

*Tuesday, 8 April 2008*

UnitingCare Moreland Hall would like to show its support for the AER Foundation's campaign to create a National Alliance against Alcohol Related Violence.

We believe that calls like those from AER Foundation, for politicians and governments, to consider how to change current laws or regulations to reduce the violence related to excessive alcohol use, are very important.

Moreland Hall has worked for the last thirty years with individuals and families struggling with alcohol and other drug issues. Many of those we work with struggle with alcohol use; and many of their family members are affected by the challenging behaviours - including violence - of those individuals as a result of that use. We see the destructive effects that excessive alcohol use and ensuing behavioural problems can have on people's lives every day.

In fact, alcohol is the single most destructive drug in terms of the numbers of clients we see. For example, of the nearly 1600 clients the organisation saw in 2006/2007, nearly 40 per cent were for alcohol (approximately 500 clients), the single biggest amount for any individual drug, and a percentage that has increased in the last five years. Excessive use of alcohol has many detrimental effects within our society, including family violence, aggression and drink-driving just to name a few.

The World Health Organisation, in a 2007 Report to the Secretariat, said there was extensive evidence of links between excessive drinking and social harms, and recommended that government undertake policies and interventions, both targeted and population-based, to reduce those harms. It suggested a range of strategies that could be used to do this, including greater regulations of sales of alcoholic beverages (including reduced times and greater price controls), enactment of appropriate drink-drive policies and deterrence based interventions and support of accessible and affordable alcohol treatment services.

Therefore we congratulate the AER Foundation and others for trying to increase awareness of the issue in the public mind, just as we welcome accurate and responsible coverage of the issue by the media and the increased commitment of governments to tackling the problems associated with it.

We hope that the campaign is just one step, but a significant one, in encouraging people within the community, and particularly government, to consider the effects of alcohol abuse in our community and the way in which it might be reduced.

Laurence Alvis,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Uniting Care Moreland Hall

Head Office: 26 Jessie Street Moreland Victoria 3058. Ph: (03) 9386 2876 Fax: (03) 9383 6705 Email: [queries@morelandhall.org](mailto:queries@morelandhall.org)

Youth Withdrawal: Gwentyth Williams House. 22 Jessie St Moreland 3058. Ph: (03) 9384 8855 Fax: (03)9384 2619

Community Residential Drug Withdrawal: Cnr Banksia & Edwin Sts. Heidelberg 3081. Ph: (03) 9497 5155 Fax (03) 9497 5381

Port Phillip Prison: c/-Moreland Hall. Cnr Doherty & Palmers Road Laverton 3028. Ph: (03) 9217 2222 Fax: 03 9217 7252