MEDIA RELEASE

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:01AM AEDT, THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2026**

# Australians support alcohol advertising restrictions as Federal Government weighs reform

Cancer Council Australia is urging the Federal Government to adopt the recommendation of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Disability for a mandatory alcohol advertising framework, as new Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data shows growing public support for stronger controls.

| **74%** | **75%** | **26%** |
|---|---|---|
| support limiting alcohol advertising online and on social media (up from 67% in 2022-23) | support banning alcohol sponsorship of sporting events (up from 70% in 2022-23) | of people aged 14+ self-reported drinking alcohol at risky levels |

New data, released today, from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (AIHW) National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2025 asked Australians aged 14 and over about their alcohol use and their views on alcohol policy. Compared with the previous survey in 2022-23, it found support for several alcohol harm-reduction measures increased, reversing a decline seen since 2013.

Support for limiting alcohol advertising online and on social media rose from 67% to 74%, and support for limiting alcohol advertising on TV until after 9:30pm rose from 70% to 75%. Support also increased for banning alcohol sponsorship of sporting events and for restricting where zero-alcohol products carrying an alcohol brand can be displayed and sold in stores.

Self-reported risky drinking fell from 31% to 26%, but around 1 in 4 Australians aged 14 and over, an estimated 6 million people, still drank at risky levels that would increase their risk of alcohol-related cancers.

The results follow the Australian Communications and Media Authority's (ACMA) review of alcohol advertising in the Free TV Code, and recent recommendations to remove exemptions that allow alcohol advertising alongside sports broadcasts at times when it would otherwise be prohibited. In September, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Disability also recommended the Federal Government establish a new mandatory alcohol advertising and marketing regulatory framework that applies across platforms with an independent regulator and penalties for non-compliance.

**CEO of Cancer Council Australia, Jacinta Reddan** said: "Alcohol is a Group 1 carcinogen. That's the same category as tobacco, and like tobacco, Australians understand that marketing can influence, entice and harm. With alcohol a known cause of at least seven types of cancer, these results show strong and growing support for limiting the promotion of a product that increases the risk of preventable cancers, and people want governments to act.

“Alcohol advertising is no longer limited to traditional channels. Young people are increasingly exposed to sophisticated digital marketing through social media, online content and sports partnerships. A parliamentary committee has recommended mandatory rules, and the community is telling us clearly that they want stronger protections in place. The Federal Government should respond to the report in a timely manner and move ahead with regulation where there is such clear public support.”

**Alcohol Program Manager and Deputy Chair of Nutrition, Alcohol and Physical Activity Committee at Cancer Council Australia, Julia Stafford** said: “ACMA’s recommendation to remove the sports exemptions is a welcome step and Cancer Council is calling on Free TV to implement these changes without delay. The community is telling us it wants less alcohol advertising, and alcohol sponsorship of sport ended. Voluntary industry codes have not delivered that.

“In 2024, alcohol was responsible for an estimated 7,804 cancer cases in Australia, or 4.6% of all cancer cases, were attributable to alcohol use. [British Journal of Cancer]. Yet in 2023, fewer than half of Australians (46%) knew alcohol was a cause of cancer or a risk factor for it. [Alcohol Change Australia] . 1 in 4 people still drinking at levels above the low-risk guidelines is a cause for concern, given any alcohol use contributes to cancer risk."

**-ENDS-**

**Contact details**

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**About Cancer Council Australia**

Cancer Council Australia is Australia’s leading cancer charity, working to reduce the impact of cancer for all Australians. Cancer Council Australia works with its members, the eight state and territory Cancer Councils to:

- Undertake and fund cancer research
- Prevent and control cancer
- Provide information and support for people affected by cancer
- Shape and influence policy and practice

Find out more at cancer.org.au, or visit our Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or LinkedIn.