

ALCOHOL-RELATED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS AND PERSONS PROCEEDED AGAINST FOR ASSAULT

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Introduction and Aims: To examine the association between risky alcohol use and police proceedings for assault.

Design and Methods: Alcohol-related emergency department (ED) data were obtained from NSW Health for males and females aged 13-17, 18-24 and 25-64 years. Data on persons proceeded against for assault were obtained from NSW Police. Time series analyses were conducted using monthly data from 2004 to 2016. Within each age/gender group, regression modelling predicted the number of persons proceeded against for assault using alcohol-related ED presentations as a predictor.

Results: The relationship between alcohol-related ED presentations and the number of persons proceeded against for assault varied by age group and gender. Among 13-17 year old males, 10 additional alcohol-related ED presentations was associated with 4.1 additional persons proceeded against for assault during the same month and 4.5 additional persons two months later. Among 18-24 year old males, 10 additional alcohol-related ED presentations was associated with 5.9 additional persons proceeded against for assault during the same month and 8.2 additional persons one month later. Alcohol-related ED data predicted the decline since 2009 in 13-17 year old males who were proceeded against for assault. The relationship between alcohol-related ED presentations and persons proceeded against for assault was smaller for females.

Discussion and Conclusions: Violence arising from risky alcohol use imposes a substantial burden on police and the court system.

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