

# Alprazolam use in Australia and policy approaches: watch this space

Barbara de Graaff, Amy Peacock, Raimondo Bruno  
School of Psychology, University of Tasmania  
[Barbara.deGraaff@utas.edu.au](mailto:Barbara.deGraaff@utas.edu.au)



## Introduction

- High rates of prescription use and notable instances of extra-medical use of alprazolam in Australia in recent years.
- Alprazolam use (including injecting) associated with vascular and tissue damage, overdose, disinhibition of behaviour with negative consequences, and anterograde amnesia.
- TGA will reschedule alprazolam from an S4 to S8 drug from January 1, 2014.
- In 2007, following increased reports of misuse and harms associated with alprazolam use, the Tasmanian PSB introduced a policy to reduce alprazolam prescriptions.



## Introduction

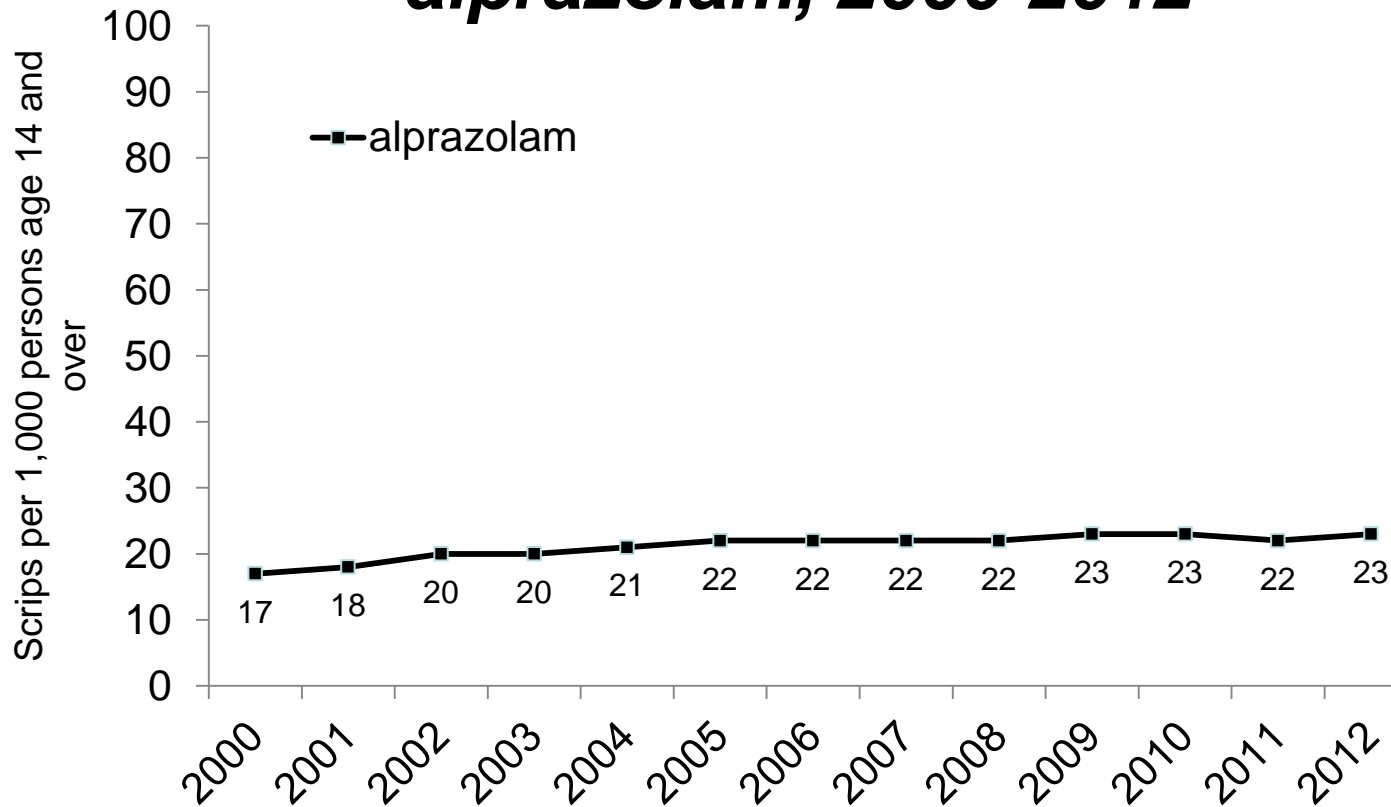
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## Aim

