



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

fare.

Foundation for Alcohol
Research & Education

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As the new Chair of the FARE Board, it is my honour to highlight the leadership shown by this small yet significantly impactful organisation.

Over the past year, my first full year as Chair, FARE has achieved a remarkable amount in our mission to create an Australia free from alcohol harm. FARE's strength lies in its proven ability to rally the support of grassroots and other key community advocates as well as like-minded health organisations to realise this mission.

At FARE, we strive to be collaborative, courageous, and perseverant. While there are many examples of how these values have driven our achievements over the past year, I want to focus on two policy areas of particular importance.

First, it takes a truly collaborative effort to launch and run a nationwide health awareness campaign to support the health and wellbeing of the present and next generation of Australians.

This year, we launched *Every Moment Matters*, a nationwide project sharing the latest evidence-based information about alcohol during pregnancy and breastfeeding. In this first year, our campaign has been viewed more than 15 million times on different media platforms. Our research demonstrates that the intended audience has received a very clear message: When pregnant or planning a pregnancy, alcohol should not be consumed, and it is safest not to drink alcohol when breastfeeding. We are grateful to have received funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care to deliver this critical, multi-year health awareness campaign.

Second, it takes courage to stand up and fight for what is right, especially when protecting communities and children from increasingly harmful digital environments.

With diligence and perseverance, we worked with senior academic researchers, renowned policy experts and leading health organisations to initiate a conversation with national political leaders, public officials and civil society groups on the criticality of creating strong checks and balances around digital environments that are enabling an increasingly frictionless pathway to alcohol harm.

In the coming year, we will double down on this advocacy by calling for real, meaningful evidence-based policy and legislative changes that create safer digital environments, especially for children and people at risk of alcohol harm.

I would like to thank Associate Professor Nicholas Carah (Deputy Chair) and fellow Board members for their tireless and selfless efforts in support of FARE's vital mission. Thank you to CEO Caterina Giorgi and Adam Knobel, who acted in Caterina's position while she was on parental leave, for their collaborative, courageous, and empathetic leadership.

Finally, I would also like to acknowledge the hard work of the whole FARE team, who bring such admirable passion, commitment, and knowledge to this important work.

Together, we strive for an Australia free from alcohol harm.

Mark Textor



FARE board members from left to right: Nicholas Carah, Tanya Hosch, Steve Ella, Teresa Dyson, Tony Walker, Jackie Trad, Mark Textor and Kirstie Clements

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

FARE exists to ensure Australians have honest and accurate information that help reduce the risks of alcohol harm, and that people's voices are heard by decision-makers while implementing policies that put the health and well-being of Australians first.

This was clear when we looked back over our achievements from the past 20 years – milestones that were only possible because of the strong foundation laid to realise our vision of an Australia free from alcohol harm.

In the almost two-decade advocacy on increasing awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), FARE worked with community groups to speak at Inquiries, draft government submissions, and provide inputs to national strategies. We also successfully advocated for pregnancy health warning labels on alcohol products. However, a key missing piece was a nationwide campaign to provide information, resources and support around alcohol use during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

This year we launched *Every Moment Matters*, endorsed and funded by the Australian Government, to help address this gap. We are so pleased to see this campaign on television, billboards, and social media across Australia. We are so proud to partner with organisations like National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (NOFASD Australia) and National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) to develop and deliver the campaign.

We made an impact in policy discussions in Australia. We contributed to the National Preventative Health Strategy 2021-2030, which included restricting exposure to alcohol marketing for children and youth and additional targets for reducing alcohol harm. We provided input to the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces, with the final report including recommendations about developing consistent and comprehensive alcohol policies. We worked collaboratively with more than 80 health and community leaders and organisations to prevent a cut to alcohol taxes.

We also focused on the need to continue to build a strong foundation to bring about long-lasting change.

That's why in this annual report, in addition to the many achievements over the past year, you will notice we have invested significant time and energy in building a strong foundation in various issue areas.

Every day millions of people across Australia, including children, are exposed to relentless digital marketing tactics designed to target their personal vulnerabilities. This year, we have been building our research, policy and advocacy capacity to ensure that alcohol companies do not target our communities with harmful ads.

