



Northern Territory Branch
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Expert Advisory Panel
NT Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review
Via: alcohol.review@nt.gov.au

Re: Northern Territory Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review

Dear Expert Advisory Panel

I am writing in my capacity as the Immediate Past President and Fellow of the Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA®).

AHPA® is the only professional association in Australia specifically for people interested or involved in the practice, policy, research and study of health promotion. It aims to advance the health of all people in Australia through leadership, advocacy and support for health promotion action in practice, research, evaluation and policy.

AHPA NT® commends the current Northern Territory Government's commitment to undertake an Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review. A review of this nature is long overdue.

In parallel with previous correspondence to the Minister for Health, AHPA NT® reinforces the need to invest more heavily in health promotion and prevention actions. The evidence and cost-effectiveness of such approaches is compelling. Please refer to recent national work AHPA® has been involved with that highlights the positive impact health promotion can play on reducing alcohol consumption, reducing chronic conditions and minimising hospitalisation:

https://www.healthpromotion.org.au/images/InfographicAHPA_PreElectionJun2016.pdf
https://www.healthpromotion.org.au/images/Adult_Health_Tracker.pdf

AHPA NT® notes that the current *NT Health Promotion Framework* developed by the Department of Health provides the ideal basis for investing in alcohol policies and legislation that explicitly support health promotion and prevention actions. However, this will require a much more significant investment in resources, and greater commitment to work in cross-sectoral ways. At a policy level, AHPA NT® is very interested in discussing opportunities to bolster the focus on the social determinants of health through Whole of Government and Health-in-All-Policies approaches. This includes the development of strategies supported by evidence-informed alcohol policies and legislation. This issue has previously been raised and discussed with the current Minister for Health. Investigating ways to better integrate policy and legislative responses to other significant public health issues such as mental health (e.g. suicide prevention efforts), youth justice (e.g. consideration of youth justice

reinvestment models), and violence (e.g. 'one punch' legislation and 'no more' campaign) is imperative. Joined-up policy and legislative responses are required.

AHPA NT[®] recognises the health inequities alcohol creates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. We direct the Expert Advisory panel to the final report from the inquiry into the harmful use of alcohol in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This clearly articulates areas for investment, that are particularly relevant to the NT population.

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Indigenous_Affairs/Alcohol/Report

AHPA NT[®] has previously highlighted the need for a feasibility study to establish a Health Promotion Foundation in the Northern Territory akin to those already established in Victoria (VicHealth), Western Australia (Healthway) and Queensland (Healthy Futures Commission) and in neighbouring South-East Asia, such as Thai Health. Most of these organisations work under a hypothecated tax model where 'unhealthy' taxes, such as those accrued through the sale of alcohol and tobacco purchases are reinvested into health promotion research, policy, and practice efforts. Here are some examples of work these organisations have been able to achieve in relation to harm minimisation efforts associated with alcohol consumption:

<https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/our-work/preventing-harm-from-alcohol>

<https://www.healthway.wa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/healthways-position-on-alcohol.pdf>

<http://www.capr.edu.au/research/harm-to-others/alcohols-harm-to-others-a-whothai-health-collaboration/>

<http://en.thaihealth.or.th/THAIHEALTHPLANS/26/Alcohol%20and%20Substance%20Abuse%20Control%20Plan/>

AHPA NT[®] would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Expert Advisory Panel to discuss our proposal to discuss tested mechanisms to invest more heavily in alcohol policy and legislative reforms that will enhance health promotion and prevention efforts. This will help to improve the health and wellbeing of the NT population consistent with NT Government's *Healthy Strong Communities* policy platform.

Kind Regards



Associate Professor James Smith
Immediate Past NT Branch President and Fellow
Australian Health Promotion Association Ltd (AHPA[®])