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Published by: AIM Digest,
PO Box 2282, BATH, BA1 2QY.

Hungary

On 16 September 2009, 26 advertising firms signed a voluntary code of conduct that restricts alcohol advertising practices in the Hungarian market. The new code includes regulation of viral and direct marketing practices.

The code stipulates a minimum age limit for actors to appear in adverts for alcoholic drinks of 25 years. Alcohol adverts can only appear in programmes where at least 70% of recipients are adults. Moreover, advertisers will put more emphasis on responsible drinking messaging. In line with the code, advertisers will not be allowed to feature irresponsible behaviour as a positive example.

China

In China, more than 10,700 cases of drunk-driving were reported during the countrywide clampdown held by the Ministry of Public Security from 15 August to 17 September 2009. Of the total, 320 cases resulted in traffic accidents.

In a related development, a draft rule has been proposed by the ministry, whereby criminal charges could be made against the most serious drink driver offenders with jail terms of 3,5, or 7 years. The draft rules also include an unspecified fixed penalty payable by passengers on board a vehicle driven by a drunk driver, if they did not try to stop the drunk driver from driving.

Norway

Norway's Ministry of Health and Care Services has proposed a one-hour reduction in the serving time for establishments with an alcohol licence to 2 a.m.

Dominican Republic

Radhames Jimenez Pena, the Attorney General in Dominican Republic, has issued a measure whereby it empowers members of the Public Ministry to close down any store, bar or night club selling alcoholic beverages that allows entry to any under aged consumers.

Under the initiative, those establishments serving underage drinkers for the first time will be forced to close their outlets for 15 days. A second breach is punishable with closure for 30 days and further infringement, 60 days.

Holland

A new advertising code for the Dutch alcohol industry came into force on October 1. Measures include an expansion of age checking on websites and a list of magazines for young consumers which cannot be advertised in. The new Code also bans alcohol advertising on sports equipment and gives more specific guidance on how adverts must not suggest that drinking leads to social or sexual success.

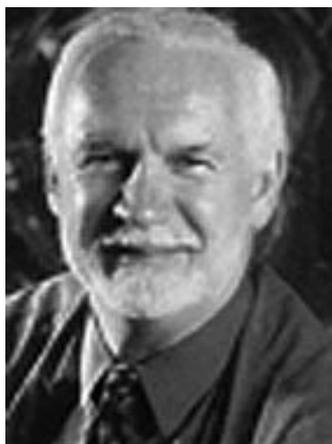
Peter de Wolf, Director STIVA: *"The alcohol industry role is important in the responsible marketing of alcoholic beverages. .. The Code has become clearer about what's permitted and not just stricter... above all it has become much more workable."*

For more information, visit www.alcoholcode.nl

Finland

In Finland, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has appointed a working group to examine whether the existing restrictions relating to alcohol advertising should be tightened further.

Interview with Curt Ellison, Epidemiologist, Boston University, 28th September 2009



Professor R. Curtis Ellison is a renowned Epidemiologist, based at Boston University School of Medicine. He founded the Institute on Lifestyle & Health there to study the effects of diet and lifestyle on longevity, including drinking, and has been an invaluable member of The AIM-Alcohol in Moderation

Council for over ten years. On a recent visit to London, Helena Conibear asked him about his lifelong studies regarding alcohol and health.

Q: Having trained as a paediatric cardiologist, when did you first become interested in the effect of lifestyle factors on how long you live?

I trained at a time when there was a rapid expansion in technology in paediatric cardiology. We were intervening on all infants, even those with “incurable” disease, almost all of whom died within their first year. It occurred to me that the huge amount of money being spent on these infants (up to a million dollars each) could be better used to prevent the most common type of heart disease, coronary heart disease. My thought was to start early in life to try and improve the lifestyles of children. I became involved in schools in Massachusetts, working to modify the food served in the school lunch rooms, trying especially to reduce salt and the intake of saturated fats and to increase the consumption of salads and vegetables. We also carried out studies in boarding schools that showed that making a few changes in food preparation could improve the blood pressure of the students. I realized that to carry out good research, I needed to learn more epidemiology. So I went back to school to learn how to design programs to prevent the development of risk factors, such as smoking, being overweight, eating a high-fat diet, and not getting adequate exercise.

What does Epidemiology mean?

Epidemiology is the science that deals with identifying factors associated with major diseases in the population and trying to do something to

prevent them. While infectious diseases were the leading causes of death in the past, most people die now from chronic diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes and obesity.

When did you realise that you could single out alcohol consumption as a lifestyle factor independent of others?

This happened quite by chance. Early studies in the Framingham Heart Study (which began in 1948) recorded alcohol consumption as well as information of factors subsequently shown to be important in causing chronic disease, conditions. I came upon the draft of a report from the Framingham Study from 1974 and was astounded to see that moderate alcohol consumption was associated with a 30-50% lower risk of coronary disease. This effect was independent of the effects of the usual risk factors for heart disease – high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and smoking. a protective effect of moderate drinking. Shortly thereafter, however, and ever since, many other prospective studies began to notice that moderate drinkers in their populations were at lower risk of developing heart disease.

30 years later, have your views changed?

Hundred’s of studies on different populations, among people of varying ethnic groups and socio economic levels, have been amazingly consistent in finding that drinking moderately leads to not only lower rates of heart disease, but also to a lower risk of adult-onset diabetes, stroke, and other chronic diseases. It is associated with lower all-cause mortality rates. Such an effect of alcohol is even better when combined with a Mediterranean style diet (low in red meats, high in whole grains and vegetables), regular physical exercise, not smoking and not becoming obese. What is also becoming increasingly apparent is how you drink – the pattern of drinking -- is especially important. The healthiest pattern is drinking small amounts, but doing so frequently (even daily).

How do you separate out the effect of drinking from what you eat, if you smoke, how heavy or fit you are?

By careful stratification of those being studied by

age, by income and education, by their diet, smoking and other lifestyle habits. We can then compare and contrast the development of chronic diseases in these different groups according to whether the subjects also consumed, or did not consume, alcohol. In the Framingham Study we have been able to follow two generations, with examination every 2-4 years, for up to 60 years now. Since more than one-half of these subjects have died, we thus have their "lifetime" risk of disease according to their lifestyle habits.

What are the ways that drinking lowers heart disease risk?

First, any type of alcohol increases the "good cholesterol," HDL- cholesterol, that lowers the risk of heart disease and stroke. It also improves your metabolism of carbohydrates, lowering the risk of diabetes. It has beneficial effects on blood coagulation, as moderate alcohol tends to make your platelets less sticky and less likely to form clots. Moderate alcohol consumption, especially drinks naturally high in antioxidants such as red wine and dark beers, also keeps the lining of the arteries healthy, which lowers the risk of many chronic diseases.

Why is the message little and often?

Basically, the effect of alcohol on your body is transitory. You have favourable effects on most risk factors almost immediately, even from less than one typical drink, but they only last for a day or two. Hence, you need to have another drink before too many days have passed. Drinking only on week-ends is not the best way: in many studies, drinking daily seems to be the optimal pattern. But not too much, for heavy drinking (and I mean regularly drinking any more than a drink or two at a time) increases your risk of many health problems and negates any protective effects associated with moderate drinking. So more drinking doesn't mean more benefits, just more harms.

The J shape curve suggests that those who don't drink have shorter lives than moderate drinkers. How do you know that non drinkers haven't given up because of health problems or are reformed drinkers?

You need to look at each study carefully. Better studies will exclude from their analyses people who

may currently be non-drinkers but are ex-drinkers, including some who gave up drinking due to health problems. The goal is to include only 'never drinkers' in the comparisons with moderate drinkers, and the majority of newer studies can do this.

Why is there such polarity of views among the medical profession regarding alcohol consumption?

Quite simply because of abuse. If you're a hepatologist (liver specialist), you see chronic abusers with cirrhosis; if you work in an emergency room, you see the effects of alcohol-fuelled violence or excess. In many sectors of medicine you see the effects of excess, but do not regularly see people who are not sick. And one of the reasons that they are not-sick is their healthy lifestyle habits which, for many people, can include small-to-moderate amounts of alcohol. Epidemiologists try to study the net effect of lifestyle factors in samples of the population, trying to get the 'big picture' associated with many factors, including alcohol consumption. While moderate drinking is associated with a lower risk of many chronic diseases, excessive drinking is surely a potentially dangerous lifestyle factor.

How do you deal with a potentially dangerous lifestyle factor, such as drinking, in advice to patients and the public?

Physicians should always be careful when giving recommendations regarding lifestyle factors -- related to diet, smoking, exercise, as well as drinking -- that are associated with favourable health outcomes. It would be foolish to try to ban all alcohol use because some people abuse it. We do not ban driving an automobile because a minority speed or drive recklessly. Instead, we regulate to curb excess and protect the law-abiding majority. The same should be true for alcohol consumption.

Drinking has been part of many cultures and religions since records began. The problem has always been those who do not follow cultural guidelines for their proper use. The 16th president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, in speaking to a temperance meeting more than one hundred and fifty years ago, put it very well: 'It has long been recognized that the problems with alcohol in this country relate not to the use of a bad thing, but to the abuse of a good thing.'

Development of the lower alcohol wine market in the UK

The Wine and Spirit Trade Association hosted an interesting seminar on the wine making techniques, legal restrictions, market opportunities and potential offered by developing lower alcohol wines for the UK market on the 1st October.

The debate was prompted by a change in EU regulations allowing the dealcoholisation of wines marketed in Britain by up to 2%, using technologies such as membrane filtration or 'spinning cone' technology, which evaporates volatile alcohol efficiently out of wine.

