

10 December 2013

## VICTORIANS INVITED TO SAY HELLO TO SUNDAY MORNING

VicHealth has joined forces with [Hello Sunday Morning](#) (HSM), an initiative to encourage Victorians to press pause on their drinking.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said HSM is a tried and tested initiative that has helped thousands of Australians rethink their relationship with booze - without judgement.

“This partnership will boost Hello Sunday Morning’s efforts across the state, offering more Victorians a great way to challenge the notion that you need to get drunk to have a good night out,” Ms Rechter said.

“As much as alcohol is part and parcel with many celebrations, we can’t ignore the fact that excessive drinking is damaging people’s health and affecting not only their lives, but that of many others in the community.

“Yet saying no or cutting back can be really hard when there’s an expectation and pressure from others to drink in social situations. We want to try to move towards a culture in Victoria where heavy drinking isn’t seen as normal.”

The partnership plays a timely role in VicHealth and the Victorian Government’s new summer campaign – Name that Point – [www.namethatpoint.com](http://www.namethatpoint.com) being delivered under the Government’s *Reducing the Alcohol and Drug toll: Victoria’s plan 2013-2017*, as part of a raft of measures to try to address alcohol harms in Victoria.

Hello Sunday Morning’s General Manager, Jamie Moore, who has also done the program himself, said he looked forward to upping the ante in Victoria.

“Since 2010, over 19,000 people across Australia have signed up to go 12 weeks or more without alcohol, and blog about their journey.

“We know this program works and through our new partnership with VicHealth we want to double the number of young Victorians who join,” he said.

“The real strength of Hello Sunday Morning is the peer support it offers participants. Each person’s story is a unique and essential contribution to a better drinking culture. We offer opportunities to connect up with fellow HSMers in your area, so you feel supported all the way.”

Mr Moore said the top five goals of people who join the program are to improve their health, lose weight, , change drinking patterns, and learn to socialise without the need for alcohol and to save money.

On average, HSM participants save around \$1200 and most (63%) achieve all of their goals.

To find out more, or sign up, visit [www.hellosundaymorning.org](http://www.hellosundaymorning.org)

**ENDS**

*Hello Sunday Morning participants who reside in Victoria are available for interview about their experiences with the program.*