We've worked with other health and community organisations to advocate for changes in alcohol laws in New South Wales and Victoria on online alcohol sale and delivery. These changes did not go far enough. We will build on this to advocate in other states such as South Australia, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory, who are also looking to introduce changes in their liquor laws.



Foundations become strong when people are involved every step of the way. We believe that everyday Australians with real-life experiences and real stories are the drivers in bringing about long-lasting change. We were touched and inspired by many of the individuals and leaders across the country who trusted us with their time, energy, and story to change the narrative around alcohol harm across the country.

This is the energy that we are carrying with us as we continue striving for an Australia free from alcohol harm.

Caterina Giorgi and Adam Knobel

(Caterina Giorgi is the CEO; Adam Knobel was the Acting CEO between March and June 2022 when Caterina was on parental leave.)

OUR WORK AND WHO WE ARE

Who we are

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is the leading not-for-profit organisation working towards an Australia free from alcohol harms.

We approach this by developing evidence-informed policy, enabling people-powered advocacy and delivering honest and supportive health promotion programs.

Australians are affected by alcohol harm every day, including through injury, violence, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and chronic diseases such as cancer.

Far too many Australians die each year because of alcohol.

By working together, we can change this.

Working with local communities, values-aligned organisations, health professionals and researchers across the country, FARE strives to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in Australia.

How we create change

1. Seek to understand where we can make the greatest impact.
2. Shape, drive and support the development of evidence-informed policies and programs.
3. Collaborate on strategic advocacy that elevates the voices of people with lived experience and values-aligned organisations.
4. Engage people and organisations in a conversation about alcohol and the benefits of reducing drinking, ensuring access to honest and accurate information and support.
5. Evaluate our impact and refine our approach based on what we learn.

Our values



Collaborative

We work with and are informed by a diverse community of people and organisations who are passionate about creating change to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians.



Empathetic

We listen and seek to understand the views of people directly impacted by alcohol harm, having their voices guide our work.



Courageous

We know lasting change can only happen if we elevate the voices of the community ahead of people with vested interests, and we don't shy away from this challenge.



Impact-driven

We focus on achieving the best outcomes for communities and learn and grow by evaluating our work to extend our impact.



EVIDENCE- INFORMED POLICY

Objective

We shape, drive and support the development of evidence-informed policy and programs that contribute to an Australia free from alcohol harms.

Outcome

Decision-makers implement policies and programs that put the health and wellbeing of Australians first.

Influencing policy to prevent and reduce alcohol harms

The FARE team lodged 25 written submissions to inquiries, reviews, and consultations on legislation, regulations, and standards related to how alcohol is made available, marketed and sold, and appeared before seven formal hearings. Consultations were held by state, territory, and federal parliaments, governments and departments, state and national regulatory bodies, and international organisations such as the World Health Organization.

These submissions covered issues including loneliness and social isolation, privacy, digital platforms, parliamentary workplaces, raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility, COVID-19 liquor licensing, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and criminal justice. Some key outcomes include the following:

- We contributed to the National Preventative Health Strategy 2021-2030 by providing an extensive submission and by coordinating the sector around key positions to demonstrate widespread support for alcohol harm reduction policies. Several of our recommendations were included in the strategy, such as restricting exposure to alcohol marketing for children and youth, including through digital marketing. FARE's submission also resulted in the inclusion of additional targets for reducing alcohol harm.
- We contributed to discussions around alcohol use during the Independent Review into Commonwealth Parliamentary Workplaces. FARE provided an extensive submission into this review. Citing FARE's evidence, the final Commonwealth report included recommendations about developing consistent and comprehensive alcohol policies.
- We also lodged a submission with a subsequent New South Wales (NSW) review into the same topic. Former Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick released an independent review into bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct in NSW Parliament. FARE welcomed the report's findings that action is needed to address the drivers and contributing factors to these behaviours, which include alcohol, to make parliamentary workplaces safer and more respectful places to work.
- We were able to place alcohol harm on the agenda for a Queensland Inquiry into social isolation and loneliness. This inquiry acknowledged that risky alcohol and other drug use was associated with physical and mental health problems. This association was both a cause and a risk that could set up a feedback loop increasing the severity of both isolation and alcohol and other drug use. Citing FARE's submission, the final report noted that social connectedness has been found to be inversely related to rates of alcohol and other drug use.