The first hurdle in the UK is the definition of wine only applying to vinous products with an alcohol content of between 8.5 and 15%. This means that any wine with an alcohol level below this has to be described as 'derived from grapes' or 'wine based', a concept not potentially attractive to the customer. Marketing development is further hampered by what to call the category – 'low alcohol' only applies to products containing under 1.2% alcohol and alcohol free is under 0.5%. EU advertising codes also prescribe that drinks cannot be marketed on the basis of their alcoholic strength (whether lower or higher), nor can a product be promoted on 'health grounds' making claims of a lower alcohol or lower calorie wine as a 'healthier option' complex.

As far as nutrition claims are concerned, only nutrition claims referring to low alcohol levels, or the reduction of the alcohol content, or the reduction of the energy content for beverages containing more than 1.2 % by volume of alcohol, is permitted.

So are there opportunities? Jeremy Beadles, Chief Executive of the Wine and Spirit Trade Association feels there are grounds to create a new tax category for wines with alcohol levels between 5.5 and 8.5% without causing problems within the EU. Lower duty on this category could help build consumer interest in this category if it enabled a marked price differential from higher alcohol wine. The terms "Lower Alcohol" and "Reduced Alcohol" are not currently defined and therefore could be used, if not construed as health claims which are not permissible.

Research presented at the conference by Nunwood analysed the wine shopping behaviours of 800 wine drinkers in the UK and found that alcohol content was low down on their list of priorities when choosing a wine – far more important was region, style and price – with alcohol level ranking 7th in their selection

criteria. Lower alcohol wines had a wholly negative perception among the group due to poor taste and quality expectations, they also hadn't noticed any lower alcohol offerings on the shelf.

Taste first – lower alcohol second

What became clear on exploring the respondents views was that wines full of flavour, that were light and refreshing – but had nothing to do with a virtuous choice – were attractive to consumers, research backed by Dan Jago of Tesco's, who also urged for any lower alcohol offerings to be main stream, rather than periphery, as consumers like brands – their usual choice, but a light more refreshing style sold on positive premises. The purchase of wine is perceived as a treat and not 'worthy', any offering would have to be stylish, sophisticated and not specifically marketed on the merits of its low alcohol content as this could be embarrassing socially for example.

However, 59% of the respondents liked the concept of better lower alcohol wines and 57% saw lower alcohol wines as relevant to their lifestyle (to choose at lunchtime, at business meetings for example). These issues were equally important for males and females, although diets and health featured more highly for women.

The conclusions of the research was that there is room for a new category, but that it should be careful not to market itself as a worthy low alcohol choice, the consumer will be wooed by 'light and refreshing' rather than low alcohol. The category could also broaden the base of wine drinkers. Weight watchers did cite the success of their brand, however, in strong growth (!5% per annum) – their customer research shows that it is the calorific value (60 calories a glass) that counts rather than the alcohol level – the two 'treats' their clients do not want to give up are wine and chocolate!

A discussion by PLB Group in partnership with TFC winemaking, who have developed several lower alcohol wines, explored wine making techniques, comparing the possibilities of producing naturally lower alcohol wines by harvesting early, choosing cooler sites and grape varieties which are naturally lower in sugars - Mosels from Germany, asti spumante, vinho verde, white zinfandels and pinot grigio were cited as current offerings at 10.5% and below that could be viewed as 'lighter and refreshing'. Red wines

offered fewer natural offerings due to the need for ripe phenolics (tannins) making reds at lower than 11.5% difficult to obtain without flavour or maturity issues.

Technological options, now legalised, supposedly 'for experimental purposes' give winemakers the opportunity to select ripe fruit, ferment and then remove up to 2% alcohol . The issue is whether taste and flavour profiles can be preserved while doing this.

Ontrade – is there consumer demand for lighter lower alcohol wine?

Interesting customer research by Mathew Clarke, the biggest on trade supplier in the UK, found that the biggest current purchasers of wines at 10.5% and lower are night clubs (20% of current sales) and bars/pubs where food is not a major selling point – suggesting that lighter more refreshing styles are already being sought by consumers when not eating in particular. 8-9% of Mathew Clarke's current portfolio can be termed as lower alcohol, and the sector is in growth by 20%, offering the company an exciting expansion opportunity. The growth is particularly being sparked by lunch time/business lunch town venues where clients are choosing a lighter style. Their research also showed that buyers would choose an existing lower alcohol alternative (example here were wines from Germany) and flag them as a lighter choice. Interestingly, high quality hotels and restaurants had the poorest selection of wines below 10.5%.

The retailers perspective

Dan Jago of Tesco made the point that consumers are driving product innovation as their wine drinker profile has changed from big meaty wines, to lighter more fruit driven, choices with strong growth in lighter Rose's for example. He believes consumers are choosing to be more moderate and rather than drink less are choosing to reduce their unit intake by choosing lower alcohol products on some occasions. Jago argued for developments to be main stream on well known brands and countries, as currently just 6% of wines from the US are under 10.5%, with negligible offerings from South Africa, New Zealand or South America. 50% of wines from Germany are under 10.5% and 16% from Portugal at present. Finally he felt the Government should encourage consumers to

choose lower alcohol wines – or beverages generally, giving them a clear price incentive by reducing duty on 5.5% – 8.5% wines for example or a 2% beer.

A discussion of how to approach signage and listing of lower alcohol wines followed, so as not to 'stigmatise' the category. Hence there is a need to clarify a uniform terminology to avoid consumer confusion.

A tasting of 60 wines of all styles at 10.5% and below followed, demonstrating supplier interest in developing the category. For further info visit www.wsta.co.uk

Dementia less prevalent in moderate drinkers than abstainers, study suggests

The relationships between alcohol consumption and dementia and cognitive decline were investigated in a systematic review including meta-analyses of 15 prospective studies. Follow-ups ranged from 2 to 8 years. Meta-analyses were conducted on samples including 14,646 participants evaluated for Alzheimer disease (AD), 10,225 participants evaluated for vascular dementia (VaD), and 11,875 followed for any type of dementia (Any dementia).

The pooled relative risks (RRs) of AD, VaD, and Any dementia for light to moderate drinkers compared with nondrinkers were 0.72 (95% CI = 0.61-0.86), 0.75 (95% CI = 0.57-0.98), and 0.74 (95% CI = 0.61-0.91), respectively. When the more generally classified drinkers, were compared with nondrinkers, they had a reduced risk of AD (RR = 0.66, 95% CI = 0.47-0.94) and Any dementia (RR = 0.53, 95% CI = 0.53-0.82) but not cognitive decline. There were not enough data to examine VaD risk among drinkers.

Authors state that those classified as heavy drinkers did not have an increased risk of any dementia compared with nondrinkers, but this may reflect sampling bias.

The results suggest that alcohol drinkers in late life have reduced risk of dementia. It is unclear whether this reflects selection effects in cohort studies commencing in late life, a protective effect of alcohol consumption throughout adulthood, or a specific benefit of alcohol in late life.

Source: Alcohol Consumption as a Risk Factor for Dementia and Cognitive Decline: Meta-Analysis of Prospective Studies Anstey, Kaarin J. Ph.D.; Mack, Holly A. Ph.D.; Cherbuin, Nicolas Ph.D. American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry: July 2009 - Volume 17 - Issue 7 - pp 542-555

Two studies suggest alcohol may improve outcome for trauma patients

Two recent studies suggest that trauma patients who were had consumed alcohol before their injuries were more likely to survive than trauma patients who suffered similar injuries but were sober at the time, according to a study by researchers at the Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center.

The researchers surveyed 7,985 trauma patients of similar age and with similar injuries to determine if the consumption of alcohol prior to injury affected outcome. The study found 7% of the sober patients died compared to just 1% of the patients who had been drinking.

"This study is not encouraging the use of alcohol," said Christian de Virgilio, MD, LA BioMed's principal investigator for the study. *"It is seeking to further explore earlier studies that had found alcohol may improve the body's response to severe injuries. If alcohol is proven to improve the body's response to traumatic injury, it could lead to treatments that help patients survive and recover more quickly."*

Alcohol consumption is a leading cause of accident and injury, with a previous study finding it contributes to about one-third of all trauma-related deaths. Previous studies found trauma patients who had abused alcohol for a long period of time had lower survival rates. But recent studies also found alcohol consumption may protect against death by changing the chemical response to injury.

"This study adds further support to the possibility that alcohol could be altering the body's response to injury in a way that helps ensure survival," said Dr. de Virgilio. *"Given these findings, more research is*

needed to determine if there is some role for alcohol in the management of trauma patients.

Source: Elevated Blood Alcohol Level May Be Protective of Trauma Patient Mortality. American Surgeon, October, 2009

In the second study, patients from the National Trauma Data Bank (2000-2005) with moderate to severe traumatic brain injury and alcohol levels measured on admission was questioned. Demographics and outcomes were compared between patients with traumatic brain injuries with and without alcohol in their blood.

Results showed that a total of 38 019 patients with severe traumatic brain injuries were evaluated. 38% tested positive for ethanol.

Ethanol-positive patients were younger, had a lower Injury Severity Score, and a lower Glasgow Coma Scale score compared with their counterparts who hadn't consumed alcohol. After logistic regression analysis, alcohol consumption was associated with reduced mortality (adjusted odds ratio, 0.88; 95% confidence interval, 0.80-0.96; $P = .005$) and higher complications (adjusted odds ratio, 1.24; 95% confidence interval, 1.15-1.33; $P < .001$).

The authors conclude that alcohol consumption is independently associated with decreased mortality in patients with moderate to severe head injuries. Additional research is warranted to investigate the potential therapeutic implications of this association.

