

Addiction research centres and the nurturing of creativity

The Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR), Melbourne: a decade on

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ABSTRACT

Established in 2006, the Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR) is Australia's only research centre with a primary focus on alcohol policy. CAPR has four main areas of research: alcohol policy impacts; alcohol policy formation and regulatory processes involved in implementing alcohol policies; patterns and trends in drinking and alcohol problems in the population; and the influence of drinking norms, cultural practices and social contexts, particularly in interaction with alcohol policies. In this paper, we give examples of key publications in each area. During the past decade, the number of staff employed at CAPR has increased steadily and now hovers at approximately 10. CAPR has supported the development of independent researchers who collaborate on a number of international projects, such as the Alcohol's Harm to Others study which is now replicated in approximately 30 countries. CAPR receives core funding from the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, and staff have been highly successful in securing additional competitive research funding. In 2016, CAPR moved to a new institutional setting at La Trobe University and celebrated 10 years of operation.

Keywords Alcohol research, Australia, epidemiology, international collaboration, research funding, social research.

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INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Alcohol Policy Research (CAPR) is Australia's only research centre with a primary focus on research related to alcohol policy. The Centre aims to improve our understanding of alcohol-related harms and the evidence-based strategies to address them. Besides conducting and publishing research, CAPR also devotes considerable energy to research translation, communicating the evidence base on alcohol policies for the public health community, social and government agencies, the media and the larger society.

CAPR receives core funding from the Foundation for Alcohol, Research and Education (FARE), an independent charitable organization working to reduce the harm caused by alcohol. This core funding covers approximately 40% of CAPR's overall budget. Beyond this core funding, CAPR has been successful in attracting competitive

funding from Australia's key research funding bodies. We have had a series of projects funded by the Australian Research Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian National Preventive Health Agency, to name just a few. These projects include, among other things, work on Alcohol's Harm to Others (HTO), Gender, Alcohol and Culture: An International Study (GenACIS), the International Alcohol Control (IAC) Study and research on trends in alcohol consumption and harms.

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

CAPR was germinated when a committed advocate for alcohol policy reform, Margaret Hamilton, turned her efforts to establishing an alcohol-specific research centre in Australia during a time when the country was predominantly focused on illicit drugs. Hamilton, the