



August 2021



ALCOHOL DEATHS AT DECADE HIGH

There were 1,190 alcohol-specific deaths in 2020, up 17% from 1,020 in 2019, according to statistics published recently by National Records of Scotland.

These figures show a return to the recent upward trend in the number of alcohol-specific deaths in Scotland following a decline in the previous year. This is the largest number of deaths due to alcohol recorded since 2008.

Alison Douglas, chief executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland said, "In 2019 we saw a positive reduction in the number of deaths caused by alcohol. This sudden increase of 17% is devastating to see and a tragedy for everyone affected. It is a stark reminder that we cannot afford to take our eye off the ball where alcohol harm is concerned."

The high number of deaths in 2020 has **renewed calls to raise the minimum unit price**. Alcohol Focus Scotland and others have been calling for the Scottish Government to make good on their commitment to review the minimum unit price, and increase it to at least 65p per unit.

 **Read more.**



Three quarters of Scots back new controls to help protect children from alcohol advertising

Newly published findings from YouGov asked the public whether they would support measures to limit the exposure of children and young people to alcohol advertising.

The poll of Scottish adults found:

- 75% of Scots support controls to limit the exposure of children and young people to alcohol advertising
 - 68% of people support stopping alcohol adverts from being shown on TV before 9pm
 - 71% of people support only allowing alcohol advertising in cinemas for films with an 18 certificate
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- 51% of people support not allowing alcohol advertising in outdoor and public spaces such as streets, parks and public transport

The Scottish Government has previously committed to consult on measures to restrict alcohol marketing to protect children and young people given the extensive evidence that exposure to marketing increases alcohol consumption.

Alcohol use is the biggest risk factor for death, ill-health and disability among 15 to 49-year-olds worldwide. Just recently the National Records for Scotland published figures showing that deaths caused by alcohol had increase by 17% in 2020 yet little has been done to limit the promotion of alcohol- despite this being one of the key recommendations by the World Health Organization to reduce alcohol consumption.

 [Read more.](#)



 **UPDATE**
WORK WITH US

ENGAGEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS COORDINATOR

We are looking for an enthusiastic and experienced professional to strengthen our engagement work. You will have a lead role in developing relationships and joint advocacy with stakeholders and communities, so that their insight and experience can help deliver positive change. Working with key stakeholders including Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs) and licensing

practitioners you will help improve policy and practice at both local and national levels.

SENIOR LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

We are looking for a creative and experienced senior learning and development practitioner to join our dedicated and skilled team. If you have experience of designing and delivering high quality training, including developing creative resources and tools, to meet the current and emerging needs of stakeholders and to deliver learning outcomes we want to hear from you.



[Visit our website for more details and to apply.](#)



Scotland's Public Finances in 2022-23 and the Impact of COVID

AFS responded to the Scottish Parliament Finance and Public Administration Committee's **consultation** on Scotland's public finances in 2022-23 and the impact of COVID. We highlight the avoidable human and economic costs of alcohol harm to Scotland and the 'best buy' policies to reduce this burden: increasing the price of alcohol, reducing its availability and restricting marketing. We note how the impact of COVID on drinking patterns could further increase inequalities in alcohol harm, and the need for increased investment in recovery-oriented alcohol services that matches the significant investment in drug treatment, to fulfil people's right to access support and treatment when experiencing an alcohol problem. We propose that the Scottish Government use its devolved and local tax powers to make those who profit from the sale of alcohol contribute towards alcohol-related harm costs and preventative action, through re-establishing a Public Health Supplement or

establishing a new Alcohol Harm Prevention Tax, which would apply to all alcohol sold by retailers in the off trade.

 [Read our response.](#)

Consultation events on National Care Service

The Scottish Government are consulting on the way social care is delivered in Scotland. This includes support for people with or recovering from alcohol or drug addictions.

They will be hosting a series of online engagement events in September and October to enable stakeholders, individuals and communities to come together to share their views on the National Care Service.

Some of these events will cover all aspects of the consultation, and some will be themed towards specific aspects of the consultation. A summary report will be produced from each event for the Scottish Government to consider alongside the official consultation responses.

 [Find out more](#)

Scottish Young Carers Festival



d Play

Working with East Dunbartonshire Health Improvement Team, Alcohol Focus Scotland attended Snack and Play sessions in local primary schools during the school summer holidays. In the sessions AFS shared our **'Oh Lila' and 'Rory' resources** with the children to encourage them to speak to a trusted adult if they had any worries or concerns.



We also explored alcohol sponsorship with the older primary aged children who shared their thoughts on what they think about alcohol and sport. Off the back of the summer European football events where players removing sponsored drinks at news briefings, the children designed  adverts that they would prefer to see at sporting events instead of alcohol.

We also shared our **'Home for Rory'** series of books with workers to use with children being looked after by family or kinship carers.



Find out more about our learning


resources for working with children, young people and families.



Personal Licence Holder Training

Alcohol Focus Scotland are now offering regular online courses for the updated Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders (SCPLH) and refresher (SCPLHR) qualifications.

Our one-day course will be delivered online and exams will be conducted via City & Guilds new remote invigilation service.

 For further information, course dates and to book visit the [Alcohol Focus Scotland website](#)



Health Harming Products and Non-Communicable Disease Prevention in Scotland

A cross-party discussion on the impact of health-harming products to launch new report from ten of Scotland's leading health charities.

Online Report Launch Event

6 September 2021 12.00 – 13.30

On the 6th September, ten of Scotland's leading health charities, will publish a report calling for action on health-harming products to prevent ill health and death from non-communicable diseases – such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, lung disease and stroke.

The paper will focus on actions the Scottish Parliament and Government should take to shape the environment around us to support people to live healthier lives, through action on issues such as the availability, marketing and price of health-harming products.

The event will feature a pre-recorded address by the Minister for Public Health, Maree Todd MSP, on the themes of the report.

We will also be joined by Sandesh Gulhane MSP (Scottish Conservative), Gillian MacKay (Scottish Greens), Carol Mochan MSP (Scottish Labour), Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP (Scottish Liberal Democrats) and Emma Harper MSP (Scottish National Party) for a discussion of the need for action on tobacco, alcohol and unhealthy food and drinks.

 **Book your place**



Recovery Walk Scotland Perth 2021

After a brief break last year, Scotland's largest recovery event 'Recovery Walk Scotland' is back for 2021 in Perth.

Recovery Walk Scotland is the largest recovery event in Scotland and has been held in different locations across the country since 2013. This year the event is comprised of three parts: Roses in the River Memorial, Recovery Walk Scotland procession through the city centre and a Recovery Festival and Village in North Inch Park, Perth.



[Find out more and register here](#)



Health Harming Products: Public Health Action Beyond COVID-19

Holyrood events

16 September 2021 10.00 - 15:00

Online

Reducing levels of obesity, alcohol consumption and tobacco use are key if we are to see any significant drop in non-communicable disease (NCD) deaths in Scotland. This has been acknowledged by government, the public health community and, indeed, wider society for many years now. However, with obesity and the use of alcohol and tobacco thought to increase the risk of severe COVID-19, the case for further preventative population level action has been strengthened.

As the new parliamentary term begins, this event will provide delegates with a timely opportunity to discuss what further steps need to be taken in relation to the availability, marketing and pricing and promotion of unhealthy products.

Sponsored by the British Heart Foundation (BHF) Scotland, it will bring together key stakeholders from across public health, academia and the third sector, in a bid to drive forward positive, meaningful change.

 **[Find out more and register here](#)**