Source: Positive Serum Ethanol Level and Mortality in Moderate to Severe Traumatic Brain Injury Ali Salim, MD et al. Arch Surg. 2009;144(9):865-871.

Drinkers exercise more than non drinkers

A new study finds that moderate and even heavy drinkers tend to be more active than those who abstain from alcohol. Researcher Michael T. French of the University of Miami and colleagues found that heavier drinkers exercised 20 minutes more per week than non-drinkers, while light to moderate drinkers exercised 10 minutes more weekly. Heavy drinking was defined as consuming 76 alcoholic drinks (of 14g) monthly - i.e. above 35g a day for men and 46 drinks per month for women (more than 21g of alcohol a day). Moderate drinking was defined as consuming

between 30 and 75 drinks monthly for men and 15 to 45 drinks for women.

Drinkers were more likely to engage in vigorous exercise than non-drinkers, as well. The researchers speculated that some drinkers exercise to burn off alcohol calories or may be sensation-seekers prone to both drinking and exercise. Or, they said, moderate drinking could just be part of an overall "healthy" lifestyle. A low definition of heavy drinking for women at 21g a day, may well have affected the results.

The study appears in the September/October 2009 issue of the American Journal of Health Promotion.

Alcohol consumption and cardiovascular risk factors in older lifelong wine drinkers: The Italian longitudinal study on aging

A protective effect of moderate alcohol consumption on the cardiovascular system has consistently been reported, but limited evidence has been produced on the association of alcohol with metabolic factors in the elderly. The aim of a recent Italian study was to investigate the association between different levels of current alcohol consumption and cardiovascular risk factors in a representative sample of elderly Italian men.

The cross-sectional multi-centre study analysed a population-based sample of 1896 men aged 65–84 years, drawn from the Italian Longitudinal Study on Aging (ILSA) cohort. Almost all the drinkers (98%) drank wine as a lifelong habit.

Adjusted ORs for risk levels for cardiovascular factors (BMI, waist circumference, fibrinogen, α_2 protein, white blood cells, HDL cholesterol, Apo A-I, total cholesterol, Apo B-I, triglycerides, LDL, glycated hemoglobin, insulin, fasting plasma glucose, HOMA IR, systolic and diastolic blood pressure) were

estimated, comparing drinkers with teetotalers using multivariate logistic regression models.

The researchers found alcohol consumption in older age associated with healthier hematological values of fibrinogen, HDL cholesterol, Apo A-I lipoprotein and insulin, but it was also associated with a worse hematological picture of total, LDL cholesterol levels, and systolic pressure.

The results indicated in elderly moderate wine drinkers a noticeably safe metabolic, inflammatory and glycemic profile that might balance higher blood pressure, leading to a net benefit. The authors state however, that these findings however need to be placed in relation to the known adverse social and health effects of heavy drinking.

Source: Alcohol consumption and cardiovascular risk factors in older lifelong wine drinkers: The Italian Longitudinal Study on Aging. Nutrition, metabolism and Cardiovascular disease. Sept 2009 Vol 19. No.7

Scientists may have discovered how resveratrol acts to stop inflammation

Research in the Journal of The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) may show how resveratrol works against inflammation.

Scientists from Scotland and Singapore investigated how resveratrol controls inflammation, including the treatment of potentially deadly inflammatory disease, such as appendicitis, peritonitis, and systemic sepsis.

“Strong acute inflammatory diseases such as sepsis are very difficult to treat and many die every day due to lack of treatment,” said Alirio Melendez, senior lecturer on the faculty of medicine at Glasgow Biomedical Research Centre in Scotland and one of the researchers involved in the work. **“Moreover, many survivors of sepsis develop a very low quality of life due to the damage that inflammation causes to several internal organs. The ultimate goal of our study was to identify a potential novel therapy to help in the treatment of strong acute inflammatory diseases.”**

In the study, researchers administered an inflammatory agent to two groups of mice. One group was pre-treated with resveratrol and the other

group was not. The mice that were not pre-treated with resveratrol experienced a strong inflammatory response, simulating disease in humans, while the group pretreated with resveratrol was protected from the inflammation.

The scientists examined the tissues of the mice to determine exactly how resveratrol was able to protect the mice from inflammation. They found that resveratrol used a one-two punch to stop inflammation in the mice by preventing the body from creating two different molecules known to trigger inflammation, sphingosine kinase and phospholipase D.

This finding suggests that it may be possible to harness resveratrol as a treatment for inflammatory diseases.

Source: Resveratrol attenuates C5a-induced inflammatory responses in vitro and in vivo by inhibiting phospholipase D and sphingosine kinase activities. Issuree PD, Pushparaj PN, Pervaiz S, Melendez AJ. 2009 Aug;23(8):2412-2 Journal of The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB)

Binge drinking expands waistlines

Regularly drinking large amounts of alcohol in a single session is the likely cause of an expanding waistline, particularly for women, rather than more steady drinking over time, according to Martin Bobak, professor of epidemiology at University College London.

A study of almost 30,000 people in the former Soviet Union found that binge-drinkers who drank the equivalent of four to five pints of beer or a bottle of wine in one day were more likely to have a “beer belly” than those who drank the same amount, spread over the week. Consuming up to 12 units of alcohol in one sitting at least once a month was associated with a 10 cm (3.9 ins) increase in women’s waist size and up to a 6 cm (2.4 ins) increase for men.

Professor Bobak and his team questioned a sample of middle-aged men and women (45 to 69 years old) in Russia, the Czech Republic and Poland, on their drinking habits and also noted their height, weight and waist size. He noted that, in contrast to studies of the Mediterranean diet which suggest that moderate consumption of red wine is good for the heart, “alcohol seems to be killing people in Russia with cardiovascular problems”.

Overall, 18% of men and 1.5% of women in the study were binge-drinkers, as defined as consuming 80-

100g of alcohol (up to 12 units) on one occasion, at least once a month.

Professor Bobak added that further studies were needed to find out why heavy drinking caused people to gain fat around their midriffs, as “it could be related to other factors such as diet or lack of exercise.” But his ongoing research suggested the pattern of drinking was important. Some people who reported being binge-drinkers actually drank less overall than others people did over time, he said. “It’s not necessarily the volume or type, but the pattern.”

Although the proportion of women binge-drinkers in the study was small, they may have been more likely to put on weight because they had a smaller body mass to cope with the effects of excess alcohol. The research also found only a slight increase in waist size associated with drinking beer or spirits instead of wine.

“Abdominal obesity is an important risk factor for diabetes and for cardiovascular disease,” Bobak noted. “The finding that binge drinking is related to abdominal obesity is therefore important for our understanding of the link between heavy drinking and these diseases.”

The findings were reported at the recent annual meeting of the European Society of Cardiology in September.

Alcohol consumption and reduced risk of hematologic malignancies

Limited data suggest that moderate alcohol drinking may have an inverse relation to risk of non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma (NHL). Prospective data about alcohol, NHL, and other hematologic malignancies (HM) are sparse.

Researcher carried out a cohort study in a multiethnic population of 126,293 adults who supplied baseline information at health examinations. There were subsequent HM diagnoses in 1244 persons. The researchers used Cox proportional hazards models with seven covariates. The role of beverage types was studied by comparing groups with preponderant choices and by studying the role of frequency of drinking beverage types.

Using lifelong abstainers plus infrequent drinkers as controls, adjusted relative risks (95% confidence intervals) for HM follow: less than one drink per

day=1.0 (0.9–1.2), one to two drinks per day=0.9 (0.7–1.0), greater than three drinks per day=0.7 (0.6–0.9, p=0.008). For 673 NHL these were 1.2 (1.0–1.5), 0.9 (0.7–1.2), and 0.9 (0.6–1.2). Persons reporting greater than three drinks/day had inverse relations to lymphocytic (n= 146) and myelocytic (n= 169) leukemias, with relative risk of 0.5 (0.2–1.0, p<0.05) for each. No major independent relation was seen for choice of wine, liquor, or beer.

The authors conclude that alcohol drinking is associated with slightly lower risk of HM, due largely to inverse relations to lymphocytic and myelocytic leukemia.

Source: Alcohol Consumption and Risk of Hematologic Malignancies. Arthur L. Klatsky, Yyan Li, David Baer, Mary Anne Armstrong, Natalia Udaltsova, Gary Fireman *Annals of epidemiology* Volume 19, Issue 10, P46-753

Binge drinkers let down guard against infection

Research suggests binge drinking weakens the body's ability to fight off infection for at least 24 hours afterwards. The study, published in the open access journal *BMC Immunology*, focused on the effect of heavy drinking on toll-like receptor 4 (TLR4), a protein that has an important role in immune system activation. Previous mouse experiments indicate that binge drinking inhibits the body's production of pro-inflammatory cytokines. These are signalling molecules that launch the inflammatory response to infection.

Stephen Pruett, currently at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Mississippi State University, USA and Ruping Fan of Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, USA, set out to compare the in vivo and in vitro effects of alcohol on cytokines and TLR4, using a mouse model. Their results confirm that acute alcohol exposure prevents the body from producing certain key pro-inflammatory cytokines. Ethanol molecules suppress TLR4's usual ability to send

signals that would normally trigger the production of inflammatory cytokines, the authors suggest.

The in vivo and in vitro results were similar, although using the mouse model the authors were able to pick up more detail on alcohol's inhibitory effect on NF- κ B, a protein complex that controls DNA transcription and which is known to control expression of some of the cytokines that are inhibited by alcohol. Some cytokines were still not on full duty guarding against infection 24 hours after the binge. "The time frame during which the risk of infection is increased might be at least 24 hours," said Pruett. "A persistent effect of ethanol on cells is indicated, such that inhibition of the response of some cytokines occurs even after the ethanol is cleared."

