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Isle of Man

Rolling licences could be introduced as part of plans to modernise licensing laws on the Isle of Man. Under the proposals, licences would be renewed automatically each year as long as the businesses continue to meet industry standards. Currently, licensees must reapply every three years. The proposals, which have been put out for consultation, are part of the regulations attached to the Liquor Licensing and Public Entertainments Act 2021, which received Royal Assent in December last year.

India

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia announced on July 30th that the Delhi government's ambitious new liquor policy (Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22) will be scrapped entirely and that from August 1, only government owned liquor vendors will be allowed to sell alcohol in the national capital.

This development comes amidst the recently launched probe into the Delhi government's excise department by the Delhi Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW), due to alleged irregularities in its new liquor policy.

Romania

Romania's government has approved a series of fiscal measures including an increase of tobacco and alcohol excise duties as of August 1 and a 10% hike in VAT on sugary drinks as of January 1, 2023, aiming to boost public revenue.

The excise duty on tobacco and alcohol has been unchanged since 2015.

Malaysia

The Malaysian government has formally gazetted new restrictions on the labelling of zero alcohol beverages. All beverages that are dealcoholised, i.e. those which are produced with alcohol that is later removed, will not be permitted to use any of the standard non-alcoholic terms on the label in order to avoid 'confusing customers.'

Germany

A survey from TÜV Mobility has found that four out of five German citizens are in favour of a total ban on alcohol for those who are taking to the road.

The survey included 1,000 people aged 16. The TÜV Association also argues that the legal consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol in Germany are too mild. The organisation is calling for the existing use of medical/psychological examinations for those caught drink-driving to be extended to cases with a lower Blood Alcohol Concentration.

Sweden

The Swedish Transport Agency reports that the number of accidents associated with electric scooters has increased sharply in recent years and the majority of accidents involving e-scooters happen in the big cities and occur most often in the evenings, nights and weekends.

A survey by Insurance company Gjensidige has found that 20% of Swedes have used an electric scooter after drinking and 72% were concerned that there is no blood alcohol limit for electric scooters.



Dietary patterns and alcoholic beverage preference in relation to 10-year cardiovascular disease, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia and diabetes mellitus incidence

Literature highlights the need for adjustment for diet quality when the effect of alcohol consumption on health is investigated. The authors of a study published in the *Wine and Vine Open Access journal* sought to define—a-posterior—dietary patterns according to various drinking preferences as well as to evaluate their combined effect against 10-year cardio-metabolic incidence.

During 2001–2002, 3,042 CVD-free adults participated in the ATTICA study; of them, 2,583 completed the 10-year follow-up, but precise information about cardio-metabolic incidence was available in 2020 participants (overall retention rate 66%). Intake per type of alcoholic beverage was assessed and “a posterior” dietary patterns were defined.

Results showed that among participants not drinking alcoholic beverages, women adhering more to a healthier dietary pattern had 25% lower CVD risk within the 10-year study follow-up, while men adhering more to an unhealthy dietary pattern had almost two times higher CVD risk. Among beer drinkers, both men and women adhering more to a healthier dietary pattern were found to have at least 26 % lower risk of developing

hypertension and at least 15% lower risk of developing hypercholesterolemia, while men adhering more to a healthier dietary pattern were also found to have 29 % lower CVD risk. Similarly, among wine drinkers, women adhering more to a healthier dietary pattern were found to have a 16% and 52% lower risk of developing hypertension and diabetes mellitus, respectively, whereas men adhering more to a healthier dietary pattern had 22% lower CVD risk. Finally, among spirit drinkers, higher adherence to an unhealthy dietary pattern in both genders had an aggravating effect on cardio-metabolic risk.

The researchers state that the quality of dietary pattern stands out as a critical confounding factor in studies assessing the effect of alcohol consumption on cardio-metabolic risk. A Phytochemical-rich dietary pattern is suggested, particularly among drinkers, they say.

Source: , R., Tsiampalis, T., Kouvari, M., Chrysohoou, C., Georgousopoulou, E., Skoumas, J., Pitsavos, C. S., & Panagiotakos, D. B. (2022). Dietary patterns and alcoholic beverage preference in relation to 10-year cardiovascular disease, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia and diabetes mellitus incidence in the ATTICA cohort study. *OENO One*, 56(3), 121–135. doi.org/10.20870/oeno-one.2022.56.3.5457

Moderate beer consumption and metabolic health

The authors of a review published in the *Journal of Functional Foods* say that beer intake is part of our society lifestyle but still a controversial topic due to the lack of consensus regarding its effects on our health.

Regarding cardiovascular disease, research needs to consider the amount consumed but also drinking thresholds, frequency of drinking, age and gender of consumers, lifestyle, or non-alcoholic components of beers. Nevertheless, epidemiological evidence points to healthy effects of low or moderate beer consumption and even a protective action for cardiovascular risk and diabetes, discouraging heavy intakes without any exception. Beer components include alcohol and phenolics, both of which alter high- or low-density-lipoprotein levels and their oxidation status in blood.

The review focusses on the composition of beers, as the source of metabolites, including alcohol, phenols and melanoidins, which influence cardiovascular health. Many data demonstrate so far that low to moderate beer intake exerts a beneficial effect in terms of cardiovascular risk. The study provides a new understanding regarding the molecular profile involved in beer components healthy effects. Circulating lipids in blood may alter their levels or oxidation status, anticipating cardioprotective microenvironments. Further, populations of high-density or low-density lipoproteins may exert different functions in our cardiovascular health after beer intake, in order to diminish cardiovascular risk.

Source: Elena M. Grao-Cruces, Sergio Montserrat-de la Paz, Maria E. Martin, Moderate beer consumption and metabolic health: A comprehensive review from the lipoprotein perspective, *Journal of Functional Foods*, Volume 95, 2022, 105188, ISSN 1756-4646, doi.org/10.1016/j.jff.2022.105188.



Risk of differentiated thyroid cancer in the EPIC cohort

Dietary pattern analysis has gained particular interest because it reflects the complexity of dietary intake. A study explored the associations between a posteriori dietary patterns and the risk of differentiated thyroid cancer (TC) in Europe.

The investigation included 450,064 adults from the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) cohort. Dietary intake was assessed using validated country-specific dietary questionnaires.

After a mean follow-up time of 14 years, 712 first differentiated thyroid cancers were diagnosed. The results showed that a dietary pattern characterized by alcohol consumption (basically beer and wine) was negatively associated with differentiated thyroid cancer risk (HR=0.75), while a dietary pattern rich in sweetened beverages was positively associated with differentiated thyroid cancer risk (HR= 1.26). The remaining 8 dietary patterns were not related to differentiated thyroid cancer risk.

The intake of sweetened beverages was positively associated with differentiated thyroid cancer risk, especially with papillary thyroid cancer risk. Similar results were observed with sugary and artificially sweetened beverages.

The investigation of dietary patterns detected that the consumption of sweetened beverages was associated with a higher risk of differentiated thyroid cancer and alcohol consumption was negatively associated with differentiated thyroid cancer risk (ie was protective). The results are in line with the general dietary recommendations of reducing the consumption of sweetened beverages.

Source: Zamora-Ros, R., Cayssials, V., Clèries, R. et al. Sweetened beverages are associated with a higher risk of differentiated thyroid cancer in the EPIC cohort: a dietary pattern approach. *Eur J Nutr* (2022). doi.org/10.1007/s00394-022-02953-5

Protective effects of wine polyphenols on oxidative stress and hepatotoxicity

In recent years, it has been increasingly suggested that the consumption of natural polyphenols, in moderate amounts, is beneficial for health. A study investigated the efficacy of a red wine (the administered dose of 7 mL/kg/day being equivalent to ~16.5 mg/kg/day total polyphenols) compared to a white wine (the administered dose of 7 mL/kg/day being equivalent to ~1.7 mg/kg/day total polyphenols), on the prevention of acrylamide-induced subacute hepatic injury and oxidative stress in Wistar rats.

Hepatic damage due to acrylamide intoxication was assessed by employing biochemical parameters (aspartate aminotransferase (AST) and alanine aminotransferase (ALT)) and by histopathological studies. Markers of oxidative damage were measured in terms of plasma malondialdehyde (MDA), hepatic Thiobarbituric Acid Reactive Substances (TBARS) and glutathione (GSH) levels, and liver antioxidant enzyme (superoxide dismutase (SOD), catalase (CAT) and glutathione peroxidase (GPx)) activities.

Regarding hepatic enzyme activities, treatment with red wine significantly decreased the AST

values, while for the ALT values only a normalization tendency was observed. Treatment with red wine and white wine, respectively, significantly prevented the increase in MDA and TBARS levels, as well as the depletion of GSH.

Red wine treatment normalized the activities of the antioxidant enzymes CAT and SOD in rats intoxicated with acrylamide, while supplementing the diet with white wine did not produce significant differences in the antioxidant enzyme activities. Histopathological findings revealed a moderate protective effect of red wine after four weeks of daily consumption.

The authors say that their findings provide evidence that red wine, having a higher phenolic content than white wine, has a significant protective effect on oxidative stress and liver injury induced by acrylamide in rats, through its antioxidative activity.

