



Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education

**Annual Report 2019-2020**

# CONTENTS

**4** MESSAGE FROM CHAIR AND CEO

---

**6** WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

---

**8** STRATEGIC POLICY, RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

---

**12** WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

---

**14** END ALCOHOL ADVERTISING IN SPORT

---

**16** RESPONSE TO COVID-19

---

**18** HEALTH PROMOTION

---

MESSAGE  
FROM CHAIR  
AND CEO



## Andrew Fairley AM and Caterina Giorgi

The impacts of alcohol in our daily lives are felt across Australia. Alcohol causes cancer, exacerbates family violence and is the leading cause of non-genetic developmental disorders.

That is why we continue taking action to reduce alcohol-caused harms at FARE. We work to raise public awareness, build the case for alcohol policy reform, support research, and counter false claims by alcohol companies.

For FARE, July 2019 to June 2020 was a period of both major achievements and transition as we worked towards our vision of stopping harm caused by alcohol.

We continued to develop and advocate for evidence-based policies by participating in local, state, and federal reviews and inquiries. We worked towards our strategic goal of contributing to 'World-Leading Research' through partnerships with institutes like the Centre for Alcohol Policy and Research, participation in research symposiums, and publishing impactful research.

In March 2020, with the COVID-19 global pandemic hitting Australia, our strength of character was truly tested. As an organisation, we worked to become adaptable, nimble, and agile to meet the challenges presented by the pandemic.

Throughout the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns FARE analysed data to understand the impact of COVID-19 on alcohol

use and harm, held webinars to share information, published research, and communicated research to decision-makers. This was to ensure people had accurate, independent information about alcohol and alcohol use during a time of heightened anxiety caused by the global pandemic. This work also helped us make sure that alcohol companies were held to account, to ensure they did not put profit ahead of the health of Australians.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, FARE continued to partner with organisations and communities, including through our End Alcohol Advertising in Sport campaign. We also worked with local and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Northern Territory to support their objection to Woolworths' decision to build one of Australia's biggest bottle shops near Bagot, a dry Aboriginal community in Darwin.

We were proud to continue our great work on important health promotion programs, including: Reduce Risky Drinking (informing university students about the risks of alcohol usage), Pregnant Pause (ensuring alcohol-free pregnancies), and TOM (reaching out to ACT men aged 25-55 to support them to reduce their drinking).

During the year, the Federal Government announced that FARE would receive a \$25 million grant to deliver a national program to inform Australia about the risks of alcohol use during pregnancy and

breastfeeding. This project aims to place Australia in a strong position to lead globally on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder prevention and support. We look forward to working with the Australian Government to commence the first phase of this program over future financial years.

This Annual Report details a range of activities that has helped FARE achieve significant impact over the course of 2019-20.

It also marks a period of change for the organisation. We want to take this moment to recognise our former CEO Michael Thorn who moved on from the organisation at the end of 2019 after almost 10 years of service. Under Michael's leadership, FARE shifted from a grant-making organisation to one focused on policy and advocacy, and achieved legislative change in New South Wales, the Northern Territory, and Queensland, which has reduced alcohol harm in the community.

In 2021, FARE celebrates its 20-year anniversary. We look forward to building on our work this year to write a new chapter in our history – one that strives towards an Australia free from alcohol harm.

**Andrew Fairley AM**  
Chair

**Caterina Giorgi**  
CEO

# WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

## VISION

---

Stopping harm caused by alcohol

## OUR VALUES

---

Independence

Innovation

Leadership

People first

Equity and Fairness





## OUR GOALS

---

### **Lead change**

Activate individuals, communities, and organisations to bring about change.

### **Strategic policy and advocacy**

Develop and advocate for policies and programs that work.

### **Defend the public interest**

Ensure the public's interest is paramount in alcohol control.

### **World-leading research**

Undertake and communicate strategic research.

### **Invest in the future**

Sustain an innovative world-class organisation bringing about social change.

## ABOUT US

---

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol.

FARE has been working since 2001 with communities, governments, and health professionals across the country to stop alcohol harms by supporting world-leading research, raising public awareness and advocating for changes to alcohol policy.

