# Sex, drugs, and backpacking

## Researchers

1. Ms Jane Fischer Centre for Drug and Alcohol Studies, Queensland Health.
2. Ms Judith Dean  Sexual Health and HIV Services, Metro North Health Service District, Queensland Health.
3. Dr Joseph Debattista Sexual Health and HIV Services, Metro North Health Service District, Queensland Health.
4. Ms Kate Allen Sexual Health and HIV Services, Metro North Health Service District, Queensland Health.
5. Ms Soulmaz Rostami Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland.
6. Mr Anthony Peet  Metro South Health Service District, Queensland Health.

## Summary

This pilot study investigates the behaviours of international backpacking travellers, with a focus on their alcohol consumption and risk taking — particularly sexual risk taking-behaviours.

## Outcomes

This study found that participants had a very low level of knowledge and understanding of safe alcohol consumption levels, a high rate of unprotected sex, and a high rate of swimming while under the influence of alcohol; however, this altered over time. This change is demonstrated by significant changes in behaviour and knowledge reported 4 weeks later in a second study.

This project has helped clarify the level of risk taking behaviour by international backpackers. It has also demonstrated that backpackers are greatly influenced by health promotion interventions and that these strategies have great potential for attracting interest and effecting behavioural change in relation to alcohol consumption and associated risk-taking behaviours.

This project won the Primary and Community Health Services, Metro North Health Service District, Queensland Health 2010 Staff Excellence Award for Research Excellence.

[view the report](/wp-content/uploads/GT_Final-Report_Alcohol-and-Drug-Service-Queensland-Health_2115.pdf)