



TAKE ACTION ON ALCOHOL

Advocacy Toolkit



100 AUSTRALIANS WILL DIE
this week
DUE TO ALCOHOL

ABOUT THE QCAA

For further information about QCAA, visit www.qcaa.org.au or contact the QCAA secretariat at contactus@qcaa.org.au.

The Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA) is a coalition of Queensland health and community organisations committed to reducing alcohol-related harm.

QCAA identifies and prioritises actions needed to reduce alcohol harms and improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders and ensures that these actions are raised with decision makers.

QCAA have a range of professional organisations including:

Founding Members

Australian Medical Association Queensland
Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education
Healthy Options Australia
Lives Lived Well
Queensland Alcohol and Drug Research and Education Centre

Current Members

Collaboration for Alcohol Related Developmental Disorders
Drug and Alcohol Nurses Australasia
Drug ARM Australasia
Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
Salvation Army
Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group
Queensland Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies

INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR

More than 100 Australians die each week because they have been exposed to alcohol, directly or indirectly. Alcohol use and misuse leads to massive numbers of deaths, injuries and a wide range of other health problems. Yet, there has been a failure to effectively address alcohol-related harm in Australia and this is nothing short of a national scandal.

You can be a part of the movement to change this.

The QCAA Advocacy Kit will provide you with all the tools you need to be successful in advocating for action on alcohol.

This should serve as your everyday guide to participating in the legislative process as well as any additional resources to help you take action to improve the health and safety of your local community.

We'll outline the issues contributing to alcohol harm in Queensland as well as delve into the policy solutions that we know can work.

Preventing alcohol harms in Queensland must be a priority. The health of the community and that of future generations depend upon clear, decisive action being taken now.

Through this advocacy kit, you can help shape the Queensland Government's effort to stop the harms caused by alcohol.

Together we can make a difference.



Professor Jake Najman
Chair, Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol

PS We'd love to hear about your local efforts to reduce harms from alcohol. Please get in touch with us any time!



ACTING ON ALCOHOL

Alcohol in our community: an overview
Reducing the harms of alcohol
How you can get involved

ALCOHOL IN OUR COMMUNITY

an overview

Alcohol harms

The impact of alcohol in Queensland is significant.

Two thirds (66 per cent) of Queenslanders have been negatively affected as a result of someone else's drinking, more than one in three (35 per cent) have experienced alcohol-related violence and two thirds (66 per cent) consider that the city or centre of town is unsafe.

An overwhelming majority of Queenslanders (75.0 per cent) identified central nightclub districts as the place where they thought alcohol-related violence was the biggest problem, more than half (56 per cent) had witnessed violence in, or around, entertainment venues or public events (mostly between people the witnesses didn't know) and nearly one in three (29.7 per cent) had witnessed violence at private parties.

The health harms from alcohol are also significant.

In 2010, there were 1,143 deaths in Queensland attributed to alcohol.

Queensland Department of Health data shows that there has been a 70 per cent increase since 2003/04 (ie 10 years), with 40,647 alcohol-related hospitalisations in 2012/13.

In addition, In 2014–15, around 850 alcohol and other drug treatment services provided just over 170,000 treatment episodes to around 115,000 individuals.

The health harms from alcohol are significant and are increasing, resulting in a substantial human and financial toll.

Alcohol consumption

Eighty per cent of Queenslanders consume alcohol.

Queenslanders consume 11.03 litres of pure alcohol per person, which is higher than the national average of 10.27 litres per person.

The highest level of per capita consumption in the state is found in Inner Brisbane.

Other areas where there are high levels of consumption are the Gold Coast and regional cities such as Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns.

The Australian Guidelines to Reduce Health Risks from Drinking Alcohol recommend Australians should consume no more than two standard drinks on any day to reduce the lifetime risk of harm from alcohol, and no more than four standard drinks on a single occasion to reduce the risk of short term harm.

Fourteen per cent of Queenslanders reported drinking six standard drinks or more on a typical occasion.





Two thirds of Queenslanders have been negatively affected as a result of someone else's drinking

One in five Queenslanders (20 per cent) said that they were unable to stop drinking once they started during the last year, 24 per cent felt guilt and remorse after drinking, more than one third (37 per cent) reported drinking to get drunk, and 18 per cent could not remember what happened the night before because of drinking.

Alcohol availability and affordability

Like the rest of Australia, Queensland is awash with alcohol. Alcohol is now more available than ever, is more heavily promoted and more affordable.

As at June 2014, there were 7,969 licensed venues in Queensland in 2014, including on premise and off premise licences.

**THERE IS CLOSE TO
ONE LIQUOR
LICENCE FOR EVERY
604 PEOPLE IN
QUEENSLAND**

The more available alcohol is, the more alcohol-related violence and harms occur. This means that if the number of liquor licences increases and/or there are more premises with longer trading hours, the risks of alcohol harm increase.