FARE works collaboratively, because we know that together, we can reverse the trend and see fewer children and families negatively affected by alcohol.

We raise funds to build the knowledge base about alcohol, to better understand what works to address the complex problems caused by alcohol, and to support Australian communities to respond to alcohol misuse.

# STRATEGIC POLICY, RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

## CONTRIBUTING TO EVIDENCED-BASED POLICY

---

FARE has continued to develop and advocate for the implementation of evidence-based alcohol policies to reduce the harm from alcoholic products.

Over the course of this year, the team has lodged over 30 written submissions to inquiries, reviews, and consultations on legislation, regulations, and standards. These activities covered topics around licencing, advertising, labelling, and delivery as well as online safety, mental health, public health, and age verification.

These consultations were held by local, state, and federal parliaments, governments and departments, state and national regulatory bodies, and international organisations such as the World Health Organization.

FARE's contributions and submissions to these consultations were the result of our partnerships with other community organisations and research bodies.

These opportunities helped us work towards changes in legislation that will help keep Australians safe from alcohol harm and draw attention to alcohol company tactics.

Some specific areas of reform FARE engaged with this year includes our advocacy for an effective pregnancy health warning label, our work towards reform of online alcohol delivery legislation in NSW, involvement in the Senate Inquiry into effective approaches to prevention and diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and contribution to the consultation on the Draft National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol.

## ADVERTISING FORUM

---

As part of our national campaign to End Alcohol Advertising in Sport, FARE convened the *In Their Sights: The Dark Arts Of Digital Alcohol Marketing* forum at Parliament House in September 2019. The forum shed light on the covert and pervasive nature of digital marketing used by harmful industries and called for better regulation of digital marketing.

FARE notes the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission inquiry into digital platforms was a substantial and important piece of work in this space. The inquiry examined the effect, influence, and implications that search engines, social media, and other digital platforms have on competition, advertisers, and consumers.

An underlying message in the final report produced by the Inquiry was that the current regulatory settings for advertising, data management, and privacy are ineffective at addressing the digital challenges we face.





## CONFERENCE ON THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE OF ALCOHOL

---

In October 2019, FARE hosted the global conference *Public Health and Global Governance of Alcohol: A Kettil Bruun Society (KBS) thematic meeting* at La Trobe University.

Improving the international governance of alcohol is in public health interest. The conference attracted 60 participants from 15 countries, with 40 participants presenting their papers. The conference also included panel dialogues and open discussion. Future research needs arising out of the conference and conclusions for policy and advocacy initiatives were also considered.



## RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM ON THE IMPACT OF PACKAGED LIQUOR

---

In December 2019, FARE hosted an in-house research symposium on packaged alcohol. The symposium was chaired by Professor Robin Room (La Trobe University, Centre for Alcohol Policy and Research) and attended by people from a range of disciplines including alcohol research, public health, advertising and marketing, criminology, and economics.

Considering the substantial increase in the number and size of packaged liquor outlets over the past 20 years — and the more recent growth in online sales and home delivery — the symposium aimed to review sector contribution towards alcohol harm.

The symposium also examined how data sources and evidence can be used to support changes to sale and distribution models that increase the risk of alcohol harm, and to assist in challenges to alcohol licence applications. In addition, research required to advance policy and advocacy goals to reduce alcohol harms were identified.

The symposium was a success with attendees building their understanding of measures that will be needed to reduce alcohol harms in Australia.





centre for alcohol  
policy research

## PARTNERSHIP WITH CAPR

FARE continued its role as a key partner of the Centre for Alcohol Policy and Research (CAPR), based at La Trobe University. CAPR is a world-class academic unit at the forefront of alcohol research. Across the year CAPR had 86 publications, including 65 peer-reviewed journal articles, and made 78 presentations.

During the year CAPR investigated a large range of topics, including but not limited to, the changes in alcohol use among young people, the impact of COVID-19 on alcohol use, growth of alcohol home delivery, the effects of the Minimum Unit Price (MUP) policy at bottle shops in the Northern Territory and media reporting of alcohol use in pregnancy.

CAPR also contributed to the widely viewed ABC television series 'On the Sauce', presented virtually at international conferences and held online expert forums for the public. CAPR Deputy Director Michael Livingston was on the working committee for the new NHMRC alcohol guidelines.



