



12 October, 2016

MEDIA ALERT

St Vincent's Calls on Premier Not to Compromise on Bottle-shop Trading Hours

St Vincent's Hospital is today calling on Premier Mike Baird to remain committed to the state-wide 10pm closing time of bottle-shops on the basis that this initiative has led to a significant reduction in domestic assaults in NSW.

St Vincent's believes that it is imperative that the alcohol harm reduction that has resulted from the 2014 alcohol reforms is not undone.

There is clear research showing that trading hours of packaged liquor stores contribute significantly to alcohol harm. Drinkers purchasing takeaway alcohol after 10pm are twice as likely to drink heavily compared to those buying alcohol before 10pm. Police have also noted that off-licence venues are more likely than on-licences to be an issue for offences involving minors. Further studies have shown 60 per cent of people presenting with injuries to emergency wards had consumed alcohol bought at a store in the hours leading up to their injuries.

The head of NSW's Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Dr Don Weatherburn, has said that a reduction in assaults in NSW was "fully attributable" to the 10pm bottle shop closing time.

St Vincent's Hospital Sydney last month welcomed the findings of the Callinan Inquiry's report and appreciates Justice Callinan's finding "of all the groups holding opinions, it seems to me that the medical profession and the emergency workers have the least or no self-interest" and that "their opinion...must carry a great deal of weight."

"If this is the case, and we as a community are serious about tackling domestic violence, then we must take the evidence seriously that any extension of bottle-shop trading hours will lead to increased harms," said A/Prof Nadine Ezard, St Vincent's Clinical Director of Alcohol & Drug Services.

What: Media Conference featuring Professor Ezard

When: 2.30pm 12 October, 2016

Where: St Vincent's Hospital Ambulance Bay

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