

Press Release

11th December 2012

Alcohol Healthwatch believes that for many of the New Zealanders who have called for alcohol law reform, the passing of the Alcohol Reform Bill will be met with relief. Director Rebecca Williams says that it's time to stop talking about it and get on with the effective implementation of the new legislation.

For the others, she suggests it is will be a non event. "We've largely known what the outcome of these final stages of the Bill's progression will be for some time, a lot of people have already moved on and started to look at how the new rules can be maximised."

Williams says the legislation is far from ideal and communities will have to work jolly hard if they are to harvest any safety gains from it. However, it is the law now and effort needs to focus on getting the best possible outcomes from it.

The 12 month lag time before key elements of the new law become effective on the ground will cause further frustration for a lot of people.

Williams also sees renewed energy for ensuring that the effective policies that were rejected by the Government remain on the policy agenda. "If this Government or the next thinks that the calls for more effective policies will quieten they are mistaken. There is strong evidence and public support for reducing the affordability and marketing of alcohol. These issues and others will remain in the spotlight both here and internationally as pressure mounts on Governments to address the growing burden of alcohol-related harm.

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