

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**29 May 2008**

### **Focus on workplace drug use during Drug Action Week**

Not enough is being done to focus on the problems of drug taking in the workplace and yet 70 per cent of drug users in Australia are employed, according to drug and alcohol testing and screening specialist Frontline Diagnostics.

Drug Action Week, held from 22 to 28 June, is a national initiative of the Alcohol and other Drugs Council of Australia (ADCA) which aims to raise awareness about alcohol and other drugs issues in Australia and highlight the achievements of the dedicated individuals who work to reduce alcohol and drug-related harm.

“Drug Action Week is a great initiative and it needs to include the awareness of drugs in all parts of the community including the workplace,” said Frontline Diagnostics Managing Director Michael White.

“Generally, people in the community think of chronic drug users being unemployed but that’s just not the case. Despite this, most organisations have no drug-safe program in place and, in many cases, are unaware of any drug and alcohol problem there might be in their workplace.

“Most drug-safe programs have been implemented in the safety-sensitive industries such as transport, mining and engineering, but it’s not just safety that suffers when drugs are mixed with work, it is also productivity and reputation.

“From our experience, it is not unusual to find 15 per cent substance abuse in the workplace. The objective of a Drug-Safe Workplace program is to show the non-users that they can take control of their own welfare and assist workmates to actively eliminate alcohol and other drugs from the workplace,” he added.

White said it is very important that any drug-safe workplace program be communicated throughout a company so as to ensure management, staff and unions feel comfortable with its development and implementation.

White established Frontline Diagnostics in 1999 to provide Australian industry with a complete solution for the detection, management and control of alcohol and other drugs in the workplace.

White has experienced first-hand how drug use can be overlooked in the workplace and the damaging consequences.

“Prior to setting up Frontline Diagnostics I worked with a business partner in pharmaceutical promotions for 15 years. We had a great working relationship and I

was unaware that he was a heroin addict until he overdosed and passed away after 12 years of using the drug,” White said.

“It was then that I decided I wanted to work towards creating a drug-safe Australia. Using my background in pharmaceuticals, I started Frontline Diagnostics to provide a testing and screening service as well as assistance in policy development for companies to lessen the impact of drug and alcohol use in the workplace,” he said.

Frontline Diagnostics services include complete drug screening and testing with results analysis and comprehensive reporting; policy development support for regulating alcohol and other drugs at the workplace; education workshops and training; purpose-built mobile clinics plus referral to accredited employee assistance providers.

Frontline Diagnostics operates with mobile clinics which provide a safe and hygienic solution that are set up and ready for testing immediately upon arrival.

For more information about Frontline Diagnostics, call 1800 888 852 or visit [www.frontlinediagnostics.com.au](http://www.frontlinediagnostics.com.au).

**Released for Frontline Diagnostics by Dennis Rutzou Public Relations  
([www.drpr.com.au](http://www.drpr.com.au))**

**For further information please call Kim Larochelle or Nicola Rutzou  
on (02) 9413 4244.**