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MEDIA RELEASE

27 MARCH 2020

DRINKWISE WARNING ABOUT THE DANGERS OF EXCESSIVE DRINKING DURING SELF ISOLATION

DrinkWise Ambassador Dr Andrew Rochford has warned Australians about the dangers of excessive drinking during self-isolation and under times of extreme stress.

The medical expert said the challenges presented by COVID-19 as well as the situation of self-isolation saw increased opportunity to drink to excess that could lead to longer term problems.

“Coronavirus has presented many challenges for all Australians in recent weeks, particularly to our health, wellbeing, general feeling of safety and financial stability,” Dr Rochford said.

“In uncertain times like these, there’s a temptation to turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism, however people choosing to drink need to remember to do so in moderation,” he said.

These pressures, in addition to job losses, the closure of businesses, venues and restaurants, and more people working from home can disrupt routines and provide people more opportunity to drink at any time at home.

“People need to keep track of what they are drinking and if they think they might be drinking too much alcohol, they should seek help,” he said.

Dr Rochford also said that with schools closing and kids at home for extended periods, it is essential that parents continue to set a good example if choosing to consume alcohol in front of their children.

“Kids are always watching and learning, so parents must display positive role modelling as it does influence children’s’ attitudes to alcohol when they grow up,” Dr Rochford said.

“It’s really important to also take care of your physical and mental health during this time of self-isolation by continuing to exercise, calling your family and friends to check-in and remaining as positive as you can for those isolating with you,” he said.

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The recently proposed guidelines recommend that people should only consume 10 standard drinks per week and no more than four standard drinks during any one day.

DrinkWise CEO Simon Strahan echoed Dr Rochford's comments, adding that there was help for people who are struggling.

"There is a range of resources on the DrinkWise website including alcohol referral services and a body health tool that shows the risks of excessive consumption," Mr Strahan said.

Visitors to the DrinkWise website can also access a drinks calculator and calorie counter that helps you keep track of how much you are drinking.

For more information, visit the DrinkWise website www.drinkwise.org.au.

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For more information about DrinkWise, access to a VNR, radio grabs from Dr Andrew Rochford, or an interview with DrinkWise CEO, Simon Strahan, contact:

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ABOUT DRINKWISE

DrinkWise is an evidence-based social change organisation dedicated to changing the Australian drinking culture to one that is safer and healthier. We do this through national education campaigns, partnerships with community leaders and organisations, and the development of practical strategies and resources that better support the community in relation to the responsible use of alcohol. DrinkWise is funded through voluntary industry contributions across the alcohol sector, and has previously been in receipt of funding from both Coalition and Labor governments.