

Takeaway alcohol sales and violent crime: the implications of extended trading hours

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SUMMARY

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BACKGROUND

A substantive body of research exists demonstrating that increased trading hours of licensed venues are associated with significant increases in alcohol consumption and related harms (e.g. Hahn et al., 2010; Wilkinson, Livingston, & Room, 2016). However, most studies to date have focused on the impact of variations (most commonly extensions) in trading hours for premises where alcohol is consumed on-site (e.g. pubs, hotels, nightclubs). Only a small number of studies have examined the effect of variations in trading hours for packaged liquor outlets on alcohol-related harms.

In December 2016, based on recommendations from the Callinan review (Callinan, 2016), the NSW Government reversed a ban on takeaway sales after 10 p.m. and further, extended the hours of sale of home delivered alcohol to 11 p.m.. This policy change affected all of NSW and occurred in isolation from any other major alcohol policy initiatives. The current study assesses the impact of the 2016 extension to trading hours (by 1 hour from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m.) on domestic and non-domestic assaults recorded by police.

KEYWORDS

Domestic violence

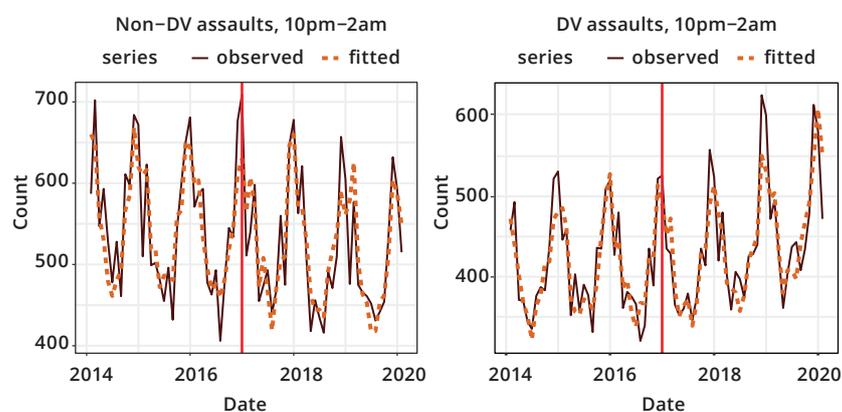
assault

alcohol consumption

trading hours

KEY FINDINGS

Monthly number of non-DV and DV assaults occurring between 10pm-2am in NSW, February 2014 – February 2020



The analyses suggest that the extension to trading hours was associated with a very small but statistically significant increase in the trend in late-night DV assaults. We estimate that in the 38-month period after the policy commenced, the rate of DV assaults occurring between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. increased by 0.5% per month. We also found a significant increase (of 0.4% per month) in DV assaults occurring at any time, however this was partially offset by a drop in the level of the DV assault rate after the policy was implemented.

There was no significant change after December 2016 in the trend or the mean rate of non-DV assaults occurring at any time or late-night non-DV assaults. Similarly, no significant effects were observed for DV-GBH assaults occurring between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. or for the full DV-GBH series, which suggests that there was no change in the rate of more serious DV assaults.

CONCLUSION

The extension to takeaway alcohol sales in NSW was associated with a very small but statistically significant increase in DV assaults. We estimate that an additional 1,120 DV assaults occurred in the 38-months after trading hours were extended.