## RISE OF ALCOHOL HOME DELIVERY

In partnership with CAPR, FARE investigated the increase in the use of online alcohol sales and delivery — the first detailed study of people who order online alcohol in Australia.

The survey of 528 participants exposed worrying links between rapid delivery services and high levels of risky drinking. It found that on-demand delivery services were most popular among 18-29-year-olds.

### Highlights:

**28% advised that the delivery enabled them to continue drinking when they would otherwise have had to stop.**

**69% of respondents who had alcohol delivered within two hours reported consuming five or more standard drinks during the same session while 28% consumed 11 or more drinks on the same occasion.**

**36% of respondents aged 25 years and under didn't have their ID checked when receiving their alcohol order.**

# 2020 ANNUAL ALCOHOL POLL

## ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS

### 2020 ANNUAL ALCOHOL POLL: ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

The 11th Annual Alcohol Poll provides a comprehensive overview of Australia's alcohol trends.

Conducted in January 2020, the poll highlighted that Australians drink the most alcohol and most frequently at home. It also revealed how rapid delivery leads to dangerous levels of drinking.

#### Highlights:

Almost half of Australians (49%) are unaware alcohol can cause cancer



18+



88% of Australians say proof-of-age should be checked when purchasing alcohol online



86% of Australians say alcohol advertising shouldn't be shown to kids on socials

Almost 1 in 5 Australians (18%) have experienced alcohol-fuelled violence



28% of parents or guardians with children under 18 say their child has been harmed or put at risk because of someone else's drinking

Of Australians who drink alcohol:



73% drink most frequently in the home



15% at pubs, bars or clubs



8% at restaurants

# WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

## DARWIN DAN MURPHY'S

---

FARE has worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, health and community groups in the Northern Territory (NT) to support their efforts to stop one of Australia's largest bottle shops being built on the doorstep of Bagot and other dry Aboriginal communities in Darwin.

Woolworths has fought for years to build the proposed 1800-square-metre Dan Murphy's — against community objection and despite knowing the harms it will cause and the danger it poses to NT communities.

FARE joined 19 groups, primarily local and community organisations in the NT, to deliver and represent community objections in the NT Liquor Commission who were holding an independent process to determine whether a liquor licence should be granted for the store.

In September 2019 the objectors were successful, and the Liquor Commission rejected Woolworths' application. It found the store would lead to a significant increase in the level of alcohol harm, which already exists nearby.

*It is most unfortunate that the Applicant did not engage in consulting the local community prior to committing to this site because it would, in our view, have come to the realisation that this was not an appropriate position for any liquor store, let alone one the size of Dan Murphy's.*

### - NT Liquor Commission

When Woolworths appealed the Commission's decision to the NT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCTCAT), FARE joined with the Liquor Commission in fighting Woolworths' appeal. Woolworths once again faced rejection.

In January 2020, Woolworths then appealed to the Supreme Court, where again FARE joined with the Liquor Commission in opposition. However, before the case could be heard, the NT Government passed special legislation to amend its new Liquor Act and make it easier for Dan Murphy's to be built.

In March 2020, FARE formally wrote to the Board of Woolworths asking them to properly consider and reassess their Director responsibilities under the Corporations Act 2001.

In May 2020, FARE supported Aunty Helen Fejo-Frith who wanted to share her story in the media to amplify the voice of the Bagot Community and explain their opposition to the store, and the work the community has been doing to tackle alcohol harms. When she spoke with the media, Helen Fejo-Frith challenged the Woolworths Board to come to the community and see first-hand why they did not want the store to be built.



In response to the Bagot Community story being published, a Change.org petition was started by Olivia Williams from Blak Business that helped gather support for the Bagot Community from across Australia. More than 150,000 people have now signed up to this petition making sure that Bagot and other NT communities feel supported in pushing for the Woolworths Board to consider community objections and reconsider the proposed store.

Throughout the year, local and community groups in the NT have been constantly making sure that their voices are heard loud and clear — and FARE has amplified and supported their work. FARE will continue supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, community and health organisations in the NT.

## FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE MINIMUM UNIT PRICE

---



September 2019 marked one year since the introduction of the Minimum Unit Price (MUP) in the NT. The NT is the first Australian jurisdiction to put a floor price on alcohol in a bid to curtail nation-leading rates of alcohol harm.

FARE worked closely with local NT organisations to support the introduction of the MUP to begin to address and reduce harm across the Territory.

In October 2019, FARE collaborated with People's Alcohol Action Coalition to publish a report highlighting how the MUP reform has led to major reductions in alcohol-related harms across the NT.

Police identified that alcohol-related assaults in the NT were at their lowest level for more than 10 years, running at 20% below the long-term average. Police and hospital data showed that rates of alcohol-related domestic violence had also declined substantially, in every major centre in the NT.

Comparing the period prior (1 October 2017 to 31 July 2018) and following the MUP implementation (1 October 2018 to 31 July 2019), the report identified that there was a:

- 26% reduction in alcohol-related total assaults (3497 in 2017-18: 2582 in 2018-19)
- 21% reduction in alcohol-related domestic violence (2228 in 2017-18: 1749 in 2018-19).

# END ALCOHOL ADVERTISING IN SPORT

The End Alcohol Advertising in Sport (EAAIS) campaign aims to protect young Australians by calling for alcohol advertising and sponsorship to be removed from sport. This is because such advertising normalises the use of an unhealthy product, which is especially dangerous to children.

Research shows that young people exposed to alcohol advertising are more likely to start using alcohol from an earlier age, drink alcohol more regularly, and drink alcohol at levels that risk their health and safety.

Since its official launch in October 2018, the EAAIS campaign has grown substantially, including securing a number of official Campaign Champions (ambassadors) and building a community of grassroots supporters across the country.

In January 2019, FARE signed Baseball Australia as the campaign's first official sporting partner. This partnership led to national promotion opportunities at Little League games and on Baseball Australia's digital platforms, including its streaming broadcast TV service.



We also partnered with the Essendon Baseball Club (EBC), our second campaign sporting partner. This partnership aimed to build awareness among EBC members and educate their families on how alcohol companies target young people. EBC displayed the EAAIS logo and branding assets on its home ground, website, and social media.

Throughout the year, the EAAIS campaign built a community of grassroots supporters across the country that were keen to see action and take action on alcohol advertising in sport. Supporters took action to declare there was #NoException, sharing content on social media about the exemption that allows alcohol companies to advertise during children’s viewing hours across sporting programs on free-to-air TV.



FARE’s *End Alcohol Advertising in Sport* TVC was also broadcast across SKY News during a parliamentary sitting week in September 2019.

Throughout the year, with these campaign efforts, more than 20,000 community supporters signed up to take action to end alcohol advertising in sport.

*“As a parent, you know it’s not what you say, but what you do that kids pick up. Kids model the behaviour of their sporting heroes, so it’s important they aren’t exposed to alcohol advertising in sport.”*

**- John Alexander OAM, MP, Politician and former professional tennis player**



# RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic changed our lives — many people have felt isolated, anxious and were under increased financial pressure. During lockdowns and heightened restrictions there was a significant increase in alcohol retail sales, which has thrown a spotlight on alcohol use at home. But during this difficult year, we have come together, supported one another, and reached out to people in ways that we haven't before.

At the start of the pandemic, FARE collaborated with Movendi International, the largest independent global movement for development through alcohol prevention, to collate stories across the world on how the pandemic has exacerbated the harms due to alcohol usage.