Pubs and clubs are often the focus of policies to reduce alcohol-related harms. However, increases in take-away alcohol outlets also contribute to violence and domestic violence rates.

Standard trading hours for licensed premises in Queensland (including packaged liquor sales e.g. from a bottle shop) are 10am to 12 midnight, however where community need is demonstrated, licensees can apply to extend their trading hours to as late as 5am, while the earliest opening in the State is 4am.

With regards to price, take-away or pre-packaged alcohol is often considerably cheaper than alcohol purchased at pubs and clubs, with wine being available for as cheap as 35 cents per standard drink based on the sale of a 750ml bottle of wine for as little as \$2.85 a bottle.

This is cheaper than bottled water and is of particular concern given that 80 per cent of alcohol is purchased from an off-licence.

Attitudes to alcohol

A vast majority (78 per cent) of Queenslanders think that Australia has a problem with alcohol and 77 per cent think that more needs to be done to reduce alcohol-related harms.

Queenslanders also think that alcohol companies (69 per cent) and clubs and pubs (68 per cent), as well as Governments (65 per cent), are not doing enough to address alcohol-related harms.

Almost half (48 per cent) of Queenslanders also think that alcohol is the drug that causes the most harm to Australians compared to illicit drugs, tobacco, and pharmaceutical and prescription drugs.

Queenslanders strongly support a closing time for pubs, clubs and bars of no later than 3am (78 per cent), stopping the sale of alcohol 30 minutes before closing time (74 per cent), a 1am lockout for pubs, clubs and bars (63 per cent), and mandating the sale of alcohol to no less than \$1 per standard drink (63 per cent).

Other measures for pubs, clubs and bars that are supported by Queenslanders include placing a limit of four drinks on the number of drinks a person can purchase at one time after 10pm (64 per cent) and stopping the sale of alcohol and energy drinks after midnight (59 per cent), along with stopping the sale of shots after 10pm (51 per cent).

REDUCING THE HARMS OF ALCOHOL



We can reduce the harms of alcohol by implementing a comprehensive evidence-based plan to address alcohol-related harms. This plan must target the heart of the problem, the excessive availability of alcohol, to be effective.

QCAA has prepared a plan of action, which includes five main evidence-based solutions to reduce alcohol-related harms which are outlined below.

Our plan acknowledges that no single strategy will reduce alcohol-related harms, and so instead, a range of evidence-based strategies is required to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Trading hours

Research on the relationship between the trading hours of licensed premises and alcohol-related harm consistently demonstrates that increased trading hours are associated with increased harms.

Recent restrictions introduced in the New South Wales (NSW) city of Newcastle demonstrate how even modest reductions in the trading hours of licensed venues can substantially reduce alcohol-related harms.

Density of licenced premises

Research has consistently found an association between alcohol outlet density and negative alcohol-related outcomes.

Recently in Victoria, an analysis was undertaken of the effects of licensed outlet density on several measures including assault, domestic violence, chronic harms and high risk drinking in young people. The analysis found there was a strong association between reported assaults and all three outlet types, general licenses, on-licence and off-licence.

In 2008, as a result of escalating local concern about alcohol-related violence, the NSW Liquor Administration Board imposed a number of restrictions on 14 licensed premises in Newcastle.

The most notable of these restrictions was the introduction of a lockout from 1.00am, and bringing forward closing times.

Closing times were changed to 3.00am for the 14 premises that were previously licensed to trade until 5.00am.

The lock out was later moved to 1:30am and the closing time to 3:30am following, a legal challenge by the licensed premises and as a result of an out-of-court agreement with NSW Police.

An evaluation carried out in the 12 months following the introduction of these restrictions in Newcastle found that there was a 37 per cent reduction in alcohol-related harms when compared to a control site.

This equates to a reduction of 33 assaults per quarter. The reduction in assaults was sustained over time, based on a five year evaluation. The evaluation also found that there was no geographic displacement to the nearest late night district of Hamilton.

CASE STUDY

REDUCED HARMS
IN NEWCASTLE

For every extra hour of trading there is a 20 per cent increase in assaults and for every hour of trading reduced there is a 20 per cent reduction in assaults.

International studies have shown that increased outlet density can be linked to higher rates of road traffic accidents, drink driving or being a passenger of a drink driver, robbery, homicide, suicide (both attempted and completed), child maltreatment, deviant adolescent behaviours, sexual offences and sexually transmitted infections.

There are too many licensed venues in Queensland.

In 2011-12 there were a total of 6,776 liquor licenses in Queensland. This equates to approximately one liquor licence for every 673 people in Queensland.

There are a number of policies that can be implemented to control the number of licensed outlets. Two of these policies are introducing "saturation zones" and "cluster controls".

