



For immediate distribution

IT'S A LOCK – MAJORITY OF QUEENSLANDERS WANT GOVT TO HONOUR COMMITMENT TO REDUCE ALCOHOL VIOLENCE

22 January 2017: A majority of Queenslanders (64%) believe the State Government should honour its election commitment to introduce 1am lockouts on 1 February.

With Cabinet due to meet on Monday morning, new poll findings released today serve as a timely reminder to the Government of the extremely high levels of community support (72%) for its late-night trading measures to reduce alcohol violence.

Commissioned by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, the polling was conducted by Galaxy Research earlier this month to gauge Queenslanders perspectives on alcohol related violence and their support for policies to address those harms.

The poll found two in five Queenslanders (40%) have been affected by alcohol-related violence, up from one in three (29%) in 2016.

An overwhelming majority of Queenslanders (81%) believe more needs to be done to reduce alcohol harm, with two in three Queenslanders (66%) saying governments are still not doing enough.

Chair of the Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA), University of Queensland Emeritus Professor Jake Najman, believes it would be a grave error for the Government to back away from its commitment to what is a sound policy measure with almost universal support.

“Premier Palaszczuk was reported last week as saying herself that ‘these are good robust laws but we have to make sure we listen to the public’. Well the people of Queensland have spoken, and the overwhelming majority support the sensible late night trading measures introduced in July 2016 and believe the Government must honour its commitment to introduce 1am lockouts in February,” Professor Najman said.

Professor Najman, who is also the Chief Investigator of the *Queensland Alcohol-related violence and Night Time Economy Monitoring* project, says any decision to unwind the modest policy measures before they are fully evaluated, and, in the case of the lock-out measures, before they are even implemented, would be short-sighted and dangerous.

“The Queensland Government was applauded for introducing a package of evidence-based measures to reduce the State’s alcohol-fuelled violence. But we must remember that it is now only a little over six months since the first of those measures were implemented. Having prioritised the health and

safety of the Queensland public, it is now crucial that the measures are given the time to prove their worth. Anything less would be a complete betrayal,” Associate Professor Najman said.

FARE Chief Executive, Michael Thorn says that once again the poll shows that Queenslanders overwhelmingly recognise that Australia has a problem with alcohol and demand that more be done to reduce those harms.

“Every day, three Queenslanders die as a result of alcohol related harm and another 93 are hospitalised. And this year’s poll, makes very clear, as it did in 2016, that the people of Queensland want more done to tackle that unacceptable toll. It’s also clear that a majority of Queenslanders continue to fully endorse the life-saving harm reduction measures introduced last July; a message the Government would do well to heed”, Mr Thorn said.

Media contacts:

Jake Najman

0411 043 490

Michael Thorn

Jeremy Henderson

0425 559 710

The Queensland Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA) is a coalition of Queensland health and community organisations committed to reducing alcohol-related harm. QCAA identifies and prioritises actions needed to reduce alcohol harms and improve the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders and ensures that these actions are raised with decision makers. www.qcaa.org.au