Undertaking research that matters

Alcohol use and harm during COVID-19: Second report

In 2020, FARE's 'Alcohol use and harm during COVID-19' report was used and cited by stakeholders across the health and community sector to provide evidence of the changing patterns of alcohol use at the start of the pandemic. In 2022, FARE published a follow-up report that included additional data about changing alcohol use and harm patterns over the past two years.

The reports have been used by alcohol and other drug peak bodies, government and media outlets across the country and continue to provide evidence for how alcohol has affected the community during the pandemic.

Some of the key findings of this report are:

- The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many Australians' alcohol use, prompting some to increase their use and others to decrease.
- Alcohol companies' advertising framed alcohol as a way to cope with isolation, thereby increasing the flow of alcohol into people's homes.
- There has been an increase in alcohol deaths and people reaching out to support services.

Alcohol retail during COVID-19

FARE's research found alcohol companies have significantly increased sales during the COVID-19 pandemic. FARE's 'Alcohol retail during COVID-19 (2020-2021)' report identified alcohol retail turnover reached a record-breaking \$15.9 billion in 2021. This report garnered media coverage and surfaced the aggressive marketing strategies used by the alcohol industry.

Some of the key findings of this report are:

- Alcohol retailer turnover in Australia increased by \$3.6 billion (29 per cent) from 2019 to 2021, reaching a record \$15.9 billion in 2021.
- Turnover for December 2021 was the highest month on record, reaching a total of \$2.1 billion in that month alone.

This increase in alcohol retail sales raises concern about the potential for increases in alcohol harms.



Alcohol companies reliant on people who drink at heaviest levels

FARE collaborated with the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR) to investigate how alcohol companies profit most from people who drink at the heaviest levels. The 'Distribution of alcohol use in Australia' report found:

- The heaviest drinking 10 per cent of the Australian population accounted for 54.1 per cent of all alcohol consumed.
- The heaviest drinking 20 per cent of the Australian population accounted for 75.1 per cent of all alcohol consumed.

The report shows that alcohol companies profit most from people who drink at the heaviest levels. This research highlights alcohol's contribution to increases in both short- and long-term harms, which include anxiety, injury, chronic diseases, and family violence.

The findings of this report contribute to our broader research on the alcohol industry's reliance on exploiting people who use alcohol at risky levels for profit-making purposes.

Creating safe online spaces for our families and communities, free from harmful advertising

Digital technologies are essential in our everyday lives. We rely on them to work, learn, connect and play. This is why it is crucial that our online environments are safe for everyone.

But at the moment companies are selling and marketing unhealthy, addictive products like alcohol using sophisticated technology.

Digital marketers target people by developing insights about their lives through extensive data collection. In the case of alcohol, this means that people who already buy and drink alcohol products in high amounts are the ones targeted most frequently by alcohol companies.

Unlike traditional forms of marketing, digital platforms do not publish advertisements in a way that the public, civil society or regulators can observe and monitor. This means that children and people experiencing alcohol dependence are being targeted out of sight, with no proper checks and balances placed on advertising.

What we have achieved this year

In 2021-22, we continued to build our policy, advocacy and research capacity to address problematic digital marketing practices by alcohol companies.

We coordinated with a wide spectrum of stakeholders – including those focused on gambling – because we know digital marketing tactics targeting people most at risk are common across addictive industries.

We continued educating and mobilising community members to take action around digital marketing practices by alcohol companies. This included communications through platforms such as social media, radio, television and editorials. We also undertook a community survey on digital marketing of harmful and addictive products to listen to the voices of people most affected by alcohol, gambling and unhealthy food advertisements.

