

Action on Alcohol: Change is Coming

**Alcohol Action NZ Conference
Te Papa, Wellington
Thursday 20th March 2014**

WELCOME MESSAGE

The theme of the conference this year is “Action on Alcohol: Change is Coming”.

Some think this relates to the upcoming general election, which, incidentally, is exactly six months from the date of this year’s conference, on 20th September. Since we formulated these words we have noticed both Labour and the Green Party have used similar words along the lines of “Change is coming” which has been uncanny.

But no; the theme was motivated by the fact that out of the blue has come New Zealand’s first substantial alcohol reform for many many years.

Change really is coming, if the Land Transport Amendment Bill is passed. This Bill proposes a reduction of the legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) for driving to be lowered from 0.08 to 0.05. It will substantially reduce alcohol-related injuries on the roads and have a moderating effect on heavy drinking in New Zealand. In fact, it may already be having an impact because many New Zealanders believe the law has already changed.

However, this Bill does not represent government acting on principle or being persuaded by evidence. It is a political response to Labour Party MP Iain Lees-Galloway’s Private Member’s Bill which was picked from the ballot in 2013. At this time the new Labour leader, David Cunliffe, was breathing hope into Labour Party supporters, TV3’s Campbell Live programme, was displaying to the public just how drunk you have to be to achieve a BAC of 0.08, and the Sunday morning Chris Laidlaw programme was interviewing a leading Irish researcher on the positive Irish experience of moving from a BAC of 0.08 to 0.05. The New Zealand government moved quickly to take over the Lees-Galloway Private Member’s Bill as its own to prevent possible political traction being made by Labour, citing its own research as the reason.

In 2010, the then Minister of Transport, the Honourable Stephen Joyce, had ignored the advice of his own Ministry, which recommended the government lower the legal adult BAC level from 0.08 to 0.05 on the basis of over 300 scientific studies showing a potential substantial reduction in deaths and injuries and major savings in costs if they did. Instead, Minister Joyce commissioned “more research”. At the time other researchers were skeptical because they were not asking the right scientific questions. It looked

like a stalling tactic. And so it turned out to be. The alcohol industry, perhaps inadvertently, admitted on National Radio recently that it advised the government to undertake “more research” on the BAC, specifically the research the government commissioned.

The Land Transport Amendment Bill is currently in Select Committee and we expect the alcohol industry will do its very best to try and water it down, delay it, and even still get rid of it if it can.

The appearance of Sir Geoffrey Palmer at this year’s conference is a great honour. There is no one in New Zealand public life who has stood up to the vested interests of government and industry more than Sir Geoffrey. His overview of the past five years of alcohol non-reform in New Zealand will be of great interest and information for the future.

We are also very honoured this year to have as keynote speakers, not one, but the three leading alcohol scientists and advocates from Australia – Prof Kypros Kypri (New South Wales), Dr Peter Miller (Victoria) and Prof Mike Daube (Western Australia).

Along with politicians, national experts and lively questioning and discussion, this year’s conference is shaping up to being one of the best Alcohol Action conferences in this series of five so far.

We hope you really enjoy this year’s meeting, including catching up with fellow advocate colleagues from around the country, and as a result of it all feel energized to keep going for another year of productive alcohol action work.

Whatever happens on 20th September, a change in government is likely, providing new opportunities for policy movement for positive alcohol reform, even if it means a new National-led coalition government with different support parties.