Saturation zones

Saturation zones impose limitations on the provision of new licenses in areas where it has been identified there are a high density of licenses. While cluster controls prohibit new liquor licenses for premises within a specified distance of existing licensed premises or other amenities (e.g. schools, hospitals, churches or places of religious worship).

Since 2005, local authorities in England and Wales (typically a council or borough) have been able to establish "saturation zones" within their licensing policies where no new licensed premises are permitted.





These saturation zones are determined on the basis of existing outlet density levels and crime data including domestic violence statistics.

The establishment of saturation zones and the basis for these zones is at the discretion of the individual local authority, but is not enacted in the National Licensing Act. Also, licence applicants have the right to appeal if they apply for a licence in a saturation zone and are refused.

Cluster controls

“Cluster controls” are another policy measure designed to reduce alcohol-fuelled violence that results from the over-abundance of pubs and clubs. They prohibit new liquor licenses for premises within a specified distance of existing licensed premises or other amenities (e.g. schools, hospitals, churches or places of religious worship).

Cluster control policies have been introduced overseas in places like England, Wales, Paris and New York.

New York has enacted “cluster controls” through their Alcohol Beverage Control Act. Since 1993 the legislation has included the “500 foot” (150 metres) rule which prohibits new on-premises licenses being issued within a 500 foot radius of three or more existing licenses. The rationale for such a measure is to ameliorate the potentially negative cumulative impact of areas that have high outlet density on public health, violence and crime.

In Paris under the Code de La Sante Publique (public health legislation), there are protected areas within which new liquor licenses are prohibited if they are within 75 metres of a licensed premise of the same category.

Responsible service of alcohol

All licensees and all staff that work in a licensed premise in alcohol services in Queensland are required to hold a Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) Certificate.

Without appropriate enforcement mechanisms, RSA measures have limited impact on the behaviour of people working in licensed venues and do not reduce alcohol-related harms.



RSA includes a range of responsibilities for licensees and people working in licensed venues. These include providing water and food to patrons, not serving alcohol to intoxicated persons and the service of alcohol in measures that reduce the risk of rapid consumption.

In Queensland RSA requirements are currently enforced by Queensland Police and Compliance Officers at the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR).

Recent changes have aligned the RSA Certificate to a National standard regulated by the Australian Skills Quality Authority. A relaxation in state regulatory mechanisms is noticeable with the certificate of attainment not expiring, making it unclear whether staff need to do refresher courses periodically. Another issue is that it does not appear that approved managers need to be at the venue or reasonably available after midnight, even though venues continue to stay open.

For RSA practices to be effective, they need to be monitored, enforced and promoted.



There is currently no legislative obligation for licensed premises to report on the compliance activities of OLGR or Queensland Police in undertaking their compliance activities.

In Queensland products designed to be consumed quickly, such as 'shots', and those that include excessive amounts of alcohol, for example 'doubles' are readily available for sale in licensed premises. These products also contribute to the culture of 'drinking to get drunk' by encouraging the rapid consumption of alcohol to intoxication. Restricting the sale of products with the highest alcohol content and concentration will result in patrons at licensed premises having to select a product of lower alcohol content, resulting in a decline in the amount of pure alcohol consumed.

In addition to these alcohol products, alcohol mixed with energy drinks are becoming a major concern in the Australian community.

Energy drinks have been shown to mask the effects of intoxication. This can result in increased risky behaviours such as drink driving and even alcohol poisoning.

Internationally there have been moves to restrict the sale of alcohol and energy drinks and to increase awareness of the harms associated with these products, including a ban of the promotion of alcohol combined with energy drinks at sporting events in Ireland, and the prohibition of the consumption of energy drinks in Denmark.

RSA requirements assist licensed premises to provide a safe environment. However this does not occur if these are not appropriately enforced or policed.

This enforcement cannot be left to licensed premises alone, but needs to be undertaken by Government to ensure that licensees are meeting their obligations under RSA.



Discounting and promotion of alcohol

Evidence clearly shows that low alcohol prices result in higher alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harms.

The most significant government intervention to address low alcohol prices is alcohol taxation reform and the establishment of minimum pricing policies.

The Commonwealth Government is best placed to set the alcohol taxation rates at levels that minimise the harms caused by alcohol. However, there is also a role for states and territories to use their powers to prevent excessive discounting and promotion of alcohol products.

The Liquor Act 1992 currently allows for the Minister to prohibit the sale of a product that inappropriately targets young people, increases intoxication at rapid rates and/or encourages irresponsible use of alcohol.

Additionally, the Liquor Act 1992 and the Liquor Regulations 2002 contain provisions to prohibit alcohol promotion in on-licensed premises.

This includes banning the promotion and sale price of alcohol on the outside at on-licensed premises (eg. 'Happy hours' and 'two drinks for the price of one').



