

17 December 2015

The Research Director
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House BRISBANE QLD 4000

Professor Wayne Hall
Director
Centre for Youth Substance
Abuse Research

CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

Dear Sir or Madam

**CONSULTATION ON TACKLING ALCOHOL-FUELLED VIOLENCE
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2015**

I write on behalf of the Centre for Youth Substance Abuse to support the proposed *Tackling Alcohol-fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2015* (the Amendment Bill). The Centre welcomes the Government's actions to address this important issue and supports the submission and recommendations made by the Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA) to the Committee.

Alcohol-related violence is a significant problem in Queensland and other Australian states, a fact that is well known to Queensland's police, emergency services and hospital staff. In 2014-15, there were 11,241 alcohol-related emergency department presentationsⁱ throughout Queensland that adversely affected individuals, families and communities. Nearly a third of Queenslanders report being adversely affected by alcohol related violence.ⁱⁱ

The harms from alcohol are not confined to the violence. The level of alcohol consumption by Queenslanders is the third highest in the country at 11.03 litres of pure alcohol per year compared to the national average of 10.42 litres.ⁱⁱⁱ This level of consumption increases the risks of serious long term health conditions such as cancers¹, cardiovascular disease, liver cirrhosis and pancreatitis. In Queensland, there were 1,143 alcohol-related deaths in 2010^{iv} and 32,844 alcohol-related hospitalisations in 2010-11. By 2014-15, alcohol-related hospitalisations had increased by over a third to 45,197.^v Alcohol was the principal drug of concern in 37 per cent of episodes of treatment for alcohol and drug problems.^{vi}

The Amendment Bill recognises the need to reduce the harm from alcohol in Queensland. Most Queenslanders accept the need for such action, with 74 per cent believing that Australia has a problem with alcohol and 71 per cent believing that more needs to be done to reduce alcohol-related harm.^{vii} Queenslanders support earlier closing hours and lockouts, also known as a one-way door, with 82 per cent supporting a closing time for pubs, clubs and bars of no later than 3am and 61 per cent supporting a 1am lockout.^{viii}

We welcome the measures introduced in the Amendment Bill for on-licence premises, such as pubs, clubs and bars. The 2am last drinks measure sends a clear message that the Queensland Government is serious about reducing alcohol harm.

It is during late night trading hours that patrons are most at risk of experiencing alcohol-related harm. Australian and international research demonstrates that there is a 16-20 per cent increase in assaults for every additional hour of trading, and a 20% reduction

¹ For example, 30 per cent of deaths and 42 per cent of hospitalisations associated with oral and pharynx cancer in men and 54 per cent of deaths and 65 per cent of hospitalisations associated with breast cancer in women

for every less hour of trading.^{ix,x} Alcohol-related assaults increase significantly after midnight.^{xi,xii}

The success of these measures is well documented in Newcastle which saw a 37 per cent reduction in night time assaults between the hours of 10pm and 6am, 18 months after it introduced earlier closing hours in conjunction with a lockout (3.30am close; 1.30am lockout).^{xiii} Five years later, the reduction in alcohol-related assaults remained with an average 21 per cent reduction in assaults per hour observed.^{xiv} More recently in Sydney, non-domestic assaults decreased by 32 per cent in Kings Cross and 26 per cent in the Sydney Central Business District (CBD) after the introduction of 3am last drinks and 1.30am lockouts in February 2014.^{xv} In the Sydney CBD, the reduction in non-domestic assaults was as high as 40 per cent.^{xvi}

As these examples demonstrate, earlier closing hours have been effective in reducing alcohol-related harms. The Government is introducing the right measures to reduce alcohol-related violence.

The alcohol industry argues that earlier closing times and the one-way door will shut down Queensland's night life and reduce tourist numbers. The contrary is more likely. A study by the Australian National Local Government Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee found that between 2009 and 2011 there was a 9.6 per cent decline in 'drink' sales revenue in Newcastle after the restrictions were introduced but this was offset by a 10.3 per cent increase in revenue from 'food' sales.^{xvii}

While CYSAR welcomes most of the proposed measures, we are concerned that the proposed exemptions on the 10pm close for packaged liquor will weaken the effectiveness of this measure. Forty-three per cent of packaged liquor outlets trade between 10pm and 12am^{xviii} which means that the alcohol harm arising from packaged liquor outlets will continue. This exemption is surprising in light of the association between the number of packaged liquor outlets and family violence^{xix} and the commitment of the government to reducing family violence in Queensland. CYSAR recommends that there be no exemptions to a 10pm close for all packaged liquor outlets and that venues trading after 10pm wind back their trading hours to 10pm from 1 July 2016.