Sincerely
Prof Doug Sellman
Prof Jennie Connor
Prof Geoff Robinson

Medical Spokespeople
Alcohol Action NZ
www.alcoholaction.co.nz



Action on Alcohol: Change is Coming

Te Papa, Wellington, Thursday 20th March 2014

PROGRAMME

Chairperson: Amy Robinson

7.40am	REGISTRATIONS	
8.40am	Mihi Whakataū	Mr Rawiri Evans, Te Atiawa ki Whakarongotai
8.50am	Introductory Comments	Dr Geoff Robinson, Wellington
9.00am	Opening Address	Sir Geoffrey Palmer, Wellington
9.30am	Change is Coming: But Not One Person at a Time	Professor Kypros Kypri, New South Wales
10.20am	Political Panel	
11.00am	MORNING TEA	
11.40am	Change is Coming: Stocktake of Change so Far	Professor Jennie Connor, Dunedin
12.10pm	Change is Coming: Culture Change Comes from Policy Change	Dr Peter Miller, Victoria
1.00pm	LUNCH	
2.00pm	Change is Coming: Will Local Alcohol Policies be Part of it?	Rebecca Williams, Alcohol Healthwatch, New Zealand
2.30pm	Change is Coming: Call for Action	Professor Jennie Connor, Dunedin
3.00pm	Change is Coming: How to Make it Happen	Professor Mike Daube, Western Australia
3.50pm	AFTERNOON TEA	
4.20pm	Speakers' Panel – Reflections on the day and the challenges ahead	Professor Kypros Kypri, Professor Jennie Connor, Dr Peter Miller, Rebecca Williams, Professor Mike Daube
5.00pm	Closing Comments	Dr Geoff Robinson, Wellington
5.10pm	Poroporoaki	Mr Rawiri Evans, Te Atiawa ki Whakarongotai
5.20pm	CONFERENCE ENDS	

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

(in speaking order)

Dr Geoff Robinson



- Chief Medical Officer, CCDHB
- Physician/Alcohol and Drug Specialist
- Past President, Royal Australian College of Physicians (RACP)
- Chair, Medical Research Institute (MRINZ)
- Medical Spokesman for AANZ
- Adjunct Professor, VUW

On leaving politics in 1990 he was a law professor at the University of Iowa and the Victoria University of Wellington. In 1994 he became a Foundation Partner of Chen & Palmer Public Law Specialists where he remained until 2005 when he was appointed President of the Law Commission, a position he occupied until 2010. During that period he also chaired the Legislation Advisory Committee. He has appeared extensively in the superior courts including the Privy Council.

He is a member of the Her Majesty's Privy Council, was made a Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George in 1991 and was made an honorary companion to the Order of Australia the same year. He was made a member of the Global 500 Roll of Honour by the United Nations Environment Programme. He holds three honorary doctorates. He was elected a member of the American Law Institute, a Member of the American Association of International Law and a Fellow of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is a member of the New Zealand Law Society Rule of Law Committee.

Sir Geoffrey Palmer



Sir Geoffrey Palmer QC was admitted as a solicitor in 1965 and to the bar in 1966 and practised in Wellington with O'Flynn and Christie before taking up a British Commonwealth Fellowship to the University of Chicago where he graduated JD cum laude in 1967. He was a law professor in the United States and New Zealand for some years before entering politics as the MP for Christchurch Central in 1979. In Parliament he held the offices of Attorney-General, Minister of Justice, Leader of the House, Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister. He was Minister for the Environment 1987-1990.

In 2010 and 2011 he chaired the Panel of Inquiry on the 31 May 2010 Flotilla Incident for the United Nations in New York that reported to the Secretary-General. For eight years he was New Zealand's Commissioner to the International Whaling Commission. Sir Geoffrey is a Distinguished Fellow of the New Zealand Centre for Public Law and the Law Faculty at the Victoria University of Wellington. He has an extensive list of publications in legal periodicals that can be accessed on the Social Science Research Network.

He is also the author or co-author of twelve books, the latest of which is *Reform: A Memoir* published by the Victoria University Press in November 2013.

Professor Kypros Kypri



Professor Kypros Kypri is a behavioural scientist interested in the evaluation of interventions to reduce unhealthy alcohol use. He was trained in psychology and public health at UNSW, University of California San Diego and University of Otago, and currently holds an Australian National Health & Medical Research Council Senior Fellowship in alcohol-related injury. With the input of many colleagues he has established an alcohol research group at the University of Newcastle which is the hub of several national and international collaborative studies. He has a longstanding interest in New Zealand alcohol policy and enjoys working with the country's finest scientists in the alcohol field.

Professor Jennie Connor



Jennie Connor is Professor and Head of Department of Preventive and Social Medicine at the University of Otago in Dunedin. She is a public health physician and epidemiologist, involved in teaching epidemiology and in research about the health effects of alcohol, injury prevention, and sexual health.

Jennie is a medical spokesperson for Alcohol Action New Zealand and strongly supports the adoption of evidence-based policy for the reduction of alcohol-related harm in New Zealand and elsewhere.

Dr Peter Miller



Peter Miller is a Principal Research Fellow at the School of Psychology, Deakin University. He is also the Commissioning Editor of the journal *Addiction*. His research interests include: alcohol-related violence in licensed venues; the longitudinal/developmental predictors of violence (including family violence); alcohol/drug use in rural populations, and the behaviour of vested interests such as the global alcohol industry policy. Peter has recently completed two of the largest studies ever conducted into licensed venues, comparing six Australian cities over three years and talking to more than 10,000 patrons. Peter is an executive board member of the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors and the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol. He is also the winner of the Excellence in Research Award presented at the 2013 National Drug and Alcohol Awards.

