



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

Media Release

27 March 2015

RACP calls for commitment to alcohol reform ahead of NSW election

Australia's largest medical college is calling for all political parties in the NSW election to commit to alcohol reform.

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians President, Laureate Professor Nicholas Talley, said alcohol-related harm is one of the most significant preventable health issues facing NSW.

"The most recent NSW Health statistics show alcohol is the cause of 142 hospitalisations, 27 emergency department visits and three deaths every day throughout the state," Professor Talley said.

"Alcohol can have devastating effects on individuals and their families, but it also puts enormous strain on our health system and this costs everybody."

It is estimated that alcohol-related harm costs the NSW government more than \$1 billion each year, which works out as an additional cost of \$416 per household for government services.

The RACP has written to the major political parties urging them to extend trading hour restrictions on licensed establishments in Sydney across the State and also to empower local communities to limit the density of licensed premises.

The College also stresses that NSW must address the number of young people at risk of falling through the gaps of a health system unable to cater for their unique needs.

"Only a holistic and responsive system where young people have access to health services specific to their needs, will address this problem," Professor Talley said.

The RACP is also seeking a commitment from NSW political parties to take urgent action to help close the gap on Indigenous health.

"In 2015, there remains a seven to nine year life expectancy difference between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW and the non-Indigenous population.

"The next Government needs to work with the Commonwealth and other State and Territory Governments to improve access to specialist medical care for all communities," Professor Talley said.

The RACP remains committed to working with the next NSW Government on these and other state health priorities.

Ends

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About The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP): The RACP trains, educates and advocates on behalf of more than 14,600 physicians – often referred to as medical specialists – and 6,000 Trainee members across Australia and New Zealand. The College represents more than 32 medical specialties including paediatrics & child health, cardiology, respiratory medicine, neurology, oncology and public health medicine, occupational & environmental medicine, palliative medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation medicine and addiction medicine. Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patients. www.racp.edu.au