Source: Banc R, Popa DS, Cozma-Petruț A, Filip L, Kiss B, Fărcaș A, Nagy A, Miere D, Loghin F. Protective Effects of Wine Polyphenols on Oxidative Stress and Hepatotoxicity Induced by Acrylamide in Rats. *Antioxidants* (Basel). 2022 Jul 10;11(7):1347. doi.org/10.3390/antiox11071347.



Alcohol and tobacco use and risk of multiple myeloma

Multiple myeloma (MM) is the second most common hematological cancer and causes significant mortality and morbidity. Knowledge regarding modifiable risk factors for MM remains limited. An analysis of an Australian population-based case-control family study investigated whether smoking or alcohol consumption is associated with risk of MM and related diseases. 789 Incident cases of MM were recruited via cancer registries in Victoria and New South Wales. 1,113 Controls were either family members of cases or controls recruited for a similarly designed study of renal cancers.

Intake of 20g ethanol/day or more of alcohol had a lower risk of MM compared with nondrinkers

(OR = 0.68, 95% CI: 0.50-0.93), and there was an inverse (protective) dose-response relationship for average daily alcohol intake (OR per 10 g ethanol per day = 0.92, 95% CI: 0.86-0.99); The risk was the same for males and females and there was no evidence of an association with MM risk for smoking-related exposures

The authors state that the associations between smoking and alcohol with MM are similar to those with non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Source: Further research into potential underlying mechanisms is warranted. Source: Cheah S; Bas-sett JK; Bruinsma FJ; Cozen W; Hopper JL; Jayasekara H; Joshua D; et al, "Alcohol and tobacco use and risk of multiple myeloma: a case-control study", *eJHaem*, Vol 3, No 1, 2022, pp109-120 doi.org/10.1002/jha2.337

Antioxidant and cytotoxic activity of red wine

The beneficial effect of moderate wine consumption is attributed to its micronutrients, especially polyphenols and largely depends on the digestion process. A study aimed to examine the influence of in vitro simulated digestion in the presence of complex food matrix on antioxidant and cytotoxic activity of red wine.

The results showed that total phenolic content of wine sample after in vitro digestion was higher compared to undigested wine, while the antioxidant activity of these samples was similar before and after digestion. Furthermore digested

wine showed cytotoxic activity on SKBR3 breast adenocarcinoma cells near 20% after 72h of treatment. This pioneering study that examined biological potential of in vitro digested wine in the presence of complex food matrix indicate that antioxidant and cytotoxic activity of red wine is preserved after digestion.

Source: Đorđević NO, Stanisavljević N, Todorović Vukotić N, Novović K, Žakula JJ, Stanković D, Pajo-vić SB. Antioxidant and cytotoxic activity of red wine after in vitro simulated digestion in the presence of complex food matrix. *Nat Prod Res*. 2022 Jul 6:1-6. doi.org/10.1080/14786419.2022.2095380.

Alcohol consumption and long-term mortality in men with or without a history of myocardial infarction

The evidence for the impact of alcohol consumption on long-term mortality among myocardial infarction (MI) survivors is limited. A team of researchers in Japan examined whether alcohol consumption was associated with cause-specific and all-cause mortality in men with or without a history of MI.

A total of 32,004 men aged 40-79 years with no history of MI and 1,137 male MI survivors, free of stroke and cancer, were followed through the end of 2009. Alcohol consumption was assessed using self-administered questionnaires at baseline and five years.

In MI survivors, consuming 23-45 g/day of alcohol was associated with a lower risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) mortality compared to never

drinkers: the multivariable hazard ratio was 0.36 (95% confidence interval: 0.16-0.80). In non-MI men, a 10-26% lower risk was observed at <23 or 23-45 g/day with the U-shaped association for CHD, cardiovascular disease, other causes, and all causes.

Alcohol consumption of 23-45 g/day was associated with a lower CHD mortality in MI survivors as so in men without MI, the authors conclude.

Source: Isao Muraki, Hiroyasu Iso, et al. Alcohol Consumption and Long-Term Mortality in Men with or without a History of Myocardial Infarction, *Journal of Atherosclerosis and Thrombosis*, Article ID 63517, Advance online publication July 01, 2022, Online ISSN 1880-3873, Print ISSN 1340-3478, doi.org/10.5551/jat.63517



Smoking, alcohol consumption and risk of bladder cancer

Smoking and alcohol consumption are associated with bladder cancer risk in observational studies. Researchers conducted a two-sample univariable and multivariable Mendelian randomization (MR) analysis to determine whether those associations are causal. The study results were published in the *International Journal of Cancer*.

The researchers used specific genetic variations (21, 126, 360, 39 single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs)) as instrumental variables for number of cigarettes per day, lifetime smoking index, smoking initiation, and drinks per week, respectively.

A total of 1,115 cases with bladder cancer and 174,006 non-cases from FinnGen consortium and 2,883 cases with bladder cancer and 417,955 non-cases from UK Biobank study were obtained. Genetic predisposition to cigarettes per day, lifetime smoking index and smoking initiation were positively associated with an increased risk of bladder cancer in both the FinnGen and UK Biobank consortium. The summary odds ratio

(OR) of bladder cancer was 1.79, 2.38 and 1.91 for one standard deviation increase in the number of cigarettes per day, lifetime smoking index and smoking initiation, respectively. The genetically instrumented number of drinks per week was not associated with bladder cancer (OR = 0.69). Estimates were consistent in multivariable MR analyses by the adjustments of body mass index and education.

The study suggests a causal potential of the association of smoking but not alcohol consumption with bladder cancer according to current evidence.

Source: Xiong, J., Yang, L., Deng, Y.-Q., Yan, S.-Y., Gu, J.-M., Li, B.-H., Zi, H., Ming, D.-J., Zeng, X.-T. and Wang, Y.-B. (2022), The causal association between smoking, alcohol consumption and risk of bladder cancer: A univariable and multivariable Mendelian randomization study. *Int. J. Cancer*. Accepted Author Manuscript. doi.org/10.1002/ijc.34228

Hongqu rice wines ameliorate high-fat/high-fructose diet-induced metabolic syndrome in rats

A study evaluated the possible protective impact of different vintages of Hongqu rice wines on metabolic syndrome (MetS) in rats induced by high-fat/high-fructose diet (HFFD).

Rats were randomly divided into six groups and treated with (a) basal diet (13.9 kJ/g); (b) HFFD and (c–f) HFFD with 3-, 5-, 8- and 15-year-aged Hongqu rice wines (9.96 ml/kg body weight), respectively, at an oral route for 20 weeks.

Hongqu rice wines could alleviate HFFD-induced augment of body weight gain and fat accumulation, and the release of proinflammatory cytokines. Glycolipid metabolic abnormalities caused by HFFD were ameliorated after Hongqu rice wines consumption by lowering levels of fasting insulin, GSP, HOMA-IR, AUC of OGTT and ITT, and lipid deposition (reduced contents of triglycerides, total cholesterol, free fatty acids, and LDL-Cholesterol, and elevated HDL-Cholesterol level) in the serum

and liver. In addition, concentrations of MDA (a biomarker for lipid peroxidation and oxidative stress) and blood pressure markers (ANG-II and ET-1) declined, and activities of antioxidant enzymes (SOD and CAT) were improved in conditions of Hongqu rice wines compared to those in the HFFD group. Eight-year-aged Hongqu rice wine produced a more effective effect on alleviating HFFD-caused MetS among different vintages of Hongqu rice wines.

To conclude, Hongqu rice wines exhibited ameliorative effects on HFFD-induced MetS in rats based on antiobesity, antihyperlipidemic, antihyperglycemic, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and potential antihypertensive properties.

Source: Nanhai Zhang, Fang Kong, Xiaoxuan Jing, Jinxuan Zhou, Liang Zhao, Mohamed Mohamed Soliman, Liebing Zhang, Feng Zhou, Hongqu Rice Wines Ameliorate High-Fat/High-Fructose Diet-Induced Metabolic Syndrome in Rats, *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 2022;, agac033, doi.org/10.1093/alcalc/agac033



Practitioner and digitally delivered interventions for reducing hazardous and harmful alcohol consumption

A paper in the journal *Addiction* compares the effectiveness of practitioner versus digitally delivered interventions for reducing hazardous and harmful alcohol consumption.

A systematic review and network meta-analysis was conducted, comprising a comprehensive search for randomised controlled trials, robust screening and selection methods, and appraisal. Of 201 included trials, 152 reported a consumption outcome that could be converted to grams/week; 104 reported the number of single high intensity drinking episodes.

At 1 and 6 months, practitioner delivered interventions reduced consumption more than digitally delivered interventions (1 month: -23 grams/week [95% confidence interval [CI] -43 to -2]; 6 months: -14 grams/week [95% CI -25 to -3]). At 12 months there was no evidence of difference between practitioner and digitally delivered interventions (-6 grams/week [95% CI

-24 to 12]). There was no evidence of a difference in single high intensity drinking episodes between practitioner and digitally delivered interventions at any time point. The researchers comment that the effect sizes were small but could impact across a population with relatively high prevalence of hazardous and harmful drinking.

