

**Senate Community Affairs Committee**

**ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**HEALTH PORTFOLIO**

**Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017, 1 March 2017**

**Ref No:** SQ17-000370

**OUTCOME:** 2 - Health Access and Support Services

**Topic:** Alcohol and Other Drugs

**Type of Question:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator:** Di Natale, Richard

**Question:**

The National Strategy is meant to provide a framework for a safer and more responsible drinking culture, and to reduce harms and preventable deaths caused by alcohol misuse. In the absence of the National Strategy, what has been done to achieve these outcomes?

**Answer:**

The last Australian National Alcohol Strategy expired in 2011. Since this time the Australian Government has continued collaboratively with the states and territories to reduce alcohol related harm, in addition to a range of Australian Government led initiatives.

The Australian Government is committed to promoting responsible consumption of alcohol through a range of measures. This approach includes increased education using the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) *Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol* so that Australians can make informed decisions. It also includes considering broader strategies to reduce both short term and lifetime risks of alcohol related harm.

The guidelines released in 2009 are currently being reviewed by the NHMRC with revised guidelines expected to be publically available in 2018.

The second evaluation of the alcohol industry voluntary initiative to place pregnancy warning labels on alcohol products is underway. The consultations and audit of products have been completed and the final report is due to be provided in May 2017, which will be referred to the Legislative and Governance Forum on Food Regulation for its consideration.

Funding of \$19 million, over four years, was provided to the Alcohol and Drug Foundation in February 2015 to continue funding the Good Sports Program.

This national prevention program aims to encourage cultural change through the provision of high quality alcohol and drug information and education services, community capacity building programs and advocacy. There are more than 7083 sporting clubs participating in the Good Sports Program. Recent studies have shown that participation in the Good Sports

Program is associated with a reduction in alcohol related harms and increases in the number of players and patrons to the club.

Funding of \$1.3 million was provided to Hello Sunday Morning to expand its web based peer support service which aims to help people change their relationship with alcohol.

Funding of \$200,000 in 2014-15 was provided to Danny Green to support the successful Coward Punch campaign One Punch Can Kill, to reduce alcohol related violence. The campaign produced two television commercials and advertisements which included billboards across Melbourne and Sydney. The campaign was extended into 2015-16 to finalise activities and further build on the momentum and success of the campaign.

The Australian Government will continue to work with state and territory health agencies, law enforcement, to reduce the harm caused by unsafe alcohol consumption.

The Australian Government committed funding of \$9.2 million towards the National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Action Plan. This FASD Action Plan ensures Government funds are directed at the frontline of dealing with this important issue – providing better diagnosis and management, development of best practice interventions and services to support high-risk women. Projects have delivered:

- The FARE – Women Want To Know Project was completed in July 2016.
- The FASD Diagnostic Tool was publically released in early May 2016.
- Funding to 13 drug and alcohol treatment services which are using the NDARC Best Practice Resource for Women Who Are Alcohol and Other Substance Dependent.
- The evaluation of the NDARC Best Practice Resource for Women Who Are Alcohol and Other Substance Dependent, which is due for completion in 2017.
- Funding for NOFASD to provide advice to individuals and families affected by FASD.
- The Menzies School of Health Research was contracted to develop Indigenous specific FASD prevention and health promotion resources and undertake training and implementation support.

Work is also underway to implement the 2016 Budget Measure, *Taking More Action to Prevent FASD* which seeks to improve diagnostic services and support for individuals and families affected by FASD.