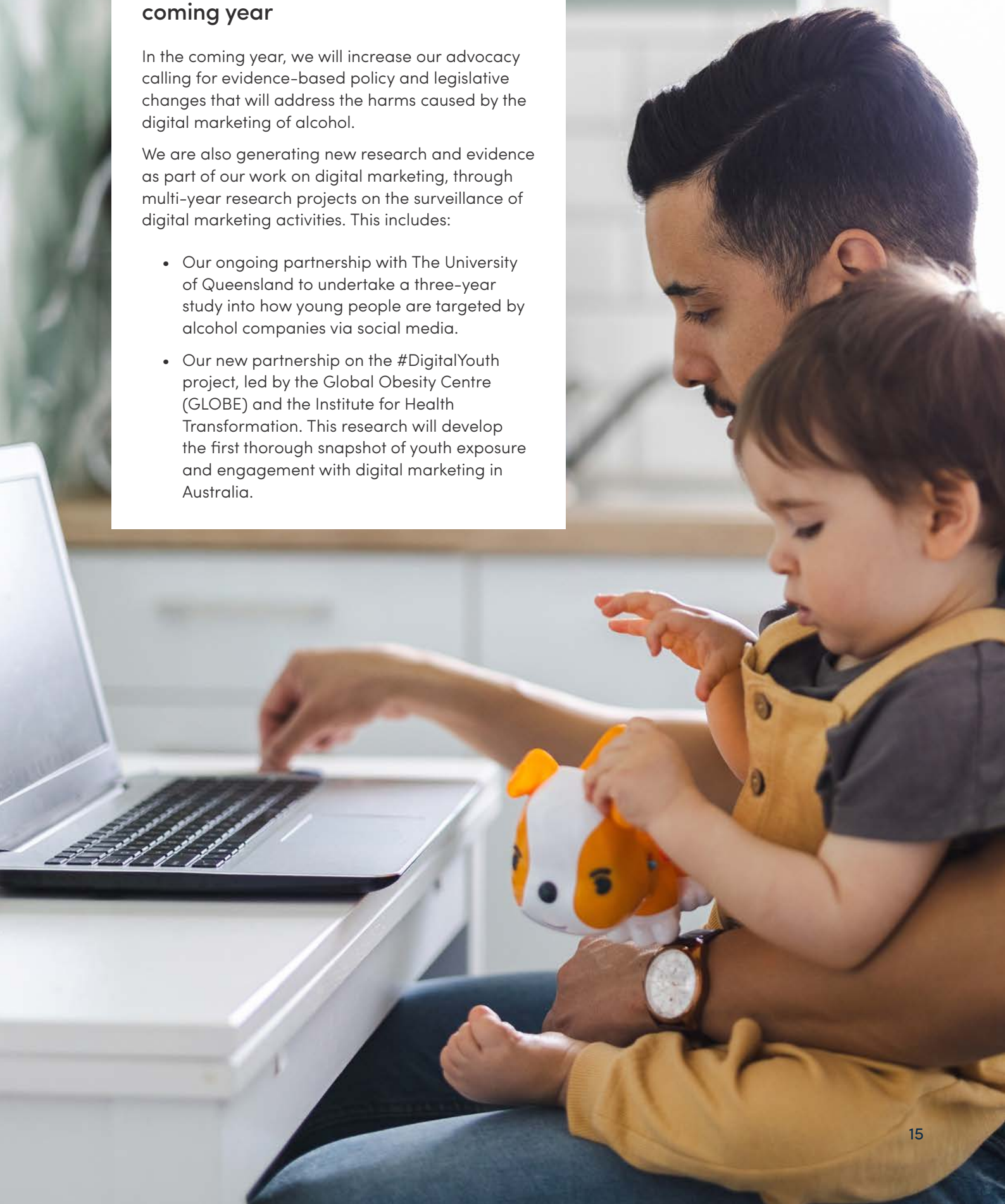
We engaged in a range of policy discussions on this topic. We commissioned a technical regulatory analysis to develop a nuanced understanding of potential pathways for addressing harmful digital marketing practices. We provided four submissions to government reviews and processes focused on reforming privacy and technology regulation and were involved in three related roundtable discussions.

What we have planned for the coming year

In the coming year, we will increase our advocacy calling for evidence-based policy and legislative changes that will address the harms caused by the digital marketing of alcohol.

We are also generating new research and evidence as part of our work on digital marketing, through multi-year research projects on the surveillance of digital marketing activities. This includes:

- Our ongoing partnership with The University of Queensland to undertake a three-year study into how young people are targeted by alcohol companies via social media.
- Our new partnership on the #DigitalYouth project, led by the Global Obesity Centre (GLOBE) and the Institute for Health Transformation. This research will develop the first thorough snapshot of youth exposure and engagement with digital marketing in Australia.