Practitioner delivered interventions for reducing hazardous and harmful alcohol consumption are more effective than digitally delivered interventions up to 6 months; at 12 months there is no evidence of a difference, they conclude.

Source: Beyer, F. R., Kenny, R. P. W., Johnson, E., Caldwell, D. M., Garnett, C., Rice, S., Simpson, J., Angus, C., Craig, D., Hickman, M., Michie, S., and Kaner, E. F. S. (2022) Practitioner and digitally delivered interventions for reducing hazardous and harmful alcohol consumption in people not seeking alcohol treatment: a systematic review and network meta-analysis, *Addiction*. doi.org/10.1111/add.15999.

Evaluation of the longitudinal association between alcohol consumption and inflammation

Moderate alcohol consumption appears to be associated with reduced inflammation compared to abstinence. However, there are concerns about the impact of common variations in researcher-defined data processing and analysis parameters on this relationship. In light of this, a group of researchers performed analyses to evaluate the robustness of the alcohol-inflammation association.

Using the 1970 British Birth Cohort Study, the relationship between alcohol consumption in early/mid-adulthood (ages 34 and 42) and levels of inflammation marker high-sensitivity C-reactive protein (hsCRP) at age 46 was assessed in 3,101 people. The effect of low-to-moderate consumption and consumption above various international drinking guidelines was compared, with abstinence as a reference.

Primary analyses were limited to those universes with occasional drinkers as reference. All universes resulted in lower levels of inflammation

amongst low-to-moderate drinkers compared to occasional drinkers (1st percentile effect: -0.21; 99th percentile effect: -0.04). Estimates comparing above-guidelines drinking with occasional drinkers were less definitive (1st percentile effect: -0.26; 99th percentile effect: 0.43). Breadth of covariate adjustment, and measurement year and national guidelines used to classify drinking groups accounted for considerable effect variance.

The association between low-to-moderate drinking and lower reduced inflammation appears robust to common variations in researcher-defined parameters. The association between above-guidelines drinking and hsCRP levels is less definitive.

Source: Visontay, R., Mewton, L., Sunderland, M., Bell, S., Britton, A., Osman, B., ... Slade, T. (2022, August 3). A comprehensive evaluation of the longitudinal association between alcohol consumption and inflammation: Multiverse and vibration of effects analyses. doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/f94uv



Population-level risks of alcohol consumption by amount, geography, age, sex, and year

The Global Burden of Disease Study (GBD) is a comprehensive regional and global research programme of disease burden that assesses mortality and disability from major diseases, injuries, and risk factors. GBD is a collaboration of over 3,600 researchers from 145 countries and is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

In an analysis published in July, researchers estimate that 1.34 billion people consumed harmful amounts of alcohol (1.03 billion males and 0.312 billion females) in 2020.

The analysis suggests that for young adults ages 15–39, there are no health benefits to drinking alcohol, only health risks, with 59.1% of people who consumed unsafe amounts of alcohol in 2020 between ages 15 and 39 years and 76.7% male.

The authors note that given the complex relationship between alcohol and diseases and different background rates of diseases across the world, the risks of alcohol consumption differ by age and by geographic location.

For people over age 40, health risks from alcohol consumption vary by age and region. Consuming a small amount of alcohol (for example, drinking between one and two 3.4-ounce glasses of red wine) for people in this age group can provide some health benefits, such as reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and diabetes.

The authors call for alcohol consumption guidelines to be revised to emphasize consumption levels by age, stressing that the level of alcohol consumption recommended by many existing guidelines is too high for young people in all regions. They also call for policies targeting males under age 40, who are most likely to use alcohol harmfully.

Source: Population-level risks of alcohol consumption by amount, geography, age, sex, and year: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2020. GBD 202 Alcohol Collaborators, The Lancet, ISSN: 0140-6736, Vol: 400, Issue: 10347, Page: 185-235 doi: [org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(22\)00847-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)00847-9)

The study provoked a number of responses. Matt Lambert, CEO of the Portman Group said: “The recommendation for variable guidance by age without context would be counterproductive,

people will turn off from what they see is unrealistic and complex advice and stop engaging with moderate drinking messages.

“The recommendation that those under 40 should not drink at all is totally unrealistic – especially considering trends in the UK show that this age group is already drinking at lower and more moderate levels compared to older generations.

“It is interesting that the study backs up previous evidence of some health benefits of moderate drinking for people above 40, but we reiterate our view that people should not drink to improve their health.

The conclusions of the study were also questioned by Christopher Snowden, writing in The Spectator [spectator.co.uk/article/the-anti-drinking-lobby-s-twisted-logic](https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-anti-drinking-lobby-s-twisted-logic) and Harry Readhead in the independent. [independent.co.uk/voices/alcohol-health-social-drinking-b2128169.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/alcohol-health-social-drinking-b2128169.html)

AOD Health/ACAAM Editorial Internship

The Grayken Center for Addiction at Boston Medical Center and its Alcohol, Other Drugs & Health: Current Evidence (AOD Health) newsletter are partnering with the American College of Academic Addiction Medicine to create the Richard Saitz Addiction Medicine Editorial Internship for a 2022-2023 addiction medicine fellow. The editorial intern will be mentored by senior addiction medicine faculty to gain experience in rigorous review of the addiction medicine literature and the field of academic publishing.

The internship, which will be directed by Darius Rastegar, MD, from Johns Hopkins Medicine, will commence on October 1 and require the selected intern to spend approximately 5 hours per month on several tasks included in the official position description and application form. The selected fellow will receive a \$2,000 stipend for the work.

The deadline to apply is August 31. If you have questions, contact AOD Health Editorial Director Casey Calver at katherine.calver@bmc.org.



Very low alcohol consumption is associated with lower prevalence of cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma in patients with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease

The role of moderate alcohol consumption in the evolution of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) is still debated. A study evaluated the impact of current and lifelong alcohol consumption in patients with NAFLD.

From 2015 to 2020, 276 consecutive patients fulfilling criteria of NAFLD (alcohol consumption up to 140 g/week for women and 210 g/week for men) were enrolled. According to their current alcohol intake per week, patients were divided in: abstainers, very low consumers (C1: <70 g/week) and moderate consumers (C2). A new tool, called LACU (Lifetime Alcohol Consuming Unit) was created to estimate the alcohol exposure across lifetime: 1 LACU was defined as 7 alcohol units per week for 1 drinking year. Patients were divided into lifelong abstainers and consumers

and the latter furtherly divided into quartiles: Q1-Q4. Stratification according to alcohol intake, both current and cumulative as estimated by LACU, showed that very low consumers (C1 and Q1-Q3) displayed lower frequency of cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma compared to abstainers and moderate consumers (C2 and Q4). The study authors say that they can speculate that up to one glass of wine daily in the context of a Mediterranean diet may be a long-term useful approach in selected NAFLD patients.

Source: Ferri S, Stefanini B, Mulazzani L, Alvisi M, Tovoli F, Leoni S, Muratori L, Lotti T, Granito A, Bolondi L, Piscaglia F. Very Low Alcohol Consumption Is Associated with Lower Prevalence of Cirrhosis and Hepatocellular Carcinoma in Patients with Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease. *Nutrients*. 2022; 14(12):2493. doi.org/10.3390/nu14122493

The association of alcohol consumption with diet and cardiometabolic risk

The association between alcohol consumption and cardiometabolic disease risk has been described as a J or U-shaped curve attributed to a combination of harmful and beneficial effects varying with volume of intake. Diet is an established risk factor for cardiometabolic disease and related traits. However, few studies examining this association adequately control for residual confounding by dietary intake. The aim of a PhD thesis was to investigate the relationship between alcohol consumption and markers of cardiometabolic health independent of dietary intake.

Analyses were conducted using data from the Airwave Health Monitoring Study – a cohort of 9,581 participants. Alcohol consumption behaviour was determined from questionnaire and 7-day diet record data. Diet quality was determined by measuring adherence to the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet using data from the 7-day diet records.

Markers of cardiometabolic health included: adiposity (body mass index and waist circumference), blood pressure, cholesterol, HbA1c and C-reactive protein. All analyses were replicated in an independent UK cohort using UK

Biobank data (n =146,888). As part of this thesis, genetic analyses were conducted to investigate whether genes implicated in the regulation of HDL-c may facilitate some of the cardioprotective effects attributed to alcohol intake.

The risk of cardiometabolic disease as indicated by a cardiometabolic risk score was lowest amongst moderate drinkers and highest amongst never, and heavy drinkers.

Increasing alcohol intake was associated with a deterioration in diet quality and had an additive effect of total energy intake. Diet quality did not modify the relationship between moderate alcohol intake and cardiometabolic risk. Alcohol intake did not alter the effect of genes implicated in the regulation of HDL-c. These findings were validated in a sub-sample of the UK Biobank cohort.

The findings from this thesis show that different levels of alcohol consumption plays a key role in determining diet quality and cardiometabolic risk. Specifically, risk of developing obesity.