Source: *Ethanol inhibits LPS-induced signaling and modulates cytokine production in peritoneal macrophages in vivo in a model for binge drinking*. Stephen Pruett, Rupert Fan. *BMC Immunology* 2009, published September 18 2009.

Regular consumption of red wine may enhance the body's antioxidant defenses

A study by researchers from the Universities of Seville (U.S.) and Pablo de Olavide (UPO) conclude that the moderate consumption of red wine may strengthen the body's own antioxidant defenses. The work aimed to see the influence of intake of red wine on endogenous antioxidant enzymes.

The research was based on eight volunteers between 23 and 37, who consumed 300 milliliters of red wine at dinner over a week. This practice was carried out with a special diet low in other food sources of antioxidant compounds, with the intention that they did not invalidate the results.

A blood sample was taken from each participant before the intake, on the second and seventh days. These were compared with control samples from another week in which the participants followed the same diet low in antioxidant compounds but not wine intake.

The study looks at 'viable' human doses and showed a "significant increase" in plasma antioxidant capacity. The researchers also found a "significant change" of

endogenous antioxidant compounds, but an increase in the activity of certain antioxidant enzymes (catalase, superoxide dismutase, glutathione peroxidase and glutathione reductase). As for the gene expression of these enzymes, the comparison between the different weeks study found an increase on the seventh day of the week intervention of the enzyme superoxide dismutase, while catalase remained unaffected.

The catalase in the week control, increased gene expression, which can be interpreted as an effort by the agency for attempting to counteract the increased production of free radicals in a week that are not taking antioxidants, according to the researchers. Given these data, scientists involved in the study concluded that both enzymes were regulated differently, although further studies are needed to reinforce this idea.

Source: *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*. Soledad Fernandez, Genevieve Berná, Eduardo Otaolaurruchi, J. Agric. Food Chem., 2009, 57 (15), pp 6578–6583

Two studies on Grapes, wine, resveratrol and heart health

A review entitled 'Grapes, Wine, Resveratrol and Heart Health' is published in the September edition of the *Journal of Cardiovascular Pharmacology*. The review states that 'epidemiological and experimental studies have revealed that a mild-to-moderate drinking of wine, particularly red wine, attenuates the cardiovascular, cerebrovascular, and peripheral vascular risk. However, the experimental basis for such health benefits is not fully understood.

The cardioprotective effect of wine are attributed to alcohol (at least 75%) as well as to polyphenols (antioxidants) Resveratrol (a powerful antioxidant) is mainly found in the grape skin, while proanthocyanidins are found only in the seeds. Recent studies have demonstrated that resveratrol and proanthocyanidin are the major compounds present in grapes and wines responsible for cardioprotection.

The review provides evidence that grapes and wines as well as resveratrol are equally important in reducing the risk of morbidity and mortality due to cardiovascular complications. Both wines and grapes can attenuate cardiac diseases such as atherosclerosis and ischemic heart disease. It appears that resveratrol and proanthocyanidins, especially resveratrol, present in grapes and wines play a crucial role in cardio-protective abilities of grapes and wines.

Source: *Grapes, Wines, Resveratrol and Heart Health* Bertelli, Alberto A A MD, PhD.; Das, Dipak K PhD, ScD *J Cardiovasc Pharmacol.* 2009 Sep 18.

A second study from Boston University School of Medicine reports that 'Epidemiological studies suggest that consumption of wine, grape products, and other foods containing polyphenols is associated with decreased risk for cardiovascular disease.

Experimental studies indicate that grape polyphenols could reduce atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) by a number of mechanisms, including inhibition of oxidation of 'bad' LDL cholesterol and other favorable effects on cellular redox state, improvement of endothelial (artery wall) function, lowering blood pressure, inhibition of platelet aggregation (stickiness or clotting), reducing inflammation, and activating novel proteins that prevent cell senescence, such as Sirtuin 1.

Translational studies in humans support these beneficial effects. More clinical studies are needed to confirm these effects and formulate dietary guidelines. The available data, however, strongly support the recommendation that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, including grapes, can decrease the risk for cardiovascular disease.

Source: *Grapes and Cardiovascular Disease*. Mustali M. Dohadwala and Joseph A. Vita. *Journal of Nutrition*, Vol. 139, No. 9, 1788S-1793S, September 2009

Alcohol disrupts body clock, sleep, study demonstrates

Recent research on hamsters suggests that too much alcohol affects the circadian rhythm, a 24 hour cycle controlled by a part of the brain that synchronises waking and sleeping with day light. Some people who drink may not respond to important light cues – such as the rising sun – to remain synchronised with their natural sleep and wake cycle.

A study by Dr Christina Ruby and colleagues at Kent State University, Ohio, exposed three groups of hamsters to bright and dim lights. The water the hamsters were given to drink was either pure or mixed with 10% alcohol or 20% alcohol.

The researchers conclude that chronic drinking may affect people's activity patterns, making drinkers less active at times of the day when they should be active and more active when they should not be, such as late at night.

The study appears in the September 2009 issue of the *American Journal of Physiology – Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology*.

Obituary: Dr Alfred A. de Lorimier



Alfred A. de Lorimier, M.D., Emeritus Professor of Surgery at the University of California San Francisco, and long serving valued member of AIM's Social, Scientific and Medical Council died at home of lung cancer on October 4, 2009.

He grew up in San Francisco, graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, and then earned his Medical degree at University College San Francisco. During his general surgical training at UCSF he recognized the need for substantial improvement in the care of infants and children. Dr. de Lorimier went to Ohio State University for two additional years of training in the nascent specialty of pediatric surgery. He returned to UCSF where he was appointed to the surgical faculty, and where he established the Department of Pediatric Surgery.

He was elected Secretary and then Chairman of the Surgical Section of the American Academy of Pediatrics from 1977-1983. Dr. de Lorimier served on the American Board of Surgery from 1983 to 1990. In 1972 he and a like-minded group of other young surgeons founded the American Pediatric Surgical Association, of which he served as president

in 1992, and as Associate Editor of its Journal of Pediatric Surgery. Dr. de Lorimier and his colleagues pioneered numerous advances in the treatment of developmental abnormalities and tumors in infants and children. Dr. de Lorimier most enjoyed the privilege of being able to help thousands of infants and children under his care. His bibliography consists of over 130 publications and 26 book chapters covering a wide range of medical topics he had encountered over the years in caring for his patients.

With his wife Sandy, Dr. de Lorimier developed a parallel career as a grape grower in Sonoma County in the early 1970's. In 1985 they established the de Lorimier Winery and operated it until its sale in 2005, AI was therefore instrumental in the California Chapter of 'Medical Friends of Wine' and advocated a Mediterranean diet and lifestyle of which moderate drinking formed an integral part. Dr. de Lorimier was concerned about the status of the health care profession in the US, particularly as reflected in a decline in applications for medical school and in the training of primary care physicians. Oftentimes he was asked whether anyone should pursue a career in medicine today. He was emphatic that few in any other field of endeavor can beat what physicians can do by advancing achievements in science and applying that knowledge to the art and craft of medicine in the care of their patients. Dr. de Lorimier was also concerned with diminishing government support of education and research. To that end he established the Alfred A. de Lorimier, M.D. Endowed Chair of General Surgery at UCSF to help support surgeon teachers and investigators in their work.

Details of the Alfred A. de Lorimier Endowed Chair can be found via www.aadelmemorial.info A gathering in Dr. de Lorimier's memory will be held in the near future.

AIM – Alcohol in Moderation was founded in 1991 as an independent organisation whose role is to communicate 'The Sensible Drinking Message' and to act as a conduit for information from the industry, its associations and relevant medical and scientific researchers, legislation, policy and campaigns.

AIM Mission Statement

- To work internationally to disseminate accurate social, scientific and medical research concerning responsible and moderate drinking
- To strive to ensure that alcohol is consumed responsibly and in moderation
- To encourage informed and balanced debate on alcohol, health and social issues
- To communicate and publicise relevant medical and scientific research in a clear and concise format, contributed to by AIM's Council of 20 Professors and Specialists
- To publish information via www.alcoholinmoderation.com on moderate drinking and health, social and policy issues – comprehensively indexed and fully searchable without charge
- To educate consumers on responsible drinking and related health issues via www.drinkingandyou.com and publications, based on national government guidelines enabling consumers to make informed choices regarding drinking
- To inform and educate those working in the beverage alcohol industry regarding the responsible production, marketing, sale and promotion of alcohol
- To distribute AIM Digest Online without charge to policy makers, legislators and researchers involved in alcohol issues
- To direct enquiries towards full, peer reviewed or referenced sources of information and statistics where possible
- To work with organisations, charities, companies and associations to create programmes, materials and policies built around the responsible consumption of alcohol.

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OECD survey compares child well being through out the world

An international survey by the think-tank The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), compares policy-focussed measures of child well-being in six dimensions, chosen to cover the major aspects of children's lives: material well-being; housing and environment; education; health and safety; risk behaviours; and quality of school life.

The detailed investigation into the well-being of children around the world found that 33% of all 13- and 15-year-olds in the UK had got drunk at least twice. This is the highest drunkenness rate of any of the industrialised countries in the study. By contrast, 12% of young American teenagers reported having been drunk twice in the data taken from schools in 2005-06.

The survey of 30 countries found that Britain has the fourth highest proportion of 15- to 19 year-olds who are not in work, education or training. Only Turkey, Mexico and Italy had more. Britain also has the fourth largest number of teenage mothers and among the highest numbers of single-parent families.