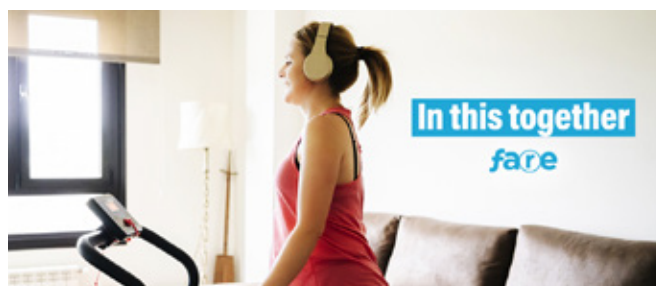
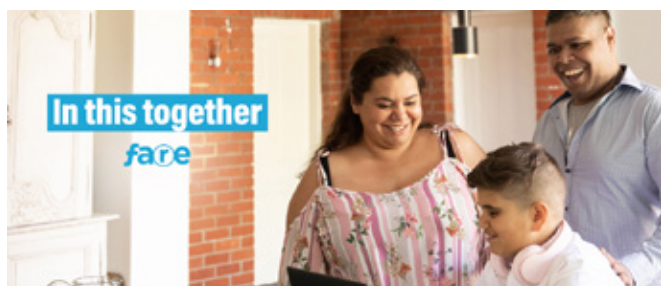
Organisations from the UK and Sweden to Kenya and Ghana spoke about the urgency to address this issue. While the country-specific contexts may be different, these calls to action made it evident that alcohol harm is a universal problem.



## BEING ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE DURING THE PANDEMIC

In response to the pandemic, FARE made sure people had access to resources on alcohol use for themselves and for their loved ones. FARE created a new dedicated section on its website that highlighted how COVID-19 was affecting both the physical and mental health of Australians, sharing evidence on the harms of increased alcohol use during this time, and strategies for how people could reduce their drinking. The website provided links to support agencies and organisations that needed extra or specialised support.

In May 2020, FARE also held an online discussion on changing alcohol use during COVID-19 and beyond, what we needed to do to support people, and how we should respond as a community. More than 200 people registered for the event. Experts, health professionals, and community leaders shared what they were seeing with alcohol use during COVID-19 and the challenges it presented for our community.



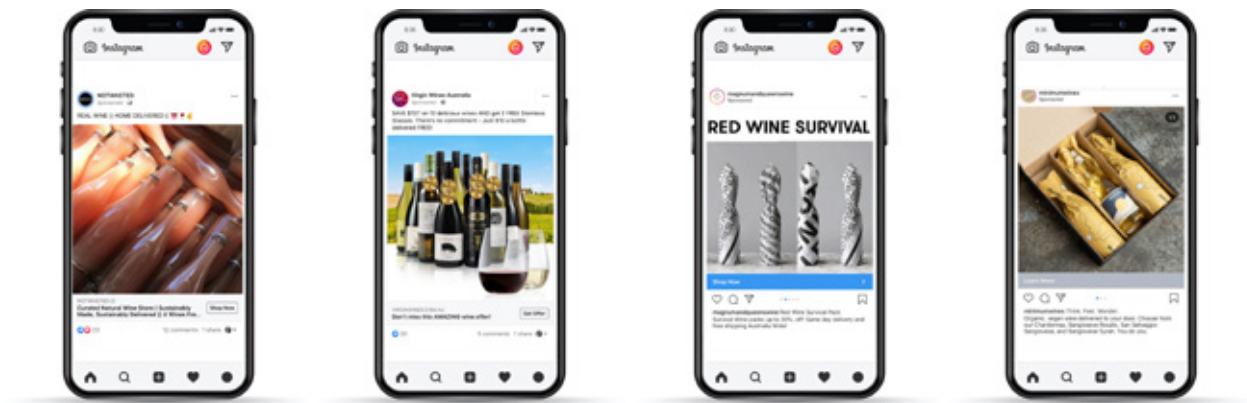


## AN ALCOHOL AD EVERY 35 SECONDS

In May 2020, FARE and Cancer Council Western Australia released a report called *An Alcohol Ad Every 35 Seconds*, which documented the levels of alcohol advertising during the first wave of lockdowns. It reported that in just one hour on a Friday night, 107 sponsored alcohol advertisements appeared on a personal Facebook and Instagram account – that's one alcohol advertisement about every 35 seconds.

The key problematic marketing messages being used by alcohol companies that we identified by analysing the ad contents were:

- get easy access to alcohol without leaving your home (58%),
- save money (55%),
- buy more (35%),
- drink alcohol during the COVID-19 pandemic (24%),
- use alcohol to cope, 'survive', or feel better (16%), and
- choose 'healthier' alcohol products (14%).



## ALCOHOL HARM DURING COVID-19

As the pandemic progressed, FARE examined available Australian data on alcohol use and harm focusing particularly during March-May 2020 and produced a report using data from service providers, polls, alcohol purchases, and media articles.

