



JOHN ELFERINK MLA | **Member for PORT DARWIN**

MEDIA RELEASE

LEADER OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT RELEASES ALCOHOL MANDATORY TREATMENT BILL

13 May, 2013

The draft Bill prescribing the Government's alcohol mandatory treatment reforms has been released for public scrutiny.

Leader of Government Business, John Elferink, said the Bill will be introduced into the Territory Parliament this week and debated during the Estimates sittings on 27 June.

"This is one of the most significant reforms in Northern Territory health and alcohol policy in recent years and the Government is determined to get it right," Mr Elferink said.

"Under the changes, problem drinkers taken into protective custody three times in two months could face up to 12 weeks of alcohol mandatory treatment.

"The Alcohol Mandatory Treatment Bill sets out the criteria, processes and powers that will mandate patient assessment, treatment, income management and aftercare orders.

"The Government looks forward to debating key points behind the legislation and welcomes stakeholder feedback.

"Our plan to treat problem drinkers is a positive move that provides a pathway to recovery that has never been explored before.

"The Labor Party has no plans to assist problem drinkers and its only promise is to bring back the Banned Drinker Register, which failed to stop problem drinkers from consuming alcohol."

Alcohol Rehabilitation Minister, Robyn Lambley, said she has already discussed alcohol mandatory treatment with dozens of stakeholders across the Northern Territory and looks forward to continuing this dialogue in coming weeks.

"There is a pressing need for a fresh approach to the grog problems many Territorians face," Mrs Lambley said.

"Alcohol problems haven't just emerged overnight, they have been with us for decades and the same old solutions just aren't working.

"In conjunction with the Government's Alcohol Protection Orders, increased policing and Alcohol Management Plans, I believe the foundations are in place to bring about a change in public drinking practices across the Territory."

The Bill will be posted on the Department of Health website tomorrow.

Media Contact:

Danielle Lede 0404 515 414

Camden Smith 0488 588 754

www.nt.gov.au

GPO Box 3146, Darwin NT 0801