

Newsletter from Alcohol Focus Scotland

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October 2023

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# Respond to Minimum Unit Pricing Consultation



**You can ensure this life-saving policy continues.**

Respond to the consultation and support:

1. Continuing MUP
2. Increasing it to 65p per unit

With the pandemic leading to a 14 year high in alcohol deaths, it is not enough for MUP to be retained. Unless there is support to increase the price, the positive effects we've seen will be reversed, condemning hundreds more people to unnecessary suffering and loss. This is particularly true for people living in our most deprived communities, where we've seen the greatest benefits from MUP.

We welcome the Scottish Government's proposal to increase the price to 65p. Alcohol Focus Scotland and SHAAP, along with more than 30 other organisations including medical bodies and children's charities, have **called** for the minimum unit price to be increased to at least 65p to make good on inflation and save lives into the future. This is in addition to increased and sustained investment in alcohol services and recovery support and the implementation of other preventative policies to tackle this public health emergency.

It is vital that we demonstrate a wide and diverse range of support for increasing the price of MUP.

The consultation closes on 22 November 2023. Alcohol Focus Scotland has developed a list of resources to help people respond.

 **Read our resources and respond to the consultation**

## CONSULTATIONS

### **AFS Response: Healthcare in Remote and Rural Areas**

The Scottish Government has committed to establishing a National Centre for Remote and Rural Health and Social Care to improve primary and community services. Due to the level and trajectory of alcohol-related problems in these areas and the specific treatment and support needs people face, we recommend the National Centre include alcohol use in its focus. We call for an updated economic assessment of alcohol harms, as well as an assessment to gather information on the needs of local communities and the range of services currently available, to help identify issues and support the planning and funding of services.

Additionally, we propose further action from the Scottish Government, in the form of an emergency response to alcohol harm. We recommend increasing the price of alcohol, reducing its availability, and controlling how it is marketed. This must be accompanied by accessible and evidence-based treatment and recovery support for those already experiencing alcohol problems. An Alcohol Harm Prevention Levy on off-trade alcohol retailers could be used to fund local action on preventing alcohol harms and improving treatment and recovery support.

 **Read our response**



## CONSULTATIONS

### **AFS Response: A Human Rights Bill for Scotland**

The Scottish Government recently consulted on a proposed Human Rights Bill, which will incorporate a range of rights into Scots law for the first time. Specifically, the Bill will bring four United Nations international human rights treaties into the law in Scotland, within the limits of the Scottish Parliament's devolved powers.

In our response to the consultation, we highlighted that human rights can help us to address the harmful impacts of alcohol. For this to happen, it is vital that the Human Rights Bill ensures that the Scottish Government, local authorities, and the public sector adopt a human rights framework for alcohol-related laws, policies, and support services. People will also need to be supported to understand that they have human rights in Scotland which must be respected, protected, and fulfilled.

 [Read our response](#)

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## CONSULTATIONS

### **New Consultation: Updating labelling guidance for no and low-alcohol alternatives**

The UK Government is seeking views on potential changes to the government's guidance on no and low-alcohol (NoLo) descriptors, specifically on:

- recommended conditions of using the descriptors 'alcohol free', 'de-alcoholised', 'non-alcoholic' and 'low alcohol' and whether such conditions should be set in regulations
- displaying numerical information of the alcoholic strength on the label
- displaying the UK chief medical officers' low risk drinking guidelines on the label and alternative ways of communicating this information to consumers
- displaying an age restriction on NoLo products and alternative options for preventing children and young people from accessing and consuming NoLo drinks

The consultation closes at 11:59pm on 23 November 2023.

 [Respond to the consultation](#)

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## TRAINING

### **Managing Alcohol and Drugs in the Workplace**

Ideal for anyone supervising or managing staff and HR professionals, this training session provides participants with an introduction to the impact alcohol and drugs have on Scottish society and specific guidance on how to address alcohol and drug related issues in the workplace.

 [Sign up for the session on Thursday 16 November, 09:30-12:30](#)



## TRAINING

### Alcohol Awareness

This training session is for anyone seeking to better understand alcohol, its impact and basic ways in which they can provide basic support and signpost others affected by it. It is especially useful for people working in supportive roles such as caring and support services, such as housing, addictions, and community-based support services.

