# Call for Government action on alcohol product marketing ​

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We all want our families and communities to be healthy and safe, but right now far too many families and communities are experiencing harm from alcohol. Alcohol-induced deaths are at their highest rate in a decade,¹ and there are increases in people being hospitalised and seeking treatment for alcohol use.²

There is strong evidence that exposure to alcohol marketing increases the likelihood that children will start drinking alcohol at an earlier age and at higher risk levels.³

This is why we need to do all we can to ensure that children are not exposed to alcohol marketing or targeted by alcohol companies.

After almost four months, and following a number of community complaints and Parliamentarians calling for action, the alcohol industry’s own Alcohol Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC) Scheme has admitted that an alcoholic product based on a popular soft drink has been designed to appeal to children.⁴ This comes after ABAC already provided pre-approval for the product’s marketing.

Asahi has known that there was community concern over their product, but instead of taking action, the company started rolling it out on tap in pubs, showing it has no concern about the complaints that have been raised via ABAC. Asahi also had no regard for the fact that the product is being promoted prolifically through TikTok by young Australians, who are sharing videos about how the product masks the taste of alcohol and appeals to young people.⁵

In practice, ABAC’s acknowledgement that this alcoholic product appeals to children in its design does nothing to address the fundamental issue with how alcoholic products are marketed in Australia.

Advertising and marketing of addictive products that cause substantial harm, including the design of their packaging, should be required to follow Government-led rules that protect our children, families and broader community.

For more than 20 years, the alcohol industry has largely set its own rules for advertising through the voluntary ABAC Scheme. The rules the industry has developed for itself are weak and littered with loopholes.⁶ Community complaints are often dismissed, and even when breaches are upheld, there are no consequences. Companies like Asahi are left to themselves to decide what action, if any, to take.

The failures and fundamental flaws of the ABAC Scheme continue to leave our community at risk of harm from alcohol marketing.

The ABAC Scheme is completely voluntary, with no legislative basis for holding alcohol companies accountable for their marketing practices.

The Australian community wants change.

Seventy five percent of Australians agree that alcohol companies should not be able to set their own rules for how they advertise alcohol.6

We, the undersigned, call for Government-led regulation of alcohol marketing in Australia that is independent of the alcohol industry – a comprehensive legislative framework with enforcement measures that effectively stop harmful alcohol marketing.

It’s time to put the health and wellbeing of our families and communities first.

Yours sincerely,

**Ms Caterina Giorgi**CEO, Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education

**Dr Erin Lalor**CEO, Alcohol and Drug Foundation

**Dr Tanya Buchanan**CEO, Cancer Council Australia

**Adjunct Professor Terry Slevin**Chief Executive Officer, Public Health Association of Australia

**Melinda Edmunds**President, Australian Health Promotion Association

**Nicole Higgins**President, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

**Professor Simone Pettigrew**Director, Health Promotion and Behaviour Change, The George Institute for Global Health

**Mr Michael White**Executive Officer, South Australian Network of Drug and Alcohol Services

**Ms Jill Rundle**CEO, Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (WANADA)

**Sandy Lukjanowski**Chief Executive, Injury Matters

**Emeritus Professor Jake Najman**Chair, Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol

**Professor Paul Dietze**Co-Program Director, Disease Elimination, Burnet Institute

**Mark Zirnsak**Senior Social Justice Advocate, Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

**Professor Dan Lubman AM**Director, Monash Addiction Research Centre, Executive Clinical Director, Turning Point

**Associate Professor Michelle Jongenelis**Deputy Director, Melbourne Centre for Behaviour Change

**Dr Belinda Lunnay**Research Fellow, Research Centre for Public Health, Equity and Human Flourishing, Torrens University Australia

**Professor Roger Magnusson**Professor of Health Law & Governance, Sydney Law School, The University of Sydney

**Professor Elizabeth Elliott AM FAHMS FRSN**Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health, University of Sydney

**Dr Cassandra Wright**Senior Research Fellow, Menzies School of Health Research

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**Dr Tanya Buchanan**   
CEO, Cancer Council Australia

**Professor Fiona Stanley AC,FAA, FASSA, FAHMS**   
Patron, Telethon Kids Institute   
Distinguished Research Professor, University of Western Australia

