

National Alliance for Action on Alcohol  
**MEDIA RELEASE**



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**National Alliance calls for alcohol health warning labels**

The National Alliance for Action on Alcohol (NAAA) has called for action to introduce evidence-based alcohol warning labels, with highest priority for warnings related to the harm caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy, following the release of research showing strong public support for their introduction.

The research, carried out for the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) found that 58 per cent of people supported health warnings for alcoholic beverages, with 86 per cent supporting a proposed FARE label warning about the dangers of drinking while pregnant.

The NAAA is urging Australian Governments to make alcohol warning labels mandatory.

Professor Mike Daube, Co-Chair of the Alliance and Director of the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth, said clear and effective health warnings for alcohol had been recommended to Ministers by their own review process (the “Blewett Report”) and were long overdue.

“Despite the immense harms caused by alcohol in our community, Governments currently do not require even the most basic of warnings. Meantime, the absence of effective warnings sends out a clear signal that Governments don’t see any cause for concern.”

“The harm is there, the evidence is there, the public support is there – it is time for governments to act “.

“Consumers of all ages have a right to clear, informative warnings about the risks of alcohol use in pregnancy, and the wide range of other major health and social problems related to alcohol, including injury, road crashes, cancer and damage caused to the developing brain. There is a world of difference between the soft, barely noticeable warnings favoured by the drinks industry and the kind of warnings that are needed”

Todd Harper, Co-Chair of the Alliance and CEO of the Cancer Council Victoria, said that health warning labels as part of a comprehensive approach can be effective in both raising awareness of health risks and changing people’s behavior, because they target consumers at critical decision points – when they are buying and when they are drinking alcohol.

“Decisions about health information and warnings should be made by governments and health authorities, not by an industry whose first interest is in maximising sales of its products. We urge all Australian Health Ministers to make a commitment to introducing strong, effective alcohol warnings”.

The NAAA represents more than 55 health and community organisations from across Australia.

**For further information/comment:**

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