Source: Griffin, J. (2022). *The Association of Alcohol Consumption with Diet and Cardiometabolic Risk in Two Independent UK Populations* (Doctoral dissertation, Imperial College London).



Association between adherence to the EAT-Lancet Diet and risk of cancer and cardiovascular outcomes in the prospective NutriNet-Santé cohort

The EAT-Lancet commission proposed, in 2019, a planetary, healthy and universal diet. However, this diet has been rarely studied in relation to various health outcomes. A group of researchers in France sought to prospectively estimate the association between the EAT-Lancet diet and cancer and cardiovascular risk.

The study was conducted among participants of the NutriNet-Santé cohort (2009–2021). The endpoints were the incident outcomes (cancer and cardiovascular diseases (CVD) and mortality from these diseases), combined and separately. Adherence to the EAT-Lancet diet was estimated using the EAT-Lancet Diet Index (ELD-I) modelled as quintiles (Q).

A total of 62,382 subjects were included, 2,475 cases of cancer and 786 cases of cardiovascular occurred during a median follow-up of 8.1 years. The sample was 76% female, the mean age at inclusion was 51 years (Standard Deviation (SD) = 10.2 years). The ELD-I ranged from -162 to 332 points with a mean score of 45.4 points (SD = 25.6 points). The analysis found no significant

association between the EAT-Lancet diet and the risk of cancer and CVD combined, and separately, was observed. Alcohol consumption was an effect modifier of the association. A significant association was observed among low drinkers (HR Q5 vs Q1 = 0.86, (95% CI 0.73, 1.02)). A higher ELD-I was significantly associated with a lower risk of overall cancer only among females, (HR Q5 vs Q1 = 0.89, (95% CI 0.75, 1.05)). Both associations were largely attenuated by body mass index.

Contrary to the authors hypothesis, the results documented significant associations between adherence to the EAT-Lancet diet and incidence of cancer only in some subgroups, and no association with CVD.

Source: Florine Berthy, Joséphine Brunin, Benjamin Allès, Léopold K Fézeu, Mathilde Touvier, Serge Herberg, Pilar Galan, Philippe Pointereau, Denis Lairon, Julia Baudry, Emmanuelle Kesse-Guyot, Association Between Adherence to the EAT-Lancet Diet and Risk of Cancer and Cardiovascular Outcomes in the Prospective NutriNet-Santé Cohort, *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 2022;, nqac208, doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/nqac208

Postprandial effects from red wine on metabolic rate, appetite-related hormones and glucose

A study compared the acute effects of moist snuff with or without nicotine and red wine with or without alcohol on prandial hormones and metabolism.

Two deciliters of wine, with or without alcohol, were taken together with a standardized supervised meal in 14 healthy women and men. All participants also combined the meal with usage of with moist snuff, with or without nicotine. The snuff was replaced hourly at each of the four settings, i.e. snuff with or without nicotine combined with red wine with or without alcohol, that started at 0800 o'clock and were finished at noon.

The scientists found ghrelin levels to be more efficiently suppressed when drinking red wine with alcohol compared to non-alcoholic wine. The postprandial metabolic rate was further elevated following alcohol containing red wine compared

with non-alcoholic red wine. Although glucose levels were not uniformly lower after alcoholic red wine, the researchers found lowered glucose levels 3 h after the meal. Nicotine-containing moist snuff elevated the levels of serum cortisol compared with nicotine-free snuff. No effects of nicotine or alcohol were found on feelings of satiety.

Alcohol in red wine augmented the postprandial suppression of ghrelin and it also lowered postprandial glucose 3 h post-meal. These effects are in line with observational trials linking regular intake of moderate amounts of red wine with lower risk for diabetes.

Source: Ismail M, Stagling S, Lundberg A, Nystrom FH. A cross-over study of postprandial effects from moist snuff and red wine on metabolic rate, appetite-related hormones and glucose. *Drug Alcohol Depend.* 2022 Jul 1;236:109479. doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2022.109479.



Genetic architecture underlying heavy drinking and smoking identified

It is not currently understood why some individuals become addicted to alcohol or cigarettes whereas others don't; one reason is a person's genetic proclivity to abuse substances. UNC School of Medicine researchers led by Hyejung Won, PhD, are beginning to understand these underlying genetic differences. By furthering understanding in this area they hope to create therapies to help people who struggle with addiction.

Won, assistant professor of genetics and colleagues identified genes linked to cigarette smoking and drinking. They found that these genes are over-represented in certain kinds of neurons—brain cells that trigger other cells to send chemical signals throughout the brain.

The researchers, who published their work in the journal *Molecular Psychiatry*, also found that the genes underlying cigarette smoking were linked to the perception of pain and response to food, as well as the abuse of other drugs, such as cocaine. Other genes associated with alcohol use were linked to stress and learning, as well as abuse of other drugs, such as morphine.

Given the lack of current treatment options for substance use disorder, the researchers also conducted analyses of a publicly available drug database to identify potential new treatments for substance abuse.

Long-term substance use and substance use disorders have been linked to many common diseases and conditions, such as lung cancer, liver disease, and mental illnesses. Yet, few treatment options are available, largely due to gaps in our understanding of the biological processes involved.

"We know from twin studies that genetics may account for why some people use and abuse substances, aside from environmental factors, such as family issues or personal trauma," Won said. "Genetic studies such as genome-wide association studies (GWAS) provide a way to identify genes associated with complex human traits, such as nicotine addiction or drinking heavily."

Through GWAS, Won added, researchers can identify regions in the genome that play roles in particular traits, compared to individuals who do not exhibit the trait. Yet, genome-wide studies cannot tell us much about how genes in those regions affect a trait. That's because these regions

are often in "non-coding" regions of the genome.

"Non-coding" refers to the fact that the genes in these regions do not translate—or code—their genetic information directly into the creation of proteins, which then perform a known biological function. Therefore, what actually happens biologically in these "non-coding" regions remains mostly unknown.

"We wanted to learn what's happening in these regions," Won said. "So we developed Hi-C coupled MAGMA (H-MAGMA), a computational tool to help us make more sense of what we're seeing in genome-wide studies."

In a previous publication, Won's lab showed how applying H-MAGMA to brain disorders identifies their associated genes and described their underlying biology. And for this current paper, her lab expanded the tool to cigarette smoking and drinking.

They developed H-MAGMA frameworks from dopaminergic neurons and cortical neurons—brain cell types that researchers have long implicated in substance use. Focusing on those two cell types, the research team applied H-MAGMA to GWAS findings related to heaviness of smoking, nicotine dependence, problematic alcohol use, and heaviness of drinking to identify genes associated with each trait.

Genes associated with alcohol use and cigarette smoking were also associated with other types of substances, such as morphine and cocaine. While the opioid crisis has caused a detrimental social burden, well-powered GWAS on cocaine and opioid use are not currently available. Won's team, therefore, sought to determine whether the genes associated with alcohol use and cigarette smoking can reveal genetics underlying general addiction behavior, genetic findings that could be extended to other substances of abuse.

"Our analyses showed that expression of genes shared between cigarette smoking and alcohol use traits can be altered by other types of substances such as cocaine," Won said. "By characterizing the biological function of these genes, we will be able to identify the biological mechanisms underlying addiction, which could be generalized to various forms of substance use disorder."

In addition to the various types of excitatory neurons, Won's team also identified additional cell



types, including cortical glutamatergic, midbrain dopaminergic, GABAergic, and serotonergic neurons that are associated with the risk genes.

With these findings in hand, it is now possible for the UNC researchers and others to investigate molecules that make addiction much less likely.

Source: Sey, N.Y.A., Hu, B., Iskhakova, M. et al. Chromatin architecture in addiction circuitry identifies risk genes and potential biological mechanisms underlying cigarette smoking and alcohol use traits. *Mol Psychiatry* 27, 3085–3094 (2022). doi.org/10.1038/s41380-022-01558-y

med.unc.edu/genetics/scientists-reveal-genetic-architecture-underlying-alcohol-cigarette-abuse/

Alcohol and cannabis co-use and longitudinal grey matter volumetric changes in early and late adolescence

Using data based on 724 adolescents curated from the NCANDA study, researchers investigated how grey matter volumes (GMVs) decline longitudinally as a result of alcohol and cannabis use. The impacts of alcohol and cannabis co-use and how these vary across assigned sex at birth and age were examined. Brain imaging data comprised the GMVs of 34 regions of interest and the results were evaluated with a Bonferroni correction.

Mixed-effects modeling showed faster volumetric declines in the caudal middle frontal cortex, fusiform, inferior frontal, superior temporal (STG), and supramarginal (SMG) gyri, at -0.046 to $-0.138\text{cm}^3/\text{year}$ in individuals with prior-year alcohol and cannabis co-use, but not those engaged in alcohol or cannabis use only. These findings cannot be explained by more severe

alcohol use among co-users. Further, alcohol and cannabis co-use in early versus late adolescence predicted faster volumetric decline in the STG and SMG across assigned sex at birth.

The researchers comment that these findings highlight the longitudinal impact of alcohol and cannabis co-use on brain development, especially among youth reporting early adolescent onset of use. The volumetric decline was noted in cortical regions in support of attention, memory, executive control, and social cognition, suggesting the pervasive effect of alcohol and cannabis co-use on brain development.

