

# Drink or Drunk:

## Why do staff at licensed premises continue to serve patrons to intoxication despite current laws and interventions?

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# Injury Control Council of Western Australia (ICCWA) Inc.

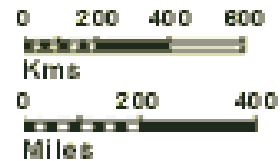
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- ❖ Peak non-government not-for profit organisation involved in injury prevention and community safety promotion in Western Australia



# Western Australia

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# Our Program Areas

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- Alcohol Related Harm
- Suicide Prevention
- Seniors Falls Prevention
- Professional Development Services
- Community Capacity Building
- Mall Walking Groups
- Safe Communities
- Community Violence
- Youth Safety

# Australia's drinking problem

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- Alcohol is a major contributing factor of violence and injury
- Alcohol is estimated to cost the Australian economy around \$15.3 billion per annum
- Single occasion alcohol use generally causes more problems than longer term alcohol dependence
- One in five Australians (20.4%) drink at short-term risky/high-risk levels at least once a month
- Licensed premises are "hot spots" for intoxication leading to aggression and violence.

# Impact of alcohol in WA

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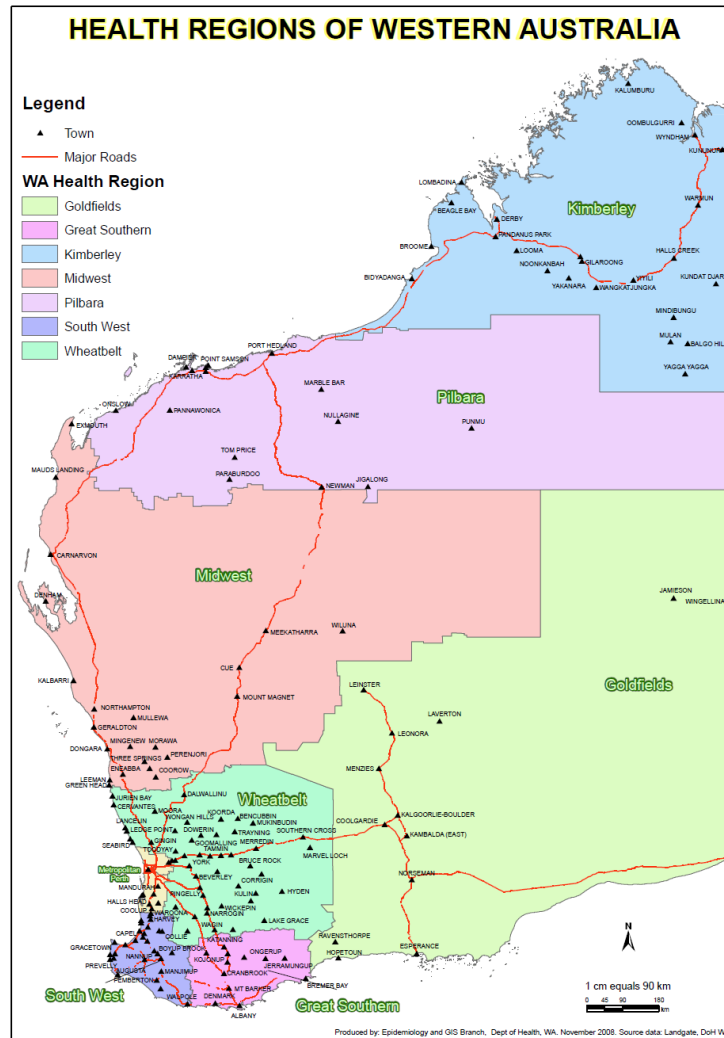
- Between 1991/92 and 2000/01 - only state to indicate an overall increase in adult per capita alcohol consumption
- Number of alcohol-related assaults increased by 52% between 1990/91 to 1998/99, from 7,684, to 11,688
- 2005 - 12.5% of all alcohol related injury hospitalisations were for assault (ED presentations not included)
- Per capita consumption in 2004/05 in WA was 12.66 litres of alcohol for those over 15 years of age
- Young offenders identified the practice of serving patrons to intoxication as a major contributing factor of violence

# Alcohol related crime - WA

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- Alcohol - a factor in approx 70% of Police work/call outs
- During 2007-08 - alcohol was a factor in 43.2% (9810) of assaults that occurred across the state
- Perth metropolitan area in 2007-08, alcohol related assaults accounted for around 37% (5499) for all domestic and non domestic assaults
- Alcohol related crime and assaults - much higher in regional WA than the state average. Eg - in the Pilbara alone, alcohol related assaults accounted for almost 64% of all assaults

# Health regions of WA





# Responsible service of alcohol in Australia

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- All States and Territories have some type of responsible service of alcohol training - not all mandatory

In Western Australia -

- Responsible service of alcohol training is mandatory for all staff
- To be licensed a premise must have a house management plan which includes code of conduct detailing patron care and dealing with intoxicated patrons

# Objectives of the study

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- Understand the reasons why staff serve patrons to intoxication despite laws/interventions
- Identify the factors that increase/decrease the probability of staff serving patrons to intoxication
- Identify new strategies to reduce the likelihood of staff serving patrons to intoxication - in particular those relating to law enforcement
- Share outcomes to inform law enforcement, policy and planning for police and other agencies

# Methodology

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- Literature review, audit of RSA and previous interventions
- Consultation with key stakeholders
- Analysis of WA crime statistics
- Data collection - originally commenced October 2008
- Interviews & on-line surveys (141 viable surveys)
- Participants - 73% Female, 27% Male
- Greater Metropolitan (120) and Regional (21)

# Study limitations

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- Relatively small sample size given the size of WA (141 surveys) - this limited the amount of data that could be collected/analysed
- Survey method- restricted expansion of answers
- Over-representation of females in the sample (73%)
- Low survey response from regional/country areas (13%)

# Survey questions

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- Who or what has had the biggest influence on whether you served patrons to intoxication or who were already intoxicated?
- In your experience, why do bar staff serve patrons to intoxication or to patrons who are already intoxicated?
- In your experience, what leads bar staff to refuse service to someone who is intoxicated?
- In your experience, did your supervisor support your choice to refuse service? Please explain.
- In your experience, did your co-workers support your choice to refuse service? Please explain.

# What previous research has found

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- Managerial
- Economic reasons
- Personal characteristics of staff including their own drinking habits
- Little to no perceived threat of civil liability or legal action
- Lack of server training
- Lack of ability to identify intoxication
- Fear of confrontation from patrons
- Act of deviance

# Previous interventions - key factors

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- Support from management in adhering to responsible service
- Stronger disincentives for not serving responsibly
- Effective liquor enforcement - Specialised Police & other bodies
- Economic incentives for positive change
- Use of positive media
- Awareness of gender relations and social norms towards alcohol
- Licensees to be knowledgeable and motivated enough to change

# Where to from here ?

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- Publish the findings and recommendations of this research in the very near future and will distribute as widely as possible
- Address the culture of drinking and the role alcohol plays in Australian society
- Combination of evidence based strategies addressing alcohol consumption - education, enforcement, advertising, access, trading hours etc
- Specific strategies targeted at licensed venues - many factors at play in serving alcohol to intoxication
- Safer Bars WA Trial - expansion across WA



# Contact us

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