While these price promotions are not allowed to be advertised on the outside of the licensed venue, they are permitted to occur within the license venue. The Act also prohibits promotional activities which encourage the rapid consumption of alcohol.

Despite these regulations, alcohol is too frequently discounted and promoted at both on and off-licensed premises. Often such restrictions are only imposed once a venue has been reprimanded following complaints arising from alcohol-fuelled incidents.



TOOLS FOR ADVO CACY

*Joining or creating groups
Engaging with politicians
Petitions
Engaging with media
Liquor licence process
Direct action*

HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

general advocacy

Advocacy can be defined as an action that supports and or suggests recommendations for a particular cause or policy. The reason we advocate is to challenge barriers that prevent us from reducing alcohol-related harm and ensure that the rights of individuals within our communities are protected.

“Overnight change takes time”

Change takes time. Therefore it should be noted that it may be months before you start to notice the results of general advocating. The key is to not give up, continue to push for change until it starts to become evident.

How to get started

Before creating a campaign, it is important to develop a simple message that outlines your cause. It is also a good idea to research the issues at hand in-order to be fully aware of facts within the field. Once you have gathered all the relevant information, create a plan that addresses who, what, when, and where of the campaign.

It is also entailment to do a review on the environment you will be entering. In saying so, be aware of your opponents and identify any possible barriers and enablers of the campaign, along with key representatives to champion the cause.

Additionally, you should take part in activities such as collaborating with similar advocacy groups and seek advice from consultants. It is also important to talk to the right people to encourage the push for change and open doors to opportunities. This could be achieved through reporters and the media.

Reflection is the key to development.

Therefore it is essential to reflect on the effectiveness and progression of the campaign. A great way to do is through evaluation plans.





JOIN OR CREATE A GROUP



Joining and creating groups is a great way to advocate. Through groups you can gather with like-minded people and have the benefit of strength in numbers.

Joining groups

There are a number of already established groups advocating to reduce alcohol related harms like the Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol. Groups often participate in both local and systemic advocacy on a range of issues.

Joining a group allows you to leverage their name and reputation to advance your advocacy efforts.

Some groups may have a joining fee but there are often different prices for organisations, individuals and students. A local action group may already have a web page or a social media group that you can join before committing to a membership.

Here are some well-known groups operating in Queensland to reduce alcohol related harms:

[Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol \(QCAA\)](#), [Act on Alcohol Project](#) [One Punch Can Kill Project](#).

Starting your own group

If you can't find a group that is tackling the issues that are important to you, you can start your own.

Often grassroots advocacy campaigns start on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. These platforms serve as a hub and central meeting place for your advocacy efforts.

Social media sites often allow you to create groups, which can be open or closed to the public. If you want to regulate membership of the group and control what campaign information is released, consider starting a closed group and have a public group or page where you can promote your campaign.

Your campaign can be about raising awareness of an issue or be a fully developed campaign to encourage action on alcohol.

Make sure you follow other social media advocates and seek out opportunities to collaborate with them. Again, strength in numbers.

There is heaps of information on social media strategies online – you can start researching today.

ENGAGING WITH POLITICIANS

Engagement of politicians can be achieved through various modes of communication. For example, directly engaging politicians via letters or indirectly through the media.

Identifying a politician's current position in the political arena and their associated roles shapes the type of engagement.

You can inform the political target of your advocacy efforts and what you want addressed through various engagement options. For example:

- Dropping into the electorate office
- Make an appointment and talk face to face
- Make a phone call
- Write a letter
- Send a fax or e-mail a message

Building a relationship with a politician is a great way to see policy change on alcohol related issues. By identifying the right people to approach and the right way to approach them, you can make a real difference. If politicians are interested in joining the cause, then you should let them know that there are people with the relevant resources and research to assist them.

Identifying politicians

The most effective way to advocate is by engaging with federal, state and local politicians based on their role, history or location.

Targeting politicians who are stakeholders in your issue gives your advocacy the best chance for success.

WRITING A LETTER TO A POLITICIAN

Writing a letter to a politician can help you raise awareness and advocate for policy change in an informed and personal way. After you have identified the best person to approach, make sure you take in to account their history when composing your letter but never make assumptions about their response or views. They may seek to meet up or simply offer a helping hand.

Always include your return address to receive a reply. Visit the QLD Parliament website for contact details of current members of Parliament:

<https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/members/current/list>

Example creating a political contact record

Name: Hon Dr Martha Citizen
Position: Minister for Families
Member for Brisbane
Political Party: Australian Example Party

Relevance

History:

- Practicing General Practitioner
- Community Activity: Cancer Charity
- Military Service: Australian Navy

Relevance: History as a medical professional would indicate understanding of the health harms of alcohol. Connection to the cancer charity could indicate interest in link between alcohol and cancer.