Source: Luo, X, Yang, JJ, Buu, A, Trucco, EM, Li, C-SR. Alcohol and cannabis co-use and longitudinal gray matter volumetric changes in early and late adolescence. *Addiction Biology*. 2022; 27 (5):e13208. doi.org/10.1111/adb.13208

The declining trend in adolescent drinking: Do volume and drinking pattern go hand in hand?

Traditionally, adolescent drinking cultures differed between Nordic and Mediterranean countries; the former being characterised by low volume and relatively frequent heavy episodic drinking (HED). Across these drinking cultures, researchers examined the associations between alcohol volume and HED with respect to (i) secular trends at the country level and (ii) individual-level associations over time.

The study used data from the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) conducted among 15–16-year-olds in Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, France and Italy, employing six cross-sectional surveys from 1999 to 2019 (126,126 participants).

Both consumption volume and HED frequency decreased in all Nordic countries and displayed a curvilinear trend in France and Italy. In all countries, consumption volume and HED correlated highly over time at the country level. At the individual

level, the correlation was positive but with a varying magnitude over time and between countries. In 1999/2003, the alcohol volume–HED correlation was significantly higher in the Nordic compared to the Mediterranean countries but became significantly weaker in Finland, Norway and Sweden and remained stable in France, Iceland and Italy during the period.

The study authors conclude that while trends in consumption volume and drinking patterns went hand in hand at the aggregate level, the association at the individual level weakened over time in several Nordic countries, along with the substantial decline in adolescent drinking since 2000.

Source: Rossow I, Bye EK, Moan IS. The Declining Trend in Adolescent Drinking: Do Volume and Drinking Pattern Go Hand in Hand? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2022; 19(13):7965. doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19137965



Patterns of alcohol consumption and associated factors in a population-based sample of 70-year-olds

The authors of a paper published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* state that although older adults consume more alcohol than other populations, knowledge about the factors associated with different consumption levels in this age group is limited.

Their study used data from a population-based sample of 1156 adults in The Gothenburg H70 Birth Cohort Study 2014–16. Sociodemographic, social, and health-related factors associated with alcohol consumption levels in 70-year-olds were examined. Total weekly alcohol intake was calculated based on the self-reported amount of alcohol consumed and was categorised as lifetime abstinence, former drinking, moderate consumption (≤ 98 g/week), and at-risk consumption (> 98 g/week). At-risk consumption was further categorised into lower at-risk (98–196 g/week), medium at-risk (196–350 g/week), and higher at-risk (≥ 350 g/week). 3% of participants were lifetime abstainers, 3% were former drinkers, 64% were moderate drinkers, and 30% were at-risk drinkers (20% lower, 8% medium, 2% higher).

The authors examined a wide range of the sociodemographic, social, and health-related factors associated with alcohol consumption levels in a population-based sample of 70-year-olds. They found that the former drinkers, and, to a certain extent, the higher at-risk drinkers, had poorer health, while there were few differences in health between the moderate drinkers and the at-risk drinkers. There were also sociodemographic and social differences between the groups. The former drinkers were more often smokers and

born outside Sweden, while the at-risk drinkers had higher education, higher income, and were more often in a relationship. The findings show the importance of differentiating between the lifetime abstainers and the former drinkers, and of differentiating between the different consumption levels among the at-risk consumers, as these subgroups differ considerably in relation to sociodemographic, social, and health-related factors.

Former drinkers had the worst physical and medical status. This finding is in line with the sick-quitter hypothesis. There were few differences between the at-risk drinkers and the moderate drinkers regarding health-related factors, even after controlling for education. However, the higher at-risk drinkers (≥ 350 g/week) had more liver disease and minor depression. The moderate drinkers had diabetes more often, which might be explained by the general recommendation to diabetics to drink in moderation.

The authors state that their findings demonstrate the importance of classifications beyond abstinence and at-risk consumption, with implications for both the prevention and clinical management of unhealthy consumption patterns in older adults.

Source: Ahlner F, Falk Erhag H, Johansson L, Mellqvist Fässberg M, Rydberg Sterner T, Samuelsson J, Zettergren A, Waern M, Skoog I. Patterns of Alcohol Consumption and Associated Factors in a Population-Based Sample of 70-Year-Olds: Data from the Gothenburg H70 Birth Cohort Study 2014–16. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2022; 19(14):8248. doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148248

Effects of moderate wine consumption on health - grants for research

The Foundation for Wine and Nutrition Research (FIVIN) launched the first call for grants for "Wine, Nutrition and Health" research projects. Sponsored by the OIVE, the initiative aims to promote scientific studies that address, from the nutritional and epidemiological point of view, the biological effects of moderate consumption of wine and its components on health in the context of a balanced diet.

The grants, which can be accessed by researchers and research groups that carry out their activity

in public and private universities, CSIC and other public and private research organisations, hospitals and health centers in Spain, will have a maximum amount of 80,000 euros. The development of the project must be carried out within Spanish territory and with a maximum duration of two years.

The deadline for submitting applications is from July 15 to September 30. The evaluation period will be from September 30 to October 30, and the award of the projects will be communicated on November 15, 2022.

fivin.com and lacienciadelvino.com



Childhood loneliness linked to stress and problem drinking in adults

Academics from Arizona State University have found that experiencing loneliness as a pre-adolescent child predicts problem drinking years later, in early adulthood. A study published in *Addictive Behaviors Reports* has shown that young adults who experienced childhood loneliness have higher stress levels and more problem drinking behaviours.

The authors state that the Stress-Dampening Hypothesis (Marlatt, 1987; Sayette, 1993; Sher, 1987) posits that individuals drink to alleviate negative affect. To date, it has not been determined whether loneliness experienced as a child can indirectly influence at-risk patterns of alcohol use through the mediating mechanism of stress and impaired control.

The study examined the direct and indirect relationships between childhood loneliness, stress, impaired control over alcohol use, and alcohol-related problems in a college student sample.

Over 300 college students participated in the study, completing assessments of childhood loneliness, current stress levels and drinking behaviors. Feeling lonely in the past was related to present-day stress levels and drinking behaviours.

Loneliness was directly linked to stress as well as to alcohol-related problems. Higher levels of loneliness were indirectly linked to both more alcohol use and alcohol-related problems through more stress and in turn, more impaired control over drinking.

The authors conclude that the current study is consistent with the Stress Dampening Hypothesis and suggest that therapeutic interventions combating loneliness in childhood may disrupt the stress-dampening pathway to dysregulated alcohol use in emerging adulthood.

Julie Patock-Peckham, assistant research professor in the ASU Department of Psychology commented "In young adults, childhood loneliness before age 12 was associated with perceived stress right now and affected dysregulated drinking."

Source: S. Berberian, J.A. Patock-Peckham, K. Guarino, T. Gupta, F. Sanabria, F. Infurna, Does loneliness before the age of twelve indirectly affect impaired control over drinking, alcohol use, and problems through perceived stress? *Addictive Behaviors Reports*, Volume 16, 2022, 100448, ISSN 2352-8532, doi.org/10.1016/j.abrep.2022.100448.

Parental and peer supply of alcohol in adolescence and associations with later alcohol consumption and harms

Supply of alcohol to adolescents is associated with increased alcohol consumption and harms including alcohol use disorder (AUD). Research published in the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* investigated (1) trajectories of alcohol supply to adolescents; (2) sociodemographic characteristics associated with supply trajectory; (3) patterns of alcohol consumption by supply trajectory; and (4) supply trajectory associations with adverse alcohol outcomes.

The researchers used Australian longitudinal survey data to model how parent and peer alcohol supply changed over five annual follow-ups.

The researchers identified five alcohol supply classes: (1) minimal supply; (2) early parent sips, late peer/parent whole drinks; (3) late peer/parent whole drinks; (4) early parent sips, mid peer/parent whole drinks; and early peer/parent whole drinks. Compared to minimal supply, the other classes

were 2.7–12.9 times as likely to binge drink, 1.6–3.0 times as likely to experience alcohol-related harms, and 2.1–8.6 times as likely to report AUD symptoms at age 19.

Earlier supply of whole drinks, particularly from peers, was associated with increased risk of early adulthood adverse alcohol outcomes. While minimal supply represented the lowest risk, supplying sips only in early-mid adolescence and delaying supply of whole drinks until late adolescence is likely to be less risky than earlier supply of whole drinks, the researchers say.

Source: A Aiken, G Chan, W See Yuen, P J. Clare, D Hutchinson, N McBride, J M. Najman, J McCambridge, E Upton, T Slade, V C. Boland, C De Torres, R Bruno, K Kypri, M Wadolowski, R P. Mattick, A Peacock, Trajectories of parental and peer supply of alcohol in adolescence and associations with later alcohol consumption and harms: A prospective cohort study, *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, Volume 237, 2022, 109533, ISSN 0376-8716. doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2022.109533.



Trends in binge drinking and heavy alcohol consumption among pregnant women in the US

A study sought to compare trends in prevalence of binge drinking and heavy alcohol consumption among pregnant and nonpregnant women from 2011 through 2020.

