

Full response from Mark McGowan on methamphetamine use in Western Australia

Written by Madeleine de Gabriele, Deputy Arts+Culture Editor, The Conversation

In relation to [this FactCheck](#) on the rates of methamphetamine use in Western Australia, The Conversation requested sources and comment from West Australian Labor leader Mark McGowan.

In response, a spokesperson for Mark McGowan said (questions from The Conversation in bold):

When Mark McGowan used the term “we”, was he was referring to Western Australia?

Yes.

Could you please provide a source, or sources, to support the assertion that Western Australia (if that is confirmed as the reference point) has the worst rate of methamphetamine usage in the country?

Sources:

[National Drug Strategy Household Survey](#) detailed report 2013 (the 2016 report is not out yet - so this is the latest). Quote from Page 11 of the report 'Meth/amphetamine use was higher in Western Australia (3.8%) than any other jurisdiction.'

Also media citing WA Police Commissioner in November 2016 (PerthNow report) - '[Police Commissioner] Karl O'Callaghan said our findings reflected the fact WA continued to have the highest meth use per capita in Australia.'

Liberal National Government also acknowledges that WA has the highest rate (WA Government

“[Western Australian Meth Strategy](#)”) Page 7.

Could you confirm that when Mr McGowan used the term “worst”, he was indicating the highest rates?

Yes.

Is there any other comment you’d like us to include?

A McGowan Labor Government will implement a State-wide, coordinated and targeted Methamphetamine Action Plan (MAP) focussed on three key areas to reduce demand, reduce harm and reduce supply. This is the most comprehensive plan to tackle methamphetamine use ever released in WA.

WA Labor will work with experts and stakeholders on early targeted prevention, better treatment services and effective withdrawal services. The MAP will build on what is currently seen as best practice, providing education, training, rehabilitation, coordination and research. There will be more focus on breaking the cycle of drug related crime in our community by ensuring that there is a focus on rehabilitation in prisons with a specialised treatment and withdrawal services.

WA Labor also announced that meth traffickers will face a maximum life sentence in prison in a plan to cut the supply in WA.

The flow on effects of methamphetamine use are devastating and will not be solved by prosecution alone. We need to ensure that equal emphasis is given to reducing both the demand and the harm caused by methamphetamines.

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