Role:

- Minister for Families

Relevance: Families - Domestic violence, child protection and youth are all areas significantly affected by alcohol related harms. People residing in the Brisbane area would definitely be stakeholders in any change to trading hours.

Contact:

Ministerial Office:

Phone: (07) 3000 0001 Email: families@parliament.qld.gov.au

Address: 1 William Street, BRISBANE QLD 4000

Electorate Office:

Phone: (07) 3000 0002 Email: brisbane@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Address: Unit 1, 23 Example Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

Engagement:

Intention: Phone to gain support in addressing alcohol related violence

Action Taken: Initial contact made that outlined interest in discussing alcohol issue

Result: Reply received June 30, 2017 and appointment made

Remember Targeting politicians who are stakeholders in your issue gives you the best chance for success

PETITIONS

Petitioning is one of the most effective ways to demonstrate public support for your cause.

Petitions are usually motivated by a desire to alter legislation or to see the administrative decision of a company or government overturned.

When advocating for the reduction of alcohol harms to the Queensland Parliament it is important to heed to rules of submitting a petition.

When creating a petition, be sure to follow any rules of the Parliament you are petitioning. These can be found on the websites of the Parliament or you can contact your local electorate office.

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Petitions

Email alerts

Another less conventional way to petition politicians is to run an email or fax campaign.

Many campaigns invite their supporters to send a template letter via email, fax or post to inform their local MP of their position on an issue.

The most successful campaigns are targeted to the right people and are personalised by the individual sending them. These form of letters can be adapted to address any particular concerns of individuals.

Postcard campaign

An effective way to get your message across is by conducting a postcard campaign to a key person responsible for your issue. This might be the Premier, Prime Minister or Minister responsible for health, families or domestic violence.

Postcards are effective because they are easy to hand out and work well to promote your cause to the community. You can hand these out near public transport, in busy areas or at local community events.



ENGAGING WITH THE MEDIA

The media is an important part of the advocacy process and no advocacy action can be complete without including some form of media engagement.

Media agents have the ability to influence the community, politicians and fellow media and can greatly contribute to how ready and aware these audiences are for receiving your advocacy pitch.

The media are an important advocacy device that can expose the general public to your issue and consequently have the capacity to support your efforts.

Basic knowledge and some form of opinion are required to build movement on your topic. This means that both community and political attention must be attained to ensure the media component of your advocacy efforts links into the other components of your advocacy action plan.

Government officials pay attention to evidence that supports change or improvement. In particular, political audiences will pay attention if that evidence doesn't reflect positively in newspapers before the next elections

Using the media is a delicate task that can't be fully controlled given the range of influential external factors. However deliberate action with media agents is a necessary step for any advocate.

Process of engagement

The media has processes of appropriate engagement that largely depend on the timeliness and potential of an issue to sell.

Media agents can be contacted on a regular basis to advocate for your issue or group. Familiarisation with the processes of

COMPILING A CONTACT LIST

Do

- Compile contact list of relevant media contacts – radio, TV, magazine, newspaper, wire services, and online media
- Justify your choice by including specific names that may be interested in your issue
- Analyse previously published content to determine attitudes towards your topic

Don't

- Use outdated contacts
- Engage media agents without a clear goal and good justification
- Assume your advocacy efforts will be used well or at all by the media agent(s)

issue prioritisation can effect whether engagement attempts are successful.

The order of importance or rank amongst media professionals is as follows:

- General Manager
- Chief-of-staff
- Editor-in-chief
- Editor
- Journalist/reporter

The procedure for getting the advocacy topic into the media can be cyclical and is not a concrete structure. The topic may be passed from both directions. For example, top to bottom or bottom up. Ultimately, the editor decides what is printed. The editor should be a prioritized target for the issue or group advocacy.

Identifying media contacts

Media contacts must be identified and listed with justifications as to why they have been targeted in your advocacy actions. This list should include contacts from as many modes of media communication as possible (both print and electronic sources).

A table or spreadsheet can help organise a relevant list of local, national and/or

international media contacts from newspapers, radio, television, magazine and internet.

It is important to develop and maintain a strong relationship with journalist and other sources of media. By doing so, they can become familiar with the issue of concern and so that you can identify the interests and needs of the journalist and media to effectively deliver your message. By being more open to the media, there is a greater chance of becoming a trusted source so it is important to be always available, courteous and supportive.

Try to locate contacts that have a specific history or role in covering alcohol issues or your topic specifically.

This information is often not readily available but can be uncovered over time as you become familiar with media contacts.

Media contact selection can be on the basis of their physical location, previous published content or general interest in the advocacy topic. However the latter is difficult to gauge until after contact has occurred.



Media Release

Once media contacts have been located, the next step is creating tools to engage them.

A press release is a good way to launch your advocacy campaign and attract the media's attention.

A one-page press release should be prepared. It should cover the key facts, the stance of your advocacy campaign, and recommendations for change.