Closing loopholes in online alcohol retail

The expansion of online sale and delivery is making alcohol more accessible in the home, increasing the risk of alcohol harms, including self-harm and family violence.

Alcohol companies should ensure they are not harming our communities. But our laws have not kept pace with the changing ways companies sell alcohol.

There are unintended loopholes that mean the common-sense checks and balances we expect as a community are not being upheld online – like checking IDs to make sure alcohol is not sold to children and ensuring alcohol is not being delivered to people who are intoxicated.

What have we achieved this year?

In November 2021, together with community advocates and health organisations, FARE advocated for amendments to the Victorian Liquor Control Reform Act to reduce alcohol harms. Reforms that were adopted included some much-needed changes to online alcohol sale and delivery, such as requirements to check identification on delivery and no unattended same-day deliveries.

To make this happen, we worked with health and community organisations who form part of Alcohol Change Victoria. We also worked closely with family violence advocates who passionately shared why stronger laws around online sales and delivery are needed. This was because the Royal Commission into Family Violence recommended that the Government should also consider the role of alcohol in family violence cases.

We also worked with organisations like Berry Street, one of Victoria's largest child and family services providers, and the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA) to paint a real picture of how alcohol has been affecting communities across Victoria.

Parliamentary debate and media attention on this legislative reform demonstrated a shift in the conversation around alcohol and harm in the community. These conversations considered how these amendments would benefit our children and our families.

While some reforms were achieved, the amendments fell short of meeting community expectations – specifically, around digital age verification for online alcohol purchases as well as delays between alcohol order and delivery – both of which can protect our families and communities from alcohol harm.

FARE will continue working on this issue and shift the narrative in other states such as South Australia, Queensland, and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), which are also looking to strengthen their laws on online alcohol delivery.

"I will firstly begin by thanking the many groups that have contacted me in anticipation of this bill before us, both alcohol and drug advocacy groups, health organisations and those from the liquor and hospitality industry. In particular, I thank the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, who took their time to engage with me on this issue and shared their concerns with the act as it stands."

Sheena Watt, Member of the Victorian Legislative Council

PEOPLE-POWERED ADVOCACY

Objective

We engage in advocacy that elevates the voices of people with lived experience and values-aligned organisations.

Outcome

People's voices are heard by decision-makers in government. Companies that sell alcohol products are accountable for the harm their products cause.



Stopping alcohol companies from receiving tax cuts in the Federal Budget 2022

In the lead up to the March 2022 Federal Budget, FARE partnered with more than 80 health and community leaders and organisations to stop efforts by alcohol industry lobby groups calling for an alcohol excise tax cut.

FARE sent an open letter to former Treasurer Josh Frydenberg explaining how a tax cut would be a disservice to the community. The letter shed light on the fact that any reduction to the price of alcohol would add to the increasing amount of alcohol harms we have witnessed over the past two years.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends alcohol taxation as one of the most effective ways of protecting the community from an exacerbation of alcohol harms. Indexation of excisable alcohol happens twice a year, in February and August, when excise rates are matched to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This ensures that tax rates move with inflation levels, ensuring the price of alcohol changes with the cost of living.

However, in the lead up to the budget, some alcohol industry lobby groups actively called for a cut in taxes, calling for a 50 per cent cut in excise tax on draught beer.

When FARE noted this ask in submissions made by these groups – along with the multiple media reports on how they were actively lobbying for tax cuts – we partnered with health and community organisations who shared our belief that the current tax system is crucial in reducing further alcohol harms.

In the weeks that followed, the tax cuts were labelled as a gimmick by Australia's top

economists and were found to be expensive and ineffective in economic modelling. The rumoured tax cuts were also strongly opposed by community leaders and organisations across the country and viewed by many Australians as a waste of money at a time when community, health and family violence services do not have enough funding to meet demand.

When the March 2022 Federal Budget was announced, the alcohol tax cuts were not part of the Budget. Strong community advocacy had resulted in common sense prevailing, with the health of our families and community prioritised over tax cuts for alcohol companies.