 **Find out more and register: Thursday 7 December, 09:30-12:30**

## TRAINING

### Alcohol and Older Adults

Do you want increased confidence and skills to work with and support older adults? Our session on Alcohol and Older adults will enhance your awareness and understanding of the problems caused by alcohol and age-specific problems. Additionally, you will learn how to engage with support functions and local activity and learn about relevant interventions.

 **Book your place for Tuesday 12 December, 09:30-12:30**





Training

Alcohol and older adults

## RESEARCH

### **Effects of media campaign videos on stigma and attitudes towards treatment seeking for alcohol use disorder: a randomized controlled study**

New research published in BMC Public Health suggests that video materials focusing on recovery and reducing the perception of differentness have an immediate effect on decreasing public stigma associated with Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD).

AUD is one of the most stigmatised disorders in the western world. As stigma is a major barrier to seeking treatment for AUD, researchers in Denmark have explored the effects of video campaigns on public and self-stigma. Participants completed surveys before and after watching one of three different videos. The researchers conclude that videos can have an immediate effect on the level of public stigma, while other types of interventions are needed to increase motivation to change people's own alcohol use and reduce self-stigma.

 [Read the study](#)

## RESEARCH

### **The Women's Soccer World Cup Final 2023: gender equity and alcohol promotion**

Researchers say broadcasters providing news coverage of sporting events should avoid “problematic” shots of fans drinking alcohol, in a commentary article published in the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine.

It is hoped that high-profile sports events like the Women's Soccer World Cup will help inspire young women's participation in sports, which often drops dramatically after they leave school. Sports participation in general is linked to positive outcomes like increased fitness, stress reduction, and a heightened sense of belonging. The researchers discuss how alcohol marketing, and particularly TV images of female fans drinking, normalise and glamourise alcohol consumption. They call for an alcohol-oriented equivalent of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

 [Read the commentary](#)



## RESEARCH

### Rainbows in June: Selling alcohol to LGBTQ+ people

Sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) are targeted by a complex web of alcohol marketing across various channels, according to new research published in *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*. Writing for the Institute of Alcohol Studies, Dr David Whiteley, Glasgow Caledonian University, summarises the scoping review.

LGBTQ+ people are more likely to drink alcohol, drink it to excess, and are more at risk of becoming dependent on alcohol than heterosexual and/or cisgender people. Although the alcohol industry tries to position itself as an ally through appropriation of SGM iconography and event sponsorship, they market extensively to LGBTQ+ people, through traditional advertising, digital marketing, and venue-based marketing. The authors call for further work to describe and quantify the impact of these strategies on alcohol use within SGM communities.

 [Read the blog post](#)

## EVENT

## IAS: An exploration of lay discussions about alcohol and pregnancy on Mumsnet

As part of IAS's Small Grants Scheme, Dr Lisa Schölin and Rachel Arkell analysed discussions taking place on Mumsnet about topics relating to alcohol and pregnancy. They looked at how these topics were discussed and how the risk of exposure to alcohol during pregnancy was framed by forum users.

Join this webinar to hear their findings, including how people posting on Mumsnet discussed evidence of alcohol and pregnancy, the NHS guidelines, deferring to professional advice, understanding of risk, and the social norms and expectations displayed.

Time: 14:00-15:00

Date: Tuesday 14 November 2023

 [Register for the webinar](#)



## WHO Less Alcohol Webinar Series

The World Health Organization has announced the return of the Less Alcohol Webinar Series for its third edition.

Each hour-long webinar will include a keynote presentation, three to four spotlight country cases, active moderation and an interactive experience for online participants. All events are free with prior registration available at the links below:

- **Youth and alcohol: do new trends demand new solutions?** Tuesday 7 November, 13:00 CET



- **Measuring alcohol policy implementation: are existing tools and methods fit for purpose and use?** Thursday 7 December, 13:00 CET



## CPG on Improving Scotland's Health: December Meeting






The next meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Improving Scotland's Health will be held as a hybrid meeting, online and in Parliament on Wednesday 6 December 2023, 18:00-20:00.

The meeting is for interested MSPs and registered group members who have completed a declaration of interest form. Members will have received details of how to book an in-person space. Details of how to register for online attendance will be shared shortly.

Please contact the secretariat at [CEO@ashscotland.org.uk](mailto:CEO@ashscotland.org.uk) if you would like to become a member of the CPG.

 **Find out more about the CPG**



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