It is usually used to introduce the press to your issue and advocacy team or to update on recent developments. The media are also our target audience and as an advocate you want to maintain credibility.

**PRODUCING CREDIBLE
NEWSWORTHY MEDIA RELEASES
IN THE CORRECT FORMAT IS
IMPORTANT IN MAINTAINING THE
MEDIA'S ATTENTION**

The structure of a media release is similar to an upside down pyramid because it needs to have the most vital information first.

The first two sentences need to incorporate the who, what, when, where, why and how. Every paragraph in a release must only have one sentence.

Letter to the Editor

Your press release, article or opinion piece may create other media opportunities.

You may respond to media engagement by preparing a letter to the editor. A letter to the editor is intended for an identified print or electronic media. It should be a

concise response to an interest in or an opposing stance on your issue.

A letter to the editor should not exceed 300 words and must clearly identify which article or event you are responding to. A letter to the editor can be used to change behaviour, deliver a message, set the record straight, impact policy or legislation and generate coverage of an issue.

A letter to the editor may not make it to 'print' however it is necessary to respond and contribute to the perception of your advocacy issue.

False statements or sentiments regarding your topic should be a priority for response. Public perception of the issue may be shaped by incorrect information and may become a barrier later if left unchallenged.

Preparing for an interview

Your submitted media release may catch the eye of reporters, which could lead to an interview. See this as the perfect opportunity to inform the public about your concerns and the purpose of your campaign. Remember that the interviewer wants a good story so be prepared. Confidence, Control and Credibility are the key to success.

Most media outlets provide questions before the interview to prepare you for what to expect. Some tips to help prepare you are;

1. Gather all the facts and research about your cause
- 2.. Simplify your message for clarity
3. Practice and improve where ever possible

It is also a good idea to do mock interviews if you are uncomfortable about the interview.

MEDIA RELEASES

Do

- An effective headline (easily relates to your topic, covers your position, is newsworthy and catches the eye)
- Include the most important information first to catch the media's attention
- Ensure the who, what, when, where, why and how are incorporated into the first two paragraphs
- One sentence per paragraph
- Introduce a spokesperson within the first four paragraphs
- An effective introduction and conclusion
- A succinct, factually correct summary of the issue
- An indication of the ethical nature of the issue
- A relevant, realistic, suggested course of action

Don't

- Include irrelevant information
- Include pictures or images unless absolutely necessary
- Indulge in irrelevant and ineffective rhetoric
- Go over one page
- Introduce an irrelevant media release-it should be attached to a significant event (finding, conference, new legislation etc)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Steps

1. Keep an eye out for opinion pieces and articles that are related to your advocacy issue
2. Record these to keep track of the attitude trends towards your issue
3. Choose one issue
4. Write a sentence or two identifying your organisation
5. Write one or two sentences of background information.
6. Write one or two sentences on your opinion
7. In one or two sentences, offer a solution and encourage readers, policy makers, etc. to take a specific action (i.e., contacting an elected official, voting a certain way, etc.)
8. Assemble paragraphs to form the letter and address it "Dear Editor"
9. Add your full name and contact information (phone, address, and email) to the end of the letter
10. Read over the letter and make sure it is clear and makes an impact
11. Edit and email/mail/fax the letter to the contact person listed
12. If you intend to email the letter, put the letter directly in the text of the email as attachments are discouraged.

OBJECTING TO LIQUOR LICENCES



As a member of the community, you are able to object to a liquor licence permit application if you are considered to have a 'proper interest'. To strengthen the objection, getting others involved including different sectors of the community could significantly help.

The purpose of the liquor Act is to regulate the liquor industry along with areas within the vicinity of licenced premises to reduce the potential harm and damages from alcohol.

For more information about the Liquor Act, visit the Australasian Legal Information Institute.

Website: <http://www.austlii.edu.au>

The Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR) processes these objections under the following guidelines.

Grounds for objection

Valid reasons to object to a liquor licence application include:

Undue offence, annoyance, disturbance or inconvenience to those who live or work within the area

Undue offence, annoyance, disturbance or inconvenience to persons in, or travelling to or from, an existing or proposed place of public worship, hospital or school

Harm from alcohol abuse and misuse or associated violence

An adverse effect on the health or safety of members of the public

An adverse effect on the amenity of the community.

All current applications are listed on the OLGR website along with an invitation for public comment and the closing dates.

All objections are required to be submitted in writing to the correct OLGR regional office. These details are outlined in the individual advertised application. Keep in mind that a copy of your objection will be provided to the applicant.

Requirements for objections

The OLGR website lists the requirements for objections as:

- be 18-years or older
- live in the area of, or be likely to be directly affected by, the granting of the licence
- submit the objection in writing as an individual or as a group by way of petition
- clearly state the grounds for the objection
- submit the written objection before the closing date.

