

SunraysiaDaily

Study looks at ice impact

News 5

A TRAM line and revamped entrance to the city near the George Chaffey Bridge are on the wish-lists of Mildura residents.

Nation 8

AUSTRALIAN journalist Peter Grete could know by next week if he'll be convicted for a second time of terrorism charges in Egypt.

World 11

A MANHUNT for two convicted killers on the run from a maximum security US prison has narrowed to a small town where reports suggested the fugitives may have been cornered.

MILDURA'S indigenous community has contributed to a Melbourne University study into the impact of ice on Aboriginal communities and opportunities for prevention and intervention.

Researchers spoke to 14 indigenous people who are users and ex-users of crystal methamphetamine, six family members and six professionals working with users of the drug.

Melbourne University senior research fellow Dr Sarah MacLean said she and her colleagues began the study, undertaken in partnership with Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS), after identifying a gap in academic research surrounding indigenous ice use and its impacts.

"We wanted to look at different Aboriginal communities' experiences around ice use," Dr MacLean said.

"The aim of the project is to look at how well the service system is responding to those who use ice and their families as well."

Dr MacLean said the findings were still being collated, but already had inspired the production of a short film on indigenous ice use.

The eight-minute feature, to be disseminated using social media, presents a "hopeful" and

"positive" account of treatment and rehabilitation.

"One of the things that has come through really strongly in the research is the need for positive stories about ice users who have successfully stopped using ice," she said.

"We are hoping to provide a more positive approach to the treatment of ice use and hope that (users) can do something about it.

"It will include what services are available if people decide they want some support around ice use, as well as information for families to support people.

"It's more of an optimistic approach rather than frightening people about treatment and rehabilitation."

The research was collected over six months.

Dr MacLean's report will be released in coming months, following approval from MDAS.

MDAS social and wellbeing manager Rae Stephens said the findings would provide valuable insight for planning future programs.

"The project's outcomes and observations will support us in making much more robust and informed arguments in support of future programs for our region," she said.

- Toni Briant



WORKING TOGETHER: Sarah MacLean (centre) is working with MDAS' Rae Stephens and Ross Hengsen to study the impacts of the drug ice in indigenous communities.

Picture: Toni Briant

INDEX

Letters	6
National news	8, 9
Business	10
World news	11
Kids' Club	12
Fun Page	13
Weather	14
Classifieds	15-17
Sport	18-22, 24
Television	23

Lottery numbers

OZ LOTTO:
(Draw 1112): 15, 32, 7, 21, 14, 5, 10. Supps 16, 31.

Sunraysia Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd. (ABN 34 004 231 261)
22 Deakin Avenue, Mildura 3500. P.O. Box 1400, Mildura 3502

Telephone: 5023 0211
Facsimile: 5023 4817
Classifieds: 5021 0145

Email:
Display advertising: ads@sunrasyiadaily.com.au
Production: pro@sunrasyiadaily.com.au
Editorial: news@sunrasyiadaily.com.au
Sports News: sport@sunrasyiadaily.com.au
Accounts: accounts@sunrasyiadaily.com.au
Classifieds: classads@sunrasyiadaily.com.au

Home delivery
contact your local newsagent

Drug court push

By Toni Briant
tbriant@sunrasyiadaily.com.au

CRIMINAL lawyers across Victoria have urged the National Ice Taskforce to expand the Dandenong-based Victorian Drug Court to regional areas like Mildura in a bid to tackle ice use.

In Victoria Legal Aid's submission to the taskforce, which visited Mildura last week, managing director Bevan Warner said the drug court's approach provided the "optimum environment

for overcoming addiction" and supported a recent recommendation from a Parliamentary committee to roll it out statewide.

The submission was compiled after consultations with criminal lawyers across Victoria and revealed more than half Legal Aid's criminal cases involved ice use.

The drug court is a division of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria which provides for the sentencing and supervision of the treatment of offenders with a drug or alcohol dependency who have committed an offence under the influence of drugs or alcohol or to support a drug or alcohol habit.

Mildura's Martin Irwin and Richards criminal solicitor Hugh Middleton said it would promote a crack-down on the region's ice user offenders.

"If they break a community corrections order, it can sometimes take a month or two to reach court," he said.

"But in the drug court, within a week or weeks they are facing the consequences of their actions." Legal Aid also called for funding for specialist rehabilitation and detox services and support services for families throughout the state - of which Mildura currently has none.

Other recommendations included tactics successfully applied by Project Ice - educating secondary school-aged children about the dangers of using the drug, and implementing a collaborative response from government departments, health and legal sectors.



Get in before the June 30 deadline



Did you know that taking Private Health Insurance before your 31st Birthday sets you up to pay lower premiums for the rest of your life?

You pay a 2% government loading for every year past your 31st birthday that you wait to take out Private cover.

Mildura Health Fund has award winning value hospital cover for singles and families to get you started.

We can't guarantee you'll achieve all 5 but the first 4 are easier than you think



Mildura HEALTH Fund



Join before June 30 and get **ONE MONTH FREE**

T 03 5023 0269 - www.mildurahealthfund.com.au - 75 Deakin Avenue