The town of Norseman, in WA’s Goldfields region, introduced voluntary restrictions on the sale of alcohol in 2008, with accompanying benefits in consumption and harm. This seminar presents findings of a mixed methods study that compared alcohol wholesale sales, presentations to the hospital’s emergency department and alcohol-related offences from before and after the introduction of the restrictions. The analysis found consumption of cask wine declined significantly in the short and long term; fortified wine consumption declined significantly in the long term; the decline in Indigenous presentations to the hospital’s emergency department approached significance; and there was a significant decline in burglary and assault offences and in Indigenous domestic violence. Key informants and focus group participants indicated the behaviour of drinkers, the amount of alcohol consumed, alcohol-related harms and community climate had all improved. These findings indicate that alcohol restrictions, fashioned by key stakeholders and backed by the community, can have a long-term impact on local alcohol problems.

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