Objecting by petition

The OLGR website lists the requirements for lodging an objection via petition as:

- have an identical heading on every page of the petition that clearly states the subject matter and is positioned so that it is clearly legible to those who sign it.
- include the particulars of each signatory in relation to their connection with the locality; for example, they must advise whether they reside, work or do business in the area
- state the name of the petition's sponsor on each sheet (i.e. the person who will be the point of contact between the Commissioner and the signatories).

For more information visit The Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation website.
Website: <https://secure.olgr.qld.gov.au/dcm>

Complaints about alcohol advertising

Concerns raised about advertisements encouraging the unsafe consumption of alcohol are considered under Section 2.6 of the AANA Code of Ethics. All complaints about alcohol advertising should be sent to the Advertising Standards Bureau. If you have a complaint.

Visit the Advertising Standards Bureau website: <https://adstandards.com.au/>

DIRECT ACTION

There are many ways to approach direct action. Direct action does not have to be big or require a lot of effort, instead a small community events such as gatherings in parks could easily express the concerns of community stakeholders. The key to success is planning, therefore it is essential to be prepared by planning approaches to effectively portray your intended message.

Direct action can be a great way to raise awareness of, and draw attention to, the harms of alcohol.

Through community events, public meetings or media stunts you can attract the attention of the community, media and ultimately key decision makers.

A great way to start is by leveraging existing events or days of significance. This might be using the start of a popular sporting competition to draw attention to alcohol advertising in sport or building a campaign around alcohol and cancer for World Cancer Day.

Many advocacy groups use social media to get the word out about their cause. By creating groups, pages or event on social sites like Facebook it can be easy to invite your friends or networks to support your cause. Remember to use a strong, simple and catchy title to attract interest.

BE MINDFUL OF WHO MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY YOUR DIRECT ACTION CAMPAIGN TO AVOID UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

*New processes - Understanding the policy development process
Overview of the legislative process in Queensland*

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

How to create your own Policy

If you have your own concerns about a particular issue and wish to take action, you can create your own policy. Policies are like rules, but more flexible like 'guideline'. They suggest points of action within an agreed limit to accommodate change.

In order to create an effective policy, it is important to have a clear and concise message that is easy to get across to your audience. You need to have relevant research as evidence along with examples outlining why the issue is an issue of concern.

Policy reviews are available to local community members. If there is not a review on your issue of concern then it is up to you to create one. If there is a policy review on a previous policy you are concerned about, you can inquire by submitting a policy submission.

Contributing to the a pre-existing policy

If you are after ways to contribute to a pre-existing policy or one already in the making, you can do this through submissions, speaking with department consultations and speaking with politicians. It is important to note that depending on the particular policy, you may be limited in having your say. Policy submission are best made through a formal consultation process.

What is a consultation?

A consultation is a way for the government to involve local communities to have their

say on existing and future policies, programs and services.

How to have your say

You can contribute to department consultations via the 'Get involved' website through an online survey. Just select the relevant consultations and then click on the survey link to answer and submit questions. from the department consultation, your ideas can get sent through to a Political consultation.

If another party (e.g. the Government) is creating a policy and you wish to contribute, visit the Queensland Government 'Get Involved' page to have your say.

This could be in relation to responding to consultations, petition parliament or contacting your local MP.

For more information visit the link below.
<https://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au/>

SUBMISSIONS

1. Prepare your approach by creating an action plan.
2. Consider the style, format and tone you intend to use. It is important to keep it concise yet keep it persuasive.
3. Start off with an executive summary. This can be where you introduce the issues of concern and incorporate case studies to portray current happenings.
4. Show all research and examples on the issues at hand to support your case.
5. State your recommendations. This is your chance to effectively demonstrate your desired actions along with their intended outcomes.
6. Submissions are public documents. If you require confidentiality there you need to address this in your submission.

Submissions can be upload via the Queensland Get Involved page

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN QUEENSLAND

A bill is a proposal for a law, either a new law or a change to an existing law, placed before the Parliament for its consideration.

The majority of bills are introduced by the government. Ministers are responsible for introducing bills into the parliament.

Individual Members of Parliament (MPs) who are not ministers may introduce bills and these are known as Private Member's Bills.

The stages that occur before a government bill is introduced in Parliament are:

- Policy approval by the Government. All major new policies, new or major expenditure and contentious matters must be approved by Cabinet. For legislation this is called the "authority to prepare a bill" stage. The proposed legislation is then ranked in order of priority on the legislation program for consideration at the next sitting of Cabinet;
- Drafting instructions are prepared by the department sponsoring the legislation and sent to the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel for the drafting of the bill;
- The draft bill and draft Explanatory Memorandum are submitted to Cabinet for "authority to introduce a bill" for approval;
- Cabinet reviews the bill after drafting and before it is introduced in Parliament;
- The minister responsible for the bill seeks a clearance to introduce the bill from the parliamentary MPs of his or her party
- The final bill is printed ready for introduction in parliament.

