# Patterns and trends of alcohol abuse within the Vietnamese community in Melbourne

## Researchers

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## Summary

This research program sought to comprehensively investigate and analyse the patterns of alcohol consumption; reasons for drinking alcohol and the context of its use; the effects of drinking alcohol and any associated problems such as debt, gambling, drink-driving, and violence; and the associated health and well-being of the Vietnamese community of Melbourne.

The project consisted of two stages. The first involved focus groups and individual interviews with twelve members of the Vietnamese community (aged 16 years and older) to obtain a formative understanding of the types of problems associated with alcohol and drug use and to identify the social and cultural context of drinking within the Vietnamese community.

The second stage involved developing and administering a survey to 1,080 people (men and women aged 16 and older) within the Vietnamese Community of Melbourne.

## Outcomes

Results are consistent with previous research, which shows that fewer Vietnamese Australians drink alcohol, and those who do, drink at somewhat lower levels than the wider Australian population. However, those that do drink appear to experience more serious problems as a consequence. It was found that middle-aged men and young adult women were the most likely to drink—and to experience problems with—alcohol. It was also found that Vietnamese in Melbourne prefer to keep their problems within their families and are unlikely to report alcohol-related violence to the police.

## Recommendations

Help seeking would be made easier if there were confidential, language specific services which understand Vietnamese culture. While doctors were the preferred helpers, other services would also be accessed by Vietnamese in Melbourne, with half of Melbourne's Vietnamese (typically older members) preferring Vietnamese specific services.

Findings from this research will be used to inform targeted alcohol services and education programs within the Vietnamese community.

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