



## Global Alcohol Policy Conference 2015



### Momentum for change: research and advocacy reducing alcohol harm

Around 400 people from 60 countries attended the Global Alcohol Policy Conference in Edinburgh from 7-9 October. Co-hosted by Alcohol Focus Scotland and the Global Alcohol Policy Alliance ([GAPA](#)), the conference brought together advocates, researchers, health professionals and policy makers to discuss evidence-based actions to reduce alcohol harm worldwide.

GAPC was dedicated to the late Dr Evelyn Gillan and began with a moving tribute to her work and life achievements. Evelyn's husband Tom accepted her honorary fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. AFS chair, Dr Mac Armstrong and GAPA chair, Derek Rutherford, welcomed delegates to the conference and introduced the First Minister who gave the keynote address. The first day focused on implementing effective policies to reduce alcohol harm and the challenges to doing so. These challenges include the strategies and tactics of a very powerful alcohol industry and mega trade treaties such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

On day two, discussions centred on the need for radical action to ensure children can grow up free from alcohol marketing. The experiences of Thailand, South Africa and Finland in curbing alcohol marketing were shared.

Rounding off GAPC, a representative from each GAPA region outlined their alcohol policy priorities before Professor David Jernigan presented the conference declaration. Finally, Derek Rutherford's contribution to the alcohol policy field was celebrated and he handed over to Professor Sally Casswell as the new Chair of GAPA.

It was certainly a busy and inspiring few days with over 100 presentations, lunchtime regional meetings, poster presentations, side events involving the [APN](#), [WHO](#) and GAPA, a reception at Edinburgh Castle and of course the ceilidh where new talents were discovered! The conference generated over 30 press articles plus broadcast media coverage and a huge amount of social media activity.



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### **First Minister's keynote address**

"The extent and nature of alcohol consumption in Scotland damages individuals, families, business and communities across the country. It harms the poorest families and communities most of all. No responsible government can ignore an issue which has such devastating consequences."

Nicola Sturgeon used her [speech](#) to reaffirm the Scottish Government's commitment to introducing a 50p minimum unit price in Scotland and to call for progress on restricting alcohol advertising to children. View her speech below.

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Nicola Sturgeon received a standing ovation from delegates following her speech.



## **Presentations**

Plenary and concurrent session presentations are available to download from [www.gapc2015.com](http://www.gapc2015.com) until the end of November 2015.

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Alcohol Focus Scotland produced a short film for the conference.



## Conference Declaration

The declaration calls on governments and civil society around the world to support and implement WHO's global strategies on alcohol and non-communicable diseases. We recognise the rights of children to grow up safe from alcohol-related harm, and in particular the urgent need to restrict alcohol marketing in all its forms. We note with concern the ramifications of global and regional trade agreements for evidence-based public health policies. We call on Member States to protect their alcohol policies from commercial and vested interests of the alcohol industry.

[Full Conference Declaration](#)



## Feedback from participants

Overall, the feedback was fantastic with 98% of respondents saying the conference met or exceeded their expectations. The venue in particular came in for high praise. In the feedback survey, some people mentioned they would like to see a delegate list at the conference - this has been uploaded to [www.gapc2015.com](http://www.gapc2015.com)



## Thank you

Thank you to the Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland, WHO, the Institute of Alcohol Studies and the many other individuals and organisations who supported GAPC 2015 - see [www.gapc2015.com](http://www.gapc2015.com) Thanks also to presenters, participants and everyone behind the scenes who contributed to its success.

## GAPC 2017 - Australia

See you in two years down under!



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