An OECD spokesman said: "The report concludes that the United Kingdom should spend more on younger, disadvantaged children".

Dawn Primarolo, the Children's Minister, said: "It is disappointing to see the UK rated so low for risky behaviours." But she added: "We have introduced a number of initiatives to help teenagers and their families make informed decisions about their behaviour, including the plans to introduce statutory Personal, Sexual and Health Education (PSHE) lessons to equip young people with the knowledge, understanding and practical skills to live healthy, safe, fulfilled and responsible lives... Recent statistics have shown encouraging decreases in teenage conceptions during the first half of 2008, that fewer teenagers than ever before are choosing to drink alcohol and we know that drug use among young people is falling... We are also launching a social marketing campaign and guidance for parents, children and young people early next year to tackle harmful drinking in children and young people."

The report is available from http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3343,en_2649_34819_43545036_1_1_1,00.html

c. Percentage of 13- and 15-years-old children who have been drunk at least twice, 2005/06, breakdown by age and sex

	13-years-old		15-years-old			13-years-old		15-years-old	
	Males	Females	Males	Females		Males	Females	Males	Females
Austria	10	6	41	36	Luxembourg	6	5	27	20
Belgium	9	6	32	22	Netherlands	6	5	30	21
Canada	11	13	35	36	Norway	3	3	25	32
Czech Republic	13	10	36	30	Poland	13	8	42	27
Denmark	15	9	59	56	Portugal	8	7	25	18
Finland	11	11	47	44	Slovak Republic	16	12	39	31
France	5	6	29	18	Spain	5	7	29	33
Germany	7	6	31	28	Sweden	4	4	26	26
Greece	7	4	21	17	Switzerland	6	4	29	18
Hungary	12	9	40	32	United Kingdom	21	20	44	50
Iceland	5	4	31	32	United States	5	5	20	20
Ireland	10	7	36	31					
					OECD24	9	7	33	29

Students knowledge of UK's excessive drinking guidelines

A survey carried out by Dr Richard Cooke from Aston University and Dr Falko Sniehotta from the University of Aberdeen sought to establish whether students were familiar with the UK government alcohol guidelines and whether these guidelines would class them as binge drinkers.

Government guidelines state eight units for men (64g in one session) and six for women (48g or more) in one sitting amounts to binge drinking.

325 students completed a questionnaire that tested their understanding of government guidelines on drinking thresholds. The results showed that the students overestimated what constituted binge drinking. The students estimated 12 units for men and nine for women. 59% of the participants did not consider themselves binge drinkers.

Dr Cooke said: "The government has invested in several campaigns to help young people 'know their limits' and keep to safe levels of drinking... However, the results of this study suggest that the messages are not being received accurately".

The findings were presented at the British Psychological Society's Division of Health Psychology annual conference in Birmingham in September.

UK on line alcohol advertising are 99% compliant

The third annual study by the Advertising Standards Authority's on online alcohol advertising compliance has found that advertisers are adhering to marketing restrictions designed to protect under-18s, countering a critical report by the British Medical Association into alcohol advertising and young people.

In its latest compliance study, the ASA noted that year-on-year the number of online ads reviewed during the study period doubled to 81. This made online the second most popular category for alcohol ads, behind press advertising. However, none of the online ads were found to be in breach of the advertising code.

Overall, the ASA surveyed 456 alcohol ads across all types of media, from TV commercials to radio, poster and online ads, in December last year. The survey found that only five alcohol ads – 1% of the total – breached regulations. None of the ads that were identified as breaking the ad code involved RTD's. "The UK has some of the strictest rules covering the content of alcohol ads of any country," commented Guy Parker, the chief executive of the ASA. "We will continue to work hard to ensure that alcohol is advertised responsibly."

The ASA has run its own compliance survey into alcohol advertising annually since a self-regulatory code was introduced in 2005.

Portman Group Campaign to raise awareness of code

Adverts in the UK national press in September raised awareness of the Portman Group's Code and independent complaints process. The Code which sets minimum, mandatory standards for all alcohol naming, packaging, brand websites, sponsorships and sampling. One of the rules is that companies should only show people drinking in their marketing if they are and look at least 25 years old, and it is this rule that is the theme of the advertising campaign.

A series of full page ads in the Daily newspapers publicised the rules and urged complaints about potential Code breaches.

David Poley, Portman Group Chief Executive, said: "We have chosen to promote the 25 year-old rule because it is one of the lesser known restrictions. It applies to any marketing activity carried out in the UK by a drinks company. The industry has set itself

extremely high standards across all its marketing. Now, we want to ensure consumers know the rules and how to complain."



Two-thirds of a pint measure to be introduced and deregulation of wine measures under 75ml in the UK

Science and Innovation Minister, Lord Drayson, has announced plans for a new imperial glass size, measuring two thirds of a pint, to be introduced in pubs and clubs under proposals to change prescribed quantities of alcohol.

The plans, to become law "at the first available opportunity", were unveiled in a government response to the National Measurement Office's consultation on specified quantities. It also includes proposals to:

- Deregulate wine servings of less than 75ml, allowing for more flexibility at wine sampling and tasting sessions
- Replace the existing specified quantities for fortified wines with smaller sizes of 50ml and 70ml, bringing the law into line with current trade practice
- Bring the sale of brandy into line with other spirits by requiring its sale in specified quantities of 25ml and 35ml.

Lord Drayson said: "There is no question of replacing the British pint, but introducing the option of a new imperial measure is good news for consumers, providing them with more choice... and the majority of respondents to the consultation supported our view that the two-thirds of a pint measure will also offer greater flexibility for landlords, while not imposing any extra burden on them."

Jeremy Beadles, Chief Executive of the WSTA said "Deregulating wine measures below 75ml is a welcome move that the WSTA and our members have long been arguing for. This flexibility will give consumers the chance to sample small measures of the huge variety of wines out there, letting them broaden their knowledge and taste everything from the finest and rarest to the most innovative and experimental."



Alcohol Concern
Making Sense of Alcohol

Future Proof? How does the UK become a social drinker?

Wednesday 4 November 2009, London

Confirmed speakers include: Prof Martin Plant, Prof Mark Bellis, Norman Lamb MP, Anne Milton MP, Julia Unwin (Joseph Rowntree Foundation).

For further details visit http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/files/20090608_172237_Annual%20conference%20flyer%202009.pdf



Wine Information Council

in association with Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins (CEEV)

Cultural differences and the role of education: How do they affect drinking behaviours in Europe?

and what does it mean for EU alcohol policy?

Friday 23 October 2009

Résidence Palace – Salle Polak

Rue de la Loi 155 – Brussels

For more information, visit <http://www.wineinformationcouncil.eu/images/stories/invitation/wic-scientificconference-23102009.pdf>

Ireland lowers BAC drink drive levels

Irish Transport Minister Noel Dempsey confirmed on the 12th October that the Government is to press ahead with the bill which will lower the current drink-driving limit. The proposed legislation will also include provisions for preliminary impairment testing to allow gardaí to form an opinion that a motorist is intoxicated due to drugs.

Mr Dempsey said he hoped the new Road Traffic Bill, which is in its final stages, will be published before the end of the month.

It will reduce the current limit of 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood to 50mg. A lower limit of 20mg will apply to learner, novice and professional drivers.

Scotland – Alcohol Awareness week

Scotland’s third Alcohol Awareness Week (AAW) took place from the 4th-10th October 2009, and included a joint programme of events designed to provide useful information to the public about responsible drinking.

The aim of the campaign was to drive awareness amongst Scots – and demonstrate – that by making positive lifestyle choices, changing drinking habits and drinking more responsibly will enable you to get more out of your day, week or weekend.

This year AAW was all about ‘Get More Out Of’. The campaign aimed to show that by making a few simple changes to your drinking habits, you can manage the amount of alcohol you consume and make sure you get more out of your time, relationships, work and activities. The campaign reinforced the message that it’s also important to understand how much you’re drinking, and how that compares to the sensible drinking guidelines

For more information, visit <http://www.alcoholawarenessweek.com>



Survey reveals falling levels of alcohol consumption in Scotland

The Scottish Health Survey 2008 reveals that the the proportion of men drinking over the weekly recommended limit declined from 34% in 2003 to 30% in 2008. The equivalent figures for women were 23% and 20%, respectively.

Among women, levels of weekly consumption were associated with a number of socio-demographic factors, such as socio-economic classification, household income and area deprivation. Levels of consumption were highest among women in managerial and professional households, in the highest income quintile and among those living in the least deprived areas.

To view the report, visit <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/09/28102003/0>

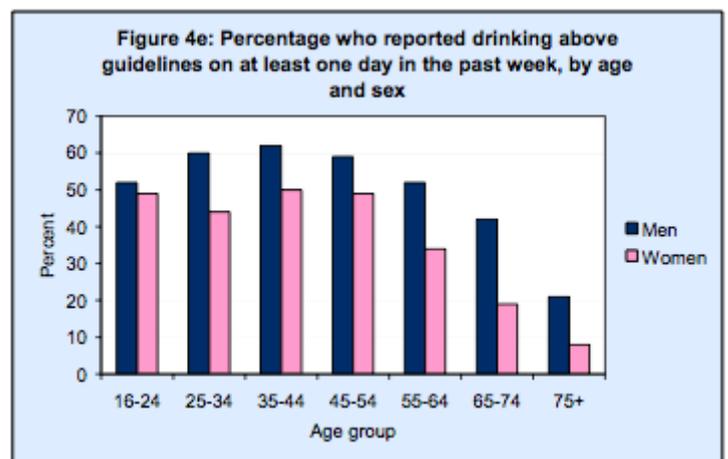
Scottish doctors asked to question patients about drinking habits

Over 26,000 people living in Scotland have been asked by medical staff to consider changing their drinking habits as part of a new target for health boards.

