to explain in detail the application of naloxone. With the support of UCB Australia, we are developing a digital application to raise awareness amongst those who use drugs, their families, the broader community and health professionals.

Victoria Police, Ambulance Victoria and North Richmond Community Health Centre support naloxone education and training.
Building capacity of organisations and frontline workers

Penington Institute provides direct support to the vital frontline services helping individuals, families and communities with substance use problems. Through our training and professional networks, we ensure community organisations and agencies have the resources available to them in order to best serve their users. We offer workforce development, as well as opportunities to establish collaborative relationships with other key service providers, to ensure that learnings are shared and healthy approaches are adapted as needed across a wide spectrum of services.

Developing workforce skills and knowledge

Frontline workers, especially those at NSPs, often interact directly with people who inject drugs, delivering hands-on health and overdose education. Training helps inform frontline workers about the harms arising from particular drug use, how to respond, and how to effectively provide information to those at risk.

Penington Institute offers a wide range of training, both customised and workforce specific. Online education is also becoming increasingly necessary, especially for isolated workforces around the country. In 2014, the Telematics Trust funded the development of an online education resource for frontline workers in contact with drug users who are expecting or have young children.

In 2014 our workforce development team delivered face-to-face training for more than 2100 workers in 123 training sessions across Victoria. Topics covered newly emerging information on the increasing injection of steroids and peptides, ice and overdose prevention.
Supporting Needle and Syringe Programs

Needle and Syringe Programs (NSPs) provide an essential service by encouraging healthy practices amongst injecting drug users, reducing transmission of HIV and hepatitis, while also decreasing financial burdens on health care systems.

Penington Institute builds the capacity of organisations to establish and operate NSPs. We develop NSP workers’ skills and knowledge to provide high quality, effective and well-utilised services. This is done through formal and informal education and training, mentoring, guidance and advice, eNetworking, publications, and resource development, network meetings and on-site visits.

In 2014, 25 organisations received formal training, with 276 NSP staff benefitting from information on topics such as current injecting drug trends, HIV and hepatitis and vein care.

Two volumes of the Anex Bulletin were published with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health, and 12 Service Provider Network Meetings were held thanks to the Victorian Government of Health. We also collaborated with medical experts to develop educational resources around the potential harms from injecting the newly reformulated OxyContin®, both to inform people who inject drugs of potential harms, while also increasing knowledge of NSP workers.

Since 2002, the Anex Bulletin has been Australia’s only workforce training publication researched and written for NSP workers across the country. The Bulletin taps into the wealth of experience that frontline workers have, sharing their knowledge and skills with colleagues and policy makers.

The Anex Bulletin is known for publishing new research and findings, such as this year’s finding that few Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations are actively preventing HIV or hepatitis through NSPs. The special Aboriginal edition highlighted inspiring examples of dedicated work to protect Aboriginal health and was incredibly well received.

Unfortunately, citing budgetary conditions, the Australian Government de-funded the Anex Bulletin from June 2014. Penington Institute is currently continuing efforts to re-instate the Bulletin and is grateful to the many frontline workers who have supported our efforts.
Working across the system

A coordinated all-of-government response is needed to properly address drug issues. Penington Institute has been tasked by several departments of the Victorian Government to respond to emerging drug trends in 2014.

In recognition that an effective response to drug use requires law enforcement, harm reduction and demand reduction, the Department of Justice commissioned us to run regional key stakeholder workshops across Victoria attended by more than 400 organisations. These were planned to establish a greater understanding of the impact of ice on the community, promote collaboration and develop an action plan for each region. The Department also funded six training workshops in Victorian prisons to similarly educate prison officers, corrections and the community sector about ice.

Successive stakeholder workshops, ice training and community forums resulted in over 900 additional people in the workforce and general community receiving up-to-date information on the effects of ice and how to tactically respond.

In February, the Victorian Department of Health and the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria together with other Victorian government departments, including Justice, Education and Early Childhood Development and Victoria Police, hosted a meeting of Victorian Aboriginal community leaders from across the state in response to requests from the community concerning the impact of ice. Penington Institute spoke at the opening plenary, providing a global overview of ice use and a vision for a local community controlled response.

Working with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VAACHO), four forums of 50 participants each were held across metropolitan Melbourne to strengthen cultural competency.

The practical forum aimed to improve staff confidence in recognising ice use, assessing risk and learning practical strategies to reduce harm and work with clients in a safe and effective manner.

The forum focused on strengthening networks and service linkages, identifying how organisations can improve their response to families impacted by ice use.
“To my late fiancee, the wonderful intelligent, warm hearted, creative, joyful, handsome Mohamed, who died March 2014, who lived for 33 years on earth. I love you, and will always love you endlessly. If my skin can produce tears it would, from every cell on my body.”

www.overdoseday.com/tributes