

MEDIA RELEASE

Tasmanians urged to take care with their drinking and smoking ahead of the Easter long-weekend

Wednesday, 8 April 2020

In response to COVID-19, and ahead of the Easter long-weekend, the Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council encourages Tasmanians to take care with their alcohol and tobacco consumption.

Chief executive Alison Lai said that staying healthy during COVID-19 is critically important, and this includes taking precautions with how much we're drinking and smoking during this time.

"The Easter long-weekend is traditionally a time for people to come together and sharing a drink can be part of this celebration for many families," Mrs Lai said.

"With the impact of COVID-19 being felt across the community, it's more important than ever that we take care with how much alcohol we're drinking, or how often people are smoking cigarettes.

"Smoking and drinking alcohol are common ways we cope with stress, uncertainty and boredom, and the COVID-19 pandemic is certainly causing a lot of that right now.

"It's normal to be stressed under these circumstances and reaching for a drink or a cigarette can feel like an escape.

"But there are things we can all do to ensure that we come out okay when things go back to normal."

The ATDC's messages to the community include:

Flatten the curve

Keep to the social distancing rules, even when drinking or smoking.

Avoid sharing drinks or smokes with others, and wash your hands before touching your face or anything that will go near your mouth, like a cigarette or wine glass.

Know the risks

Both drinking alcohol and smoking can cause breathing issues, which can put you at higher risk of serious COVID-19 complications. Increasing the amount of alcohol you're drinking and how often you're drinking can lead to greater tolerance and dependence. Being dependent on alcohol will not only affect your health but also your relationships.

Think about it

Be aware of your alcohol and tobacco use - it's easy to drink or smoke more than you used to without really noticing.

Avoid the temptation to stockpile alcohol or cigarettes, try to monitor your use and turn your attention to other things you enjoy.



No Harm, No Discrimination

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Talk about it

If you're drinking or smoking more, consider quitting or at least cutting back, and reach out to friends, family or support services. Also look out for those around you and don't be afraid to have a gentle conversation with a loved one.

Mrs Lai confirmed that all alcohol, tobacco and other drug services were operating as essential services during COVID-19.

"Services and support is available and Tasmanians should not hesitate to reach out if they have concerns about themselves or others.

"Isolation makes it easy to avoid talking about alcohol and tobacco, but now more than ever we need to stay connected and look out for each other," she said.

Seek support

Alcohol and Drug Information Service - 1800 811 994

Family Drug Support - 1300 368 186

Alcohol and Drug Services - 1300 139 641

Quitline - 13 7848

Tasmanian alcohol and other drug service directory – www.atdc.org.au/service-directory

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Who are the ATDC? The Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania is the peak body representing and supporting community organisations, and the people they assist, to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug related harm for all Tasmanians.

Our vision is a Tasmania without alcohol, tobacco or other drug related harm or discrimination.

LANGUAGE MATTERS – Language is powerful, especially when discussing alcohol and other drugs and the people who use them. Stigmatising language reinforces negative stereotypes. "Person-centred" language focuses on the person, not their substance use.

When reporting on people who use alcohol and other drugs....	
Try this ☺	Not this ☹
Substance use, non-prescribed use	Abuse, misuse, problem use, non-compliant use
Person who uses drugs	Drug user, drug abuser
Person with a dependence on....	Addict, junkie, druggie, alcoholic
Person experiencing drug dependence	Suffering from addiction, has a drug habit
Person who has stopped using drugs	Clean, sober, drug-free
Person with lived experience of drug dependence	Ex-addict, former addict, used to be a...
Please see the <i>Language matters</i> resource at: www.nada.org.au/resources/language-matters/	



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