The cross-sectional study used data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) from January 1, 2011, to December 31, 2020. The BRFSS is a nationally representative, cross-sectional sample of US adults that measures alcohol consumption based on 30-day recall. It defines binge drinking as 4 or more drinks during a single occasion and heavy alcohol consumption as 8 or more drinks per week. Age- and race and ethnicity-adjusted prevalence of binge drinking and heavy alcohol consumption were estimated.

Among the 49,098 pregnant women included in the study, 28.8% were 18 to 24 years of age and 3.7% were 40 to 44 years of age compared with 26.2% and 19.1%, respectively, for the 1 243 402 nonpregnant women. For pregnant women, prevalence of binge drinking increased from 2.5% in 2011 to 6.1% in 2020, an average annual percent change (AAPC) of 8.9%. Binge drinking for nonpregnant women decreased from 18.6% in 2011 to 17.6% in 2020 with an AAPC of 0.7%, reflecting an increase from 2012 to 2019.

For pregnant women, prevalence of heavy alcohol consumption increased from 0.7% in 2011 to 3.2% in 2020, an AAPC of 11.6%. Prevalence of heavy alcohol consumption for nonpregnant women increased from 6.6% in 2011 to 7.5% in 2020, an AAPC of 2.3%.

In this cross-sectional study the authors found that binge drinking and heavy alcohol consumption were higher among nonpregnant women than pregnant women, but the AAPC for both behaviours was significantly greater among pregnant women than nonpregnant women. Binge drinking increased by 0.7% per year between 2012 and 2019, and heavy alcohol consumption increased by 2.3% per year among nonpregnant women. However, binge drinking increased 8.9% per year and heavy alcohol consumption increased 11.6% per year among pregnant women.

These results suggest worsening behavioural risks among pregnant women, potentially owing to changes in socioeconomic and psychosocial stressors that may have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the study authors say.

Source: Howard JT, Perrotte JK, Flores K, Leong C, Nocito JD, Howard KJ. Trends in Binge Drinking and Heavy Alcohol Consumption Among Pregnant Women in the US, 2011 to 2020. *JAMA Netw. Open.* 2022;5(8):e2224846. doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.24846

Parental monitoring, family conflict, and adolescent alcohol use

A study examined relationships among parental monitoring, family conflict, and subgroups of adolescent alcohol use identified through longitudinal latent class analyses (LLCA). Differences in these subgroups across sex and race/ethnicity were also examined.

The study used data collected during a longitudinal study in which more than 4,000 adolescents completed questionnaires each semester for seven semesters, beginning in spring of their freshman year of high school until spring of their senior year. Three classes of drinking were identified over time (low, increasing, and moderate use). Most adolescents were increasing-use drinkers. Moderate drinkers were more likely to be male than female; nondrinkers were most

likely to be African American; and increasing-use drinkers were more likely to be Mexican American. Adolescents who received less maternal monitoring and experienced more family conflict were more likely to be identified in the class of moderate alcohol use compared to nonuse.

The authors suggest their findings highlight the importance of encouraging parental monitoring and decreasing family conflict to reduce the likelihood of adolescent alcohol use throughout the high school years

Source: Bray JH, Gallegos MI, Cain MK, Zaring-Hinkle B. Parental monitoring, family conflict, and adolescent alcohol use: A longitudinal latent class analysis. *J Fam Psychol.* 2022 Jul 18. Doi.org/10.1037/fam0001019.



Alcohol laws at UK football stadia

Easing legal restrictions around the sale and consumption of alcohol at UK football stadia could deliver public safety and financial benefits, but is not without risks, according to key stakeholders interviewed as part of a new University of Stirling study.

Under current legislation, football supporters in England are permitted to purchase alcohol at stadia – but it cannot be consumed within view of the pitch, while in Scotland, the general sale of alcohol is prohibited, other than in hospitality settings.

Academics from the Institute for Social Marketing and Health (ISMH) at Stirling, Loughborough University, and the University of Edinburgh used focus groups with regular match-attending supporters, casual supporters who usually watch games at home or in bars, and those who follow the Scotland and England national teams to consider existing laws. Researchers also engaged a range of stakeholders in interviews – including representatives from the UK and Scottish Governments, police, football supporters' groups and safety organisations.

Many stakeholders felt that there were unintended consequences arising from the current laws, such

as fans arriving late to games in large numbers in Scotland and fans binge-drinking at half-time in England; and that it would boost revenues for clubs if current restrictions around the sale of alcohol were eased. However, several stakeholders felt that 'a break in drinking' on match days was positive, and that any easing would present a significant risk, as greater alcohol sales would mean continuous and higher alcohol consumption by some fans.

Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the research team found most participants were in favour of easing existing laws as part of pilot schemes. In England, this could permit alcohol consumption within view of the pitch, and, in Scotland, the general sale of alcohol in football stadia. However, the details of exactly what would be permitted and how any pilot would operate and be evaluated requires careful consideration, the study's authors say.

Source: Jack G. Martin, Richard Giulianotti, Comille Bandura, Stephen Morrow, Kate Hunt, Angus Bancroft, Richard I. Purves, Stakeholder views of current laws surrounding alcohol at UK football matches: Is it a case of using a "sledgehammer to crack a nut"? *International Journal of Drug Policy*, Volume 107, 2022, 103789, ISSN 0955-3959, doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2022.103789.

Assessing the feasibility of using place-based health information in alcohol licensing

As in most other countries, England has no explicit alcohol licensing objective around health, so objections to applications tend to focus on the traditional concerns of crime and public disorder. A group of researchers examined the practicalities of using health-related information in local licensing decisions and the prospects for a dedicated health-associated licensing objective.

Seven local authority pilot areas were purposively selected and provided with a compendium of health information (Public Health England Toolkit), including data-access agreements and mapping software. A series of 'mock licensing hearings' explored practical challenges in using health data. Key informants were interviewed at baseline and 10–12 weeks after receiving the Toolkit.

The researchers found that access to localised health information was problematic, and there was

a mismatch between a 'data-orientated approach' and the need for contextualised evidence. Perceived difficulty in proving that a new licence would damage health discouraged challenges on health grounds. Constraints in using health information in alcohol licensing are not restricted to the absence of a dedicated health-associated licensing objective. While the latter may enhance the legitimacy of public health participation, improved access to localised health information, stronger collaborative working and training in how to contextualise evidence, will all be critical to better alcohol harm reduction through licensing decisions.

Source: John D Mooney, Zeibeda Sattar, Frank deVocht & Jonathan Ling (2022) Assessing the feasibility of using place-based health information in alcohol licensing: case studies from seven local authorities in England, *Cities & Health*, doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2022.2091880.



Individual-, peer-, and parent-level substance use-related factors among 9- and 10-year-olds in the US

Although a relatively large body of research has identified multiple factors associated with adolescent substance use, less is known about earlier substance-related factors during preadolescence, including curiosity to use substances.

Research led by Meghan E. Martz PhD, a research assistant professor specializing in the development of substance use disorders in the Department of Psychiatry at Michigan Medicine, University of Michigan examined individual-, peer-, and parent-level domains pertaining to substance use and how these domains vary by sociodemographic subgroups and substance type.

Participants were 11,864 9- and 10-year-olds from the baseline sample of the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study. Youth-reported measures were curiosity to use substances and perceived peer substance use. Parent-reported measures were availability of and rules about substances. These measures were compared for alcohol, nicotine, and marijuana and across sociodemographic subgroupings (sex, race/ethnicity, household income, and family history of alcohol problems). The predictors of curiosity to use by substance type were examined.

The researchers found that the most striking descriptive differences were found between race/ethnicity and income categories. Black parents were much more likely than other parents to have a rule that their children may not use alcohol, tobacco or marijuana, and low-income parents were slightly more likely than those with middle or high incomes to have such a rule.

Pre-teens whose parents made \$100,000 or more per year were much more likely to be curious about alcohol, and their parents were more likely to say it was readily available in the home. Lower-income children, with family incomes of \$50,000 or less, were slightly more likely to be curious about nicotine and marijuana, and to have it available in the home.

Across all groups, pre-teens were more likely to be curious about alcohol or nicotine if their parents said that these substances are readily available in the home. The same was true for nicotine curiosity among kids whose parents hadn't made specific rules about their use of tobacco or other nicotine-containing substances.

This information could help future efforts to tailor preventive messages and measures, and identify children most at risk of future problems, said Martz, "We were very surprised by the percentage of parents—more than 25% of the entire group—who hadn't made any explicit rules about substance use for children this age. Compared to all other race/ethnicity groups, Black parents were the most likely to have made rules against substance use, suggesting this subgroup in particular may be using early protective strategies," says Martz.

The study found that greater curiosity to use alcohol was associated with being male, higher household income, perceived peer alcohol use, and easy alcohol availability; greater curiosity to use nicotine was associated with being male, perceived peer cigarette use, easy availability of cigarettes, and no parental rules about cigarette use.

This study identified substance use-related individual-, peer-, and parent-level factors among a diverse, national sample. Findings highlight the importance of considering sociodemographic and substance-specific variability and may help identify risk and protective factors preceding adolescent substance use.

