

31 January 2025

The Hon Sam O'Connor MP
Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth

By email: [REDACTED]

Subject: Expert panel needs health representatives

Dear Minister

Risky alcohol consumption continues to cause harm to Queenslanders, including through violence, injury, chronic disease and mental illness. These in turn result in avoidable emergency department (ED) presentations and hospital admissions, overburdening our doctors and health system which are already at breaking point.

Research has shown Queensland's world-leading alcohol harm reduction laws, including safe night out precincts and lock-out provisions, have successfully reduced ED presentations for assault and other injuries. That is why we wrote to both political parties in October last year urging them to keep the laws no matter who won the state election (enclosed).

Given our letter was copied to both the (now) Premier and Health Minister, we were disappointed to see the government's announcement of an expert panel to revitalise Queensland's night-life economy contained no health representatives. This is despite the media release stating the panel would 'discuss ways to enhance... safety' and 'comprised experts covering all aspects of Queensland's night life'.

We urge you to balance the panel by including representatives from the health sector to ensure any reforms do not increase alcohol-related harms. Our hospitals and doctors cannot be expected to cope with patients who could be saved from being there. We offer an AMA Queensland representative to join the panel and can meet to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Dr Nick Yim
President
AMA Queensland

Dr Brett Dale
Chief Executive Officer
AMA Queensland

Copied to:
The Hon David Crisafulli MP, Premier and Minister for Veterans
The Hon Tim Nicholls MP, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services