

Monthly newsletter from Alcohol Focus Scotland

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reducing harm caused by alcohol



eFocus **September 2019**

news

New Alcohol Deaths Prevention Support Available from AFS

AFS is delighted to announce a new package of support on alcohol deaths prevention for ADPs and Public Health teams. Support for alcohol death audits will include a new researcher support network and guidance on how to undertake audits. These are reports which examine the case histories of people who have died by alcohol and may also include interviews with those who knew them, in order to see where opportunities may exist for support for others. The guidance will be published in summer 2020.

The researcher support network will be a bimonthly meeting point for researchers and planners either currently working on or interested in undertaking audits. The guidance will let planners and researchers new to the field get ahead of potential challenges, and more experienced areas reflect on work done elsewhere. [Read more.](#)

For more details, or to get involved, please contact [Simon Jones](#), 0141 572 6593.

Right to know - it's time for industry to tell us what's in our drinks



The Scottish Government is considering taking control of alcohol labelling - and not a minute too soon. Just last month, the Portman Group (an alcohol industry membership body) announced that they are encouraging their members to display the current low-risk drinking guidelines on labels.

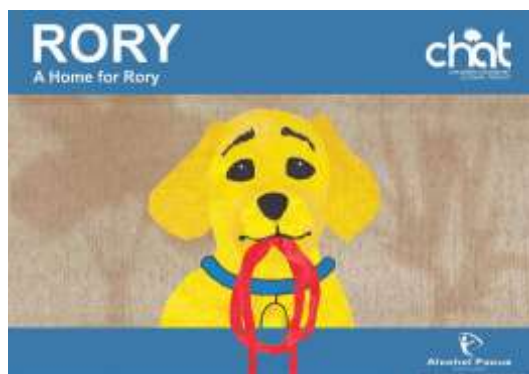
This has confused many of us, who have been expecting this to happen this very month – the UK Government said that the guidelines would be reflected on drinks from 1 September 2019. Three years since the guidelines were updated, this newest commitment is too little, too late. Overall, the government's reliance on voluntary agreements with the industry has failed: more information is found on a pint of milk than a bottle of vodka. Now is the time to mandate alcohol labelling, rejecting industry promises that aim to further delay action.

[Read more.](#)

NEW add-on to the C.H.A.T. pack - A home for Rory

Do you work with foster carers or kinship carers? We're delighted to introduce the new *A Home for Rory* series of books.

This new suite of books continues the story of Rory - a little dog whose owner has an alcohol problem.



While the original book helps children understand that problems like this exist and that it can be difficult to talk about them, the new series enables a child to explore the feelings they may have when their family circumstances change and they have to be looked after by another family member.

[Read more.](#)

Conversation boosts honesty over drinking in pregnancy, study finds

A "conversational approach" is the most successful way of encouraging honest disclosure of drinking habits by pregnant women, a new study says.



This contrasts with previous research that had recommended midwives should use formal screening tools, such as structured questionnaires. The new study, from Stirling and Edinburgh universities, said it was important to build trust.

It said the questions had to be flexible and not simply asked verbatim. [Read more.](#)

What would you choose?

What would you choose – annual tax giveaways of more than £1 billion to support the alcohol industry or paying the salaries of 40,000 nurses?



In the past few years the UK government has chosen to support the alcohol industry by cutting alcohol duty. This costs the treasury more than £1bn every year – that's enough to fund 40,000 nurses or 28,500 police officers. What would you choose? [Tell your MP.](#)

The Alcohol Health Alliance believe the government should choose to reduce the harms of alcohol instead of supporting the drinks companies that fuel it. This is why we are asking the government to increase alcohol duty by 2% in this year's Budget.

Will you join us? [Send a postcard to your local MP and let them know what you think.](#)

policy

Cross-Party Group [#scothealth2021](#)

The next meeting of the CPG will be the annual general meeting on Wednesday 18 September. [See more](#) about what the Cross-Group has been up on in the last year.

If you're interested in becoming a member please contact [Valerie Smith](#).

Addressing the impacts multiple substance use by smokers

The Scottish Tobacco-free Alliance are setting up a short life working group on Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs to identify issues to be addressed in relation to research, information provision, treatment and coordinated policy development where combinations of drug or alcohol use in the presence of smoking are found. A modest number of meetings will be organised over the next year but virtual participation is also encouraged. Contact Iain Stewart on istewart@ashscotland.org.uk for further information.

research

> Can a policy-induced reduction in alcohol consumption improve health outcomes and stimulate the UK economy?: A potential 'double dividend'.

