

**THURSDAY 16TH NOVEMBER 2023**

## **National alliance calls for immediate government action in light of alarming alcohol harm data**

Today's release of new data on alcohol use has unveiled concerning details about alcohol's impact on Australians, prompting Alcohol Change Australia to call for swift government action to free Australians from harm.

The National Drug Household Strategy Survey 2022-23, released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare today, found in 2022-23:

- A staggering 21% of Australians over 14 years have suffered verbal or physical abuse or were put in fear by someone under the influence of alcohol in the past year.
- Injuries requiring medical care due to alcohol use are on the rise.
- 31% of the population, equating to 6.6 million people, drink alcohol at levels considered risky, with little change since 2016.
- Public concern over harmful alcohol use has increased, with almost a third (31%) viewing it as the most worrisome drug.

Hannah Pierce, Executive Officer at Alcohol Change Australia, emphasised these figures are not just statistics but represent millions of Australians suffering harm due to alcohol products.

The survey also highlights an increase in alcohol harm among women and a worrying trend of risky drinking among young females.

“While for most groups the proportion of people drinking alcohol at risky levels has remained stable, there has been an increase in the number of girls and young women drinking at risky levels. There’s also rising rates of harms experienced by women from someone under the influence of alcohol.”

Ms Pierce said it’s not surprising there has been no significant reductions in the proportion of Australians drinking at risky levels since 2016, given the ferocity with which the alcohol industry pushes its products on to the Australian community.

“Australians are constantly bombarded with promotions for alcohol and are encouraged to buy more alcohol by retailers who flood the community with very cheap alcohol.”

Ms Pierce said there are a range of measures the Australian Government can introduce to prioritise the health and wellbeing of all Australians, including introducing higher standards for alcohol marketing.

“This latest survey clearly demonstrates that Australians are experiencing serious and widespread harms from alcohol products. This should serve as a wake-up call that the time is now for the Federal Government to take action on alcohol.”

### **About Alcohol Change Australia:**

Alcohol Change Australia is a collaborative alliance comprising diverse health and community organisations from across the nation. Our collective mission is to combat and diminish the impact of alcohol-related harm on individuals, families, and communities throughout Australia.