- Brief overview of national alprazolam consumption, with a specific focus on rates of use amongst IDRS participants.
- The Tasmania experience of restricting access to alprazolam will be examined using data from the Tasmanian IDRS study.



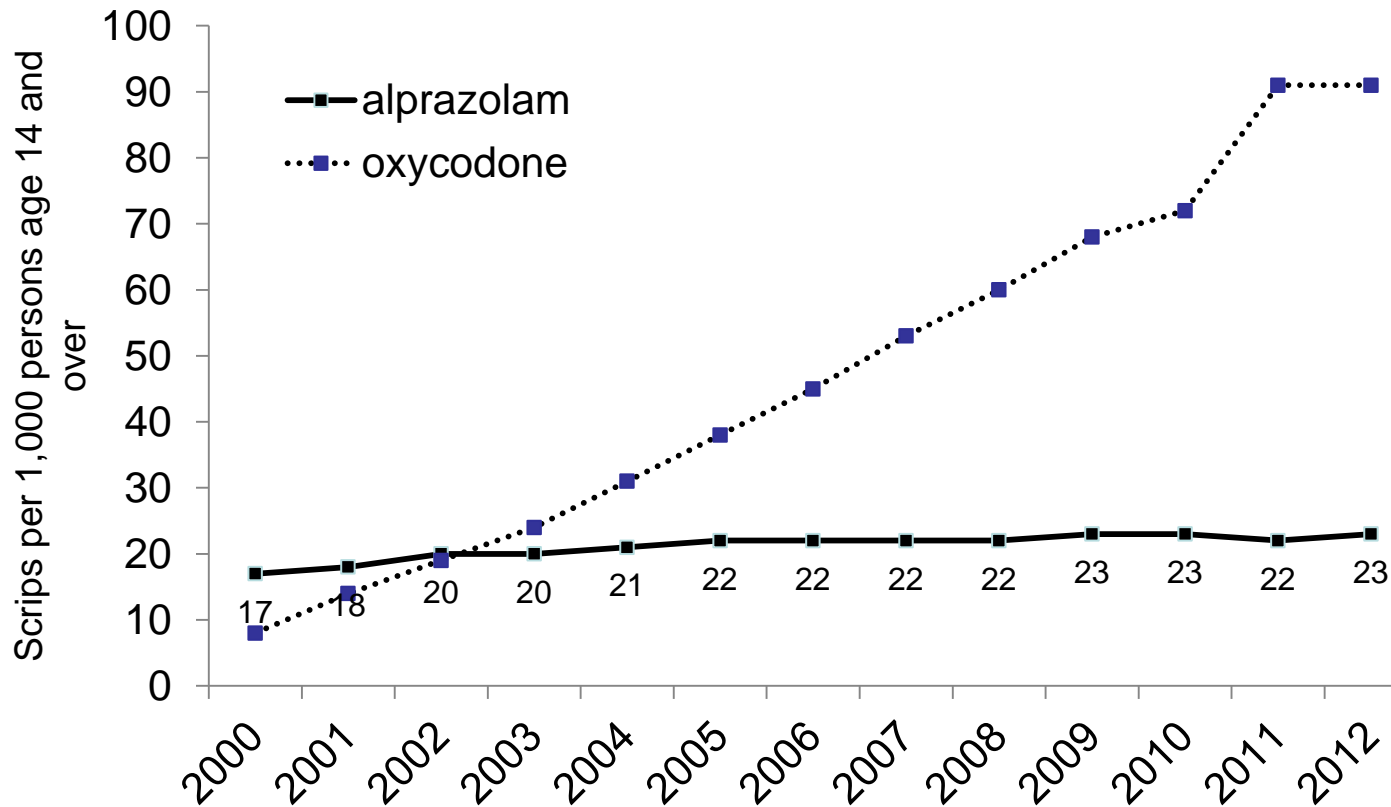
# National PBS and RPBS prescriptions for alprazolam, 2000-2012