“We must ask ourselves – are elevated levels of alcohol harm an acceptable trade-off for giving alcohol companies a tax break? This is not a price I'm willing to pay, and it's not a price our community should pay.”

Kym Valentine, Victorian Victim Survivors' Advisory Council



Preventing criminalisation of people with FASD

Everyone with a disability should have access to the support they need. This includes people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), who experience neurodevelopmental challenges that can affect motor skills, language, executive functioning and social skills.

Without the right support, people with FASD have a higher risk of experiencing poor mental health, risky alcohol and drug use, disruption at school, unemployment and homelessness.

These challenges can mean people with FASD encounter the criminal justice system. We need systemic changes to ensure that people with FASD get the support they need and are not criminalised. This involves ensuring people with FASD are appropriately supported, both in the community to prevent engaging with criminal justice, and within the justice system itself to prevent further criminalisation.

What have we achieved this year?

As an active member of the #RaiseTheAge campaign, FARE ensured that it advocated for raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility in government inquiries, given the high prevalence of people in the criminal justice system with FASD.

In November 2021, we prepared a submission for the Queensland Criminal Law (Raising the Age of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2021.

In May 2022, FARE developed a plan for 'Preventing the Criminalisation of People with FASD', which we lodged as a submission to the 2022-23 Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Budget Consultation. This submission addressed all 12 domains of the ACT Wellbeing Framework and made 18 recommendations.

The ACT submission was developed through consultation with a range of government and non-government organisation stakeholders, with legal, clinical, academic, social service, disability and lived experience expertise of FASD and the criminal justice system. Experts across Australia were consulted, as well as targeted engagement with ACT stakeholders.

We were able to ensure that FASD was part of the policy conversation. The final Queensland report stated that offending behaviour may be driven by underlying complex issues including FASD. The final ACT report also noted gaps in the service system that included limited prevention, early intervention and support services.

Working with grassroots advocates

FARE recognises that people who experience alcohol harm have an invaluable perspective that must be integrated into public conversations and decisions about alcohol policy. Without these perspectives, public narratives and policies on alcohol can become detached from real human experience.

FARE has been working together with experts in lived experience program design and grassroots advocates with lived experience of alcohol harm to co-design an ongoing structure for community members to meaningfully participate in FARE's work. This will help our goal of ensuring community voices and experiences are heard loud and clear by decision-makers.

This includes our Victorian Voices on Alcohol Harm Network. The Victorian Voices project is a network of people with experiences of alcohol harm in Victoria. This advisory group will meet regularly to discuss and influence our work to reduce alcohol harm across the state.



International advocacy

Global Alcohol Action Plan

Alcohol companies and their lobby groups have been systematically working to undermine global alcohol policies that would reduce the harms associated with their products.

In January 2022, we released a report from the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR) at La Trobe University on how Big Alcohol was deliberately working to water down the Global Alcohol Action Plan (the Action Plan). To prevent any further interference with the Action Plan by alcohol companies and their lobby groups, FARE also produced an analysis which showed how alcohol companies and their lobby groups had influenced changes in the draft Action Plan. The research gained media attention and was used by a number of organisations across the world to advocate to their governments to support a strong Action Plan.

FARE collaborated with international organisations to provide input to the various stages of the development of the Action Plan and engaged with the Department of Health at a domestic level.

In May 2022, the World Health Assembly adopted the Action Plan to support and accelerate the implementation of the WHO's Global Strategy to Reduce Harmful Use of Alcohol.

The adoption of the Action Plan sends a strong signal that reducing alcohol harm is a global health priority in light of alcohol's contribution to the global burden of disease.

i-mark initiative

FARE joined other international organisations in March 2022 to launch i-mark, a new global initiative to end the influence of the alcohol industry in the development of health policy. i-mark is a movement designed to resist the industry's corporate agenda and demonstrate the growing resistance to industry involvement in policy, education, research and the charity sectors.

At the launch, FARE CEO Caterina Giorgi gave a presentation on why the initiative is so important, using the 20-year delay in introducing effective health warnings on alcohol products in Australia as an example of how the alcohol industry acts to prevent, delay and undermine effective alcohol policy.

