Australian National University

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KEY MESSAGES

Addressing alcohol and tobacco harms in remote Indigenous communities and rapid responses to mental health crises in regional centres

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1.   Policy Context: Alcohol Management Plan (AMP) Evaluation Study - to inform the review of alcohol restrictions in Queensland's Indigenous communities

KEY MESSAGES

We surveyed and reported community residents' experiences. Slim majorities agreed AMPs reduced violence and improved community amenity. Alcohol availability was not reduced, binge drinking increased and people felt anger about discrimination and increased criminalisation. Targeting 'sly grog', providing treatment services while reconciling criminalisation and discrimination are recommended options for government.

2.   Policy Context: Developing smoke-free spaces to reduce high rates of smoking in remote Indigenous communities in northern Australia

KEY MESSAGES

Very high and unchanging smoking rates and crowded living conditions in remote Indigenous communities in northern Australia mean that second-hand smoke exposure (SHSe) is extreme. This project, still under way, aims to increase the number of 'smoke-free' homes to greater than 50% of houses and reduce expenditure on tobacco. Governance by those who are capable and with a mandate for setting rules about that space is essential. If a space is not appropriately governed consistently and capably and in a way that is supported or agreed by other householders, there can be no smoke-free space rules.

3.   Policy Context: Review of the Cairns Mental Health, Police and Ambulance Co-responder Model (CoRM) to address mental health crises

KEY MESSAGES

The Cairns Mental Health Co-Responder Model of collaboration between Queensland Health, Police and Ambulance Services means that joint, rapid responses to mental health crises can be made in the community that are more efficient effective and safe for all. Consumers report improved experiences and outcomes. Trauma is reduced as crises are de-escalated. Compulsory treatment is less often used. Overall workload is reduced for first responders and mental health practitioners in a safer environment.