

Project Overview: Community culture of responsible drinking in Glenelg

What?

The first stage of the initiative focuses on preventing alcohol-related harm, with underage young people as the main target group.

Why?

Although alcohol problems occur across the lifespan, this initiative focuses primarily on young people. Alcohol consumption by young people in Glenelg and Southern Grampians is significantly higher than the state average, with higher rates of associated anti-social behaviour, such as alcohol-related assaults. There are effective evidence-based strategies available to prevent alcohol-related harm of young people.

How?

Reducing the demand and supply of alcohol to underage young people

Southern Grampians & Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP) has joined with partners in Glenelg Shire including Portland District Health (PDH), Glenelg Shire Council, Dhauwurd-Wurrung Elderly & Community Health Service (DWECH), DEECD (School Nursing), Victoria Police and Great South Coast Medicare Local to form the Glenelg Alcohol Health Promotion Planning Committee (AHPPC).

The PCP and Portland District Health are leading the initiative, in partnership with the AHPPC, with Deakin University providing advice and support. In consultation with Dr John Toumbourou, Professor and Chair in Health Psychology at Deakin University, the Committee has agreed to undertake collaborative health promotion action focussing initially on alcohol and underage young people.

The first stage of the initiative aims to increase understanding of factors influencing alcohol and other drug use and to reduce the demand and supply of alcohol to underage young people. The national guidelines state that the safest option is for young people not to use alcohol before they turn 18; this reduces the risk of injuries and harm, impaired brain development and alcohol problems later in life. The initiative has a focus on preventing and delaying alcohol use by underage young people.

Strategies include:

- a student survey about health and wellbeing issues including alcohol use, alcohol availability and attitudes toward alcohol; it will also investigate factors within community, school, family and peer groups that can be modified to reduce or prevent adolescent alcohol use. A number of schools across Glenelg Shire have been invited to participate in the survey;
- underage alcohol sales monitoring at liquor outlets;
- social marketing and communication to increase community awareness of strategies to prevent alcohol-related harm and the National Health & Medical Research Australian Guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol, especially the one for children and young people; and
- building local community capacity to support prevention strategies.

Work will primarily focus on Portland in line with health promotion staff capacity at PDH and DWECH, however, other areas of Southern Grampians and Glenelg will be included where capacity and resourcing is available.

Once the first stage of the project is completed, the Committee and other key stakeholders will consider the outcomes, including the key findings of the student survey. On the basis of the data and local capacity, we will determine options for further evidence-based action across the community.

Contacts:

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