

MEDIA RELEASE

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**ALCOHOL AND DRUG FOUNDATION WELCOMES
PROPOSED SENATE INQUIRY INTO FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER**

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation strongly welcomes a proposed Senate inquiry into Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

South Australian Senator Stirling Griff intends to move a motion this afternoon, on International FASD Awareness Day, for the Senate Community Affairs References Committee to conduct a broad ranging inquiry into FASD.

Matters the proposed inquiry will cover include:

- The level of community awareness of risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy
- Provision of diagnostic services in Australia
- Prevalence of FASD in vulnerable populations
- Recognition of FASD in the criminal justice system
- Access of FASD support available through the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Effectiveness of the National FASD Action Plan 2018-22

Chief Executive Officer, Dr Erin Lalor AM, said the Alcohol and Drug Foundation is hopeful the inquiry will complement and inform the Australian Government's National FASD Action Plan, released in November 2018.

Since the release of the National FASD Action Plan, the Western Australian Coroner's Court has released its findings from the *Inquest into the 13 Deaths of Children and Young Persons in the Kimberley Region*. Several of the recommendations relate to FASD.

"Research shows alcohol consumption during pregnancy can have a marked impact on the development of a child's central nervous system, while long-term studies show youth with FASD have high rates of mental health problems, learning difficulties and involvement with the criminal justice system," Dr Lalor said.

'For women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy, not drinking is the safest option,' Dr Lalor added.

Dr Lalor also noted the personal commitment of Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt and Minister for Indigenous Australians Ken Wyatt to addressing FASD. She was hopeful there would be a strong FASD focus in the next National Alcohol Strategy.

For drug information or support, people can visit www.adf.org.au or call the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's DrugInfo line on 1300 85 85 84. The confidential service provides drug information and puts people in touch with relevant support and health services in their state and territory.

For media enquiries please call the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's media team on 0430 948 380 or email them at media@adf.org.au

About the Alcohol and Drug Foundation: Celebrating 60 years of service to the community, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation is one of Australia's leading bodies committed to preventing and minimising alcohol and other drug harms in communities around the nation. The Foundation reaches millions of Australians in local communities through sporting clubs, workplaces, health care settings and schools, offering educational information, drug and alcohol prevention programs and advocating for strong and healthy communities.