

Independent Liquor Law review

VR

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I am making a submission in two capacities , as a clinical psychologist practicing in Paddington and as a resident in [REDACTED].

My position from both perspectives is that I support the current lockout and would not want to see a watering down of the laws.

My experience is that the combination of the drinking culture and previous extended opening times in Sydney encouraged young people to go out and get really drunk (upwards of 10 standard drinks over an evening) which had a number of adverse effects.

Clinical Psychologist perspective

I am in private practice and see a number of clients who typically go out in the lockout area on Friday and Saturday nights.

Assaults

Since the lockout has been in effect considerably fewer clients have experienced violent events such as glassings or assaults while they have been out . Although the assaults I see do not usually result in critical injuries the psychological impact on the victims can be severe and include PTSD and fear of going out . Thus any reduction in these assaults is welcomed.

Effect of drinking culture

My experience is that for clients with crystal methamphetamine (ice) problems , an evening's heavy drinking leads to ice use.

With the prevalence of the heavy drinking culture it is difficult for clients to find other social activities on Friday and Saturday evenings as their friends are out drinking , which hampers their efforts to stop using.

For clients with depression and anxiety alcohol can exacerbate the symptoms but again it is difficult for clients to find non alcohol related activities at a the weekend.

Paddington resident perspective

I live [REDACTED] just outside the lockout area.

The biggest change with the lockout laws is that it is now so much quieter during Friday and Saturday nights . Previously rowdy drunk people would walk up and down Oxford Street yelling, or they would walk along my street shouting to each other at all hours of the night. This led to very interrupted sleep . As I work a full day on Saturday this was particularly difficult, and it also interrupted sleep during what was also my weekend.

Now there is much less noise after midnight and none at 4.00am , a welcome relief.

I also live in a street with a number of share houses and the noise here also seems to have quietened dos.

Previously Oxford Street was not only a no go area in the evening but also in the early morning and it was particularly unpleasant to walk down Oxford Street around 8am through people who had been drinking all night . This has now stopped and it is comfortable to walk down Oxford Street in the morning .

The focus on drinking led to the destruction of the daytime Oxford Street culture a loss to residents who do not benefit from the nighttime clubs. This is now starting to change.

There has been a lot of press comment about the loss of the nighttime culture but my experience is that the mono drinking culture is stopping the development of a vibrant diverse culture in Sydney that is more inclusive of all age groups.

As a resident I believe it is important that policies reflect the needs of all residents , not just young people , and the new lockout laws achieve a better balance than before .

Comment

There have been press suggestions that well behaved venues could have their hours extended. In my view this would still lead to the previous problems of noise and assaults on the streets.

Thank you