Health personnel in accident and emergency units, ante-natal clinics and GP practices are being encouraged to talk with their patients about reducing their alcohol intake in an attempt to lower the risks to their health. In 2008-2009 the number of alcohol brief interventions that took place reached 26,499. Each health board will be given a specific target, which it will be expected to hit by 2010-2011.

Welsh Health Survey 2008

The latest in the series of annual reports providing key findings from the Welsh Health Survey has been published. The survey is a major source of information about the health of people living in Wales. The survey was established in 2003 and runs all year round. It is designed to be nationally representative of people of different ages, sex and geographic area. This report focuses on the findings for 2008 and shows some comparisons with earlier years.



European Night without Accident

The 7th annual European Night Without Accident will take place on Saturday 17th of October in more than 200 nightclubs in 27 countries across the EU.

In each nightclub, volunteers encourage people entering the nightclub to choose a 'designated driver' from their group, who agrees to remain sober for the evening. The volunteers ask them to wear a bracelet to be recognisable.

When the 'designated drivers' leave the nightclub, they can undergo a voluntary breath analysis to check if they have honoured their commitment. If under the drink drive limit, they are rewarded with small presents offered by partners and sponsors. If they are over the drink drive limit, the volunteers makes the driver to leave his/her car, to hand the keys to a friend who did not drink any alcohol, or to find a different solution to travelling home safely.

Participating countries include Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Portugal, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Malta, Cyprus, Italy, Czech Republic, Hungary, Finland, Bulgaria and Slovakia.



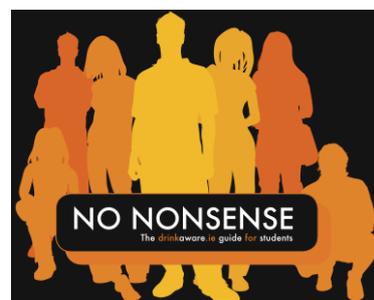
Ireland - responsible drinking message with a difference for students

In September, Drinkaware.ie offered students a responsible drinking message with a difference. 'No Nonsense', is a guide giving students all of the information that proves being drinkaware isn't at odds with having a vibrant student social life.

"drinkaware.ie has taken a new approach to the student responsible drinking message with the 'No Nonsense' online guide... Full of hints and tips, the online guide is designed to give students all the information they need to make their night out a better one. I would encourage students starting back in college to pick up the guide and take five minutes to check it out for themselves" said Fionnuala Sheehan, drinkaware.ie CEO.

The guide which is available throughout colleges and online at drinkaware.ie has been produced in collaboration with the Union of Students in Ireland. Copies have also been sent to Student Union offices nationwide. The guide is part of the drinkaware.ie student campaign which is being rolled out over the 2009/ 2010 academic year.

For more information, visit <http://www.drinkaware.ie>



Binge drinking teenagers heed surgeons' warnings

Saving Faces has been working on a novel binge drinking prevention intervention for teenagers. They studied 13 and 14 year old pupils in 70 English schools. The results showed that more than half of those who had tried alcoholic drinks had binged and these 13 and 14 year olds had suffered harms when drunk such as getting in fights, having to go to hospital with alcohol related problems and having sex they later regretted. Saving Faces sent Oral and Facial surgeons into half of these schools to talk to these pupils showing them a series of increasingly

graphic pictures of patients with horrific alcohol related facial injuries.

Two years later, those who remembered the talk were very much more aware of the consequences of binge drinking than their counterparts in the 35 control schools, who had not received the talks. They were less likely to get drunk and had suffered fewer alcohol related harms. They also drank less frequently and had reduced their consumption by 15%. Further research is needed to establish how the surgeons' stark, but effective message can be delivered to larger audiences.

Report suggests that Swedish alcohol policy fails to lower abusive drinking

The restrictive Swedish alcohol policy with high prices and taxes for alcohol has failed to meet the objective of reducing both overall alcohol consumption or excessive drinking patterns, a new report has illustrated.

According to the report conducted by the Swedish Retail Institute (HUI), the current restrictive Swedish alcohol policy has resulted in numerous shortcomings and among the key findings are:

- As an instrument for keeping alcohol consumption low, the trends over the last 15 years show that it has not succeeded.
- Today's situation is far from the objectives that the Swedish alcohol policy is aiming to achieve
- Huge quantities of imported alcohol are resold illegally to avoid duty.
- This, in combination with the fact that the availability of alcohol to young people is greater than

ever before and criminal organisations have gained a hold on alcohol distribution makes the situation untenable.

Commenting on the publication of the report in Brussels, The Brewers of Europe Secretary General Rodolphe de Looz-Corswarem concluded, "The significant increase in overall alcohol consumption in Sweden over the last 15 years, i.e. up 30%, has not led to the same extent to negative health effects as claimed by proponents of the 'lower consumption equals lower-risk theory.' This demonstrates that lowering overall consumption as a means to reducing total alcohol related harm is not a sustainable strategy, harm reduction strategies must be carefully targeted."

To access the HUI study, visit http://www.brewersofeurope.org/asp/news_events/detailed_news.asp?id=52

'Alcohol Dialogue' programme in Denmark



Due to launch in Denmark in mid October, 'Alcohol Dialogue' is an educational toolkit, offering research-based knowledge and targeted the oldest class in primary schools and in and secondary schools. The material contains a large number of exercises that enable students to increase their awareness about alcohol and to explore their attitude and behaviour towards it.

Alcohol Dialogue is based on a dialogue based approach to teaching that is conceived as part of a larger effort that also includes parents and the preparation of a alcohol policy at the school.

For more details, visit <http://alkoholdialog.dk>

'Progress Report on the Implementation of the EU Alcohol Strategy'

The first progress report on the implementation of the EU Alcohol Strategy that was adopted by the European Commission in October 2006 has been published.

The strategy was created in response to the growing recognition of the health impact of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption in the EU. The European Commission compiled the report with input from across the EU, and they conducted two surveys of alcohol policy in Member States.

The report comprises national updates from the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action, an examination of the outputs from the Alcohol and Health Forum and an analysis of the outputs from the Public Health Programme.

To view the report, visit http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/alcohol/documents/alcohol_progress.pdf



Drink driving in Holland falls steadily

In Holland, a study commissioned by the Ministry of Transport and Works Bureau and the Public Ministry for Traffic shows a gradual lowering of drink drive figures. The study was based on 64 alcohol controls over Holland's 25 police regions. The study took place on one weekend (Friday and Saturday night between 22.00 and 4.00 hours) in 2008. 26,377 drivers were tested.

Consistent with previous years, the percentage of offenders was higher late on Friday night and Saturday night (between 2.00 and 4.00 hours). The region with the highest percentage of offenders was western Netherlands (3.5%) in comparison to the northern and eastern Netherlands (1.7%). In 2008 the number of drivers with BAC in their blood continued to decline. 93.2% of driver registered a reading of less than 0.2 per thousand, compared 90.2% in 2000.

Novice drivers

Since January 2006, the alcohol limit for novice drivers has been set at 0.2 per thousand. A novice driver is anyone who has held a driving license for less than

5 years. 4.8% novice drivers exceeded the limit of 0.2 per thousand (down from 5.3% in 2007). On Friday night this rose to 11.3%. Particularly striking is the fact that novice drivers 25 years and older were more likely to be over the limit (7.7%) than novice drivers under 25 (4.2%). Since October 1, 2008 the 'Light Alcohol Educational Measure' has been introduced which is a compulsory course of two sessions for novice drivers found to have a BAC between 0.5 and 0.8. The costs are borne by the students.

Experienced drivers

Experienced drivers are in violation with a limit of 0.5 parts per thousand and in this category, there was a decline from 3.2% to 2.9%. Within this group, the proportion of those between 0.2 and 0.8 ‰ has decreased by 0.4% since 2007.

Heavy drinkers

The proportion of heavy drinkers was virtually identical: 0.4 percent. The percentage of heavy drinkers has remained at the same level for many years. For more information, visit on www.alcoholcode.nl

Italy - Campaign aimed at young drink drivers

The Italian Government ran an advertising campaign over the summer aimed at young males who drive after drinking heavily. The highest mortality rate in road accidents is recorded mainly during the summer months at weekends and during the hours around 5am.

The campaign uses the deformed image of the face of a girl in order to simulate the distorted perception of a driver who has been drinking heavily. Campaign materials were placed on banners of websites visited by young people and (poster were displayed in major nightclubs around the country.



WHO global health risks update

The recently published WHO global health risks update report identifies the global and regional mortality and disease burden associated with 24 health risks.

In the editorial Gretchen Stevens, Maya Mascarenhas and Colin Mathers point out that: "These risk factors range from environmental risks such as exposure to smoke from indoor solid fuel use, to metabolic risks such as high blood pressure. The report finds that five leading risk factors (childhood underweight, unsafe sex, alcohol use, unsafe water and sanitation, and high blood pressure) are responsible for one-quarter of all deaths in the world and one-fifth of all disability-adjusted life years (DALYs). Success in reducing exposure to these five risk factors alone would increase global life expectancy by nearly 5 years."

The editorial goes on to outline that the report describes the changing risk profiles of developing countries and discusses the challenges related to assessing risks.

