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30 June 2017

Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review
c/o Department of Health
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Dear Review Manager

SUBMISSION TO THE ALCOHOL POLICIES AND LEGISLATION REVIEW

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Northern Territory (NT) Government's *Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review*. This review process provides the NT Government with an important opportunity to implement comprehensive reforms to strengthen the regulation of alcohol and reduce alcohol-related harms in the NT.

In the Northern Territory, 38.6 per cent of people aged 12 years and older consume alcohol at rates that place them at risk of short-term harm and 28.8 per cent over consume alcohol at levels that place them at risk of long-term harm, including chronic disease and illness.¹ This is significantly more than the proportion reporting such consumption nationally (25.7 per cent and 17.6 per cent respectively).² The NT also has some of the heaviest consumption rates in the world. The latest data shows that consumption in the NT is 11.9 litres per capita.³ This means that if NT was a country it would be in the top ten countries with the heaviest consumption rates.⁴

Alcohol is too readily available in the Territory with one licence for every 353 people aged 18 years and above.¹ Too many people are affected by alcohol-related harms. Alcohol is responsible for more than 9,000 emergency department presentations and associated with nearly 65 per cent of all family and domestic violence cases where the alcohol status is known. In some areas of the NT, this figure is more than 80 per cent.⁵

At Telethon Kids Institute we are committed to improving the health of children and young people through research that makes a real difference. A priority area for research is Alcohol, Pregnancy and FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder). The goals of our work are to: develop prevention strategies; build the capacity of health, justice & other professionals; and Implement & evaluate programs for children & young people with FASD and their families.

Telethon Kids Institute hosts FASD Research Australia, funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council, which has the aim to reduce the effects of antenatal alcohol on child health.

¹ Based on the number of licensed premises as at 8 July 2016 and the Northern Territory population of 180,970 aged 18 and over at 30 June 2015 [Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016) 3101.0 - Australian demographic statistics, Dec 2015. Population by age and sex tables]

Thank you once again for the opportunity to raise these important issues with you.

Yours sincerely

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¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2014). *National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2013*. Retrieved from: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/alcohol-and-other-drugs/data-sources/nds-shs-2013/>

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2014). *National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2013*. Retrieved from: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/alcohol-and-other-drugs/data-sources/nds-shs-2013/>

³ Department of the Attorney-General and Justice. (2016). *NT wholesale alcohol supply for 2008-2015*. Northern Territory Government. Retrieved from: <https://justice.nt.gov.au/attorney-general-and-justice/statistics-and-strategy/wholesale-alcohol-supply-data>

⁴ World Health Organization (2016). Global Health Observatory data repository. Recorded alcohol per capita consumption, from 2000 Last update: May 2016. Retrieved from: <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A1026?lang=en?showonly=GISAH>

⁵ Northern Territory police (2017). *Statistical publications*. Retrieved from <http://www.pfes.nt.gov.au/Police/Community-safety/Northern-Territory-crime-statistics/Statistical-publications.aspx> on 6 June 2017