Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

Robyn Lambley
Minister for Health

Driving down alcohol abuse in the Barkly

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Alcohol-related Emergency Department presentations have hit a five year low in Tennant Creek under the Giles Government’s tough new alcohol policies.

“The Territory Government is tackling grog-related harm head-on with a suite of measures including Alcohol Protection Orders, Temporary Beat Locations and a zero-tolerance approach to domestic violence. These new hospital figures prove our policies are starting to bite,” Chief Minister Adam Giles said.

“There has been a marked reduction in alcohol-related presentations to the Emergency Department over the four months to April. April saw the lowest number of alcohol-related presentations since August 2009.

“These figures mark a dramatic turn-around in a consistent climbing trend which began five years ago when Labor was in Government.

“They show that the tools the Country Liberals have given Police are working and that fewer men, women and children are ending up in Emergency as a result.”

Health Minister Robyn Lambley said the figures show there has been a substantial reduction in alcohol-related harm in the community during 2014.

“Over the past five years, Emergency Department presentations have been as high as 120 per month but there were 79 presentations in March and just 44 in April,” Mrs Lambley said.

“Importantly, the proportion of all Emergency presentations that are alcohol-related and go on to be admitted has dropped from as high as 37 per cent under Labor’s watch in 2009, down to less than 10 per cent in April this year.

“That’s a success story in anyone’s book and it shows the Government’s package of alcohol measures is protecting the community from harm.”
A range of measures have come into play since the start of the year aimed at driving down alcohol-related harm in the Barkly.

“The hospital data reinforces the impressive outcomes of Police Strike Force Datsun which has been in operation since February, targeting domestic violence and anti-social behaviour,” Mr Giles said.

“There has been a 51 per cent reduction in offences against the person from February to June compared to the same period in 2013.

“The majority of these kinds of offences are both domestic and alcohol related and these figures show we’re making inroads into protecting women and children from violence.

“Under new Alcohol Protection Orders that have been operating since Christmas, 166 people in the Barkly are now banned from buying, possessing and drinking alcohol or being on licensed premises.

“Officers have also been regularly using Temporary Beat Locations outside bottleshops in Tennant Creek since February with great success.

“Throughout the year, Police have been working cooperatively with publicans through the Tennant Creek Liquor Licensing Accord.

“We hope these impressive hospital figures will give licensees confidence that their very effective local approach to Tennant Creek’s alcohol problems should continue.”

Media Contacts: Danielle Parry 0413 081 801