



russell family fetal alcohol disorders association

30<sup>th</sup> October 2014

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Professor Ian Harper  
Competition Policy Review Secretariat  
The Treasury  
Langton Crescent  
PARKES ACT 2600  
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Dear Professor Harper

#### SUBMISSION TO THE COMPETITION POLICY REVIEW

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the *Competition Policy Review Draft Report* (Draft Report). We are concerned that the recommendations made in the Draft Report will greatly increase the availability of alcohol in Australia and lead to significant increases in alcohol harms. We would like to offer our support to the submission prepared by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE). FARE is an independent not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol by joining with communities, governments, health professionals and police across the country.

Alcohol is not like other products such as orange juice or cornflakes, it is a product that requires special laws and restrictions about where it can be sold, when it can be sold and who can consume it. These regulations reflect the harm that alcohol can cause and are both in the public interest and for the public's benefit. Alcohol should not be subject to the same economic principles as cornflakes and orange juice as neither of these, when you increase their availability, will cause significant harm in the community.

The rffada represents parents and carers and families living with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder [FASD] and see first-hand the wide-ranging harms that result from prenatal exposure to alcohol. These harms include violence, domestic violence, road accidents, 'coward punches', drug and alcohol addiction and have been implicated in every other alcohol related harm. The Draft Report states that the aim of Competition Policy is to "*improve the welfare of Australians*" but the recommendations outlined in the Draft Report will not achieve this, as they will lead to the increased availability of alcohol and increased harms. The previous review of Competition Policy resulted in vast increases in number and types of premises selling alcohol across Australia. This has contributed to alcohol-related harms which include 15 deaths [62% increase in ten years] and 430 hospitalisations each day<sup>1</sup> none of which includes the direct cost of the, at least, 5% of people in Australia who have been prenatally exposed to alcohol.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to raise these important issues with you.  
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Russell", is written over a horizontal line.

Anne Russell  
Russell Family Fetal Alcohol Disorders Association

<sup>1</sup> Gao, C., Ogeil, R. and Lyod, B. (2014). Alcohol's burden of disease in Australia. Canberra: FARE and VicHealth in collaboration with Turning Point