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## Welcome to the July edition of eFocus, your monthly update from Alcohol Focus Scotland.

### **Policy, Research & Consultations**

#### **Health impact of alcohol misuse "insidious and pervasive", say MPs**

The House of Commons Health Select Committee has published the findings of its inquiry into the Government's Alcohol Strategy. MPs on the Committee warned that the strategy's focus on binge drinking and public order overshadows the health impact of chronic alcohol misuse. The Committee also concluded that the Responsibility Deal is not a substitute for government policy, and that the alcohol industry should acknowledge the link between alcohol advertising and consumption if it wishes to be seen as a serious, committed partner. Read more [here](#).

#### **Quarter of intensive care patients have drink problem**

A quarter of patients who end up in intensive care in Scotland have drink problems, a report by the Scottish Intensive Care Audit Group has said. The study of 771 patients across all 24 intensive care units found 25% were alcohol-related and 22% of the patients had chronic alcohol disease. The work, published by the Anaesthesia medical journal, said many young and less well-off people were affected.

#### **Alcohol ban on ScotRail trains comes into force**

A ban on drinking or visibly carrying alcohol on board ScotRail trains between 9pm and 10am came into force on 20 July. In the first weekend of the new rules being in operation, no arrests were made although two people were refused travel at Glasgow Central station because, under longstanding railway rules, they were considered unfit to travel due to the effects of alcohol. Read more [here](#).

#### **Dementia risk, even at moderate alcohol consumption levels**

Drinking even moderate amounts of alcohol increases dementia risk, US research suggests. The findings challenge the notion that some alcohol could be good for ageing brains. People who stick to recommended alcohol limits are still at risk, as well as binge and heavy drinkers. The study tracked the health over 20 years of 1300 women in their mid-60s. The risk, ranging from mild cognitive impairment to full blown dementia, was higher among those who reported drinking more alcohol. Read more [here](#).

#### **Alcohol and cancer website launched**

Eurocare and the Association of European Cancer Leagues have launched a new [website](#) to provide information on the links between alcohol and cancer.

#### **Wish I wasn't here - Children 1st campaign**

Children 1st has launched a summer-long campaign to highlight how alcohol-fuelled abuse is blighting children's lives. [Wish I wasn't here](#) features a postcard from Callum, talking about how his holidays were ruined by his mum's drinking. A OnePoll survey found that a quarter of respondents have seen someone who is drunk being aggressive or violent around a child they were looking after. The same survey found that half of all respondents had seen someone drunk in charge of a child.

#### **University of Bath alcohol consumption research**

The University of Bath is conducting an academic study in the field of alcohol consumption, looking at prospective changes in the UK market. The study is being conducted in order to investigate the prospective shift in alcohol buying habits away from pubs, bars and clubs to shops and supermarkets. [Take the survey](#).

#### **Alcohol packaging should carry graphic health warnings, urge doctors**

Cigarette-style images on alcohol packaging would help the public understand excessive drinking's link to diseases and violence, according to the UK Faculty of Public Health. They say harmful drinking has become so common that "no nonsense" warnings displayed in a prominent place on alcohol products are needed to overcome widespread public ignorance about the dozens of medical conditions alcohol can cause. Read more [here](#).

## **Licensing Update**

### **Crime directly linked to number of off-licences in an area**

Academics at the University of Glasgow have found that people living in an area with six alcohol outlets or more can expect crime rates twice as high as those in an area with only three. The study found that poverty was a key factor in relation to crime, after allowing for deprivation, alcohol was identified as the most significant determining factor in crime levels. The study is part of the [Go Well](#) research programme, a long-term study of the impacts of regeneration upon disadvantaged communities in Glasgow.

### **National Licensing Conference 2012**

Alcohol Focus Scotland's annual national licensing conference will take place on Wednesday 12 September in Glasgow's Grand Central Hotel. This year the theme is "Promoting Licensing Action in the Public Interest". Speakers include Cabinet Secretary for Justice Kenny MacAskill, Jon Bannister from the University of Glasgow, and Sir Crispin Agnew QC. There will be panel discussions and presentations showcasing good licensing practice, and opportunities for questions and information sharing. A discount is available for bookings paid for before 10 August. [Book now](#).

## **Alcohol Focus Scotland News, Training & Events**

### **AFS questions Tesco's 'everyday value' range**

In a letter to Tesco, Alcohol Focus Scotland has questioned how their 'everyday value' range of beers, wines and spirits is compatible with them being signatories to the Government's Responsibility Deal. Positioning the cheapest alcohol as an everyday product is inappropriate and irresponsible. Not only does the Scottish Government advise against drinking every day, but the cheapest alcohol is most often drunk by the most vulnerable groups. AFS has yet to receive a response from Tesco.

### **New Policy & Development Coordinator post**

Alcohol Focus Scotland is looking to recruit a Policy & Development Coordinator to provide development support to Alcohol and Drug Partnerships across Scotland. The closing date for applications is 6 August. More information and application form [here](#).

