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No More Alcohol Outlets

UnitingCare Wesley is very concerned by current proposals to extend the number of outlets for alcohol, all in the name of 'increasing competition'.

"We know that alcohol and nicotine are the two drugs that cause the greatest deal of drug related harm in the Australian community, and we know that increased accessibility increases the amount of harm resulting from the use of products that have risk associated with them," said Mark Henley Manager of Advocacy and Communication.

Unitingcare Wesley is aware of the argument that says that because alcohol is a legal product then restrictions for the market of alcohol should be removed. This argument however fails to recognise the risks and public harm associated with alcohol and the need for sales of alcohol to be a regulated process.

"We are also concerned about enforcement of regulations associated with alcohol sales, particularly if the number of outlets is increased," added Mr Henley. "We know that the Office of the Commissioner of Liquor and Gambling inspectors currently struggle to get to each liquor outlet in the state in each year, so more alcohol outlets would mean even less inspections. Less inspections almost certainly mean increases in community harm."

UnitingCare Wesley believes that alcohol is too easily obtained by minors and more outlets would simply mean underage people will be able to get alcohol even more easily when what is needed is making alcohol less accessible to minors.

"We call on the Federal and State Governments to urgently review the aspect of competition policy that increases the risk of harm to our community and increased future health costs by encouraging even more alcohol outlets in our community with reduced regulation and enforcement than currently applies," concluded Mr Henley.

Further Comment

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