23 February 2018

Dear Alcohol Review Implementation Team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Community Impact Assessment Guidelines for the new public interest and community impact test under the Liquor Legislation Amendment (Licensing) Bill 2018 recently passed in the Northern Territory Parliament.

As outlined in our submission to the Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review, PHAA strongly urges that changes resulting from the review prioritise the health and safety of all Territorians, and ensure that public health has clear priority over the commercial interests of the alcohol industry.

PHAA is pleased to support the reinstatement of the NT Licensing Commission to increase public engagement with liquor licensing processes in NT. Similarly, we are strongly supportive of the introduction of a Public Interest and Community Impact Test.

Allowing flexibility in terms of the content of the application to suit different circumstances is both sensible and reasonable. The requirement for objective, accurate and relevant evidence is strongly supported. However, PHAA believes that the language in the draft Guidelines should be strengthened and clarified to provide certainty for both the community and potential applicants.

Firstly, the draft notes that “the Guideline sets out those matters that may be considered by the Commission...”. PHAA recommends that this be amended to “the Guideline sets out those matters that will be considered by the Commission...”.

Secondly, PHAA recommends that there should be a minimum set of requirements for all applications. In the current Draft Guidelines, there is no detail on what the process is if certain information is not provided in the application. PHAA recommends that the Guidelines be clarified to note that each criteria of the test must be addressed individually with all relevant information, and that where the Commission deems that information is missing from an application or that further information or details are required, the Commission will not decide on the license until such information is provided to the satisfaction of the Commission.

The PHAA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft. Please contact us if any further information is required.

Sincerely,

Michael Moore, AM
Chief Executive Officer
Public Health Association of Australia

Dr Rosalie Schultz
PHAA Branch President
Northern Territory Branch

Julia Stafford
PHAA Co-Convenor
Alcohol and Drugs Special Interest Group