Source: Meghan E. Martz et al, Individual-, peer-, and parent-level substance use-related factors among 9- and 10-year-olds from the ABCD Study: Prevalence rates and sociodemographic differences, *Drug and Alcohol Dependence Reports* (2022). doi.org/10.1016/j.dadr.2022.100037



Drinking alone foreshadows future alcohol problems

Research from Carnegie Mellon University found that drinking alone during adolescence and young adulthood strongly increases risk for alcohol use disorder (AUD) later in life and this risk is especially high for women. The results are available in the July issue of the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*.

“Most young people who drink do it with others in social settings, but a substantial minority of young people are drinking alone. Solitary drinking is a unique and robust risk factor for future alcohol use disorder,” said lead author Kasey Creswell, associate professor of psychology at CMU. “Even after we account for well-known risk factors, like binge drinking, frequency of alcohol use, socioeconomic status and gender, we see a strong signal that drinking alone as a young person predicts alcohol problems in adulthood.”

Screening of young people for risky alcohol use has up to now, focused on the frequency and quantity of alcohol consumed. Creswell believes the social context in which young people drink is a critical but often overlooked indicator of future alcohol misuse.

Creswell joined colleagues at the University of Michigan to analyse data from the Monitoring the Future study. Approximately 4,500 adolescents (age 18) responded to surveys asking about their patterns of alcohol use and whether they consumed alcohol while alone. These participants

were then followed for 17 years, providing information about their alcohol use and drinking alone in young adulthood (ages 23/24) and reporting AUD symptoms in adulthood (age 35).

Results showed that adolescents and young adults who reported drinking alone were at increased risk for developing AUD symptoms in adulthood compared to their peers who only drank in social settings. The team controlled for well-established early risk factors for alcohol problems, such as binge drinking and frequent drinking. The odds of having AUD symptoms at age 35 were 35% higher for adolescents who drank alone, and 60% higher for young adults who drank alone, compared to social-only drinkers. Adolescent females who drank alone appeared to be at particular risk for developing future alcohol problems in adulthood.

About 25% of adolescents and 40% of young adults reported drinking alone. These findings suggest targeted interventions may be helpful to educate and inform these groups, especially young women, of the risks of solitary drinking to prevent the development of AUD in the future.

Source: Kasey G. Creswell, Yvonne M. Terry-McElrath, Megan E. Patrick, Solitary alcohol use in adolescence predicts alcohol problems in adulthood: A 17-year longitudinal study in a large national sample of US high school students, *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 2022, 109552, ISSN 0376-8716.

doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2022.109552.

Impact of wine bottle and glass sizes on wine consumption at home

Reducing alcohol consumption across populations would decrease the risk of a range of diseases. A study estimated the impact of using smaller bottles (37.5cl vs 75cl), and glasses (290ml vs 370ml) on consuming wine at home.

250 UK households consuming at least two 75cl bottles of wine each week were included in the analysis. The majority consisted of adults who were white and of higher socioeconomic position. Households were randomised to the order in which they purchased wine in 37.5cl or 75cl bottles, to consume during two 14-day intervention periods, and further randomised to receive smaller (290ml) or larger (350ml) glasses to use during both intervention periods.

217 randomised households completed the study and were included in the primary analysis. There

was weak evidence that smaller bottles reduced consumption: households consumed on average 146ml (3.6%) less wine when drinking from smaller bottles than from larger bottles. The evidence for the effect of smaller glasses was stronger: households consumed on average 253ml (6.5%) less wine when drinking from smaller glasses than from larger glasses.

Using smaller glasses to drink wine at home may reduce consumption the authors conclude. Greater uncertainty remains around the possible effect of drinking from smaller bottles.

Source: Mantzari E, Ventsel M, Ferrar J, Pilling MA, Hollands GJ, Marteau DTM. Impact of wine bottle and glass sizes on wine consumption at home: a within and between households randomised controlled trial. *Addiction*. 2022 Jul 18. [Doi.org/10.1111/add.16005](https://doi.org/10.1111/add.16005).



Heavy drinking and drinking harms for cisgender and transgender college students

A team of researchers from Oregon State University examined alcohol use and harms, and their interrelations among cisgender and transgender college students.

A secondary analysis was conducted using a US sample of 242,624 four-year-college students. These outcomes were compared between cisgender women (68.53%) and cisgender men (29.27%), transgender men (0.91%), transgender women (0.23%), and nonbinary students (1.06%): level (number of drinks) of recent alcohol use, frequency of binge drinking (≥ 5 drinks) in the past 2 weeks, and occurrence and count of harms while drinking in the past year. Gender differences in the association between drinking level and consequences were also examined.

Cisgender women were the reference group for all of the comparisons. Cisgender men reported less occurrence of regret, sex without their consent, and unprotected sex when drinking, but the greater occurrence of injury and trouble with

the police. Transgender women and nonbinary individuals reported lower odds of regret and unprotected sex when drinking. Transgender men and nonbinary individuals reported increased odds of sex without their consent when drinking. All transgender subgroups reported increased odds of suicidal ideation when drinking. Finally, associations between the level of recent drinking and odds of experiencing harms differed by gender identity.

The researchers conclude that patterns of alcohol use, consequences, and their interrelationship differed for cisgender men, transgender women and men, and nonbinary individuals relative to cisgender women. These findings suggest that there is a need for gender-inclusive prevention for alcohol harms among students.

Source: Dermody SS, Lamb KM, Kerr DCR. Heavy drinking and drinking harms for cisgender and transgender college students. *Psychol Addict Behav.* 2022 Aug;36(5):466-476. [Doi.org/10.1037/adb0000778](https://doi.org/10.1037/adb0000778).

Differential impact of minimum unit pricing on alcohol consumption between Scottish men and women

A study assessed the immediate impact of the introduction of minimum unit pricing (MUP) on alcohol consumption in Scotland and whether the impact differed by sex, level of alcohol consumption, age, social grade and level of residential deprivation of respondents.

Using data from Kantar Worldpanel's Alcovision survey, that included 53,347 women and 53,143 men, the study assessed the impact of the introduction of a minimum price of 50 pence per UK unit (6.25 pence/g) for the sale of alcohol in Scotland on 1 May 2018.

The study found that the introduction of MUP was associated with a drop in reported weekly total alcohol consumption of 5.94g a drop in off-trade consumption of 3.27g and a drop in on-trade consumption of 2.67g. Associated reductions were larger for women than for men and were greater

among heavier drinkers than for lighter drinkers, except for the 5% of heaviest drinking men for whom an associated increase in consumption was found. Secondary before-and-after analyses found that reductions in consumption were greater among older respondents and those living in less deprived areas. The introduction of MUP was not associated with a reduction in consumption among younger men and men living in more deprived areas.

The authors say that greater policy attention needs to be addressed to the heaviest drinking men, to younger men and to men who live in more deprived areas.

Source: Rehm J, O'Donnell A, Kaner EFS, et al. Differential impact of minimum unit pricing on alcohol consumption between Scottish men and women: controlled interrupted time series analysis. *BMJ Open* 2022;12:e054161. [Doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-054161](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-054161)



UK Treasury delays alcohol duty reform

The UK Treasury has confirmed that its announcement concerning the outcome of the review on alcohol duty will not be made until autumn.

A consultation ran from October 2021 to January 2022 to identify a simplified approach to alcohol duty which was "...more economically rational and less administratively burdensome on businesses and HMRC." The future plans were outlined in last year's Autumn Statement.

One proposal was for a 5% cut on the duties on beer and cider dispensed from containers which were 40 litres or larger, the so-called 'Draught Relief'.

In reaction to the delay, CAMRA CEO Tom Stainer said: "...introducing the new system of alcohol taxation designed to give pubs, social clubs and taprooms support through a new preferential rate of duty charged on beer and cider served on draught compared to the likes of supermarket alcohol is so important".

UK Hospitality CEO Kate Nicholls stated: "This delay is incredibly disappointing for the pubs and hospitality. With the sector and its customers facing soaring costs, we needed to see positive action on lower duty rates for draught beer and cider... The new Government must make this legislation, which is already agreed policy, a priority in early September so we can deliver benefits to pubs, the wider hospitality sector and, crucially, consumers. The economic advantages are clear for the Treasury, so it is time to act."

No specific reason for the delay has been given, but it is thought to be related to uncertainty surrounding the next government and next Chancellor.

Government action on drink spiking at universities

Responding to a question from MP Julie Elliott (Lab) on what steps the Department for Education is taking to help prevent spiking incidents at universities, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Education) Andrea Jenkyns explained that on 24 May 2022, the Department for Education launched a new working group dedicated to tackling spiking attacks against university students. This forms part of the wider government mission to tackle violent and sexual crimes, and strengthen victims' rights. The group brings together vice-chancellors, police, campaigners, and victims to produce plans for practical action to help keep students safe. It will report back before the start of the autumn term.

Professor Lisa Roberts, University of Exeter Vice Chancellor, has been appointed to lead the working group and coordinate the higher education sector's response. Insight and evidence gathered by the working group will be used to inform the government's report to Parliament on spiking, due to be published in spring 2023.

