



MEDIA RELEASE

PRIME MINISTER'S SUPPORT FOR DRUG TREATMENT WELCOMED

The Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA) welcomes the Prime Minister, John Howard's acknowledgement of the benefit of addiction treatment services in his comments today regarding Ben Cousins the AFL footballer.

There are 40 Therapeutic Communities in Australia and New Zealand helping over 3000 people a year rebuild their lives. Drug and alcohol abuse affects people from all walks of life and has a devastating effect on their loved ones.

In Mr Cousin's case we are also seeing a huge flow-on effect, particularly as he is in the public eye.

"Ben can become a role model for people fighting drug addiction. By taking a positive step, seeking treatment and proving to the community that drug addiction can be overcome he can rebuild his reputation and hold his head high." Says Janice Jones, Executive Officer of ATCA.

Therapeutic Communities provide a wholistic approach to treatment and rehabilitation, working not only with the addiction but the underlying causes that impact on recovery. Support is also provided to families to help them understand and cope with the affect a loved ones' drug use has on their lives.

The Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association calls not only on the Federal government but States and Territories to support the National Drug Strategy by providing more credible residential services that provide long term treatment in a safe supportive environment instead of being shunted from service type to service type.

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