Booze problem hits home in middle-age

THE middle-class trend of “wine o’clock” is increasing the rate of heart problems, liver disease and even alcohol-induced dementia.

Doctors warn that those people who enjoy a “few glasses” of wine at home each evening could actually be suffering from a form of chronic alcoholism.

And while most drinking advertising is aimed at young people, there is also a growing concern about those in their 50s and 60s binge drinking.

NSW Health data reveals that 27.3 per cent of people aged 55-64 consume alcohol at levels that are posing a long term risk to their health. While a few glasses of wine with dinner might be seen as “culturally sophisticated”, Australian Medical Association NSW President Dr Brad Frankum said there was a lack of awareness about the dangers of home drinking.

“The problem I see frequently is couples who share a bottle of wine between them every night,” Dr Frankum said. Dr Frankum said two standard drinks a day was “the upper limit” and people of all ages should have at least two drink-free days per week.