

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Report exposes the social and economic cost of alcohol on communities

Alcohol costs Australia an estimated \$66.8 billion each year according to a report released by the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University yesterday.

*Examining the Social and Economic Costs of Alcohol Use in Australia: 2017/18*, looks at health care costs (including GP, emergency department and ambulance service), workplace costs and the impact of alcohol through crime, and road traffic accidents.

While expressing concern at the findings of the report, Alison Lai, chief executive of the Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council Tasmania was not surprised at how significant the impact is.

"Alcohol has always been, and remains, the number one drug of concern for Tasmanians who choose to seek support for their drug use," Ms Lai said.

"Alcohol use in our community is wide-reaching and this report speaks to this.

"Sometimes there is a misconception that people who choose to seek support for their drug use are either trying to quit smoking, or seeking support for other substances like cannabis or amphetamines.

"People can forget that alcohol is a drug, and are sometimes unaware of the significant impact it has on people, their families and our communities because it has such a firm place in our society and how we celebrate and commiserate.

"But like any drug, people need to consider how much they take to reduce the harm it can have to your health, and relationships with others," Ms Lai said.

In light of the findings of this report, and with Christmas and the New Year just around the corner, Ms Lai is encouraging everyone to enjoy themselves but to also drink responsibly with their health and wellbeing in mind.

"The National Health and Medical Research Council Guidelines for reducing the health risks associated with drinking alcohol recommend that people under the age of 18 should not be drinking, and adults should not have more than 10 standard drinks of alcohol per week, and no more than four standard glasses in any one session," she said.

For more information on the National Health Guidelines for Alcohol visit the [National Health and Medical Research Council website](#) or [download the report \(pdf\)](#).

**Alison Lai, ATDC CEO** (m) 0450 517 017



*No Harm, No Discrimination*

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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 Language matters at: <a href="http://www.nada.org.au/resources/language-matters/">www.nada.org.au/resources/language-matters/</a>	



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