

**Evidence.
Policy.
Partnership.**



Dear Members of the North South Alcohol Policy Advisory Group,

This newsletter provides updates on recent alcohol research and policy relevant to Ireland and Northern Ireland.

In the March edition you will find a number of data and research publications, including a recent paper on the impact of MUP on alcohol-related deaths and hospitalisations in Scotland. Also featured is a report by the Institute of Alcohol Studies on patterns of alcohol-related violence in England and Wales and an evidence review by Public Health Scotland on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on alcohol consumption and harm in Scotland and England.

Data and Research

Evaluating the impact of alcohol minimum unit pricing on deaths and hospitalisations in Scotland: a controlled interrupted time series study

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This study has shown that the implementation of MUP legislation was associated with significant reductions in deaths, and reductions in hospitalisations, wholly attributable to alcohol consumption. The greatest improvements were in the four most socioeconomically deprived deciles, indicating that the policy is positively tackling deprivation-based inequalities in alcohol-attributable health harm.

[Read more about this study](#)

Alcohol branding during rugby union matches in Ireland after commencement of Sect. 15 from the Public Health (Alcohol) Act: a frequency analysis of highlights from the European Rugby Champions Cup and Six Nations Championship

This study sought to examine the frequency and nature of alcohol brand references in or on the sporting area during two rugby union tournaments played in Ireland after Section 15 of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act had commenced. Across both tournaments, 481 alcohol brand references were observed in or on the sporting area, showing that alcohol branding continued to feature in or on the sporting area after the commencement of Section 15 of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act.



[Read more about this study here](#)

Support for evidence-based alcohol policy in Ireland: results from a representative household survey



Calnan and colleagues used a household survey to examine attitudes towards alcohol control measures among the general public in the context of significant reforms undertaken in the Irish alcohol policymaking landscape. This study provides evidence of support for alcohol control policies in Ireland. However, notable differences were found in levels of support according to sociodemographic characteristics, alcohol consumption patterns, knowledge of health risks and harms experienced.

[Read more about this study here](#)

Impact of minimum unit pricing on alcohol-related hospital outcomes: systematic review

A clinical research fellowship funded by the Health Service Executive and Institute of Public Health examined the impact of minimum unit pricing of alcohol on the primary outcome of alcohol-related hospitalisation, and secondary outcomes of length of stay, hospital mortality and alcohol-related liver disease in hospital. Six natural experiments and 16 modelling studies were included in the review. Natural studies were consistent with minimum pricing modelling studies and showed that this policy could reduce alcohol-related hospitalisation and health inequalities.



[Read more about this study here](#)

The impact of lower strength alcohol products on alcohol purchases in Britain



The UK Government aims to promote a significant increase in the availability of alcohol-free and low-alcohol products by 2025. Anderson and colleagues conducted a modelling study of alcohol purchases in almost 70,000 British households. The study revealed that lower strength alcohol products have not contributed to British households buying fewer grams of alcohol over the 5-year follow-up period during 2015–2019.

[Read more about this study here](#)

Patterns in alcohol-related violence: exploring recent declines in alcohol-related violence in England and Wales

This report highlights data from the UK Office for National Statistics suggesting that alcohol-related violence in England and Wales has been declining, but this decline remains unexplained



and generally unexamined. This report examines possible explanations for the decline seen in alcohol-related violence as well as how changing patterns of youth drinking might contribute to this decline in violence.

[Access the report here](#)

Trends in public awareness and knowledge of drinking guidelines: a representative population survey in England, 2016–2022

OXFORD
ACADEMIC

This study examined trends in public awareness and knowledge of drinking guidelines in the UK since their revision in 2016. Findings from a repeat cross-sectional survey found that the majority of adult drinkers in the UK are aware of low-risk drinking guidelines. However, less than a quarter know the recommended weekly limit and only around half think it is 14 units or less. Disadvantaged groups remain less likely to know the guidelines.

[Read the journal article here](#)

People, profits, and health: the Lancet Series on the commercial determinants of health

A new Lancet Series on the commercial determinants of health provides recommendations and frameworks to foster a better understanding of the diversity of the commercial world, potential pathways to health harms or benefits, and the need for regulatory action and investment in enterprises that advance health, wellbeing, equity, and society.

The Lancet logo is a dark blue rectangle with the words "THE LANCET" in white, uppercase, sans-serif font centered within it.

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[Access the papers here](#)

Policy Perspectives

The implementation of a public health alcohol policy in Ireland



This paper provides perspectives on the complexities and challenges of implementing legislation related to public health policy, but also demonstrates that real action can occur with advocacy from public health clinicians and key stakeholders.

[Read more about this study here](#)

Evidence review

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on alcohol consumption and harm in Scotland and England: An evidence summary

This briefing paper summarises the evidence in Scotland, England and the UK on changes in consumption of alcohol over the COVID-19 pandemic, and on alcohol-related health harms. It builds on previous work by Public Health Scotland and others by including evidence from a range of sources to understand what impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on alcohol use and associated harms.



[Access the briefing paper here](#)

Alcohol Treatment Services

Alcohol Treatment Services in England; a National Audit Office briefing



National Audit Office

The National Audit Office has published a factual briefing on alcohol treatment services in England. The briefing sets out the background of alcohol consumption and associated harm. It considers current access to, and outcomes from, treatment services, before outlining the current levels of spending, use of, and outcomes from,

alcohol treatment services.

[Access the report here](#)

Events

SHAAP/SARN Alcohol Occasionals 2023

Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (**SHAAP**) and the Scottish Alcohol Research Network (**SARN**) have announced the 2023 series of the *Alcohol Occasionals* around the theme: ***Alcohol in a Changing World***.



The webinar series will be hosted online using Zoom, and registrants will receive a link to join. *Alcohol Occasionals* are free to attend and open to all, including academics/researchers, healthcare professionals, policy-makers and members of the public.

Save the dates for future seminars (all 12.45-2pm UK time) – registration is now open:

- **Tuesday 25 April** | “Availability is the poor cousin of marketing and pricing”: Qualitative study of experts’ views on policy priorities around alcohol” | Dr Elena Dimova
[Register here](#)
 - **Wednesday 24 May** | Alcohol marketing to LGBTQ+ people: Evolving strategies to target identity | Dr David Whiteley
[Register here](#)
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Alcohol Marketing to LGBTQ+ Communities

The Institute of Alcohol Studies is hosting a webinar on 3 May 14:00 – 15:00.



Dr David Whiteley (Glasgow Caledonian University) will present findings from a review of academic evidence on alcohol marketing to LGBTQ+ people.

Register for this event

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