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VA101

BETTER ONLINE ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT FOR VETERANS AND SERVING ADF MEMBERS

The Right Mix website has been enhanced to provide better support for veterans and serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members in order to help them manage their alcohol consumption, Minister for Veterans' Affairs Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson said today.

The Right Mix has been updated based on the latest research into the effects of alcohol consumption. It also provides information on the best ways to gain online support for people who want to change their behaviour.

"We want to encourage serving and ex-serving members to maintain a healthy balance between alcohol consumption, diet and exercise," Senator Ronaldson said.

"Striking the right balance is vital for improving the mental and physical health of veterans and serving ADF members.

"The redeveloped site provides people with the option to develop a self-help action plan to reduce their alcohol consumption with the help of their medical professional.

"It also has a range of interactive tools, allowing them to quickly measure how much they drink, and compare their drinking habits against low risk levels.

"Alcohol consumption data collected by the *ON TRACK with The Right Mix* mobile application can now be shared with *The Right Mix* website as part of the self-help action plan. People can log in to the website and easily see their progress against their set goals and share that with their treating clinician," Senator Ronaldson said.

The website draws on clinical findings on the effects of alcohol, including increased injury risks and the increased risk of cancers and other health problems, to make recommendations about low-risk drinking patterns.

"*The Right Mix* website, together with its companion mobile app, allows a new generation of serving members and veterans to use their smart phones and tablets to monitor their drinking habits," Senator Ronaldson said.

"It supports the ADF's Alcohol Management Strategy which promotes harm minimisation, and focuses on incentives like improvements in physical wellbeing and work performance."

The Right Mix can be accessed through the At Ease Portal via www.at-ease.dva.gov.au/therightmix and the *ON TRACK with The Right Mix* app is free to download from the iOS App Store and Android Google Play.

Veterans and their clinicians can find the full range of the Government's online mental health support tools at www.at-ease.dva.gov.au.

Media enquiries:

Minister Ronaldson: Mark Lee 02 6277 7820 or 0408 547 381

Department of Veterans' Affairs Media: 02 6289 6203

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) and Veterans Line can be reached 24 hours a day across Australia for crisis support and free and confidential counselling.

Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 8 8241 4546).