ADDICTION IN THE RED CENTRE

Dr Bernard Hickey
Addiction Psychiatrist
Alice Springs
CENTRE
ALICE SPRINGS
Central Australia

• 50,000 people in region
• 30,000 Aboriginal Australians

• 30,000 people in Alice Springs
• 12,000 Aboriginal Australians in Alice Springs
• 18,000 Aboriginal Australians outside of Alice Springs
ADDICTIONS NOTED

• ALCOHOL
• CANNABIS
• ICE AMPHETAMINE
• OPIATES
• OTHER ‘HAPPY HERBS’
• PETROL AND SOLVENT-OPAL NON SNIFFABLE FUEL, FORCED TREATMENT, VIGILANCE
10 August 2016:

Alcohol is still responsible for two deaths, 52 hospitalisations and 69 assaults every week. NT drivers are 20 times more likely to return a breath test above the legal limit; alcohol’s a factor in at least 42 per cent of road deaths.

It’s a factor in 53 per cent of all assaults in up to 65 per cent of all family violence reported to police and 85% of intimate partner violence.

It is a major cause of child neglect, under stimulation and lack of responsive care.
Alice Springs Correctional Centre

Over 500 inmates
90% Aboriginal Australian
CENTRALIAN ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE THE LAST 150 YEARS

• Invasion
• Colonisation
• Near annihilation
• Missions and Sheep and Cattle Stations
• Cowboys and police
• Alcohol ban
• 1967-citizenship- fringe dwelling- town camps
LEADING TO........

• English not first language
• English as Kriol
• Low literacy and numeracy
• Non aboriginal employment rate 98%
• Aboriginal employment rate optimistically 40%
The wild and the meek

Non aboriginal population

• Missionaries, mercenaries, misfits, madmen

• Cowboys coming to town drinking pattern

• APPROX 40% OF INPATIENT AOD SEEN NON ABORIGINAL-ALCOHOL, AMPHETAMINES, OPIATES/PAIN
‘policemans’ waterhole
Government, Centralian Aboriginal persons and alcohol

Governments have tried

- Killing - 1850 to 1967
- Banning – til 1970
- Fining
- Imprisoning
- Dry town camps and communities - still, but leaks
- Thirsty Thursday - 1994
- Banned drinkers register version 1 2011
- Alcohol Mandatory Treatment 2014
- POSI-point of sale intervention
- Banned Drinker Register version 2 2017
- Most recently point of sale restrictions in Tennant Creek
The Northern Territory Attorney-General Natasha Fyles has acted to further restrict the sale of takeaway alcohol in Tennant Creek effective tomorrow 14 March 2018, for three months.

The varied conditions of the licences impose these restrictions:
• Takeaway liquor will only be available for sale Monday through to Saturday between the hours of 3pm and 6pm.
• Takeaway liquor sales on Sunday is prohibited.
• Sale of these products will be limited to no more than one of the following per person per day:
  – 30 cans or stubbies of mid-strength or light beer; or
  – 24 cans or stubbies of full strength beer; or
  – 12 cans or bottles of Ready to Drink mixes; or
  – One two litre cask of wine; or
  – One bottle of fortified wine; or
  – One bottle of green ginger wine; or
  – Two x 750 ml bottles of wine; or
  – One 750 ml bottle of spirits.
• The sale of port, wine in a glass container larger than 1 litre and beer in bottles of 750ml or more remains prohibited.
Wednesday, June 29, 2011

Alcohol. Coles and Woolworths try to do the right thing and...

This happens:

Coles and Woolworths are under attack in Alice Springs for banning cheap wine in an attempt to force up the alcohol floor price.

The Alice Springs town council has decided 5 votes to 3 to ask the supermarket chains to abandon the new rules due to come into effect Friday.

From then Coles will sell no bottled wine for less than $8 and no 2-litre cask wine setting an effective floor price for alcohol of $1.14 per standard drink. Woolworths will also cease selling 2-litre casks.

Mayor Damien Ryan argued strongly in favour of the ban Monday night, but having been defeated told The Age he would write to Coles and Woolworths as directed.
The Alcohol Burden of Disease Report noted that the Northern Territory has the highest proportion of alcohol related deaths for both males and females with the proportion around three times greater than the national average. The proportion of infectious diseases and deaths attributable to alcohol in the Northern Territory (22.6 per cent), was almost three times as high as the proportion in Tasmania (8.1 per cent).
Multitalented and punching 1000% above weight

- The population rates of alcohol-attributable injury mortality and morbidity were highest in the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory also had the highest population rates of alcohol-attributable neuropsychiatric diseases, deaths and hospitalisations with rates around 10 times higher than those in any other state or territory.

Alcohol attributable emergency presentations by hospital, NT, 2016-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Alice Springs Hospital</th>
<th>Gove District Hospital</th>
<th>Katherine Hospital</th>
<th>Royal Darwin Hospital</th>
<th>Tennant Creek Hospital</th>
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<td>831</td>
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<td>5618</td>
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Not just the angle making it go up
Alice shedding 'stabbing capital of the world' tag

- Posted 28 Mar 2008, 3:00pm **New figures from the Alice Springs Hospital show the town is no longer the 'stabbing capital of the world'.**
- A seven-year study co-authored by the hospital's head of surgery, Dr Jacob Ollapallil, last year revealed Alice Springs had the highest number of stabbings per capita in the world, with more than 200 stab operations a year.
- Dr Ollapallil says the hospital has seen less than half the expected number of stabbing admissions in the first two months of this year, with 26 cases.
- "More than that, none of these were very serious injuries," he said.
- He says alcohol restrictions, extra policing and the federal intervention are clearly helping to reduce violence.
- "My impression is that all these measures have made a difference," he said.
- He says the drastic reduction in trauma admissions has freed up resources to focus on elective surgery, diabetic and renal patients.
SOME OF THE LEVELS OF OPACITY

• 1. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION STYLE
• 2. SOCIOECONOMIC
• 3. HISTORICAL MISTRUST
• 4. CULTURAL/SOCIAL/RELIGIOUS/TECHNOLOGICAL
• 5. LITERACY AND NUMERACY
• 6. ILLNESS BURDEN
• 7. REMOTENESS
• 8. HIGH WORKER TURNOVER AND LACK OF EXPERTISE AND CROSS CULTURAL TRAINING
PLEASE USE AN INTERPRETER
REHAB

• CHILD AND YOUTH-BUSHMOB 20 BEDS
• CAAAPU- ABORIGINAL 25 MALE BEDS
• DASA- MIXED 25 BEDS
• SALVOS- 5 BEDS MALE
• TENNANT CREEK BRADAAG- 20 BEDS

• NO 12 STEP FACILITATION

• EVERY ORGANISATION HAS A DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICE
NOT PHOTOSHOPPED