The alcohol industry is increasingly attempting to enter into partnerships with governments, health services, education providers, researchers and non-government organisations at both local and international levels, as part of its corporate agenda to expand its influence and increase sales.

HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMS

Objective

We develop and deliver evidence-based resources and programs to engage Australians in a conversation about alcohol harms and the health and wellbeing benefits of reducing drinking.

Outcome

Australians engage with honest and supportive information to prevent and minimise alcohol harms in their lives and their communities.



Every Moment Matters

Problem

Alcohol consumed at any stage of pregnancy passes directly to the baby via the placenta and can damage their developing brain, body, and organs.

In 2021, FARE surveyed almost 1,500 Australian women who were pregnant or planning a pregnancy and found that one in three women (29 per cent) were unaware that alcohol use during pregnancy could cause Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

More than half (51 per cent) of women surveyed were not aware or not sure that alcohol could cause harm, even in the early stages of pregnancy, and more than two thirds (69 per cent) were unaware that alcohol freely passes across the placenta to the developing baby.

Solution

The *Every Moment Matters* campaign, developed by FARE and endorsed and funded by the Australian Government, was launched on 30 November 2021.

The campaign – the first of its kind to be delivered nationally – aims to provide Australians with accurate information about alcohol, pregnancy and breastfeeding.

The mass media campaign was informed by an extensive review of published literature, and by survey and focus group research including testing of key campaign messages. It was developed in consultation with a wide range of experts, stakeholders and community groups.

The first instalment of this campaign highlights that every moment matters in pregnancy when it comes to drinking alcohol, starting from the moment a person starts trying to conceive. The campaign has been featuring nationally on television, radio, digital and out-of-home channels and will run until July 2024.

Impact

Preliminary findings from the first evaluation survey of *Every Moment Matters*, delivered by the University of Adelaide, were overwhelmingly positive. Some of the early highlights from the evaluation are:

- 87 per cent said it was easy to understand
- 84 per cent said it was believable
- 85 per cent agreed that the campaign makes it clear that alcohol should not be consumed during pregnancy
- 80 per cent said the ad made them feel motivated to support their partner to stop drinking alcohol during pregnancy
- 75.5 per cent said the ad gave them confidence to resist drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

Since the launch of the campaign there have been over 15 million completed views of the campaign ad, and more than 270,000 clicks on social media content, resulting in 169,000 website sessions.

Across Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra, the television commercial continues to reach over 50 per cent of the intended audience. The campaign was also featured in more than 500 large format posters that were placed in retail settings across the country.





every moment matters

Looking forward

The next phase of the campaign will include providing information and online training for health professionals. We are also partnering with National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (NOFASD Australia) to support priority groups including women at higher risk of alcohol-exposed pregnancies and with National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) to develop and deliver health promotion programs with regional and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

It will also highlight personal stories of Australians affected by alcohol use during pregnancy. By sharing and showcasing these stories, FARE hopes to provide unique insight into the issue and motivate conversations around Australia that highlight the benefits of an alcohol-free pregnancy and offer support for those in challenging situations.



Reduce Your Risk

Problem

Alcohol causes cancer, with alcohol being responsible for more than 5,000 new cancer cases in Australia each year.

Alcohol is currently classified as a Group 1 carcinogen – or a cancer-causing agent. That is the same classification held by tobacco smoke and asbestos. Research shows there is no safe level of alcohol consumption, and the risk of alcohol-related cancers increases with the amount you drink.



Solution

The *Reduce Your Risk* campaign, which was supported by Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Health under the Health Promotion Grants Program, aimed to increase the proportion of people in the ACT aged 25–65 who:

- are aware of the latest *Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol* (hereafter the Guidelines)
- are aware of the link between alcohol and cancer
- can name one or more types of cancer caused by alcohol, and
- discuss their alcohol use with a health professional.

The first phase, which focused on engagement with local general practitioners, commenced in June 2021, with information about the campaign and resources being provided to most GP clinics in the ACT.

The second phase, a public education campaign, was implemented between 4 July and 30 September 2021 using TV, radio, out-of-home and digital advertising.

A website was created to house evidence-based information to support the key health messages.

