



## Alcohol & other drugs – the associated harm

Alcohol and other drug (AOD) misuse costs Australian workplaces around \$6b each year in lost productivity. Recent research has found that hospitality workers are up to **three and a half times more likely** than other workers to misuse AOD at work, or attend work under the influence of AOD.

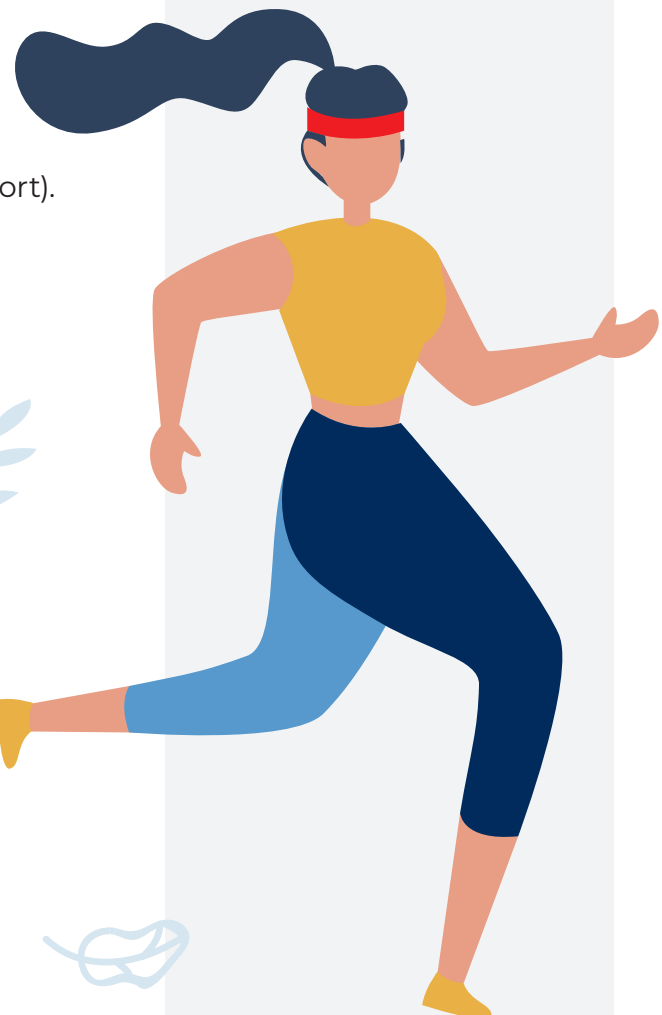
There are a range of work-related, social and individual-level factors that can heighten the risk for AOD misuse, and associated harm, among hospitality workers. These can include:

- Working conditions (e.g. working long and irregular hours, shift work, face-paced 'pressure cooker' working environments).
- Workplace norms and attitudes regarding AOD use (e.g. AOD use seen as a 'coping' strategy for dealing with work-related stress/pressures and as a way for 'building' a sense of comradery among co-workers).
- Poor workplace behaviours and culture (e.g. workplace bullying and/or harassment, abusive behaviour among co-workers, limited workplace support).
- Individual-level factors (e.g. age, mental illness, poor social support).



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### DID YOU KNOW

Australian workers take almost 11.5 million sick days a year due to AOD misuse.



Work Health & Safety legislation states that both employers and employees have responsibilities in regard to AOD use. There are a range of actions that employees and employers can take to reduce the misuse and impact of AOD in the workplace, including:

## EMPLOYERS:

- Adopt an approach to AOD use in the workplace which incorporates **policy, education, training, counselling and treatment**.
- Encourage risk drinking by normalising harm reduction strategies (e.g. providing and promoting non-alcoholic drink options to staff).
- When planning staff social get-togethers and celebrations, consider activities that **build social connection** without promoting heavy drinking or possible drug use (e.g. going to the movies/games arcade or organising a team sport/game).

## EMPLOYEES:

- Be aware of your rights and responsibilities around AOD within your workplace or industry.
- Limit your own AOD use and look to encourage **alternate ways of winding down** with your co-workers after a shift.
- Look out for your co-workers.
- Look after your own mental health and stress. This can include:
  - Engaging in **regular exercise**.
  - Eating well.
  - Getting enough sleep (this can be challenging when working shift/irregular hours – so seek support if this is difficult for you).
  - Making time for rest and **relaxation away from work**.
  - Spending time with friends and family who provide you with positive support.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

If you're concerned about your own, or someone else's mental health or AOD use, seek support.

Speak to a trusted friend or family member, talk to your GP, or reach out to a support services.

We have provided a list of support services and many of them offer free resources and support.

**You can download it here.**