Source: Medicare/PBS website



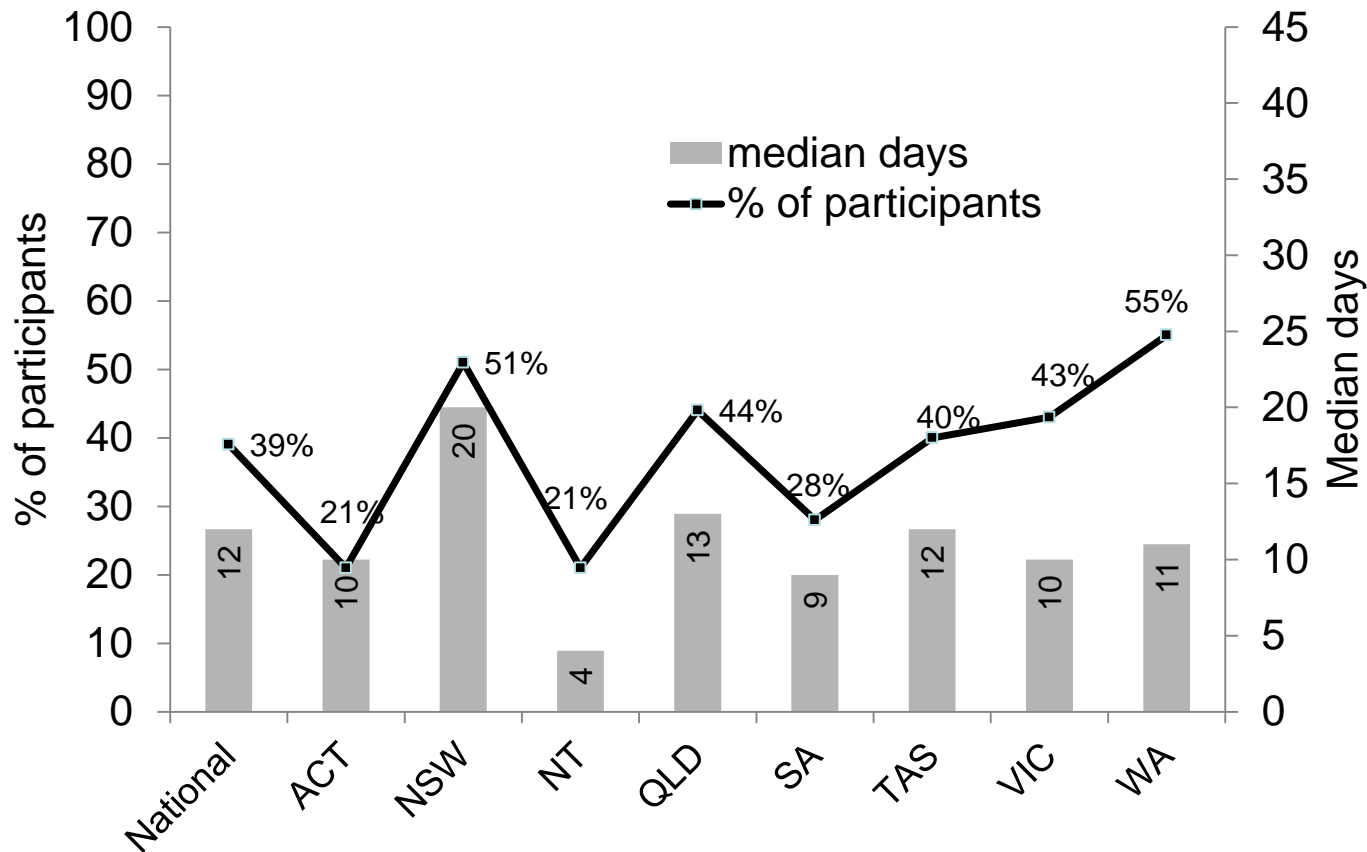
# National PBS and RPBS prescriptions for alprazolam (& oxycodone), 2000-2012



