

Inquiry into the Decriminalisation of Certain Public Offences, and Health and Welfare Responses

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Ms Lynda Pretty
Acting Committee Secretary
Community Support and Services Committee

By email: cssc@parliament.qld.gov.au



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Dear Ms Pretty

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the *Inquiry into the decriminalisation of certain public offences, and health and welfare responses*.

AMA Queensland supports health-based approaches to alcohol and other substance abuse problems. These issues should be treated in a health context and not via the criminal justice system.

Attached is our *Position Statement on Drug Law Reform* which, whilst directed at substance use rather than alcohol abuse, has significant parallels directly relevant to your Inquiry (confidential, not for publication or distribution).

As noted by the Queensland Parliamentary Mental Health Select Committee in its report from the *Inquiry into the opportunities to improve mental health outcomes for Queenslanders*, strategies that provide people who use alcohol and other drugs with early support and divert them away from criminal responses are beneficial for individuals and more cost effective than punitive responses.

Taking this approach to minor offences which are often related to alcohol and other substance abuse problems such as public intoxication, begging and public urination will also ensure more Queenslanders suffering these issues get the health treatment they need.

We welcome the inquiry and look forward to the report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maria Boulton'.

Dr Maria Boulton
President
AMA Queensland

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brett Dale'.

Dr Brett Dale
Chief Executive Officer
AMA Queensland

Enclosed: AMA Queensland, *Position Statement on Drug Law Reform* (confidential, not for publication or distribution)