

Congratulations to the NSW Police Commissioner on calling for a National Summit to combat the Drug Ice Epidemic.

For years, I have expressed concern that the northern beaches is not immune from Drug Ice and the devastation it causes to those consuming it and the heartache parents and loved ones suffer seeing people close to them deteriorate into paranoia and dysfunction, unable to participate in every day society. In the last four years, 166 people died on our roads involving motorists with at least one of three illicit drugs; cannabis, speed or ecstasy in their system. A disturbing 11 per cent of road fatalities involved a driver or motorcyclist who had illicit drugs in their system.

A National Summit can address the need for more funding for drug rehabilitation and mental health support. A system overhaul where parents or guardians can actually remit a person on drugs into drug rehabilitation or mental health services is paramount. All too often it is too late, and a person has to hit rock bottom and be sentenced to gaol instead of receiving the services needed to prevent them from being incarcerated or eventually dying. Tougher sentencing for the protection of our community against those pushing these drugs is also needed.

Drug Ice and hydroponically marijuana are also leading causes of suicide as they cause depression and other mental illnesses. Every day 7 people in Australia die by suicide and each year 2,535 die from suicide compared to the National Road Toll of 1,310. Warringah Council has adopted my recommendations that resources on where to get help be placed in every Council building. It is important to get the word out that services like LifeLine on 13 11 14, the Suicide Call Back Service [1300 659 467](tel:1300659467), Kids Helpline [1800 551 800](tel:1800551800) and Beyondblue [1300 224 636](tel:1300224636) are all available to help people of all ages.

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