



Media Release

NAAPA WELCOMES OPPOSITIONS COMMITMENT TO REDUCE ALCOHOL HARMS IN NSW

17 November 2013: The NSW ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA) has today welcomed the NSW Opposition's plan to reduce alcohol harms in NSW.

Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), Chief Executive Mr Michael Thorn says the announcement by the NSW Opposition is a significant step forward to addressing the extensive harms that result from alcohol, and commended the Opposition's understanding that prevention measures are the only effective way to reduce alcohol-related harms.

"This announcement is an important first step in reframing the debate on alcohol harms. It is an acknowledgement that we must prevent alcohol harms, and not merely respond with band aid solutions after the event. We need to prevent the violence, not merely react to the punch once it has landed. We need to reduce the numbers that present bruised and bloodied to the State's hospitals every Friday and Saturday night, not simply roster more staff," Mr Thorn said.

The Opposition's announcement comes as the NSW Government finalises its Review of the NSW Liquor Act.

Mr Thorn said the Opposition's plan was a positive endorsement of measures long advocated by NAAPA, including the introduction of a risk-based licensing system which would make licensees more accountable for the alcohol harms they cause, Controlled Purchase Operations which would ensure alcohol is not being made available to minors by licensees, as well as the collection of alcohol sales data which is crucial in gaining an understanding of the consumption patterns across NSW.

"The Oppositions has shown leadership and commitment to help protect the health and safety of communities in NSW from the damages caused by alcohol. NAAPA is pleased to see that a number of the important evidence-based measures we have advocated for have been adopted by the NSW Opposition.

The plan included the announcement of an 18 month trial of a 1am lockout and 3am last drinks for Sydney CBD and Kings Cross, but did not include reduced trading hours.

Mr Thorn says it is disappointing that reduced trading hours did not form part of this plan because winding back trading hours is a proven effective measure to significantly reduce alcohol-related harms.

Mr Thorn says it is now time for bi-partisan support in NSW.

“I now call on the O’Farrell Government to acknowledge that these reforms have been proven to reduce alcohol harms, to listen to the people of NSW who are demanding real action, and to show the people of NSW that they have an effective plan” Mr Thorn said.

Media Contacts

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The NSW and ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA) is an alliance of health and community organisations active across NSW and the ACT that has been formed with the objective of promoting action to reduce alcohol-related harms. The Coalition of NSW and ACT organisations has been formed to lobby and campaign for alcohol policy reform to reduce alcohol-related harms across the two jurisdictions. www.naapa.org.au