### **Updated alcohol information leaflets**

A reminder that the Scottish Government has updated 5 alcohol information leaflets which can be ordered from Alcohol Focus Scotland. The leaflets are free but postage/packaging charges will apply. The titles are: Alcohol and healthy living, Alcohol and stress, Recognising problem drinking, Alcohol and young people, and Women and alcohol. [Order now](#).

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## Welcome to the June edition of eFocus, your monthly update from Alcohol Focus Scotland.

### **Policy, Research & Consultations**

#### **Supermarkets sell 71% of alcohol on promotion**

A report into European pricing and promotions reveals that 71% of alcohol products sold in the major UK supermarkets were on promotion. In Italy, the second most active European country in terms of alcohol promotions, 33% of alcohol products were sold on promotion. On average, European countries sold between 20% and 30% of alcohol products on promotion. Read more [here](#)

#### **Lower alcohol products - a literature review**

Lowering the alcohol content of drinks offers health benefits for drinkers and at a population level, policies that promote the production and consumption of lower alcohol products have the potential to contribute to reductions in alcohol-related harms. Read more [here](#)

#### **Alcohol associated with 2 in 5 trauma cases**

A report from the [Scottish Trauma Audit Group](#) (STAG) presents information for 5,045 patients who were admitted to hospital for at least three days or who died as a result of trauma injuries in 2011. It shows that alcohol is associated with 37% of major trauma cases, and the likelihood of the involvement of alcohol rises in line with the severity of trauma sustained.

#### **Alcohol-related hospital discharges 2010/11**

[Latest figures](#) show there were 38,825 alcohol-related discharges from general acute hospitals in Scotland during 2010/11. Rates were 7 times higher among those living in the most deprived areas compared with the least deprived, and highest in the 50-54 age group. Alcohol dependence was recorded in 69% (2,807) of all alcohol-related discharges from psychiatric hospitals.

#### **Online alcohol retailers fuelling under-age drinking**

Online alcohol sales are creating a significant and emerging battleground in the fight against under-age drinking, according to *Checked Out*, a new report from Serve Legal and Plymouth University. Researchers uncovered a number of websites selling alcohol with no age-check policy or only a simple disclaimer that the consumer needed to be over 18 to complete the purchase. Read more [here](#)

#### **Bulk-buy drink ban has small impact on sales**

There has been a modest decline of 4.3% in sales in the 33 weeks since the ban on deals, such as 3 bottles of wine for £10, was introduced last October. A Scottish Government spokesman said: "We have always been clear there is no single solution to tackling Scotland's alcohol problems and the quantity discount ban will be most effective when used alongside minimum pricing, as this will prevent deep discounting of products." Read more [here](#)

### **Licensing Update**

#### **New data profiles to inform decision making**

Profiles of the financial cost of alcohol to Scotland's 32 local authority areas will be available soon for the first time. These profiles, published by AFS and [SHAAP](#), provide local estimates of the cost of alcohol use to health, crime, social services and in the workplace. Also available next month is the second part of AFS' licensing toolkit. The factsheet on data collection and analysis explains the importance of using evidence to inform licensing policy and decision making, and includes information on a range of alcohol statistics.

## **Alcohol Focus Scotland News, Training & Events**

### **AFS challenges supermarkets' 'pick up a case of wine' promotion**

A Sainsbury's store in Glasgow apologised for displaying a 'manager's choice' sign encouraging people to buy a case of wine instead of a bottle 'because it's easier'. Alcohol Focus Scotland wrote to Sainsbury's to complain about the sign, saying encouraging people to buy more alcohol than they intended was irresponsible and incompatible with the Government's Responsibility Deal which Sainsbury's have signed up to. AFS also wrote to a Glasgow branch of Morrison's which was displaying the same sign but has yet to receive a response.

### **Updated alcohol information leaflets**

The Scottish Government has updated 5 alcohol information leaflets which can be ordered from Alcohol Focus Scotland. The leaflets are free but postage/package charges will apply. The titles are: Alcohol and healthy living, Alcohol and stress, Recognising problem drinking, Alcohol and young people, and Women and alcohol. [Order now.](#)

### **Community alcohol consultations**

As part of Alcohol Focus Scotland's national community project, we have launched a community alcohol consultation with people living and working in Neilston, East Renfrewshire. Findings from a similar consultation in Lochgilphead and Ardrishaig will be published soon. Initial results show that alcohol harm is having a significant impact on community life, with concerns around the impact on families, licensing, drink driving, litter and rowdy behaviour. For more information about this work contact [Caroline Church](#).

### **Overview of alcohol deaths in Scotland**

Alcohol Focus Scotland has produced an [overview](#) of alcohol-related deaths in Scotland. It includes the most recent statistics by gender, age and area, trends over time, and comparisons with UK/Europe. In 2010, there were 3,492 alcohol deaths in Scotland - 2455 men and 1037 women. The majority of alcohol-related deaths were in the 45-59 age group.

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