

Reach out for help these holidays – alcohol supports are available

22 December 2021:

Holidays can be a stressful and difficult time for some, which can lead to increased alcohol use and harm.

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is reminding everyone that there are supports available if they have concerns about their drinking or the drinking of someone they know.

FARE CEO, Caterina Giorgi, said that for some people, the holidays can be a stressful, difficult and lonely time.

“This year, many of us experienced disrupted routines and increased levels of stress as we dealt with the effect that the ongoing COVID pandemic had on our lives,” Ms Giorgi said.

“Some people might have noticed themselves, or a loved one drinking more or drinking to cope with anxiety or stress.

“In 2019-2020, alcohol retail sales increased by 27 per cent (\$3.3 billion), and these elevated sales continued into 2021.

“We know that alcohol companies use the holidays as a marketing opportunity, and it is difficult to avoid being bombarded with advertising for alcoholic products.

“If you are concerned about your drinking or the drinking of a loved one but don’t know where to begin, you don’t have to do it alone. There are many services you can tap into for support.”

There are some things to look out for if you are concerned about your alcohol use. These include:

- a family member or friend has expressed concern about your drinking
- your drinking has interfered with your daily activities or responsibilities
- your drinking has affected or harmed those around you
- you sometimes find it hard to stop drinking once you’ve started.

The Australian Alcohol Guidelines, updated in December last year by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), advise that people who drink alcohol should have no more than 10 standard drinks in a week and no more than four standard drinks on any day.

When it comes to reducing alcohol intake, there are a few strategies that can help, like:

- set a limit and count your drinks
- have a few alcohol-free days every week
- establish new routines that don’t include alcohol.

Support is available by calling the National Alcohol and Other Drug hotline (1800 250 015) and online support sites [Daybreak](#) and [Bushtribe](#).

More support services are available at www.fare.org.au/support

Background

- [Data from the ABS](#) shows that from 2019 to 2020, retail sales from alcohol companies increased by 27 per cent, resulting in \$3.3 billion of alcohol flowing into Australian homes. The biggest month of alcohol sales was December.
- [Alcohol harm increases](#) in the lead up to most public holidays, particularly the days before New Year's Day and the last working day before Christmas.
- A snapshot [survey of Emergency Department presentations](#) on the Saturday night before Christmas found that one in eight Emergency Department presentations were alcohol-related.

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The **Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)** is the leading not-for-profit organisation working towards an Australia free from alcohol harms. We do this through developing evidence-informed policy, enabling people-powered advocacy and delivering health promotion campaigns.

FARE has been working with communities across the country to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians for 20 years. To learn more about us and our work visit www.fare.org.au.