For more details, visit <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/87/9/09-070565/en/index.html>

Driving after binge drinking more common than believed in US

Dr. Timothy Naimi, an epidemiologist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention alcohol programme, evaluated data from more than 14,000 adults in 13 states in 2003 and 14 states in 2004, who reported binge drinking as part of the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System survey. Binge drinking was defined as having five or more drinks during an occasion, such as an evening out or at a party.

Overall, 11.9% of the binge drinkers drove within two hours of their binge drinking, Naimi found. 50% of the binge drinkers were aged 25 to 44. And 54.3% were often coming from bars, clubs and restaurants. 23% had been drinking at someone else's home. Significant independent risk factors for driving after binge drinking included male gender (AOR = 1.75); being aged 35-54 or > or = 55 years compared to 18-34 years (AOR = 1.58 and 2.37, respectively); and drinking in bars or clubs compared to drinking in the respondent's home (AOR = 7.81). Drivers who drank most of their alcohol in licensed establishments consumed an average of 8.1 drinks, and 25.7% of them consumed > or = 10 drinks.

The study concludes that because binge drinking and subsequent driving were common in establishments licensed to sell alcohol, and because licensing is conditional on responsible beverage service practices (i.e., not selling to intoxicated people), efforts to prevent impaired driving should focus on enforcing responsible beverage service in licensed establishments.

Source: *Driving after binge drinking*. Naimi Timothy S; Nelson David E; Brewer Robert D. *American journal of preventive medicine* 2009;37(4):314-20.

New York mandatory tests cut alcohol-related truck crashes

The risk of alcohol-associated crashes involving truck drivers has declined by 23% since the US implemented mandatory alcohol testing for commercial truck drivers, researchers estimate in 1995.

According to Dr. Guohua Li, of Columbia University in New York City the prevalence of alcohol-related fatal crashes among truck drivers is now comparable to that of commercial pilots in fatal airplane crashes. In Canada and Mexico, where commercial drivers are not subject to mandatory alcohol testing, fatal crashes involving commercial drivers appear "much more likely to involve alcohol," Li said.

Li's team used 1982 to 2006 Fatality Analysis Reporting System data to assess alcohol-related crashes involving drivers in commercial motor vehicles before and after the January 1, 1995 implementation of mandatory alcohol testing for such drivers. Of the 69,295 motor carrier drivers involved in crashes during the study period, most survived their crash, and most were men, 25 to 64 years old, with no history of driving while under the influence of alcohol.

In addition to other regulatory changes taking place during the study period, mandatory alcohol testing accounted for 24% fewer daytime fatal truck crashes and 26% fewer nighttime fatal truck crashes, after allowing for other factors associated with motor vehicle crashes such region of the country and road and weather conditions.

These findings, the researchers conclude, provide "compelling evidence" of the efficacy of mandatory alcohol testing for commercial motor carrier drivers.

Source: *American Journal of Epidemiology*, September 15, 2009

Toyota developing anti-drunk driving gadget

Toyota Motors has announced that it is developing anti-drunk driving equipment that will lock the ignition of a vehicle if high levels of alcohol are detected in the driver.

The system features a hand-held breathalyser, equipped with a digital camera, that detects alcohol consumption and photographs the driver's face for identification.

If the driver tests positive, the system either warns him or her, or locks the vehicle's ignition depending

on the level of alcohol detected.

Toyota is conducting tests with affiliate truck maker Hino Motors, and will install the equipment in selected trucks and other vehicles of fleet customers that include companies and government organisations. The device will alert fleet administrators if the driver is detected with excessive alcohol levels.

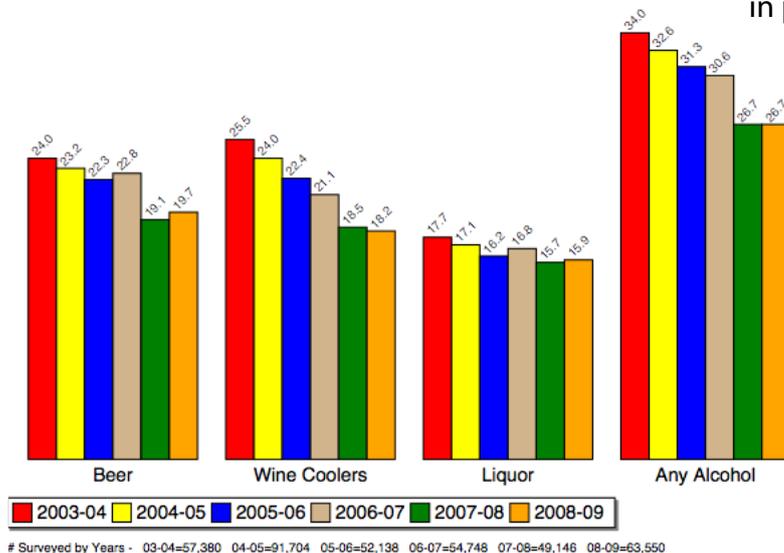
Nissan Motor is currently developing similar equipment.

Pride survey shows significant decline in underage drinking

Similar to other national surveys that track underage drinking, the 2008-09 Pride survey shows significant decreases in drinking among America's youth.

The annual survey of students in grades 6 to 12 released this month reported one-, five-, and ten-year declines in alcohol consumption among middle school students. Most notable is the significant decline in past year alcohol consumption among students in grades 6 to 8. Nearly one in four middle school students (27%) reported consuming alcohol in the past year during the 2008-09 school year, a 22% decrease over the past six years from 34%. Additionally, 65% of middle school students reported that their parents talked to them about the "problems of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use" in the past year.

The Pride survey is available from <http://www.pridesurveys.com/newsletters/archive/091409.htm>



The Centre for Responsible drinking launched in Canada

The Centre for Responsible Drinking was officially in October by Ian Faris, President & CEO of the Brewers Association of Canada (BAC).

The Centre for Responsible Drinking is a national source of information on alcohol-related matters such as drinking and driving, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), alcohol and youth, alcohol and health and alcohol misuse in Canada. It is an educational organisation and online repository for alcohol information, research, resources and commentary from industry, academic and public policy experts.

With the help of its initial partners — The Foundation for Alcohol Research, the Brewers

Association of Canada, the Canadian Foundation on Fetal Alcohol Research (CFFAR), the Center for Education and Research in Safety, the Student Life Education Company and the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) — the Centre offers innovative initiatives and approaches to educate Canadians from all walks of life about the implications of alcohol consumption.

The Centre for Responsible Drinking is committed to leading the discussion with respect to alcohol use. The Centre's website will regularly feature programs and research put forward by partner organizations. Finally, in order to foster conversation about alcohol use, the Centre will also host twice yearly symposia.

Ian Faris commented "While a number of different groups are individually doing tremendous work to advance research into alcohol consumption, to prevent alcohol abuse and to inform the public of the impact of its choices with regards to alcohol, the Centre aims to provide Canadians with an online resource enabling them to access information about all aspects of alcohol consumption."

The Centre's website is available at www.responsibledrinking.ca



NSDUH 2008 survey results released

The US National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) 2008 describes trends and patterns of alcohol use among the population aged 12 or older and is particularly concerned with the use of alcohol by persons aged 12 to 20 who are under the legal drinking age in all 50 States and the District of Columbia.

The report shows that the figures for Americans who are current drinkers (51.6% of the adult population) and heavy drinkers (6.9%) has remained constant when compared to the 2007 survey. However, In 2008, rates of current alcohol use amongst younger drinkers showed significant declines from 2007. The rate of current alcohol use among youths aged 12 to 17 was 14.6% in 2008, down from 15.9% 2007 and youth binge drinking rates were 8.8% in 2008 down from 9.7% 2007. Heavy alcohol use in the last 30 days amongst adults enrolled in full time college, aged 18 to 22 has also decreased to 16.3%, from 19.5% in 2006

To view the report, visit <http://oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh/2k8nsduh/2k8Results.cfm#Ch3>

MADD to produce a line of alcohol free beverages

MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) has entered into an exclusive license agreement with Hill Street Marketing to produce a line of alcohol-free beverages, MADD Virgin Drinks, which aims to provide American consumers with an alternative to alcoholic beverages.

The company said that the MADD Virgin Drinks line currently includes three virgin cocktails (Mojito, Margarita and Pina Colada), a virgin Lager & Lime, virgin Red and White Wine, and a virgin Sparkling White Wine.

Laura Dean Mooney, national president of MADD, said: "We know many people want an alternative for their guests to help encourage safe, sober and savvy driving, as well as the great taste needed to make guests feel like they are part of the party but without the alcohol."

Brian Bolshin, president and CEO of Hill Street, said: "We're thrilled to partner with MADD to produce and distribute this line of Virgin Drinks, and proud to donate a significant portion of sales to MADD to support their current and ongoing efforts to reduce the incidence of impaired driving".

US 'We Don't Serve Teens' campaign

Dozens of national, state and local organizations are supporting the Federal Trade Commission's "We Don't Serve Teens" 2009 Fall campaign to help get the word out that serving alcohol to teens is unsafe, illegal and irresponsible.

"Research shows that not only are parents and other adults the primary influence over a teen's decision regarding drinking but they are also a primary source of alcohol for teens whether they know it or not," said DISCUS President Peter H. Cressy. "As the school year begins, this campaign provides an important reminder to parents and other adults that serving alcohol to teens is unsafe, illegal, and irresponsible."

The 'We Don't Serve Teens' education campaign is based on research showing that most teens who drink, obtain alcohol from social sources including sneaking alcohol from their parents' homes; having older friends buy it; or obtaining it at parties. The campaign website, www.dontserveteens.com, provides information about teen drinking, how to

reduce teens' access to alcohol, practical tips for parents on talking to teens about alcohol and camera ready campaign materials.