The community has an opportunity to take part in this process. This can be achieved through submissions (which can be as informal and brief) as an email to a detailed formal submission.

First reading

After the bill has been introduced in the parliament, the minister nominates a parliamentary committee to examine the bill. The minister delivers a speech of up to one hour, explaining the principles and policies underpinning the bill. The Clerk of the Parliament reads the short title of the bill for a first time.

Committee consideration

The nominated parliamentary committee considers the bill and has up to six months to prepare a report on that bill unless there is a resolution by the House or by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly that the time period be altered. This is a public process, the community can make comments on the proposed legislation along with other issues that have come to their attention.

Committee report

The committee tables, the report and the bill is placed on the Notice Paper for the second reading debate. Committee members may also conduct a public hearing and/or seek clarification on particular issues.

Second reading

At least one calendar day after the bill has been placed on the Notice Paper, the motion for the "second reading" is moved by the Minister in charge of the bill. The minister then speaks to the bill and also to the committee report.

The Leader of the Opposition (or nominee) responds. Members of the relevant committee then have the opportunity to speak. The second reading debate continues with contributions from government and non-government members. The Minister concludes the second reading debate with a speech in reply. The Clerk then reads the short title of the bill a second time.

Consideration in detail

The next stage is consideration in detail where bills are examined clause by clause by the Legislative Assembly. During this stage, amendments may be proposed to individual clauses of the bill.



Third reading

The Minister in charge of the bill moves the motion for the “third reading”.

This is the last opportunity for the parliament to consider the bill. The motion may be debated but it is restricted to the content of the bill as it stands after consideration in detail, and to why the bill should or should not be read a third time.

Debate from the second reading or the consideration in detail stages cannot be repeated.

The motion for the third reading can only be amended to dispose of the bill.

Once the motion is agreed to, the Clerk reads the short title of the bill a third and last time. The long title of the bill is then agreed to.

Enactment

Two parchment copies of the bill are signed by the Governor, on behalf of the Queen.

This is called Royal Assent and the bill becomes known as an Act of Parliament. Royal Assent can take up to two weeks.

When an Act has a commencement clause it usually states when an Act will come into force. It will specify that the Act comes into force-

- on a particular date or dates;
- or upon proclamation in the Government Gazette.

If an Act does not have a commencement clause, it will come into force on the date of assent when it is signed by the Governor.

For more information on the parliamentary system visit the Queensland Parliament website for access to fact sheets
<https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/>

If you are advocating a national issue, visit the Australian Parliament website for more information. <http://www.aph.gov.au/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There are a range of excellent resources for evidence gathering on alcohol issues.

To make it easier, QCAA has gathered a list of reputable websites to help you start building your advocacy efforts.

Act on Alcohol is a service to support Queensland communities address alcohol-related harm and Act on Alcohol.

The Act on Alcohol team has experience in community engagement and development, health promotion, social marketing, social media and project planning. They also have a wealth of knowledge around how and who to connect with in local communities to enable you to take action.

www.actonalcohol.org.au

Centre for Alcohol Policy and Research is an innovative, world-class research facility at the forefront of informed alcohol policy development. CAPR's most significant work is the ongoing study entitled 'Alcohol's Harm to Others', which measures 'third party' harms from alcohol use that have not previously been explored in a national context.

www.capr.edu.au

Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol.

FARE undertakes and communicates

world-leading research, develops and advocates for policies and programs that work, mobilises communities and organisations across the country to work together to stop harm caused by alcohol, defends the public interest and hold the alcohol industry to account.

FARE has an extensive research library including recent publications including:

- Annual Alcohol Poll: Attitudes and behaviours
- The hidden harm: Alcohol's impact on children and families
- Risky business: The alcohol industry's dependence on Australia's heaviest drinkers

www.fare.org.au

My AOD Prevention is an online hub for AOD prevention workers. The functionality of the website is broken into theory, knowledge and practice sections, covering a vast range of skill development and contribution opportunities. This includes theoretical foundations, AOD prevention best practice, key strategies, documents, readings and resources, a practice workspace covering AOD prevention project write ups, information topics and perspectives by prevention workers, best practice approaches and problem solving.

www.myaodprevention.org.au

Healthy Options Library is a specialist library providing information on alcohol, other drugs and mental health. First established in 1984 as part of Drug ARM Australasia, the library now supports the staff, volunteers, students, and clients of the Healthy Options Australia organisations. The library is also open to the public and provides materials to schools, media representatives, researchers and clinicians.

www.library.hoa.org.au



For further information about QCAA, visit www.qcaa.org.au or contact the QCAA secretariat at contactus@qcaa.org.au.

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