Source: Medicare/PBS website



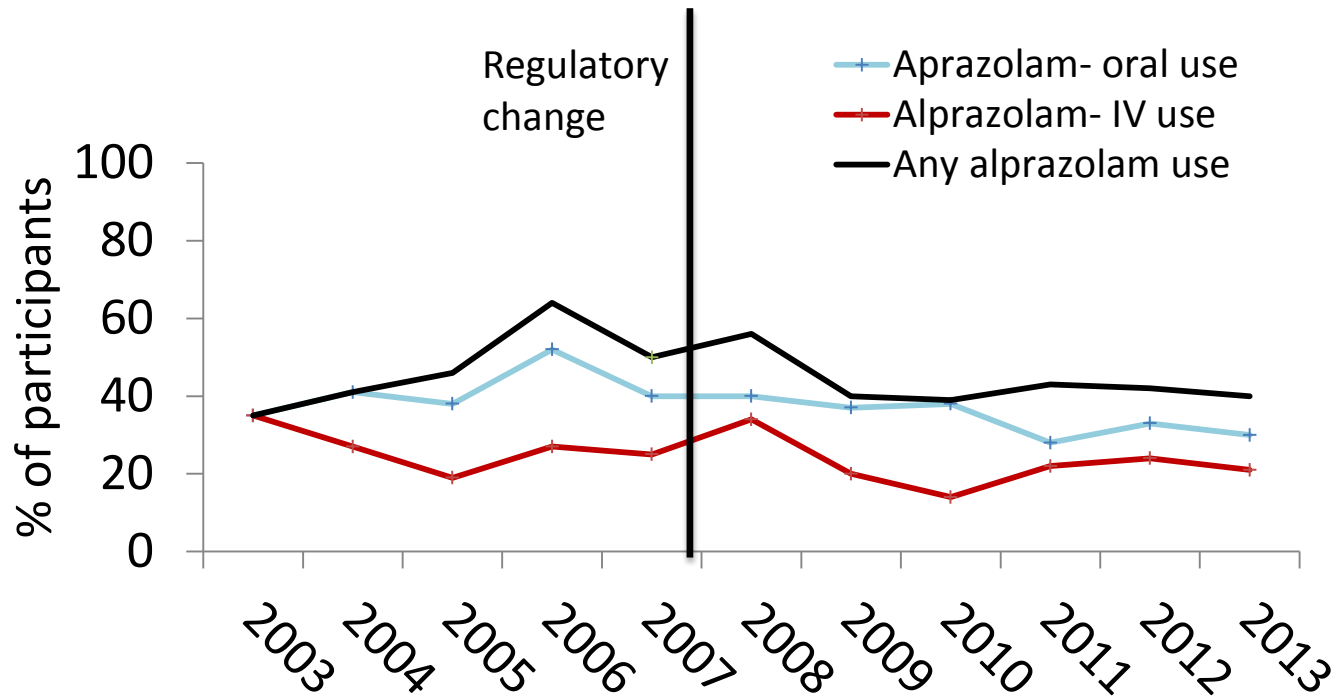
## Use of any alprazolam amongst IDRS participants in the preceding 6 months, 2013



