



MEDIA RELEASE
For immediate release – 13 November 2009

Time to cut the ties between alcohol sponsorship and sport

Alcohol Healthwatch is supporting calls to eliminate alcohol industry sponsorship of sports and sports people.

In the latest edition of the international scientific journal *Addiction*, researchers call on legislators and policy makers to take a precautionary approach and eliminate such sponsorship.

The researchers also say the alcohol industry should have to provide its sponsorship causes no harm, rather than communities and other groups having to prove harm, as is currently the case.

Alcohol Healthwatch Director Rebecca Williams says stopping the constant barrage of alcohol promotion must be an essential part of efforts to reduce alcohol-related harm.

“Alcohol advertising is shown to encourage earlier and heavier drinking.

“For example, in a study published in 2008, researchers Kypros Kypri and Kerry O’Brien made the specific link between alcohol sponsorship and heavier drinking among sports people in New Zealand.”

Rebecca Williams says the alcohol industry aggressively promotes alcohol, while at the same time actively advocating against effective measures to address the harm it causes.

“The cost of this alcohol-related harm, over \$5.3 billion dollars and 1000 lives per year, is currently met by the community at large. It’s time the industry picked up its share.

She says an increase in taxes on alcohol could provide alternative sponsorship funds to sporting and other recreational and cultural organisations currently funded by alcohol interests.

Media Contact:

Rebecca Williams
Director
Alcohol Healthwatch
Ph: (09) 520 7035

Mob: 021 862 250

Kypros Kypri PhD
NH&MRC Research Fellow
School of Medicine and Public Health
University of Newcastle NSW Australia
+61 2 4913 8231
Mobile: +61 448 898814

Action on Liquor - See www.ahw.org.nz for policy briefing papers on key liquor issues: including Warning Labels, Taxation, Sale of Liquor, Advertising, Blood Alcohol Concentration for driving and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.