

Australian Medical Association Limited

ABN 37 008 426 793

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499
 Website: <http://www.ama.com.au/>



Transcript: AMA Vice President, Dr Tony Bartone, 3AW Drive, 27 March 2017

Subject: Alcohol advertising; Pete Evans

TOM ELLIOTT: Alright. Alcohol advertising. Now, look, I don't have a problem with maybe restricting the advertising of alcohol during hours in which children are watching TV. Alcohol and sports advertising, like the Australian cricket team being supported, as they were for 20 years, by VB doesn't worry me really. I mean, I drink alcohol. I'm not really sure that advertising makes any difference to me. I know that alcohol causes problems but I'm not sure that cutting back on its advertising will stop those problems. Anyway the Royal Australian Australasian College of Physicians this morning has said let's ban all alcohol advertising. The lot. No restrictions – sorry, no exemptions, ban it altogether. Joining us on the line now is the Vice President of the AMA, Dr Tony Bartone. Good afternoon.

TONY BARTONE: Good afternoon Tom.

TOM ELLIOTT: Well, your cousins, I guess, at the Royal Australasian College of Physicians have said “ban all alcohol advertising”. What do you think?

TONY BARTONE: Look, I can actually see where they're coming from, and we've had a position on our books where we've all been calling for the ban of sporting-associated alcohol advertising for many years now. It's about glamorisation of a culture, glamorisation to a breed of new developing young Australians, making it fashionable to say that you can't party without a drink, and sport and drink go together, which we know that they don't.

TOM ELLIOTT: Okay well - but I mean alright if I'm sitting there one night and I'm contemplating what type of red wine I might buy for a dinner party the following weekend and an ad comes on that says buy the - I don't know - the Rosemount shiraz or something, as opposed to something else, I mean surely that sort of advertising's okay, isn't it?

TONY BARTONE: Look, Tom, it's about being very, very clear about the indication and the time and the audience that you're marketing to. Clearly sporting events get around this loophole of not being able to market during children's hours up until 8.30 on any other weeknight of the week.

It's about keeping a message clear that sports involves endeavour, involves fun, involves competition at the highest level, but it doesn't involve or need to have the association with alcohol. As a society, we have a problem with alcohol in the community. We just need to look at the rates of cancers, the rates of road trauma and I know - I can see where you're coming from but we've got to be very clear. We have a problem. We're putting in an association where people have - where children have heroes, they see the VB logo on the lapel, on the paraphernalia, and it becomes normalisation. We've seen the ...

TOM ELLIOTT: [Interrupts] Okay, I understand that sporting one and I understand the not wanting to market alcohol to children, but the Australasian College of Physicians is suggesting banning all alcohol advertising whatsoever. The whole lot. I mean, do you agree with that?

TONY BARTONE: Well, in terms of the whole lot, obviously we - in the right venue, in the right medium, at the right place, at the right time - it's society that needs to make that decision.

But it needs to be - you know, the message needs to be made clear that it's not about glamorisation of something which is potentially very, very lethal and needs to be treated with respect and needs to be treated like any other object or thing that - in excess, in the wrong way - can lead to that outcome.

TOM ELLIOTT: Okay. I was going to just change tack for a moment very quickly. I saw paleo Pete Evans on the TV last night and he's not really backing down from his claims that fluoride is bad for your teeth, sunscreen will give you cancer and that drinking milk will somehow leach calcium from your bones. Do you think it's time for him to shut up?

TONY BARTONE: Look, I really do believe he needs to basically stick to his knitting, get back, stay where he's obviously made a career - as a celebrity chef. And he's obviously a very good chef. He's obviously a very good celebrity in that respect.

But when it comes to health advice, leave the health advice to the experts, which is predicated on years and years of research and medical evidence, and really not put the public's health at risk. He's in a privileged position, it comes with responsibility. He should respect that responsibility that comes with that position and not make claims that he can't substantiate.

TOM ELLIOTT: Thank you Dr Bartone. Tony Bartone there, Vice President of the Australian Medical Association.

27 March 2017

CONTACT: John Flannery
 Maria Hawthorne

02 6270 5477 / 0419 494 761
02 6270 5478 / 0427 209 753