



Media Release

EMBARGOED 12:01AM 3 DECEMBER 2014

QLD MPS URGED TO BACK NEW PLAN ON ALCOHOL

3 December 2015:

Three Queenslanders die every day as a result of alcohol related harm. Another 100 are hospitalised every day. Not enough is being done to reduce this dreadful burden. A State coalition of health and community leaders has told members of parliament and aspiring political candidates that Queensland must do more to combat alcohol harms.

The Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA) has urged all parties to commit to a comprehensive, evidence-based plan to prevent alcohol harms ahead of next year's election.

Launched today at Parliament House, Brisbane, the QCAA 2015 Queensland Election Platform, includes measures to reduce alcohol violence, to protect children and families, support communities, reduce the burden on the Queensland health system and to develop a whole of government approach to reducing alcohol harms.

Professor Jake Najman, QCAA Chairman, says QCAA has developed a comprehensive alcohol plan. It acknowledges that no one single approach can be effective and that we need a range of evidence based measures if we want to save lives and reduce harms," Professor Najman said.

Among the QCAA's 17 recommendations are efforts to address the availability of alcohol including the state-wide introduction of 3am close and 1am lockouts, the introduction of the moratorium on all late-night trading beyond midnight across Queensland and efforts to restrict the harmful discounting and promotion of alcohol in both on and off licenced premises.

QCAA is also calling for an investment of \$1 million over four years to develop and implement a state-wide Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Plan, and \$2 million over four years to support domestic violence services and alcohol and other drug services develop a shared model of care to ensure victims are not turned away.

Other measures include a ban on alcohol shopper docket promotions, and a ban on alcohol advertising on state property including bus stops and public transport.

QCAA is also calling for a ban on political donations by the alcohol industry to political parties, together with measures to exclude the alcohol industry from involvement in the development of alcohol policy measures in line with the recommendation from the World Health organization.

Dr Richard Kidd, Australian Medical Association (AMA) Queensland, says the QCAA Election Platform includes measures to reduce alcohol's burden on the Queensland health system including the funding of a \$2 million brief intervention program and a health education campaign on the health impacts of alcohol.

"Our State is awash with alcohol and that alcohol is placing an enormous burden on our health system. Alcohol kills three Queenslanders and hospitalises a further 96 every day. If we want to reduce that unacceptable toll Government must be willing to introduce comprehensive evidence based policies that will reduce the harms and the burden on the Queensland health system," Dr Kidd said.

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) Chief Executive, Michael Thorn says in the run up to the 2015 election, Queensland politicians can no longer ignore the evidence before them.

"An overwhelming majority of Queenslanders believe Australia has a problem with alcohol and they don't think Government is doing enough. Now in the run up to the Queensland election, we are challenging all political candidates to declare whether they stand for effective evidence based measures that save lives and reduce harms, or whether they are willing to watch and do nothing as the State's alcohol toll continues to grow," Mr Thorn said.

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