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## **Responsible approach to Alcohol Policy**

ANZSCTS endorses and supports the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Responsible Approach to Alcohol Policy (Ref REL-HRS-049).  
[https://www.surgeons.org/-/media/Project/RACS/surgeons-org/files/policies/rel-relationships-and-advocacy/hrs-human-resources/2020-08-25\\_POL\\_REL-HRS-049\\_Responsible\\_Approach\\_to\\_Alcohol.pdf?rev=204d4e6bd56a41a5818fd9f5263f1da0](https://www.surgeons.org/-/media/Project/RACS/surgeons-org/files/policies/rel-relationships-and-advocacy/hrs-human-resources/2020-08-25_POL_REL-HRS-049_Responsible_Approach_to_Alcohol.pdf?rev=204d4e6bd56a41a5818fd9f5263f1da0)

This policy applies to all ANZSCTS events and meetings and should be the guide by which these events are planned and managed.

These recommendations should be read in conjunction with individual government jurisdictional regulations including Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA).

### **Background**

ANZSCTS exists as a Society to promote the field of Cardiothoracic Surgery within Australia and New Zealand and as such, events including courses, annual scientific meetings and other conferences are conducted in support of these endeavours.

These events present an additional benefit for surgeons, trainees, allied health and industry to meet together and socialise both formally and informally at various organised functions.

While it is a cultural norm that alcohol plays a role in social functions, it is important to consider the negative effects of alcohol consumption.

Supporting that alcohol represents a public health concern for Australia and New Zealand:

- Australian data from **National Alcohol Strategy 2019–2028**
  - 1 in 4 Australians drinking at risky levels
  - 10-15% of emergency department presentations are alcohol related
  - 1 in 4 road fatalities can be attributed to drink driving
  - Leading cause of drug-related death with more than 4,000 deaths per year
- New Zealand data from **New Zealand Health Survey 2017/18**
  - 1 in 4 New Zealanders drink hazardously
  - Pure alcohol consumption is similar to Australia

Given the known harmful effects of alcohol to the individual and to the community, the ANZSCTS Executive has formulated some guidelines on alcohol service and consumption at events supported and organised by the Society.

This document is to be used in the planning of ANZSCTS hosted and supported events in order to minimise potential alcohol related harm. While ANZSCTS has no control over private and industry related functions, it is hoped that these guidelines are incorporated into those events.

## ANZSCTS Hosted and Supported Events

- **Event venues**
  - Events should only be run at venues with Responsible Service of Alcohol certification or equivalent according to local jurisdiction
  - This document and RACS Responsible Approach to Alcohol Policy (Ref REL-HRS-049) document should be communicated to the venue by event organisers
  - Preference given to venues that are in close proximity to accommodation
  - Venue to ensure that there is readily available adequate transportation at the end of the event
  
- **Event conduct**
  - Event to have clearly defined start and end times
  - Cessation of alcoholic drink serving 30 minutes prior to the end of event
  - A variety of non-alcoholic options should be made available for the entire event and servers should promote these options to all guests
  - During table service, no top ups of glasses should be provided but rather refilled by servers only when empty or requested by a guest
  - Events where alcohol is served should be with substantial food service
  
- **Responsibility for each other**
  - Recognition that the responsibility for each other extends outside of workplace, including to junior members and allied health staff
  - Encouragement for those people who choose not to consume alcohol and ensuring that there is no peer pressure at events to consume alcohol
  - Understanding that it is a collective responsibility of all those present at events to ensure that excess consumption of alcohol by any individual is avoided

[https://www.alcohol.org.nz/sites/default/files/field/file\\_attachment/AL576%20Alcohol%20at%20Workplace%20Events\\_Online.pdf](https://www.alcohol.org.nz/sites/default/files/field/file_attachment/AL576%20Alcohol%20at%20Workplace%20Events_Online.pdf)

<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/01/national-alcohol-strategy-2019-2028.pdf>

<https://alcoholthinkagain.com.au/alcohol-your-community/alcohol-the-workplace/workplace-resources/strategies-for-workplace-functions-events/>

<https://alcoholthinkagain.com.au/alcohol-your-community/alcohol-the-workplace/workplace-resources/facts-about-alcohol-and-workplace-issues/>

<https://alcoholthinkagain.com.au/alcohol-your-community/alcohol-the-workplace/workplace-resources/tips-for-staying-low-risk/>

**Endorsed by ANZSCTS Executive – 07 December 2020.**

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