This study investigated the 'net' impacts of a reduction in consumption accounting for the reallocation of household spending and the expenditure of any increase in government revenues. The impact of a reduction in alcohol consumption due to: a change in consumer tastes that generate a reallocation of household spending; an increase in alcohol duties accompanied by the use of increased revenues to stimulate government expenditure was simulated. There was evidence of a trade-off between employment and health benefits for the case of a tastes-induced switch from alcohol consumption, but this is less severe than past analyses would suggest (and does not apply to economic activity more generally). For the case of increased taxation on alcohol (and increased government spending), there is in fact no trade-off between employment on the one hand and health on the other; employment and economic activity are stimulated while health outcomes improve. The study concluded that there is a potential 'double-dividend' of improved health outcomes and increased economic activity as a consequence of a rise in alcohol duties. [Read the abstract.](#)

> Alcohol Use in Pregnancy and Miscarriage: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

A systematic review of studies reporting alcohol exposure during pregnancy and miscarriage. Meta-analysis of data from 231,808 pregnant women finds those exposed to alcohol during pregnancy have a greater risk of miscarriage compared to those who abstained. For alcohol use of 5 or fewer drinks per week, each additional drink per week was associated with a 6% increase in miscarriage risk. This review provides evidence that alcohol consumption during pregnancy is associated with a dose-mediated increase in miscarriage risk. Future studies evaluating change in alcohol use in pregnancy are needed to provide insight into how alcohol consumption prior to pregnancy recognition impacts risk. [Read the abstract.](#)

training

Alcohol Focus Scotland learning opportunities

Learning and development is an integral part of our work at Alcohol Focus Scotland. Our wide range of evaluated training courses can help people understand, manage and prevent the harm caused by alcohol. We can provide training for

- People working in the licensed trade and in the regulation of licensing
- Early years workers, teachers and others working with children and young people affected by a family member's drinking
- Employers who want to raise awareness of and manage alcohol/drug issues in the workplace
- People in a professional or personal role caring for someone affected by alcohol
- Volunteers and staff on telephone helplines providing alcohol information and support

To find out more about our diverse learning opportunities visit our [website](#), and read our [Learning Brochure](#).

E-Learning Coming Soon!

At Alcohol Focus Scotland we're always working to develop and deliver quality, effective and evidence based learning solutions. Most recently we've been working to develop our first e-learning course, Alcohol Affects Us All. Once available, the course will be accessible from anywhere, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and across all devices.

Currently at an advanced stage, we hope to launch the package later in 2019.

Stay tuned for further updates or email us now at: training@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk to register your interest.



Personal Licence Holder Refresher (PLH) deadline passed

If your licence expires on or before 1st September 2019 and you have not yet completed a refresher training course and submitted your renewal application get in touch with your local licensing board.

Alcohol Focus Scotland will continue to offer comprehensive refresher courses to meet the requirements of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, please get in touch for details. Call us on 0141 572 6700.

Personal Licence Holder (PLH) full course (can include refresher)

> *Thursday 10th October, Wednesday 6th November, Wednesday 4th December 2019, Glasgow*

AFS runs Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holder and Refresher courses once a month at our offices in Glasgow. [Find out more](#) about course dates, times and costs.

Licensing Standards Officers course

> *Wednesday 6th- Friday 8th November, Glasgow*

This is a mandatory three day course for Licensing Standards Officers employed by local councils. [Find out more](#)

events

Scottish Cancer Conference 2019

The Scottish Cancer Conference is a unique gathering of organisations involved with cancer; from patients to pharmaceutical companies and from clinicians to charities, presenting an unrivalled opportunity to share, learn, network and understand the latest developments in our combined efforts to beat cancer. For more information and to book your place visit the [Scottish Cancer Conference website](#).

> 18 November 2019, thestudio Glasgow

Alcohol Evidence in Policy and Practice

6th Masterclass on Alcohol Evidence, Public Health Policy, & Practice for Policymakers; Charities; Practitioners & Researchers.

This three day course is aimed at anyone wishing to gain an in-depth understanding and up to date insight into evidence and innovative practice in alcohol policy in the UK and internationally, and covers Alcohol Policy Overview, Alcohol Use and Effects, Price, Place and Promotion, and Advocacy, Action and Opposition. For more information and how to book visit the [UKCTAS website](#).

> 19 - 21 November 2019, Norton House Hotel, Edinburgh

Alcohol workshops, seminars and conferences

Are you organising an alcohol-related workshop, seminar or conference? Please let us know and we can help you promote it here in eFocus and on the AFS website.



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