

What are the impacts of alcohol supply reduction measures on police-reported adult domestic and family violence in the Northern Territory of Australia?

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Introduction and Aims: Alcohol use is correlated with domestic and family violence. Between 2017 and 2018 a Banned Drinker Register (BDR), a Minimum Unit Price (MUP), and Police Auxiliary Liquor Inspectors (PALIs) were introduced in the Northern Territory. Both the BDR and MUP are applicable across the whole jurisdiction, while PALIs are only in place in three regional towns. Additional restrictions were put in place in Tennant Creek. This study examines the impact of these policies on police-reported adult domestic and family violence.

Design and Methods: We used interrupted time series models to examine the impact of the policies on police reported adult domestic and family violence assaults and breaches of violence orders from Jan 2014 – Feb 2019 in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs.

Results: Preliminary analysis found significant increases in total and alcohol involved breaches in Darwin, Katherine, and Alice Springs following BDR. Both total and alcohol-involved assaults also increased in Katherine post-BDR, as did alcohol-involved assaults NT wide. After the combined MUP/PALI introduction in Alice Springs, total and alcohol-involved breaches decreased. Total assaults decreased in Tennant Creek following the introduction of PALIs, as did both alcohol-involved assaults and breaches in Katherine. The Tennant Creek restrictions resulted in decreased total- and alcohol-involved assaults.

Discussions and Conclusions: More stringent supply reduction policies appear to have resulted in step decreases in DFV assault and breaches. It is possible the increases following BDR implementation may be related to increased reporting or changes in recording practice, but this requires further investigation.

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