

Natasha Fyles

Minister for Health



Media Release

Safer Communities: BDR Evaluation Shows Positive Results

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The Territory Labor Government has released the 12 month Banned Drinker Register (BDR) Evaluation Report, showing positive results.

The independent evaluation overseen by Menzies School of Health Research points to a reduction in the supply of alcohol to problem drinkers and reductions for individuals whose alcohol related behaviour was causing repeat offending.

The BDR was scrapped by the chaotic former CLP government.

The Territory Labor Government has kept its promise to bring back the BDR – and action a raft of other evidence based measures - to reduce alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour.

Since the BDR was rolled out September 2017, around 7400 people have been placed on the BDR and there have been more than 9000 refusals of sale.

The 12 month evaluation has indicated that the following benefits are being seen since the reintroduction of the BDR:

- Alcohol treatment episodes have increased from a monthly average of 221 to 259 since the BDR commenced, showing that more people are voluntarily seeking treatment to address their problem drinking.
- People who have a high number of alcohol related incidents in the justice system have shown a reduction since being on the BDR.
- More people are self-referring onto the BDR compared to the previous model.
- Sobering Up Shelter admissions have generally increased in most centres over the first year of the BDR. As a harm reduction measure, the SUS is often the entry point for people to commence treatment.

The Banned Drinker Register is one part of a suite of comprehensive measures to tackle alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour. This includes giving police the power to shut down bottle shops caught irresponsibly selling alcohol, stationed Auxiliary cops on bottle shops and banned additional takeaway Liquor Licenses.

The Territory Labor Government will continue to independently evaluate the BDR and identify ways to further enhance and improve its effects for the community with the next evaluation releasing in June 2019.

To access the full evaluation go to <https://digitallibrary.health.nt.gov.au/prodjspui/handle/10137/7236>

Quotes from the Minister for Health, Natasha Fyles:

“Territorians have had a gutful of crime and anti-social behaviour on our streets.

“Our alcohol reforms are about cutting crime. We are targeting alcohol abuse to make our communities safer.

“We won’t be repeating the CLPs failed approach of scrapping the BDR, less cops on the beat, and cutting funding for youth diversion programs.

“We have taken clear steps to build on the BDR with a suite of evidence based reforms for alcohol harm reduction, based on the Alcohol Policy and Legislation Review (Riley Review).”

Quotes from Professor Peter Miller, Director of the Centre for Drug Use, Addictive and Anti-social Behaviour Research (CEDAAR), Deakin University:

“Alcohol kills more people globally than AIDS, violence and road accidents combined, and is the leading cause of death in people aged 15-40. The NT has the highest per capita consumption in Australia and alcohol-attributable deaths occur in the NT at about 3.5 times the rate they do in Australia generally. In this context, strong measures are clearly justified and the NT Government’s focus on alcohol will provide important lessons for the NT and other governments nationally and internationally.

“For this reason, and to ensure the best mix of policy intervention and value for money of taxpayer dollars, the ongoing and rigorous evaluation of the BDR is essential. This report provides further evidence of the impact over time and does an excellent job of showing the community-wide trends as well as highlighting the wide range of outcomes in this complex group of people with multiple and complex needs.”

Media Contact: Ellie Clancy 0436 646 689