

Paul Lynch MP
Shadow Attorney General
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NSW LABOR OPPOSITION COMMITS TO ESTABLISH A NEW DRUG COURT IN WOLLONGONG

NSW Labor has today committed to establish a new drug court for the Wollongong region.

Addressing a forum at the University of Wollongong organised by the Wollongong and District Law Society, Shadow Attorney General and Shadow Minister for Justice Paul Lynch said it was time the Drug Court was expanded to the region.

“The Drug Court of NSW helps break the cycle of addiction,” said Mr Lynch.

“The previous Labor Government established the State’s first Drug Court in Parramatta in 1999. A second was opened at Toronto in the Hunter region in 2011, and a third was later established at the Downing Centre in Sydney.

“In Government, Labor will expand the Drug Court to Wollongong.

“Extensive research undertaken by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research shows that the Drug Court program reduced both drug use and reoffending, saving NSW taxpayers more than \$1.75 million per year.

“Drug Courts help end the cycle of drug-related crime which is a positive for the whole community”.

“The expansion of the Drug Court to Wollongong will help tackle the problems of drug-related crime”.

“It has been proven to work very effectively in the Hunter, Parramatta and Sydney, with a reduction in crime and significant savings for the State”.

“It is time Wollongong gets the same facilities as other parts of NSW,” added Mr Lynch.

The Drug Court of NSW offers non-violent, drug dependent adult offenders the opportunity to participate in an intensive, supervised program of treatment and rehabilitation. Successful completion of the program, which takes at least 12 months, allows offenders to avoid a custodial sentence.

The Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research’s most recent evaluation report (2008) found that participants accepted into the program were:

- 17 per cent less likely to be reconvicted for any offence
- 30 per cent less likely to be reconvicted for a violent offence
- 38 per cent less likely to be reconvicted for a drug offence

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