CYSAR supports a proposal that the Government introduces a moratorium on new late night trading licences to limit harm while it develops a framework to assess applications for new liquor licenses or to extend trading hours. In 2014, the Newman Government removed the moratorium on late night trading when it introduced its Safe Night Out Strategy. This action saw over 120 new approvals for late night trading hours in the 12 months to September 2015.^{xx} These approvals have significantly increased the number of late night trading hours as new venues have been allowed to trade after midnight and existing late night venues have been allowed to extend their trading hours. Because late night trading hours are associated with increased levels of harm, it is important to minimise the risk of harm while the framework is developed.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the consultation on the Amendment Bill.

Yours sincerely,



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ⁱ Queensland Health (2015) *Alcohol-related presentations* Emergency Department statistics 2007-2015 provided to FARE by QLD Health

ⁱⁱ Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (2015) Annual Alcohol Poll 2015 Canberra: FARE

ⁱⁱⁱ Gao C, Ogeil RP & Lloyd B (2014) *Alcohol's burden of disease in Australia* Canberra: FARE and VicHealth in collaboration with Turning Point

^{iv} Gao C, Ogeil RP & Lloyd B (2014) *Alcohol's burden of disease in Australia* Canberra: FARE and VicHealth in collaboration with Turning Point

^v Queensland Health (2015) *Admitted patient episodes of care for diagnosis of 'Alcohol related conditions', Public and Private acute hospitals, Queensland 2002/2003 to 2014/2015* Data provided to FARE by QLD Health

^{vi} Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2015) *Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia 2013–14: state and territory summaries* viewed on 8 December 2015 at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=60129551120>

^{vii} *ibid*

^{viii} *ibid*

^{ix} Kypri K, Jones C, McElduff P, Barker DJ. (2010). Effects of restricting pub closing times on night-time assaults in an Australian city', *Addiction*, 106 303-310

^x Rossow, I & Norström, T (2011) The impact of small changes in bar closing hours on violence. The Norwegian experience from 18 cities *Addiction* Vol 107, Issue 3.

^{xi} Jochelson, R (1997). *Crime and Place: An analysis of assaults and robberies in Inner Sydney* Sydney: New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research

^{xii} Briscoe, S. & Donnelly, N (2001) Temporal and regional aspects of alcohol-related violence and disorder *Alcohol Studies Bulletin*

^{xiii} Kypri K, Jones C, McElduff P, Barker DJ. (2010). Effects of restricting pub closing times on night-time assaults in an Australian city', *Addiction*, 106 303-310

^{xiv} Kypri, K, McElduff, P & Miller, P (2014) Restrictions in pub closing times and lockouts in Newcastle, Australia five years on *Drug and Alcohol Review* 33, 323–326

^{xv} Menéndez P, Weatherburn D, Kypri K & Fitzgerald J (2015) Lockouts and last drinks: The impact of the January 2014 liquor licence reforms on assaults in NSW, Australia *Crime and Justice Bulletin: Contemporary Issues in Crime and Justice* Number 183

^{xvi} Menéndez P, Weatherburn D, Kypri K & Fitzgerald J (2015) Lockouts and last drinks: The impact of the January 2014 liquor licence reforms on assaults in NSW, Australia *Crime and Justice Bulletin: Contemporary Issues in Crime and Justice* Number 183

^{xvii} Bevan, T (2013). *The Australian Night Time Economy A First Analysis 2009 to 2011*. Canberra: The National Local Government Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee.

^{xviii} Office of Liquor Gaming and Regulation (2015) *Queensland Liquor Licences issued at 31 October 2015* Data provided to FARE by OLGR

^{xix} Livingston M (2011) A longitudinal analysis of alcohol outlet density and domestic violence *Addiction*, 106, 919-925

^{xx} Personal communication to FARE, September 2015