



MEDIA RELEASE

Urgent call for NT Government to retain floor price on alcohol to prioritise health and safety of Territorians

Today representatives from community, health, research and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations have called on the Northern Territory Government to reconsider their plan to scrap the Minimum Unit Price (floor price) on alcohol.

This call comes amidst [strong community opposition](#) to the Government's proposal to remove evidence-based alcohol harm minimisation measure.

Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) Chief Executive, Dr John Paterson said, "This week the NT Coroner, Elisabeth Armitage handed down her report on the inquest into Aboriginal women killed by domestic violence in the NT.

"The report included two explicit recommendations on alcohol, including for an evidence-based alcohol strategy to reduce alcohol availability to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence.

"We need to be doing everything we can to keep our communities safe, and we know that alcohol exacerbates family and domestic violence. Removing the floor price would lead to more alcohol harms, more crime and more disadvantage.

"Instead of rushing to implement these plans while the ink is still drying on the coroner's report, we are asking the NT Government to reconsider its proposal to change these crucial policies, and give us the opportunity to have a say on any changes that will significantly impact our community."

People's Alcohol Action Coalition Spokesperson, Dr John Boffa said, "We know that at this time of year violence escalates, and services are under even more pressure.

"We need to be focusing on preventing harm in any way we can – which is why the floor price on alcohol is so important. It's proven to be effective in reducing rates of violence."

Association of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies Northern Territory (AADANT) Executive Officer Stephanie Holmes said, "Every day, we see the devastating consequences of alcohol harms in our communities. We urge the Government to pause this decision, consult with people on the frontlines, and prioritise evidence-based solutions that protect Territorians."

Flinders University Professor James Smith said, "The floor price has been extensively evaluated, and we encourage government to review the evaluations before making decisions."

Dr Cassandra Wright, Program Lead of Alcohol and other Drugs and Senior Research Fellow at Menzies School of Health Research said, "Researchers and health professionals from the NT are backed by leading scientists around the world in urging the government to retain a floor price on alcohol as a commonsense measure with demonstrated benefits.

"Removing the floor price will only allow alcohol companies to ramp up practices that aim to increase alcohol use among people who already experience the greatest harms.

"Pricing policies are an essential part of the toolkit of governments who are serious about reducing rates of alcohol harm in the community. Dismantling any effective alcohol policy in the context of the magnitude of harms we experience is completely unacceptable."

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) CEO Caterina Giorgi said, "At the National Cabinet meeting in September, every Chief Minister and Premier in Australia acknowledged the role that systems and industries play in exacerbating violence.

"They also made a commitment to review their alcohol laws, and their impact on family and domestic violence victims in order to identify and share best practice and reforms.

"These proposed changes to alcohol policies in the NT is at odds with this commitment, and does not prioritise the wellbeing and safety of women and children."

- ENDS –

Interviews are available with: Dr John Paterson, Chief Executive, AMSANT; Dr John Boffa, People's Alcohol Action Coalition Alice Springs NT; Dr Cassandra Wright, Senior Research Fellow at the Menzies School of Health Research; and Caterina Giorgi, CEO, FARE.

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