**Ms Patricia Turner**   
CEO, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

**Ms Shanna Whan**   
CEO and Founder, Sober in the Country (SITC)

**Emeritus Research Fellow Professor Carol Bower**   
Telethon Kids Institute

**Dr Gemma Crawford**   
President, Australian Health Promotion Association

**Ms Hayley Foster**   
CEO, Full Stop Australia

**Mr Jamie Crosby**   
CEO, Families Australia

**Ms Caterina Giorgi**   
CEO, Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)

**Dr John Crozier**Chair of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (National Trauma Committee) & Co-Chair, National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA)

**Mr Terry Slevin**   
CEO, Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA)

**Dr Anne-Marie Laslett**   
Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Alcohol Policy of Research (CAPR)

**Dr Sandro Demaio**   
CEO, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)

**Mr Sam Biondo**   
Executive Officer, Victorian Alcohol & Drug Association (VADA)

**Ms Louise Gray**   
CEO, NOFASD Australia

**Dr Clare Skinner**   
President, Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM)

**Adjunct Associate Professor Scott Wilson**   
CEO, Aboriginal Drug & Alcohol Council (ADAC)

**Mr Andy Moore**   
CEO, Hello Sunday Morning (HSM)

**Dr Ingrid Johnston**   
CEO, Australasian College of Road Safety

**Mr Paul Hateley (Major)**   
Head of Government Relations   
The Salvation Army Australia Territory

**Dr Gabrielle O’Kane PhD, MPH, BSc, Dip Nutr & Diet**   
CEO, National Rural Health Alliance

**Mr Robert Hunt**CEO, Dietitians Australia

**Professor Michael Farrell**   
Director, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC)

**Jennifer Duncan**CEO, Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council (AADC)

**Dr Erin Lalor**CEO, Alcohol and Drug Foundation

**Ms Louise Wightman**Chair, Maternal, Child and Family Health Nurses Australia (MCaFHNA)

**Professor Peter Miller**   
Director, Centre for Drug use, Addictive and Anti-social behaviour Research (CEDAAR)

**Professor Elizabeth Elliott AM FAHMS FRSN**   
Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health, University of Sydney

**Emeritus Professor Ian Webster AO, FRSN**   
Physician, University of New South Wales

**Mrs Cynthia Kilah**   
District Secretary, Independent Order of Rechabites Queensland

**Ms Kym Valentine**Member of the Victim Survivors Advisory Council (VSAC), Victoria

**Mr Shane Varcoe**   
Executive Director, Dalgarno Institute

**Associate Professor Michael Livingston**   
National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University

**Mr Toby Hall**   
Group CEO, St Vincent’s Health Australia

**Mr Michael White**   
Executive Officer, SA Network of Drug and Alcohol Services (SANDAS)

**Ms Karen Booth**   
President, Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA)

**Ms Jill Rundle**   
CEO, Western Australian Network of Alcohol & other Drug Agencies (WANADA)

**Dr Danielle McMullen, President**   
Australian Medical Association (AMA) (NSW)

**Dr John Boffa**   
Spokesperson, People’s Alcohol Action Coalition, NT (PAAC)

**Mr Robert Stirling**   
CEO, Network of Alcohol and other Drugs Agencies

**Ms Jody Wright**   
Executive Director, Drug Awareness & Relief Foundation (Australia)

**Professor Jake Najman**   
Chair, Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA)

**Ms Abigail Wetherton**   
Community Development Officer, Odyssey House NSW

**Dr Rosemary Stanton OAM**   
Public Health Nutritionist

**Dr Hester Wilson BMed (Hons) FRACGP FAChAM MMH**   
General Practitioner and Staff Specialist in Addiction Medicine

**Ms Alison Lai**   
CEO, Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council Tasmania (ATDC)

**Dr Alex Wodak AM**   
Ambassador, Harm Reduction Australia

**Professor Simone Pettigrew**   
Director, Health Promotion and Behaviour Change, The George Institute for Global Health

**Ms Julie McCrossin AM**   
Broadcaster and Cancer Advocate

**Dr Jeff McMullen AM**   
Journalist, Author, Film maker

**Mr Brett Holmes**   
General Secretary, NSW Nurses & Midwives’ Association (NSWNMA)  
Branch Secretary, Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) NSW Branch

**Professor James Smith**   
Deputy Dean Rural and Remote Health – NT, Matthew Flinders Professor (Health and Social Equity), College of Medicine & Public Health, Flinders University

