

Alcohol: changing cultures, addressing needs: The good, the bad and the ugly



STOPPING
HARM
CAUSED BY
ALCOHOL



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The ugly facts about alcohol and the harms it causes in Australia today

Injury and disease

- More than 5,500 deaths and 157,000 hospitalisations annually
- 70,000 alcohol-related assaults annually
- 20,000 cases of child abuse and 24,000 incidents of domestic violence
- 5% of all cancers – the second biggest attributable factor in all cancers
- 4.2 million Australians admit to drinking to get drunk at least once a year
- 20% of drinkers consume about 80% of all alcohol

Costs

- 188,000 DALYs lost annually – to premature mortality or to living with a disability
- Total cost of alcohol - \$36 billion annually, including \$20 billion of ‘harm to others’ costs
- Up to 70% of front-line police time spent responding to alcohol-related crime
- Direct costs to the NSW Government for police, hospital and emergency services, and justice services in excess of \$1 billion annually according the Auditor General (2013)



Alcohol is more available, more affordable and more heavily promoted as regulatory controls have been loosened

Supply and regulation

- More than 50,000 liquor outlets nationally, with significantly increased trading hours
- The real price of wine has fallen by 25% over 30 years and increased its market share to nearly 40%
- Alcohol marketing that targets young people; increasingly through unregulated social media platforms
- Major sponsorship arrangements between big sport and big alcohol

Policy action

- 2006 National Alcohol Plan expired in 2011 and has not been replaced
- More than 10 Government Reviews have recommended overhauling the alcohol taxation system, including the Henry Review in 2009
- Harper Review into competition policy recommending further deregulation of alcohol sales
- \$370 million National Preventive Health Partnership abolished and impending cuts to the Commonwealth AoD Flexible Funds program



We need a new national plan with population-wide prevention measures that will catalyse culture change

National Alcohol Plan

- The policy prescription is clear - increase prices, reduce availability and restrict marketing
- A national plan sets policy direction and an operating framework
- Measurable outputs and outcomes to keep Governments honest and accountable

Working together and mobilising the community

- Form strong alliances of public health and community groups who share a common interest
- Harness and mobilise community concern about alcohol's harms
- Activate community leaders from outside of the sector

Protecting the public interest

- Hold the alcohol industry to account by monitoring their activity and countering their rhetoric
- Conduct research into alcohol industry political activity including exposing Governments' closeness to industry actors
- Expose the tactics of the alcohol industry's including the establishment of SAPROs like DrinkWise

Review and evaluate

- Monitor progress using robust data and scientific methodology
- Evaluate effectiveness and make changes where problems are identified
- Identify policy and program gaps to inform future strategies and plans

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