

14th November 2004

The Hon. Andrew Refshauge MP
Member for Marrickville
PO Box 170
Marrickville 1475

Dear Andrew

I am writing to you to seek your assistance in having the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre Drug and Alcohol counselling service reinstated. For over five years the Centre had been able to provide the people of this area with a free drug and alcohol counselling service. This service has ceased since May 2004.

The Centre is situated in the heart of Newtown and provides an easily accessible and non-threatening place for drug and alcohol users to seek assistance. Newtown has a high population of people who use drugs and alcohol and the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre was seen as the place to go to for assistance. The Centre currently provides a comprehensive range of services to people who have problems with the use of drugs and/or alcohol. Narcotics Anonymous hold seven weekly meetings and Alcohol Anonymous hold two meetings and all meetings are very well attended. The information and referral service responds daily to inquiries from relatives, friends of users, people who have recently left rehabilitation and current users. The Centre does refer people to other services but they are finding other local services in the area have long waiting periods. Also many people do not see Royal Prince Alfred as an alternative as often people with the greatest need are less likely to access counselling at any mainstream health facility.

I am requesting your assistance in having the Drug and Alcohol counsellor reinstated to Newtown Neighbourhood Centre.

Yours Sincerely
