



POSITION STATEMENT ON ALCOHOL HARM

JULY 2013

Although alcohol can provide social benefits to our community, it is a legalised drug with the potential to cause serious harm. Excessive alcohol consumption is a major risk factor contributing to physical, mental and social ill-health in our community, and to Māori: non-Māori health inequities in Northland.

Alcohol-related harm also results in significant costs to the health sector - yet much of this is potentially preventable.¹ Northland District Health Board is committed to taking a lead role in reducing alcohol-related harm in our community.

Northland DHB will:

1. Promote and encourage evidence-based interventions to reduce alcohol-related harm,¹ including:
 - a. Support for development of Local Alcohol Plans (LAP) in Northland in each Territorial Local Authority (TLA) area, in accordance with the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 and in partnership with our communities
 - b. Support for interventions aimed at reducing alcohol accessibility and availability (including restricting on-licence hours from selling alcohol after 2am, restricting off-licence hours from 9am to 10pm, and tightening the issuing of liquor licences)
 - c. Reduction of alcohol advertising and sponsorship in Northland. Northland DHB will not accept sponsorship from the alcohol industry and will support alternative sponsorship of sporting and cultural events in Northland.
2. Support and promote the national policy recommendations outlined in the 2010 Law Commission Report² including:
 - a. Increasing excise tax on alcohol and minimum pricing strategies
 - b. Raising and ensuring enforcement of the alcohol purchase minimum age
 - c. Reducing the legal blood-alcohol limits to a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of 0.05 (50 mg/100 ml blood),
 - d. Regulating alcohol advertising and sponsorship.
3. Strengthen intersectoral collaboration and engagement with Northland Primary Health Organisations (PHO), Iwi health providers, Whānau Ora collectives, non-Governmental organisations (NGOs), New Zealand Police, Territorial Local Authorities, New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) and other partner agencies to deliver coordinated alcohol-related harm reduction approaches and treatment

¹ A summary of alcohol-related health issues is contained in the background paper appended.

² New Zealand Law Commission. Alcohol in Our Lives: Curbing the Harm. A report on the review of the regulatory framework for the sale and supply of liquor. Law Commission Report no. 114 ISBN 978-1-877316-91-3 (book) ISBN 978-1-877316-92-0 (internet) April 2010, Wellington.



strategies, such as the successful Far North Regulatory Alcohol Team, and Alcohol Drug Helpline projects.

4. Commit to the collection and reporting of high quality alcohol-related health data to support the development of evidence-based policies and strategies for the reduction of alcohol-related harm for Northland.
5. Support implementation of effective alcohol screening, early identification, and brief intervention approaches to reduce alcohol harm.
6. Promote awareness of alcohol-related harm before, during and after pregnancy, and improve assessment and management of pregnant women to reduce the risk of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).
7. Strengthen clinical referral pathways and treatment services for people with alcohol-related problems across Northland, with a specific focus on reducing inequities in access and outcomes for Māori.
8. Promote alcohol harm reduction amongst Northland DHB staff, including education and services available to them for treatment and support.
9. Ensure all Northland DHB properties and sites maintain “alcohol-free” status.³
10. Northland DHB will model “best practice” host responsibility at all Northland DHB social functions off-site where alcohol may be provided.

³ With the exception of therapeutic management of patients, and the current Northland DHB social club venue.