

Hon John Key

Prime Minister



8 October 2009

Media Statement

PM outlines National Govt's plan to fight 'P'

Prime Minister John Key today outlined the Government's plan to tackle the dangerous drug 'P' in a speech in Auckland.

"I am determined that we will use the full force of the Government's arsenal to fight the problem of P, a seriously addictive drug that is ruining lives," Mr Key says.

"My officials have been working for months with various government agencies on fighting this menace. The result is a Government Action Plan on Methamphetamine, which contains a comprehensive set of policy changes."

"The Government is adopting a multi-pronged approach to fighting this dangerous scourge by cracking down on precursors, breaking the supply chain, providing better routes into treatment, supporting families and community, and strengthening leadership and accountability."

The Government moves include:

- Restricting access to the precursor chemicals P is produced from by making pseudoephedrine a Class B2 controlled drug, making it prescription-only.
- Using the proceeds of crime legislation to fund anti-P initiatives, including additional Police and Customs activities to fight gangs and organised crime. Proceeds will also fund an expansion of drug treatment services.
- Developing a dedicated treatment pathway for P users, starting with the Ministry of Health investing in additional \$22 million in clinical services to ensure both short term and longer-term treatment for P addiction is available to more than 3,000 additional patients over the next three years.

- Assigning 40 additional Customs officers to special dedicated drug-taskforce duties to help break the supply chain.
- Implementing a new Police Methamphetamine Control Strategy from November this year, which aims to use intelligence in new ways to target gangs, investigate drug syndicates which import P precursors illegally, target P 'cooks' and seize funds and assets gained through P-related activity.
- Reviewing the outdated Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Act 1966, to provide a more effective legal means for families and doctors to get P-addicts into compulsory assessment and treatment.
- Making chief executives of Government agencies accountable for delivering on our plans, as measured against a range of targets that will be clearly set out in the actual Action Plan to be released next week.

"The steps outlined today are critical, but if further action is warranted, the Government will take it. I am not going to pretend that this Action Plan will stamp the P problem out for good," says Mr Key.

"Throughout the world, wherever leaders have promised to eradicate drug use they have found it to be an elusive goal.

"That is why the Government intends to come at the problem from all directions – by cracking down on precursors, breaking the supply chains, providing better routes to treatment, supporting families, and strengthening leadership and accountability."

Media contact: Kevin Taylor 027 600 5619

Attached: One-page summary & report of Professor Sir Peter Gluckman on pseudoephedrine