We found that the National Alcohol and Other Drug hotline experienced a 100 per cent increase in the numbers of calls between January and May 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. 1800RESPECT, the national counselling/support service for people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse also experienced an 11 per cent increase in calls in May compared to the same time the previous year.

Alcohol increases the severity and frequency of family violence, and a joint report from Women's Safety New South Wales and FARE found that alcohol is increasingly involved in family violence cases.

This report highlighted the seriousness of alcohol's role in family and intimate partner violence by surveying domestic violence specialists working in support services in New South Wales during the COVID-19 pandemic between 4 and 8 May 2020.

About half the workers reported an increase in their case load since COVID-19 restrictions were introduced. A similar portion reported an increase in the involvement of alcohol in family violence situations.

The research highlighted the need to improve access to support services, and better referral pathways between alcohol and other drugs, mental health, and family violence services.

# HEALTH PROMOTION

This year, we cultivated and strengthened our relationships with state and federal governments to implement projects that will help reduce the harms caused by alcohol in our society.

We worked with ACT Health to develop and deliver a number of important programs, including:

- Reduce Your Risk, informing people about the links between alcohol and cancer
- Pregnant Pause, ensuring alcohol-free pregnancies, and
- TOM, reaching out to ACT men aged 25-55 to support them to reduce their drinking.

Over the course of the year, FARE completed a previous three-year project funded by ACT Health (Reduce Risky Drinking), launched a new iteration of the Pregnant Pause program (June 2020) and began preparation work for the pilot project TOM.

## REDUCE RISKY DRINKING

**What:** In November 2019, we completed Reduce Risky Drinking, a three-year project that challenged perceptions and provided information on alcohol use to undergraduate students at the Australian National University and the University of Canberra.

**Impact:** During this project, we reached more than 6,500 students. This campaign had a positive impact on the drinking culture of the target group with a significant reported decrease in drinking at risky levels at both the universities. We also found that students said that it is okay to be a non-drinker at university.



## PREGNANT PAUSE COMMUNITY HERO PROGRAM

**What:** Pregnant Pause is FARE's long-running program that encourages alcohol-free pregnancies. In early 2020, we received a grant from ACT Health for a further iteration of Pregnant Pause, known as Community Heroes. This program invited people in the ACT community to step up and create supportive, alcohol-free environment for women during pregnancies.



**Impact:** From small businesses and gyms, to community services and small media companies, organisations and individuals across the ACT signed up to become Pregnant Pause Community Heroes. Community heroes have been active on social media and in their place of business to increase awareness about the importance of alcohol-free pregnancies.

The FARE team is continuing with the project in the 2020-2021 period, with a new stage sharing the message that there's no safe time, no safe type, and no safe amount of alcohol during pregnancy through GP clinics and local media outlets like Her Canberra.



## TOM

---

**What:** FARE launched TOM in September 2020, a digital health promotion pilot project targeting men in the ACT aged 25-55. Our initial research with the Canberra community revealed that a Third of Men in the ACT wanted to reduce the amount of alcohol they drink. This gave rise to TOM, a character whose story — delivered over social media in a series of short animations — encouraged men who drink alcohol to follow the Australian guidelines to reduce risks from alcohol-related harms.

**Impact:** This pilot project featured a website, which provided men with resources, support links and tools they could use like mobile apps that could be used to reduce drinking. Local ACT men also shared their stories, personal decisions, and experience of cutting back on alcohol on this website and in social media.



## NATIONAL AWARENESS PROGRAM ON ALCOHOL, PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING

---

In December 2019, it was announced that FARE would receive a \$25 million grant from the Australian Government to develop a national awareness program on alcohol, pregnancy and breastfeeding, which was part of the government's ongoing commitment to address Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), the leading cause of preventable developmental disability in Australia.

The national program will be developed and delivered over the next four years, placing Australia in a strong position globally to lead on FASD prevention and support.



Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education

**STOPPING HARM CAUSED BY ALCOHOL**

LEVEL 1, 40 THESISGER COURT, DEAKIN, ACT 2600 | PO BOX 19, DEAKIN WEST, ACT 2600  
[www.fare.org.au](http://www.fare.org.au)