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POLICY OPTIONS:

How states and territories can take further action on outdoor alcohol advertising

1

Ban all outdoor alcohol advertising and sponsorship across the jurisdiction



2

Ban all outdoor alcohol advertising and ban sponsorship at family-friendly events



3

Ban alcohol advertising on government-owned assets and public transport infrastructure



WHY WE NEED ADVERTISING REGULATION

Alcohol is one of the most heavily promoted products in the world. Yet it is also one of the most harmful, contributing to more than 200 disease and injury conditions and causing nearly 6,000 deaths in Australia every year.^{1,2}

Evidence clearly shows that young people's exposure to alcohol marketing increases their alcohol consumption and increases the risk of starting drinking from a younger age.^{3,4} The World Health Organization recommends enforcing bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship, and promotion to reduce alcohol use and alcohol harm.⁵ Market research from the Outdoor Media Association indicates that 92.6 per cent of consumers are exposed to outdoor advertising at least once per day, and that three out of every five shoppers are influenced by outdoor marketing immediately prior to shopping.⁶ This form of marketing is extremely influential and therefore accutely harmful in the context of alcohol marketing.

As highlighted in *Outdoor alcohol advertising in Australia: snapshot of the current state of play*, most jurisdictions have introduced some controls on outdoor alcohol advertising, which are largely administered through government policies applied through contract variations. While these restrictions work to limit exposure, they are not comprehensive enough to prevent children and young people's exposure to all outdoor alcohol advertising. Current restrictions can be strengthened further by legislating bans or more comprehensive restrictions, and introducing sanctions and other monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

OPTION 1

Ban all outdoor alcohol advertising and sponsorship across the jurisdiction

There is precedent for a complete ban on outdoor advertising and sponsorship of unhealthy products. In 1987 Victoria was the first state or territory to prohibit outdoor tobacco advertising. The legislation was introduced banning cinema ads, competitions, and leaflets, with billboard advertising prohibited as of 1 January 1989. The Victorian Government also established VicHealth (then Victorian Health Promotion Foundation) to buy out tobacco sponsorship.

OPTION 2

Ban all outdoor alcohol advertising and ban sponsorship at family-friendly events

It is impossible to control who sees outdoor advertising, with alcohol ads prominently placed in locations frequented by children including shopping centres, public transport and stadiums. There is precedent for states and territories to ban outdoor alcohol advertising. In the absence of a complementary ban on alcohol sponsorship, state and territory governments could prohibit alcohol companies and brands from sponsoring events and activities that are popular among families and where children are present, including sporting events.

OPTION 3

Ban alcohol advertising on government-owned assets and public transport infrastructure

Alcohol costs the states and territories billions of dollars in health care, hospital, and law enforcement expenses. The marketing and promotion of alcohol significantly contributes to these costs. Accepting money from the alcohol industry to promote its products undermines the work and investment governments make in keeping their communities strong and healthy. Governments invest significant funds in programs, policies, and campaigns that seek to reduce harm from alcohol. Reducing the volume of competing, 'pro-alcohol' messages would support the government's investment to have a greater impact.

REFERENCES

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- 6 Outdoor Media Association. (Retrieved 23 October 2019) A Healthy Media Plan, data obtained from Day in the Life Study Research Now. Accessed <http://www.oma.org.au/facts-and-figures/research-and-insights/healthy-media-plan>