Rebecca Williams



Rebecca is the Director of Alcohol Healthwatch, an independent Charitable Trust working to reduce alcohol-related harm. She has been in the role since 2001 and provides leadership and management of the team and its operations. She also provides the interface with the Trust Board and is the spokesperson for the organisation. She has prior experience in teaching, statistics, event management and injury prevention.

Professor Mike Daube AO



Professor Mike Daube is Professor of Health Policy at Curtin University, where he is Director of the Public Health Advocacy Institute and the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth.

He was previously Director General of Health for Western Australia and Chair of the National Public Health Partnership.

Professor Daube is Co-Chair of the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol, President of the Australian Council on Smoking and Health, Patron of Local Drug Action Groups Inc., Co-Convenor of the WA Coalition for Action on Alcohol and Youth, and chair or member of many other national and state government and non-government committees. He was Chair of the Australian Government's Tobacco Expert Committee that recommended plain packaging.

Professor Daube has been active in health policy and tobacco control, alcohol and public health advocacy, nationally and internationally, for more than forty years.

He has published widely and received numerous awards from national and international organisations including the World Health Organization and the American Cancer Society's Luther Terry Distinguished Career Award. He is an Officer in the Order of Australia (AO).



ABOUT ALCOHOL ACTION NZ

Alcohol Action was launched at the end of 2009. It is a national group responding to the excessive presence of alcohol and the enormous social, medical and personal damage alcohol misuse is inflicting on our society.

The purpose of the group is effective promotion of evidence-based alcohol policy in New Zealand.

At the current time this evidence is best summarised by a “5+ Solution” primarily based on the World Health Organization sponsored publication “Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity” [Babor et al 2010]:

The 5+ Solution

1. Raise alcohol prices
 2. Raise the purchase age
 3. Reduce alcohol accessibility
 4. Reduce advertising and sponsorship
 5. Increase drink-driving counter-measures
- PLUS: Increase treatment opportunities for heavy drinkers.

Based on this set of guiding principles, Alcohol Action NZ has developed a set of more specific policies as follows:

1. Introduce a minimum price per standard drink to end ultra-cheap alcohol sales, and make substantial increases to excise tax on all alcohol.
2. Return the purchase age for both on- and off-license to 20 years.
3. Restore supermarkets to be alcohol-free.
4. Dismantle alcohol advertising and sponsorship over a five year period, and introduce health warnings on beverage containers immediately.
5. Reduce the adult drink-driving limit from 0.08 to 0.05.

It is important to note that the majority of those involved in Alcohol Action enjoy drinking alcohol, but all are alarmed about the way alcohol dominates many social situations and the scale of the heavy drinking in contemporary New Zealand – a heavy drinking culture that enriches the alcohol industry while causing immense harm to individuals and society as a whole.

The excessive commercialisation of alcohol, which drives the heavy drinking culture, must be brought under greater control so that a new middle ground is

achieved between excessive commercialisation at one extreme and prohibition at the other. An important starting point for appropriate regulation of alcohol is recognition of it as a Class B equivalent drug (High Risk to Public Health) according to the Misuse of Drugs Act criteria for classifying recreational drugs.

There are more than 4000 people on the current Alcohol Action NZ email list. If you would like to join and receive regular updates on the progress of the alcohol campaign visit www.alcoholaction.co.nz.



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WAIATA

WHAKAARIA MAI

WHAKAARIA MAI
TŌ RIPEKA KI AU
TIAHO MAI
RĀ ROTO I TE PŌ
HEI KŌNĀ AU
TITIRO ĀTU AI
ORA MATE
HEI AU KOE NOHO AI

(repeat)

KO TENEI TE WA

KO TENEI TE WA
KA WAIATA AU
KA WAIATA KIA IHOA

KO TENEI TE WA
KA INGOI AHAU
KA INGOI KI TE ARIKI

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WAIATA AROHANUI
KI TE ATUA

TE AROHA

TE AROHA
TE WHAKAPONO
ME TE RANGIMARIE
TATOU TATOU E

**The 5+ Solution
is the solution to
New Zealand's damaging
drinking culture**