



Foundation for Alcohol
Research & Education

Media Release

FARE FUNDS SCRUTINY OF ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT PLANS

6 March 2014: Leading Indigenous academic Professor Marcia Langton will head a University of Melbourne research team seeking to prove the effectiveness of Alcohol Management Plans (AMP) in combating alcohol misuse in Aboriginal communities.

The team will conduct an in-depth case study in the Jilkminggan community in the Northern Territory over nine months, collecting information on how AMPs are understood by community members, health professionals and politicians.

While AMPs are considered an important Australian Government response to the harms caused by alcohol in Indigenous communities, there has been little research on their effectiveness or how they should be implemented and evaluated to be evidence-based.

The case study will address how communities can engage in reducing alcohol-related harms and contribute to policy through the research team's ongoing collaborations with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Prof. Langton said that in-depth, qualitative research conducted at a community level was vital to understand appropriate frameworks for AMP implementation strategies.

The project is one of two grants focusing on AMPs under the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) latest research funding round.

The other study, by the University of Southern Queensland, will evaluate the AMP operating in Cherbourg, an Indigenous community of 12,000 in the South Burnett area, 280km north-west of Brisbane. It will be led by Professor Don Gorman, Director of the university's Centre for Rural and Remote Area Health, and include Ms Raelene Ward, the centre's Indigenous Nurse Research Fellow.

Introduced in 2004, the Cherbourg AMP implemented dry place declarations in most of the community's public spaces including the council chambers, hospital and school, and in 2009 added a cap on alcohol transported into the community.

Prof. Gorman said that the evaluation would determine the Cherbourg community's opinion on the proposed alcohol restrictions, investigate the efficacy of the AMP and use the results to identify strategies to reduce alcohol consumption and violence.

FARE Chief Executive Michael Thorn said that governments often used AMPs to manage alcohol-related harms in Indigenous communities.

"This research will help us understand what factors make them effective or ineffective, and to use this to inform future policy," Mr Thorn said.

"FARE is pleased to fund these studies among the 12 grants in its current research funding round."

The grants, to universities, local government, hospitals and medical research institutes throughout Australia, include funding for evaluations, cross-sectoral research projects and pilot studies.

Since 2001 FARE has collaborated with a range of leading universities and institutes and invested more than \$20 million in research that explores the extent and nature of alcohol harm in Australia.

FARE is also the principal supporting partner of the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR), investing \$5 million in the world-class alcohol policy research institute.

“Developing strong evidence-based policy is critical to reduce alcohol-related harms,” Mr Thorn said.

“FARE’s funding of new research will continue to help governments make informed policy decisions about a range of other alcohol-related harms.”

Michael Thorn is available for interview.

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Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) is an independent, charitable organisation working to prevent the harmful use of alcohol in Australia. Since 2001 FARE has invested more than \$115 million in research and community projects to minimise the impact of alcohol misuse on Australians. Through its national grants program and commissioned research, FARE has established itself as a leading voice on alcohol and other drugs issues. FARE works with community groups, all levels of government, police, emergency workers, research institutions and the private sector to address alcohol-related problems. For more information visit FARE’s website: www.fare.org.au