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UK Government follows a dangerous path, again!

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It was reported on Monday that the [Government have decided that they no longer need scientific advice on drug law](#). Presumably this is related to the mountain of scientific evidence contradicting the Government's prohibitionist stance, but it does at least make it clear that the policies have absolutely nothing to do with health.

As if they couldn't top that, the Government have now announced that they will be [promoting abstinence over control of drug addictions](#). Although, to the casual observer, this may seem like a wise move, it's a terrible decision and here's why;

Reason 1: Abstinence raises the likelihood of relapse.

As anyone who has ever been addicted to anything can tell you, abstinence is far harder the controlling or even weaning. The shame that you feel when you do relapse is hard to describe, but it's more than sufficient to cause you to try and hide the truth of the matter. This leads to uncontrolled intake, without the help and support of friends and family (who you are lying to by omission).

The idea of abstinence also infers that the user should go 'cold turkey'. I sincerely hope that the Government isn't advocating this, if they are then they need to be replaced **now**. Cold Turkey isn't just unpleasant, it's dangerous. It can and does kill - when the body is dependant on a substance, sudden removal of that substance can cause seizures. The phenomena known as 'Drink Tremors' is an example of this, and serious tremors can kill. Just ask your doctor!

Reason 2: Some Users Can't Cope Without

It's widely accepted that some people have very addictive personalities, similarly there are those (and the groups don't have to overlap) who need to get stoned in order to cope with life. Regardless of moral views on this, the fact of the matter is that abstinence is not a suitable method for these people. They'll be unable to cope, and will relapse. If they do this in secret, they could be in a far more dangerous situation that had they been stabilised.

By forcing abstinence, the Government is knowingly putting these groups at risk in order to gain political points. Despite their history of ignoring informed opinions, even the Government can't be so truly stupid as to pursue this course of action. Can they?

Reason 3: It'll discourage users from seeking help

There are users of many substances that we would consider to have a 'problem'. The nature of the substance doesn't matter, it's legality has no bearing on whether or not a user has a problem - Alcohol is legal and yet alcoholics are considered to have a problem.

It's very difficult for heavily addicted users to imagine life without their chosen substance, so why would you seek help for your 'problem' when you know that help plans to force you to abstain? Some users would be perfectly happy to reduce their intake by 2/3rds but will no longer be given that option. How many of these users are likely to come forward and admit that they have a problem.

Consistent at least

Combined with the decision to discard ACMD, this decision makes perfect sense. The Government have opted to do away with rational thought (not that it helped much!) and create policy based on individual moral judgements. Despite promoting this as a step forward, there's no doubt that this is a major step backwards for everyone who has anything to do with drugs whatsoever.

Quite frankly, anyone showing the Coalitions lack of rational thought would probably be committed for their own protection. Perhaps it's time we did the equivalent to this Government? Labour may have been authoritarian totalitarians but they at least pretended to entertain rationality!

Both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats have shown that they are collective liars willing to renege on anyone of their pre-election promises. Both Cameron and Clegg have called for relaxation of laws on Cannabis in the past, but now that they are ~~husband and wife~~ in power they've changed their stance. Changed their stance so much, in fact, that they are willing to threaten those who won't abstain with financial penalties.

Expect statistics on 'drug related harm' to rise significantly once this policy is followed!!

Apologies for the rantiness of this post, but I'm pretty angry with how incompetent this Government is proving to be. Not only are they pursuing policies which actively cause harm, but they continue to try and claim the moral high ground.

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Tags: [Abstinence](#), [Access to Medicine](#), [Cannabis](#), [Government](#), [Policy](#), [Prohibition](#), [United Kingdom](#)

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