

MEDIA RELEASE
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**CONCERNS ALCOHOL INDUSTRY DELAYS
INTRODUCTION OF CLEARER PREGNANCY WARNING LABELS**

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation is concerned lobbying by the alcohol industry has hindered efforts to introduce clearer pregnancy warning labels, aimed at protecting the health of unborn babies.

Late last week, food and health ministers requested a review of the labels, proposed by Food Standards Australia and New Zealand. The labels include a pictogram and/or the message 'HEALTH WARNING: alcohol can cause lifelong harm to your baby' in red and black text.

The disappointing review request comes after the alcohol industry launched a campaign against the proposed new labels, which are clearer than the existing labels.

"The alcohol industry is out to make a profit, so strong health warnings on their products are a real threat to them," Alcohol and Drug Foundation Chief Executive Officer, Dr Erin Lalor AM, said.

"Currently pregnancy warning labels on alcoholic products can easily be missed as they might be too small or the colours don't stand out enough."

"We have a responsibility to protect babies from alcohol-related harms. All Australians have the right to know if a product is going to cause harm to their unborn child," Dr Lalor remarked.

Dr Lalor said it is crucial Australians are aware that abstinence from alcohol is the safest option during pregnancy and that there are a number of risks associated with consuming alcohol while pregnant or trying to fall pregnant.

"Unfortunately, too many Australians don't know that drinking alcohol during pregnancy or while trying to conceive, risks adverse outcomes such as miscarriages, still births, low birth weight and [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder \(FASD\)](#)," Dr Lalor explained.

"People who are affected by fetal alcohol exposure are at risk of life-long brain damage which may result in learning difficulties, mental illness, chronic offending behaviour and subsequent incarceration, and often require lifelong support."

Dr Lalor added that the alcohol industry should be called out on any attempts to use Coronavirus as a cover to delay much needed public health protections.

For free and confidential drug information or support, people can visit www.adf.org.au or call the [Alcohol and Drug Foundation's DrugInfo line on 1300 85 85 84](#). The non-judgmental service provides the facts about alcohol and other drugs, advice on how to support loved ones, and connects people with relevant health and support services in their state and territory.

ENDS

For media enquiries please call the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's media team on 0430 948 380 or email media@adf.org.au

About the Alcohol and Drug Foundation: Celebrating 60 years of service to the community, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation is one of Australia's leading bodies committed to preventing and minimising alcohol and other drug harms in communities around the nation. The Foundation reaches millions of Australians in local

communities through sporting clubs, workplaces, health care settings and schools, offering educational information, drug and alcohol prevention programs and advocating for strong and healthy communities.

The Power of Words: There's power in the language we use to talk about alcohol and other drugs, and people who use alcohol and other drugs. Stigmatising language can negatively impact on a person's health, wellbeing and relationships. Using person-centric language, instead of focusing on an individual's substance use, has the power to reduce stigma and improve health and social outcomes. For a guide to using non-stigmatising language, please see the [Power of Words or the Mindframe Guidelines](#).