Campaign resources were based on the Alcohol. Think Again 'Spread' campaign, a joint initiative between the Mental Health Commission and Cancer Council Western Australia, previously evaluated as being successful in raising awareness of the link between alcohol and cancer. An additional complementary concept was created and tested to deliver hyper-local content with the message that 'alcohol and cancer go together'.

Impact

The campaign achieved considerable reach, with half of the target group reporting seeing ads during the campaign period, and more than half of these recalling the main message that 'alcohol and cancer go together'.

Comparison of pre- and post-campaign surveys showed substantial increases in awareness of the Guidelines and awareness of the link between alcohol and certain cancers.

Resources produced for the project remain available on the *Reduce Your Risk* website, to inform people about the risks of cancer from alcohol and provide information on ways to minimise that risk.

ACT residents	Pre-campaign	Post-campaign	% Change
Aware of the Guidelines	49%	55%	+6
Aware of content of the Guidelines	19%	24%	+5
ACT residents aware of the Guidelines	Pre-campaign	Post-campaign	% Change
Aware of 4 standard drinks in a day advice	6%	24%	+18
Aware of 10 standard drinks in a week advice	21%	38%	+17

Raising awareness of alcohol harms and how to improve health and wellbeing

The emergence of COVID-19 has resulted in an increasing number of Australians seeking help with alcohol use. Data from the National Alcohol and Other Drug hotline showed calls almost doubled in 2020 compared to 2019. Calls for support continued to climb, with triple the number of calls in 2021 compared to 2019.

In 2021, Australian Executor Trustees provided FARE with funding to enhance our alcohol education and digital information services.

The funding enabled FARE to build a prototype website and work with social research experts to undertake user needs and experience analysis with Australians who were concerned about their own or a loved one's alcohol use.

This project addresses a critical gap in the digital health service space at a time when many Australians are under extraordinary pressure due to COVID-19. Surveys have indicated that the pandemic has changed alcohol use for many Australians, prompting some to increase alcohol use and some to seek advice and support to decrease their use.

Ultimately, this project is designed to help FARE provide a key pillar of digital support for Australians, sharing information, advice and service referrals that will help prevent and reduce alcohol harms in Australia.





OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Launching FARE’s 20-year Impact Report

In December 2021, FARE celebrated its 20th birthday. We are incredibly proud of what we have achieved together over the past two decades and are so excited for what is to come. To mark the occasion, FARE released our 20 Years of Impact report, highlighting the work done over the past two decades.

From contributing to world-leading research on reducing alcohol harm in Australia and across the world, to building awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and the importance of alcohol-free pregnancies, to holding multi-billion corporations accountable for actions that cause harm – we’ve achieved so much together!

We know these achievements are only made possible through the contributions of the amazing organisations and everyday people who have supported us as we work towards an Australia free from alcohol harm. Thank you for continuing to support our work.



Unveiling our new look

To further commemorate 20 years of FARE, and as we looked forward to some bold upcoming projects, we marked a new chapter in our journey by refreshing our logo and updating our website. Our new look sought to capture this evolution, reflecting a new era and better representing our core values, what we do, and how we operate.



Our people and our culture

FARE is a group of highly skilled, committed and spirited people with vast experiences in health promotion, policy, research, communication, design, and operations.

As a team of 24 people, across five states and territories, with diverse backgrounds and life experiences, each team member brings a unique perspective to the vision of an Australia free from alcohol harm. We believe our work will have the greatest impact on all Australians when we embrace diverse voices.

FARE has established a work culture where people are valued and supported, where wellbeing is prioritised, and where everyone feels empowered to bring their authentic selves to work – and we are committed to continuous improvement on this front.

As a result of this journey, FARE was recently acknowledged for our work culture and awarded as one of the best workplaces in 2021, receiving the Your Voice Best Workplace Award 2021 and the Your Voice Change Champion Award 2021.



TAKE ACTION

Now more than ever, Australians deserve to have a say in the role that alcohol plays in their lives and communities.

Every day, Australians around the country are putting incredible heart and energy into preventing alcohol harms in their communities.

With your support, our team can work alongside grassroots advocates, health organisations, and government agencies to help create the change they want to see in our communities.

To join our community, visit fare.org.au/subscribe.

To donate, visit fare.org.au/donate.

You can also stay up-to-date on our work by following us on social media:





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