The 'We Don't Serve Teens' nationwide campaign has been supported by a diverse group of public and private partners, including America's leading distillers, federal, state, and local governments, advertising and media organizations, and consumer groups.

Since its inception, the 'We Don't Serve Teens' Back-to-School campaign has generated an unprecedented 1.1 billion advertising impressions with a market value of over \$9 million, and has been recognized by the U.S. Senate and officials from 40 states.



New Drinkwise website for parents in Australia

As part of its latest campaign, 'Kids and alcohol don't mix', DrinkWise has launched a fully interactive website at www.drinkwise.com.au, designed especially to help parents access facts and expert advice about kids and drinking, as well as have their say about the issues.

Parents are invited to select their child's age and review a comprehensive list of common questions and discussion points, related to the child's particular age group. From 'Parents-to-be' to 'Parents with teenagers'.

Parents have the option to vote on particular issues and the results are updated instantly to reveal the consensus from the active online parent community. They are also invited to register to become an active contributor and receive invitations to upcoming events. Highly respected and authoritative experts then provide professional advice on these issues and more.

Chris Watters, CEO of DrinkWise Australia, said the website was developed in direct response to research which showed that 51% of parents indicated they had insufficient tools, knowledge and support to delay the age at which their child first started drinking alcohol.

The campaign is a continuation of the generational change journey that DrinkWise commenced last year with its successful 'Kids absorb your drinking' campaign which informed parents that children form their attitudes toward drinking from a young age.



Australia - Alcohol-caused death rates decline but hospitalisations continue to rise

New research from the National Drug Research Institute (NDRI) found that the death rate due to alcohol has declined in most regions in Australia, but the number of recorded hospitalisations from alcohol-caused injury and disease has risen substantially in every state and territory. The major cause of alcohol-attributable death was alcoholic liver cirrhosis and the leading cause of hospitalisations was alcohol dependence.

To read the full press release <http://db.ndri.curtin.edu.au/media.asp?mediarelid=92>

Online interventions reduce college drinking reduced by

College students who received Internet-based screening and brief interventions were less likely to drink alcohol, according to researchers from Australia and New Zealand.

For the study, more than 7,200 undergraduate students ages 17-24 were prescreened for alcohol use. Those classified as engaging in harmful or hazardous drinking were assigned to either a control group or to receive online motivational feedback therapy.

After one month, participants receiving intervention drank less often, smaller quantities per occasion and less alcohol overall than did controls, according to the researchers, who also noted that the effects for overall and per-occasion consumption persisted at a six-month followup. Differences in alcohol-related harms were not significant, however.

"Given the scale on which proactive Web-based electronic screening and brief intervention (e-SBI) can be delivered and its acceptability to student drinkers, we can be optimistic that a widespread application of this intervention would produce a benefit in this population group," the authors wrote, adding: "The e-SBI, a program that is available free for nonprofit purposes, could be extended to other settings, including high schools, general practices and hospitals."

Source: Randomized Controlled Trial of Proactive Web-Based Alcohol Screening and Brief Intervention for University Students. Kypros Kypri, et al. Arch Intern Med. 2009;169(16):1508-1514.

EUROPE

UK

Alcohol Concern

First Floor 8 Shelton Street, London WC2 9JR
www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

Alcohol Education And Research Council

Abell House, John Islip Street, London SW1P 4LH
www.aerc.org.uk/

BII - British Institute of Innkeeping

www.bii.org

The Medical Council on Alcohol

3 St. Andrew's Place, London, NW1 4LB
www.m-c-a.org.uk

The Portman Group

7-10 Chandos Street, Cavendish Square,
 London W1G 9DQ
www.portman-group.org.uk

The Drinkaware Trust

7-10 Chandos Street, Cavendish Square,
 London W1G 9DQ
www.drinkaware.co.uk

Alcohol Focus Scotland

2nd Floor 166 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2NH
www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

BBPA British Beer and Pub Association

Market Towers, 1, Nine Elms Lane, London. SW8 5NQ
www.beerandpub.com

Wine & Spirit Education Trust

International Wine & Spirit Centre
 39-45 Bermondsey Street
 London SE1 3XF
www.wset.co.uk

The Wine and Spirit Trade Association

International Wine & Spirit Centre
 39 - 45 Bermondsey Street
 London SE1 3XF
www.wsta.co.uk

US

American Council On Science And Health

1995 Broadway, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10023-5860
www.acsh.org

Beer Institute

122 C Street, NW #750,
 Washington DC 20001
www.beerstitute.org

California Association Of Winegrape Growers

601 University Avenue, Suite 135 Sacramento, CA 95825
www.cawg.org

Distilled Spirits Council Of The US

1250 Eye Street, NW, Suite 400,
 Washington DC 20005
www.discus.org

Family Winemakers of California

520 Capitol Mall, #260
 Sacramento, California 95814
www.wineamerica.org

ICAP

International Center for Alcohol Policies
 1519 New Hampshire Avenue, NW
 Washington DC 20036
www.icap.org

The Century Council

1310 G Street, NW, Suite 600,
 Washington, DC 20005-3000
www.centurycouncil.org

Lodi-Woodridge Winegrape Commission

2545 West Turner Road Lodi, CA 95242 USA
www.lodiwine.com

Brewers of Europe

Rue Caroly 23-25, B-1060 Bruxelles
 email: info@brewersofEurope.org
www.brewersofEurope.org

Deutsche Wein Akademie

GMBH Gutenbergplatz 3-5, 55116 Mainz
www.deutscheweinakademie.de

The European Federation Of Wine & Spirit Importers And Distributors (EFWSID)

Five Kings House
 1 Queen Street Place
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EFRD - The European Forum for Responsible Drinking

Rue Belliard, 12, bte 5, B-1040 Bruxelles
www.efrd.org
www.responsibledrinking.eu
www.marketresponsibly.eu

Enterprise et Prevention

13, Rue Monsigny, 75002 Paris, France
www.soifdevivre.com

FIVIN

Plaza Penedés, 3, 3,08720 Vilafranca del Penedés,
 Barcelona, Spain
www.fivin.org/

FIVS

International Federation of Wines & Spirits
 18, rue d'Aguesseau, F-75008 - PARIS France
 website: www.fivs.org

Forum of Taste and Education

Livornostraat 13 b 5 rue de Livourne – Brussel
 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium
 email: fbvs.bfwg@skynet.be

FORUM PSR

(Zodpovědní výrobci lihovin)

THE REST OF THE WORLD

Oldways Preservation & Exchange Trust

266 Beacon Street Boston, MA
www.oldwayspt.org

WineAmerica

The National Association of American Wineries
 1212 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 425
 Washington, DC 20005
www.wineamerica.org/

SOUTH AMERICA**Proyecto Ciencia Vino Y Salud**

Facultad de ciencias Biológicas,
 Casilla 114 D. Santiago, Chile
 email: vinsalud@genes.bio.puc.cl

Centro de Informacoes sobre Saude e Alcool (CISA)

Rua do Rocio 423/1208 - 04552-000 - Sao Paulo SP, Brazil
www.cisa.org.br

MEXICO**FISAC**

(Fundacion de Investigaciones Sociales A.C.)
 Francisco Sosa 230. Coyoacan CP 04000 Mexico DF
 -Mexico
www.alcoholinformate.org.mx

The Wine Institute

425 Market Street, Suite 1000, San Francisco, CA 94105, USA
www.wineinstitute.org/

CANADA**Centre for responsible drinking**

www.responsibledrinking.ca

Sněmovní 9

118 00 Prague 1, Czech Republic
www.forum-psr.c

Fundacion Alcohol Y Sociedad

C/ Argensola nº 2, 2º Izq.. 28004 Madrid
www.alcoholysociedad.org

GODA

Gode Alkoholdninger, Kanonbaadsvej 8, DK-1437 København K, Denmark
www.goda.dk

HAFRAC

Rétköv u.5. H- 1118 Budapest
www.alkoholtfelelosen-2340.hu

IREB

19, avenue Trudaine, 75009 Paris
www.ireb.com

MEAS

Merrion House
 1/3 Fitzwilliam Street Lower
 Dublin 2, Ireland
www.meas.ie
www.drinkaware.ie

OPGA

Osservatorio Permanente sui Giovani e l'Alcool
 Viale di Val Fiorita 90, 00144 Rome, Italy
www.alcol.net

OIV

18 rue d'Aguesseau, 75008 Paris, France
www.oiv.int

STIVA

Benoordenhoutseweg 22-23, NL-2596 BA,
 The Hague, The Netherlands
 website: www.stiva.nl

Scandinavian Medical Alcohol Board

Vandværksvej 11 DK - 5690 Tommerup
www.smabnordic.com

Éduc' Alcool

606, Cathcart, Suite 700, Montréal, Québec, H3B 1K9
www.educalcoool.qc.ca

Traffic Injury Research Foundation.

Suite 200, 171 Nepean Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K2P 0B4
www.trafficinjuryresearch.com

AUSTRALIA**The Australian Wine Research Institute**

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DrinkWise Australia

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www.drinkwise.com.au

NE ZEALAND**ALAC**

Level 13, ABN Amro House
 36 Customhouse Quay, PO Box 5023
 Wellington 6145
www.alcohol.org.nz/

AFRICA**Industry Association for Responsible Alcohol Use (ARA)**

PO Box 112, Bergvliet 7864, South Africa
www.ara.co.za/

Taiwan Beverage Alcohol Forum (TBAF)

11F, 285, Zhongxiao East Road, Section 4, Taipei 10692, Taiwan ROC
www.tbaf.org.tw