



City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi Street, West Perth WA 6005
Phone: 9420 7212 Fax: 9486 7955 www.iccwa.org.au

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate release

ICCWA Lunchtime Forum Thursday 5 March 2009

The 'Diversion' and 'Slow Down' Programs: increasing awareness among Aboriginal people

Flip-charts and a video that feature Aboriginal characters will spread the message about blood-borne viruses to Aboriginal communities in the regions.

Slow Down, a project of the WA Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (WANADA), draws on local knowledge and the expertise of community drug service teams and Aboriginal health services in the Midwest, South West and Great Southern. Participants have used the project to create wider awareness of the risks of injecting drugs such as amphetamines, and to improve communication between local agencies.

"Each resource encourages people to slow down and consider the risks," says project officer Mary Ford. "We have an important message and we're working to get it out there in a way that engages Aboriginal people."

The Diversion program offers drug counselling and rehabilitation to people who might otherwise receive custodial sentences. Diversion offers people the chance to address the alcohol and other drug problems that have contributed to offending behaviour and to learn about the health risks of alcohol and other drug use.

Aboriginal people are less likely to take up this opportunity and WANADA is working to increase awareness of Diversion among Aboriginal people so that they too can benefit. So far, WANADA has contributed to the creation of culturally secure brochures, the production of community service announcements about Diversion for radio, and community focus groups that aim to find out why Aboriginal people do not access Diversion as well as to increase community awareness.

The forum will be held in the Conference Room at City West Lotteries House, 2 Delhi Street, West Perth on Thursday 5 March 2009 at 12.30pm.

Ends.

Media contact: Deborah Costello, CEO, ICCWA (08) 9420 7212 or 0408 900 448.