Source: IDRS PWID interviews



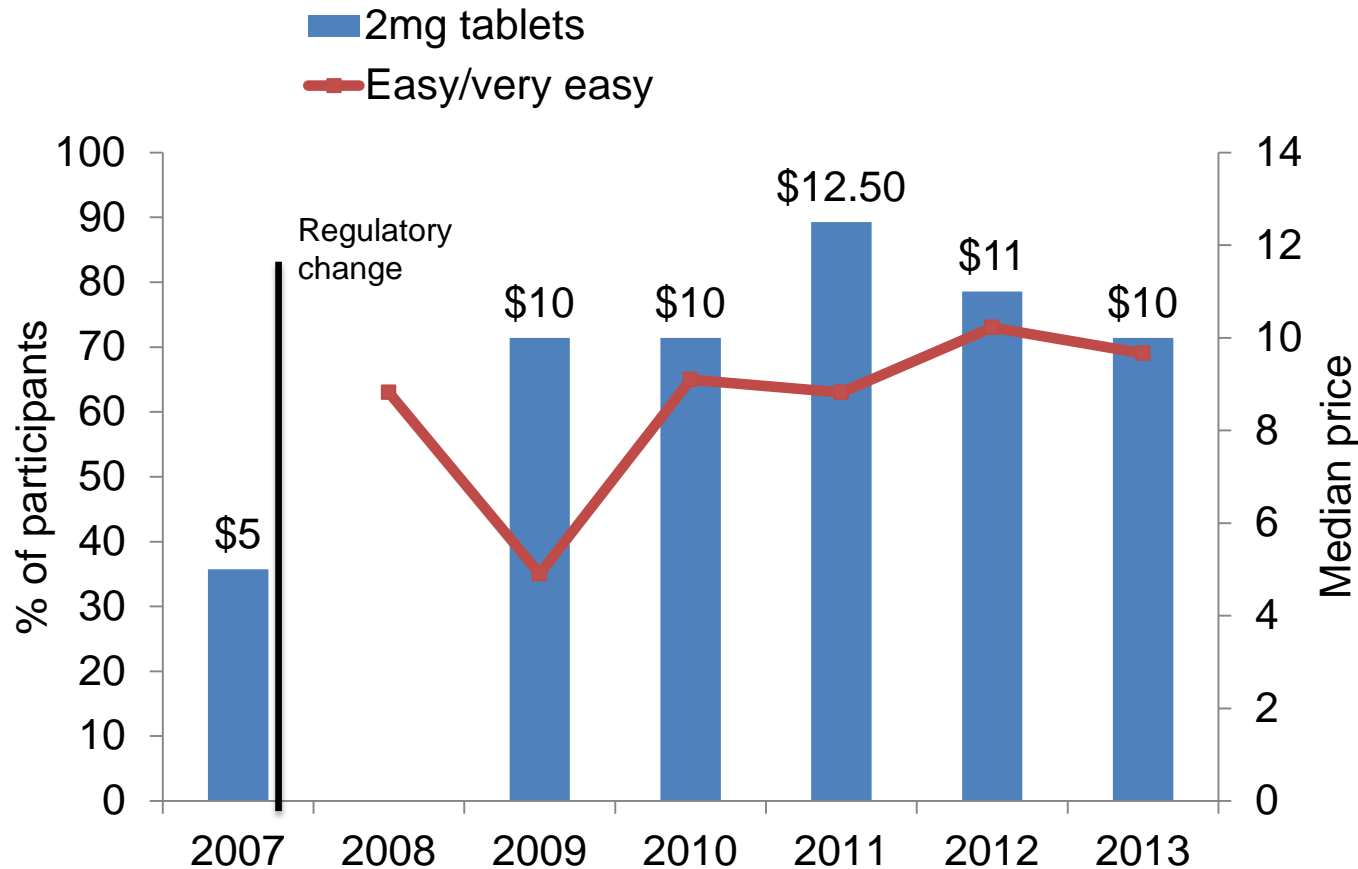
## Use of any alprazolam and amongst TAS IDRS, 2003-2013



Source: IDRS PWID interviews



## Price and availability of illicit alprazolam in TAS



Source: IDRS PWID interviews





## *The balloon-like properties of the drug market*

