

MEDIA RELEASE

PEAK BODY SUPPORTS THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE AGAINST ALCOHOL RELATED VIOLENCE

The Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA) is proud to support the National Alliance Against Alcohol Related Violence.

There are 40 Therapeutic Communities in Australia and New Zealand providing rehabilitation and treatment to over 3000 people a year with alcohol and other drug related problems. At least 60% of these people list alcohol as a significant drug of choice and many of these people are victims of family and public violence. Others have admitted to being perpetrators of violence whilst under the influence of alcohol, and are seeking treatment to change anti-social behaviours.

Ms Janice Jones the Executive Officer of ATCA said today, "This new research shows what we at the coal face have known for years, increased access to alcohol results in an increase in violent and aggressive behaviour. Innocent people are suffering and the cost to families and the community, both emotionally and financially, is unacceptable. It's time for governments to act!"

The ATCA is calling on National, State and Local governments to lead the way in tackling alcohol related violence head on.

Ms Jones added, "Alcohol misuse is costing Australians over \$15 billion annually. The Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation is to be commended for bringing this information to the public's attention".

The ATCA, along with many others, is calling for a change to the alcohol taxation system so that manufacturers will be encouraged to sell more low alcohol products. There is also a call for a reduction in the number of outlets, as there is irrefutable evidence showing that an increase in the number of outlets has led to more alcohol related violence.

"We are also concerned that Local Governments need to develop strategies to tackle alcohol-related violence at a grassroots level. Working in partnership with therapeutic communities and other agencies that are dealing with the results of alcohol abuse will assist in the development of a partnership approach to addressing this problem".

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