Media Release

Robyn Lambley, Member for Araluen
Minister for Alcohol Rehabilitation

12 months of alcohol mandatory treatment puts NT on the right track

1 July 2014

It is 12 months today since the Country Liberals Government introduced alcohol mandatory treatment in the Territory, delivering on our promise to counter public drunkenness and provide the necessary rehabilitation to break the cycle of abuse.

Minister for Health Robyn Lambley said she was pleased to announce that the contract to expand alcohol mandatory treatment in Tennant Creek had been awarded to a local provider.

“In Tennant Creek, BRADAAG (Barkly Region Alcohol and Drug Abuse Advisory Group) will operate a 12 bed treatment service at the NT government-owned Alcohol and Other Drugs facility in the town.

"We have a strong working relationship with BRADAAG, which runs a range of alcohol support and rehabilitation services in Tennant Creek, including the Sobering Up Shelter.

“The Department of Health will operate a four bed AMT assessment service in the Tennant Creek Hospital.

"It is expected services will progressively start operating from late this month.

"This is a service that has been called for by people in Tennant Creek to help local residents get off the grog and reconnect with the community.

"I am hopeful that we will soon see the same improvements in alcohol related assaults and crime in Tennant Creek as we have seen in other centres where AMT operates, as part of the Country Liberals Governments suite of measures to tackle alcohol abuse.

"By the start of 2015 we will have permanent and secure AMT facilities at Berrimah in Darwin, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, with construction to start on a new Katherine facility later in the new year.

"This will bring the total number of beds to 150.
“The new secure facilities in Darwin and Tennant Creek will also help to address issues surrounding absconding.

“The majority of clients are returning after absconding, and multiple interactions with an alcohol rehabilitation system are often required to help people get off the grog.

“We would not have been able to roll out such an important program without the help of police, nurses and hospital staff, assessment clinicians, tribunal members and the treatment service providers.

"We will continue to expand AMT to keep producing positive results for Territorians, their families and community."

The following are two recent examples of how AMT is helping to change people's lives:

**Alice Springs**

A 43 year old woman has almost completed her treatment order at the Alice Springs facility after many years battling alcohol. She is now proactive in managing her own health care after being informed of her medication requirements. This client has identified that she has an alcohol issues and has actively made decisions to remain sober and not drink any more. The client has indicated that that she would like to remain in a community treatment program post the completion of her AMT Order. She wishes to obtain employment and she has been given approval to gain experience in the CAAAPU Kitchen. She is doing extremely well and she has been discussing seeking an apprenticeship with GTNT with a view to obtaining a Certificate in Commercial Cookery. Staff have assisted the client to apply online and have worked with her to develop a resume. This client is also undertaking English and writing skills tests to ascertain what help she may require to successfully complete the apprenticeship.

**Darwin**

A 47 year old grandmother recently completed her treatment order on 23 June.

Prior to entering treatment, the client lived in Darwin residing with family at Palmerston and at times living in the long grass. She completed year 12 and has been previously employed as a teachers aid and has worked in a money management role. Over time she lost motivation to work due to excessive drinking over a number of years. Throughout the program she displayed a very positive attitude towards changing her lifestyle, and her positive attitude also positively affected other clients in the program. After engaging in the treatment program for a few months the client indicated that she wished to return to her home community and work within the drug and alcohol field to assist others. She asked her case manager if she could facilitate some of our group sessions with other women clientele which was arranged and implemented. Since that time she has co-facilitated groups, enjoyed the experience and done an excellent job. Her case manager and Indigenous Liaison Officers contacted a non-government agency about possible employment opportunities within their organisation back in her home community. The organisation has indicated that they are keen to employ her as they are always looking for local people from within community to add value to their drug and alcohol teams.