

National Cabinet called on to adopt expert recommendations on alcohol as part of approach to preventing violence

3 September 2024:

More than 30 community, health, Aboriginal, research and women's organisations from across Australia are calling on members of the National Cabinet to commit to taking action on alcohol's role in domestic, family and sexual violence.

In an open letter sent to the members of National Cabinet ahead of their meeting this Friday, community leaders are calling for governments to implement the alcohol-related recommendations outlined in the rapid review panel final report, "[Unlocking the prevention potential: Accelerating action to end domestic, family and sexual violence](#)".

The recommendations include:

- 11a. equipping and resourcing General Practitioners (GPs), perinatal, and mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services to identify and support DFSV victim-survivors and people who use violence (Commonwealth and states and territories).
- 11d. Increasing cross-sector collaboration between the AOD and DFSV sector and provide specialised services for women that are family friendly and support caring for children (states and territories).
- 14c. establishing a strategy for capability uplift across other intersecting workforces, and prioritising legal, justice, child protection and health (including AOD and mental health) sectors.
- 17a. adopting clear primary objectives in state and territory liquor regulatory regimes to prevent gender-based violence, alongside existing objectives around alcohol harm reduction (states and territories).
- 17b. restrictions on alcohol sales, delivery timeframes (states and territories) and advertising (Commonwealth and states and territories).

The open letter also calls on National Cabinet to re-establish a national governance framework for the alcohol and other drugs sector to coordinate action across state and territory governments.

Signatories to the open letter include: Patricia Turner AM, Chief Executive Officer, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation; Kym Valentine, Survivor Advocate; Annabelle Daniel OAM, Chief Executive Officer Women's Community Shelters; Donna Ah Chee, Chief Executive Officer, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress; Shanna Whan, Chief Executive Officer, Sober In the Country; and Mr Brian Howe AO, Hon Professor, University of Melbourne, Former Deputy Prime Minister; and Caterina Giorgi, Chief Executive Officer, Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education.

Kym Valentine, an experienced television/theatre actor and Survivor Advocate, urged members of the National Cabinet to deliver on the expert panel's recommendations.

"While everyone's story is unique, there are commonalities, and there are immediate levers you can access to address each of these – including alcohol.

“We’ve always known that when drinking is involved, it is like pouring petrol on a bonfire.

“The link between alcohol and violence has always been categorically undeniable. For victim survivors it is unequivocal. Our real-life experiences cannot be ignored, suppressed or denied.”

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) CEO, Patricia Turner said that alcohol has a significant impact on the safety and wellbeing of all communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.

“We’ve known for decades that alcohol contributes to the rates and severity of domestic and family violence across the country.

“The recommendations from the expert panel are critical in addressing this in the short-term, and will also contribute to achieving a range of targets under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.”

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) CEO Caterina Giorgi said governments have a unique opportunity to prevent further harm and violence.

“This is a once in a generation opportunity to drive meaningful change that will prevent gender-based violence and violence against children. It’s time for governments to act on alcohol, as part of a comprehensive approach to preventing family, domestic and sexual violence.

“We need strong leadership to implement the expert panel’s recommendations to address this crisis – now.”

- ENDS -

Available for interview:

- Caterina Giorgi, FARE CEO
- Kym Valentine, Survivor Advocate

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Media outlets are requested to promote help-seeking information when reporting on alcohol and other drugs, in line with the [Mindframe National Guidelines](#).

Suggested wording relating this this media story: *If you or someone you know needs support, please call Lifeline 13 11 14, the National 24/7 Alcohol and Other Drugs Hotline 1800 250 015 or 1800RESPECT 1800 737 732.*

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is a not-for-profit organisation with a vision for an Australia free from alcohol harms – where communities are healthy and well and where laws, policies and programs are fair, equitable and just.

Working with local communities, people with lived experience of alcohol harm, values-aligned organisations, health professionals, researchers and governments across the nation, we are improving the health and wellbeing of everyone in Australia.

To learn more about us and our work visit www.fare.org.au