



## Media Release

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### **Health workers to discuss local ice strategies**

Esperance health professionals treating patients affected by methamphetamine use will have a chance to speak with one of the State's leading authorities on illicit drug use this week.

Rural Health West has engaged Paul Dessauer from the Western Australian Substance Users' Association (WASUA) to lead a discussion with local health professionals about ice use, harm reduction and drug treatment services at an exclusive dinner discussion on 23 June.

Rural Health West Manager of Continuing Professional Development Leesa Thomas said rising methamphetamine use was a concern for many health professionals.

"They're keen to know more about how they can treat patients, keep them safe, and what help is available for those affected by drug use.

"Mr Dessauer's organisation, WASUA, provides peer education, harm reduction, healthcare and drug treatment services for people who use illicit drugs.

"He has extensive knowledge of the interplay between drug use and mental health issues, and delivers the drug and alcohol program for patients at Graylands Hospital.

"This discussion will give local health professionals a chance to hear from Mr Dessauer about the strategies other communities have put into place and will hopefully lead to a shared understanding of how the Esperance community can care for people with drug issues," she said.

The discussion is specifically for health professionals caring for patients who use illicit drugs. Health professionals interested in attending should contact Rural Health West on 6389 4500.

Rural Health West provides a range of professional development opportunities to rural health professionals to enhance their skills and knowledge and improve access to quality health care for people living in rural Western Australia.

**ENDS**

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*As the leading rural health workforce agency for Western Australia, Rural Health West is a not-for-profit organisation funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments responsible for the recruitment and retention of a highly skilled sustainable health workforce to meet the needs to rural and remote Western Australian communities.*