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## **NAS SIGNALS WELCOME ACTION ON ALCOHOL HARM**

**2 December 2019:** The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) congratulates Federal, State and Territory Ministers for finalising the National Alcohol Strategy 2019–2028 (the NAS).

“Australia has not had a national strategy since 2011 and we congratulate Health Minister Greg Hunt for spearheading this successful outcome,” said FARE Director of Policy and Research Trish Hepworth.

“Given the high burden of harm from alcohol, including 144,000 hospitalisations each year, we trust that the NAS will support proportionate action from the Commonwealth, states and territories to protect Australians and their families,” she said.

FARE has also welcomed the Minister’s announcement that the Government will commission a report to estimate the social costs of alcohol to the community.

“Australia faces a \$36 billion a year alcohol burden, with approximately a third due to alcohol dependence, a third caused by injuries, and the final third due to chronic diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular diseases,” Ms Hepworth said.

“In implementation, we urge governments to take action to increase the community’s awareness of the more than 200 injury conditions and life-threatening diseases caused by alcohol,” she said.

FARE strongly encourages the Federal Government to revisit alcohol taxation reform, which would be the most effective way to reduce the death toll from alcohol-related harm, which is almost 6,000 people every year.

“We know from multiple reviews that alcohol taxation is the most cost-effective measure to reduce alcohol harm because measures can be targeted towards reducing heavy drinking, while providing government with a source of revenue,” Ms Hepworth said.

**Ms Hepworth is available for interview.**

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The **Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)** is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol. Alcohol harm in Australia is significant. Nearly 6,000 lives are lost every year and more than 144,000 people are hospitalised making alcohol one of our nation’s greatest preventive health challenges.

For over a decade, FARE has been working with communities, governments, health professionals and police across the country to stop alcohol harm by supporting world-leading research, raising public awareness and advocating for changes to alcohol policy. In that time FARE has helped more than 750 communities and organisations and backed over 1,400 projects around Australia.