

Community Coalition on Corrections

C/- ACT Council of Social Service (ACTCOSS)

<http://correctionscoalitionact.org.au>

PO Box 849

MAWSON ACT 2607

MEDIA RELEASE

FORUM SERIES ON THE OPERATION OF THE NEW PRISON

Two lunchtime forums this month – one on how fear and stigma inhibit good health policy and the other on young people and youth diversion – will kick off a series of forums focusing on impacts of the new ACT prison.

“The bricks and mortar of the new prison are important but far more important is the human factor if the prison is to return a worthwhile dividend to the ACT community,” said Bill Bush, secretary of the Community Coalition.

“The forums that the Coalition and its members are organising will focus on the human factor: the operation of the prison and the many ways the prison will and should interact with the community.”

The Coalition is thankful that the ACT Government has set the bar high. The prison is to be human rights compliant. It is to be healthy and promote rehabilitation. It is to be family friendly. Attention is to be paid to training that fits detainees for employment. There is to be a smooth transition back into the community.

“These outcomes pose big challenges which the Coalition is keen to play its part in promoting,” added Mr Bush. “They are achievable only with the co-ordination of human and material resources across government and the community including those of agencies represented on the Coalition.”

The first two forums will take place in the *Legislative Assembly reception room*, London Circuit, commencing at 12:30 pm:

Friday 14 March: “How fear and stigma inhibit good health policy”.

Speaker: David McDonald, a leading consultant in social research
Organised by ACT Hepatitis C Council & AIDS Action Council of the ACT

Thursday 20 March: “Exploring Diversions: Implications of the new ACT Prison and Youth Detention Centre”.

Speaker: Julia Tresidder of the Australian Institute of Criminology
Organised by Youth Coalition of the ACT

The forums are intended to foster informed debate.

The ACT Community Coalition on Corrections is a network of community organisations and interested individuals which engages in systemic advocacy for corrections reform and the rights of prisoners and their families in the ACT.

Contact for first forum: [Andrew Burry] (02) 6257 2855, 0412 882 855

Contact for second forum: Maiy Azize (02) 6247 3540, 0434 200 794

Contact for series: Bill Bush (02) 6257 1786

4 March 2008