



NSW/ACT Branch

Australian Health Promotion Association

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Invest in Health Promotion

Health promotion is a cost-effective strategy, with every \$1 invested delivering \$14.30 in benefits (Masters, 2017; Naughtin, 2022).

To protect the population in New South Wales, we propose the following actions:

1. Ban Alcohol Advertising

Alcohol is the fifth highest risk factor contributing to the burden of disease in Australia and was responsible for 4.5% of the total burden of disease in 2018. (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2024). Despite alcohol being linked to cancer and other health issues, it continues to be widely advertised on television, in newspapers, online, and in public spaces like sports stadiums. The alcohol industry is among the top 10 spenders on outdoor advertising in Australia (Alcohol Change Vic, 2023). A comprehensive ban on outdoor alcohol advertising, including on NSW government property, should be implemented. This ban should also extend to sporting events, and a phased approach should be taken to eliminate alcohol sponsorship of sports competitions and teams.

2. Increase Funding for Community Drug Action Teams (CDATs)

Each CDAT currently receives \$7,000 per year, which is insufficient given the administrative requirements and workload on community members. Funding should be increased to at least \$70,000 per CDAT, enabling communities to develop, implement, and evaluate relevant health promotion programs tailored to their specific needs.

3. Implement Evidence-Based PreVenture Program in NSW Public High Schools

Fund a dedicated team to implement the PreVenture program in all NSW public high schools. This requires trainers, administrative support, and a budget for implementation. The program should be co-designed with young people to ensure cultural relevance, particularly for CALD, Aboriginal, LGBTQIA+, and rural communities. Currently, PreVenture is delivered inconsistently, lacks adequate funding, and is not mandated for all schools, perpetuating health inequities.

4. Decriminalise Drugs for Personal Use

The evidence overwhelmingly shows that criminalisation of drug use has failed (Lancet, 2023). Decriminalising drugs will shift the focus from punitive measures to treatment and prevention,

ensuring people who use drugs receive the help they need instead of facing criminal charges that exacerbate their issues. NSW should redirect the majority of AOD funding from law enforcement to health-based interventions. Decriminalisation will help reduce the harm associated with drug use by providing support rather than punishment.

5. Implement Drug Checking Services

Establish fixed-site and mobile drug education and checking services to prevent overdoses, especially in light of the increasing prevalence of potent nitazenes. These services provide essential harm reduction, particularly at festivals and other high-risk settings.

6. Expand Supervised Injecting Facilities

Allow for multiple licenses for supervised injecting facilities across NSW. There is currently only one centre in NSW and extensive evaluation has shown it an effective harm reduction strategy

7. Adopt a *Health in All Policies*(HiAP) Approach

Health is influenced by factors beyond the AOD sector, including education, transport, employment, and housing. A HiAP approach ensures that policies across all sectors consider their impact on health, addressing social and commercial determinants of health. This approach can prevent the conditions that lead to AOD harm use in the first place, South Australia has reviewed the evidence and found that governments need intersectoral action to act on the social and commercial determinants of health to find solutions to complex AOD issues. See <https://www.wellbeingsa.sa.gov.au/assets/downloads/review-of-intersectoral-collaboration-models.pdf>

Sincerely



Gabi Martinez

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