

Lowering the Blow

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Serving lower-alcohol drinks at public events can help reduce the number of people who need medical attention.

This is the message from a letter published in the August issue of Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health.

Margaret Lesjak from Broken Hill Centre for Remote Health Research looked at the results of a voluntary agreement to serve only low or mid-strength beer and spirits over the Broken Hill St Pat's picnic race weekend in March 2009.

Hospital emergency departments reported a two-third drop in alcohol-related cases from the surrounding areas compared to the previous year.

Major issues common at the event were underage drinkers and refusal of service or entry to intoxicated persons. In 2009, no-one was refused service due to [intoxication](#) or being underage.

“Not selling full-strength beer and spirits appears to have reduced the problem of intoxicated people at the races,” Ms Lesjak said.

“The data provides a benchmark for 2010 races and this sort of intervention may also be applicable to other similar events.”

More information: This article is published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health (Vol. 33, Issue 4).

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