

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ALCOHOL AND DRUG FOUNDATION WELCOMES SAFESCRIPT LAUNCH

The [Alcohol and Drug Foundation](#) welcomes the introduction of SafeScript in Victoria, saying the real-time prescription monitoring system is set to play a key role in helping to reduce prescription drug-related harms such as fatal overdoses and dependencies.

Chief Executive Officer Dr Erin Lalor says with prescription drugs now responsible for more deaths in Australia than illicit drugs, it's critical that all jurisdictions across the country introduce integrated real-time prescription monitoring systems.

"The Alcohol and Drug Foundation is extremely concerned about the high number of pharmaceutical-related deaths in Australia," Dr Erin Lalor said.

"Every state and territory urgently needs to introduce complementary real-time monitoring systems to help reduce preventable overdoses and the number of people misusing prescription drugs," Dr Lalor added.

Real-time prescription monitoring systems provide medical professionals with timely information about a patient's prescription medication history. The systems aim to prevent 'prescription shopping', where individuals obtain medical scripts from multiple prescribers.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation believes real-time prescription monitoring is just one strategy to help reduce [pharmaceutical misuse](#). On top of this, all Australians need to be educated about the dangers of prescription drugs and be encouraged to treat pain without prescription medication where possible.

"People typically have a very different attitude towards pharmaceutical drugs than they do towards illegal drugs. Perceptions that pharmaceutical medications are 'safe' because they are usually prescribed by a medical professional means many people overlook the dangers. All Australians need to know that pharmaceuticals can be addictive and even fatal when misused," Dr Lalor said.

If someone feels that they have a prescription medication dependency, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation strongly recommends they talk to a GP or pharmacist.

People can also call the [DrugInfo line](#) on 1300 85 85 84. The confidential service provides drug information and puts people in touch with relevant services in their state or territory, should they want counselling or treatment.

**ENDS**

For media enquiries please call the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's Media Manager Carmel Green on 0430 948 380.

**About the Alcohol and Drug Foundation:** Celebrating almost 60 years of service to the community, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation is one of Australia's leading bodies committed to preventing and minimising alcohol and other drug harms in communities around the nation. The Foundation reaches millions of Australians in local communities through sporting clubs, workplaces, health care settings and schools, offering educational information, drug and alcohol prevention programs and advocating for strong and healthy communities.