

The Hon. Jill Hennessy MP
Minister for Health
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Hon. Martin Foley MP
Minister for Mental Health
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Level 22, 50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne, Victoria, 3000

1st July 2015

Dear Ministers,

Re: Victorian Government's withdrawal of funding from the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research

The Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA) is committed to improving the health of all people in Australia. As such, we strongly urge the Victorian Government to reconsider its intention to withdraw funding from the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR).

Alcohol misuse is the third greatest contributor to Australia's burden of disease (behind only tobacco and obesity), costing Australia \$36 billion every year. CAPR is Australia's only policy research centre dedicated solely to alcohol, providing the essential evidence that enables us to take effective action to reduce alcohol related harm on a large scale.

Withdrawing funding from alcohol harm reduction to focus on the methamphetamine 'ice' represents a manifestly unbalanced approach to public health which completely ignores the available evidence. While ice presents a serious problem for a relatively small number of drug users, alcohol continues to cause more harm than all illicit drugs combined. For each hospitalisation due to methamphetamines (of which ice is just one), there are 46 hospitalisations for alcohol use.

AHPA calls on the Victorian Government to acknowledge that alcohol misuse causes harm on a massive scale that dwarfs the harm caused by all illicit drugs combined, and restore essential funding to the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research.

AHPA recognise that determining funding priorities is a complex government process. We would welcome any opportunity to contribute our population health expertise to this process.

Sincerely



Paul Klarenaar
Director | Advocacy Projects



Gemma Crawford
Director | National President