**Professor Nick Lintzeris**   
President, Australasian Chapter of Addiction Medicine (AChAM)

**Professor Adrian Dunlop**   
President-elect, Australasian Chapter of Addiction Medicine (AChAM)

**Ms Maria Mitchell**   
Manager, The Ulladulla & Districts Community Resources Centre

**Ms Joy Marie Butler**   
President, WCTU (Woman’s Christian Temperance Union) Australia Ltd

**Ms Anne Bergen**   
President, WCTU (Woman’s Christian Temperance Union) Victoria

**Dr Libby Topp**   
Narrawallee, NSW 2539 (Federal seat of Gilmore)

**Dr Emma Gilberg MBBS FRACGP**   
General Practitioner, Lakelands Medical Centre

**Dr Michael Tam, BSc(Med) MBBS MMH(GP) FRACGP**   
Staff Specialist in General Practice, South Western Sydney Local Health District

**Dr Ignatius Eric Hadinata MBBS BMedSci FRACGP**Barwon Family Medical Practice

**Dr Deborah Wiens MD, FRACGP, FRACP(CHAM)**   
Addiction Medicine Specialist, Metro North Hospital and Health Service

**Dr Mahendran Gajaharan**   
General Practitioner, Addiction Medicine

**Dr Paul Grinzi**   
General Practitioner, Royal Park Medical

**Dr Maggie Brady**   
Honorary Associate Professor, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, the Australian National University

**Dr Lyn Crehan**   
Riverlands Alcohol & Other Drugs Center

**Dr Chris Davis BSc MBChB DCH DFSRH FRACGP**   
Chief Medical Officer, Clean Slate Clinic and GP East Sydney Doctors

**Dr Nicholas Pelzer**   
General Practitioner, Newhealth Medical Centre

**Dr Alison Taylor**   
General Practitioner, Trial Bay Family Practice

**Dr Jenny James MBBS, DCH, MPM**General Practitioner, Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney

**Dr Claire Wilkinson**   
NHMRC Senior Research Fellow, University of New South Wales (UNSW)

**Mr Tony Brown**   
Chairperson, Hunter Multicultural Community Drug Action Team

**Dr Kashif Murtaza MBBS, MWH, FRACGP**   
General Practitioner, DPV Health and Nexus Primary Health

**Dr Noel Plumley**   
Addiction Medicine Specialist

**Dr Christine Longman**   
General Practitioner, The Western Medical Centre

**Dr Joanne Woodford MBBS FRACGP**   
General Practitioner, Margate Medical Centre

**Dr Ferghal Armstrong FAChAM, FRACGP**   
Addiction Medicine Specialist & General Practitioner

**Dr Michael Atalla FRACGP, MBChB, MRCGP, Diploma In Skin Cancer Surgery, M(Med)Sci-GP, D(OBST)**   
Skin Cancer Doctor

**Dr Andrew McDonald FRACGP, Grad. Dip Alcohol & Drug Studies**   
General Practitioner, The Ballarat Group Practice

**Professor Billie Bonevski**   
Professor and Lead of Public Health, College of Medicine & Public Health, Flinders University

**Dr Antony Bolton MBBS FRACGP**   
Addiction Medicine & General Practitioner

**Dr Michelle Atkinson B Med (Newc) FRACS (A.Orth.A.)**   
State Chair, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) NSW

**Dr Terry Lu**General Practitioner, Longford clinic, Tasmania

**Dr Kathy James**General Practitioner, Special interest Addiction Medicine

**Dr Layla Yasmeen**   
General Practitioner, Wentworthville medical and dental centre

**Dr Elizabeth Connor**Branch President, Public Health Association of Australia (WA Branch)

**Dr Isabel Hanson MBBS, BSc, BA (Hons)**   
General Practitioner, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Registrar

**Professor Leanne Hides**Senior Research Fellow & Clinical Psychologist Deputy Director, Centre for Youth Substance Abuse Research (CYSAR)

**Professor Jacqueline Bowden**   
Director, National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA)

**Dr Chris Davis BSc MBChB DCH DFSRH FRACGP**Chief Medical Officer, Clean Slate Clinic and GP East Sydney Doctors

**Dr Rob Phair**President, Rural Doctors Association Victoria (RDAV)

**Dr Sarah Chalmers**President, Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM)

## Join our community

Will you join the community taking action on alcohol?