The government has already taken action to reclassify gamma hydroxybutyrate and closely related substances which have been used for drink spiking. It will work with law enforcement and local authorities to tackle spiking incidents, including considering the case for a specific criminal offence for spiking.

Many universities have also set up their own initiatives to tackle the issue. The University of Exeter is offering drink safety test strips, and Nottingham Trent University is funding and delivering bystander intervention training to staff in night-time city venues. Jenkyns commented that the new working group will look at these and other solutions being tested on campuses across the country.

Women, alcohol, pregnancy & FASD

In a series of 6 blogs, Professor Moira Plant shares highlights from her report (to be published this summer) on her work as part of the Healthier Pregnancies, Better Lives (HPBL) programme at the Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland (QNIS) in 2021. The first blog focused on ways to ask about a patient's/client's relationship with alcoholic drinks and how to measure the amount they consume.

The second blog shares highlights from the forthcoming report on Women, Alcohol, Pregnancy and FASD. It focuses on some of the factors explaining why a woman might drink during her pregnancy and what factors might help or hinder professionals in discussing any patient's drinking history and habits.

qnis.org.uk/blog/women-alcohol-pregnancy-and-fasd/



Number of pubs in England and Wales falls to lowest on record

Real estate consultancy Altus Group said that there were 39,970 pubs in England and Wales in June, down more than 7,000 venues since 2012.

Despite the sector continuing to shrink over the past decade, figures from the Office for National Statistics in 2019 showed that the industry expanded for the first time in 10 years, but it appears that the coronavirus pandemic and current cost of living crisis have brought that progress to a halt.

Altus Group said that 400 pubs in England and Wales closed last year and a further 200 closed in the first half of 2022.

"Whilst pubs proved remarkably resilient during the pandemic, they're now facing new headwinds grappling with the cost of doing business in a crisis through soaring energy costs, inflationary pressures and tax rises." Said Robert Hayton, head of Altus in the UK.

Altus' research found that the West Midlands had lost the most pubs in the first half of this year, with 28 closing their doors. London and the East of England were the next hardest hit, with each losing 24 venues.

CEO of UK Hospitality Kate Nicholls commented: "These figures are truly shocking but will come as no surprise to many in the industry. The overwhelming burden of taxation – particularly business rates – and red tape will have proved too much for many licensees.

"The pandemic intensified the distress that many business owners were facing, and in many cases business support was not enough to keep them afloat. While these are pub closures, there has been similar – sometimes worse – levels of closure across restaurants, nightclubs and broader hospitality.

"The current economic crisis increases the chances of further decline, with soaring costs in energy, food and drink, a higher VAT rate, falling consumer confidence and an acute labour shortage. For businesses struggling to repay Covid-related debt this could simply be too much.

"We need the Government to take urgent steps to remove barriers to growth, help to tackle the cost crisis we're facing and support more people into work and training. Without this help, we could see thousands more pubs lost from their communities in the next few years.

Welsh Conservatives call for review of minimum alcohol pricing after links to drug deaths

The Welsh Conservatives have called for a review of minimum alcohol pricing in Wales following reports in Scotland that the policy is driving people to street drugs, linked to hundreds of deaths. Figures released in July showed that 1,330 people died from overdoses in Scotland in 2021, with almost 70% of those linked with benzodiazepines or "benzos", which sell for as little as 20p a pill. Benzos, sometimes known as street Valium, were linked to 191 deaths in 2015 but were a factor in 918 fatalities last year, an increase of over 380%.

Leading addiction group, the Scottish Drugs Forum believes some young people have switched to cheap drugs because of the increased cost of alcohol. David Liddell, its chief executive, said "Some young people who may have been likely to drink cheap ciders seem to now be using so-called street Valium... Our concern is that using street drugs is inherently dangerous and if people are using these and alcohol in combination, the risk is raised again."

Welsh Conservative Shadow Health Minister Russell George MS said: "The increasing number of stories about the negative effects of minimum unit alcohol pricing proves that Labour was wrong to ignore the laws of unintended consequences when they passed it in Wales despite our calls to prevent this very thing from happening.

"Given the increasing escalation of concerns about the MUP, I will be asking the Labour Government to review the MUP to evaluate just how damaging it is.

Calorie labelling on prepacked alcohol – consultation

Responding to a question from Daniel Poulter Conservative, Central Suffolk and North Ipswich about when the Department for Health and Social Care plan to publish a consultation on requiring businesses to provide calorie labelling on alcohol products, Maggie Throup The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health and Social Care said "The Government has announced its intention to consult on whether to introduce mandatory calorie labelling on prepacked alcohol and alcohol sold in on-trade businesses such as pubs and restaurants. The consultation will be launched in due course".



Alcohol-specific deaths in Scotland increase

1,245 people died from conditions caused by alcohol in Scotland in 2021, according to latest figures published by National Records of Scotland. The number of deaths is the highest since 2008 and represents a 5% increase from 2020. However, the rate of mortality from alcohol-specific causes was 22.3 deaths per 100,000 people in 2021. Although this is higher than the 21.5 deaths per 100,000 in 2020, it is not a statistically significant increase, and remains below the peak rate of deaths from alcohol in 2006. Of those who died from alcohol-specific causes, two thirds were male. The average age of deaths of those who died from these causes was 58.7 years for females and 59.7 years for males. Julie Ramsay, Vital Events Statistician at NRS, said: "Health inequalities are a feature of alcohol-specific deaths. Deaths attributed to alcohol were 5.6 times as likely in the most deprived areas of Scotland compared to the least deprived areas. This is more than the deprivation gap for all causes of death, which is 1.9."

In the past five years, after adjusting for age, the rate of mortality from alcohol-specific deaths was higher than the Scottish average in Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Lanarkshire Health Board areas.

nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths/alcohol-deaths

New liquor regulator, Victoria, Australia

In Australia, Victoria's new liquor regulator, Liquor Control Victoria, launched in July and will play a vital role in helping reduce liquor-related harm and ensuring the liquor industry continues to receive strong regulatory oversight. Liquor Control Victoria will see liquor regulation brought within the Department of Justice and Community Safety, with the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC) retaining responsibility for gambling and casino oversight.

Liquor Control Victoria comprises Victorian Liquor Commissioners and staff from the Department of Justice and Community Safety. The new regulator will perform a number of important functions, including undertaking licensing, approval, authorisation, and registration activities and monitoring and responding to breaches of liquor regulations.

Problem-solving courts to combat drug and alcohol-fuelled crime

In the UK, new courts will direct drug and alcohol abusers to tackle their addiction head-on or face tough consequences.

The first three 'Problem-Solving Courts' (PSCs) are being piloted as part of the Government's £900-million Drug Strategy, based on evidence that this approach will most effectively turn such offenders away from crime and protect the public. They will trial community sentences for low-level criminals who would otherwise face short jail terms.

Under unique orders which can be issued by the PSCs, offenders will see the same judge at least once a month, have intense support and supervision from the Probation Service, and get wraparound services tailored to their individual needs - such as from substance misuse and recovery agencies, housing support and educational services.

They will also get treatment and undertake frequent, random drug testing where appropriate. Offenders will be offered the full range of treatment interventions to help them achieve abstinence.

The £8.25 million pilot will see two such courts launched at Liverpool and Teesside Crown Courts, while a further one at Birmingham Magistrates' Court will focus on female offenders with complex needs, including substance misuse.

Campaign to limit alcohol consumption by air passengers continues

Manchester Airport has urged travellers to drink responsibly as they could be denied access to their plane. On Twitter, it wrote said: "Did you know that if you are deemed unfit to fly, you may be denied boarding and you could face up to two years in jail for disrupting a flight?"

The warning is part of the nationwide campaign, called One Too Many, that encourages holidaymakers to fly responsibly.

ONE TOO MANY FLY RESPONSIBLY

FLY RESPONSIBLY OR YOU COULD PAY THE PRICE.

- No holiday** If you are deemed unfit to fly you may be denied boarding.
- Up to 2 years prison** You may face up to 2 years in jail for disrupting a flight.
- Up to £5,000 fine** If you delay a flight from taking off you may be fined.
- Up to £80,000 diversion fee** If you cause a major incident you may receive an £80,000 diversion fee.
- Airline ban** If you cause a flight to be cancelled you may be banned from flying in the future.



UK government clarifies alcohol-free and low-alcohol plans

The UK's Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) has responded to reports that it is planning to increase alcohol by volume (ABV) content allowed in alcohol-free beers. Under current legislation, "no-alcohol" beer in the UK must be less than 0.05%, and "low-alcohol" beers can be up to 1.2%. It was thought that the changes would be included in the white paper on health disparities that was due to be published in July, but will now be delayed until after the summer, when it will need the support of the new Prime Minister.

According to a report in Just Drinks, the DHSC has said it is not currently considering proposals to increase the 'alcohol-free' descriptor threshold to 1% ABV, nor to increase the 'low-alcohol' descriptor threshold from 1.2%.

Previously, Laura Willoughby, co-founder of the mindful drinking movement Club Soda, had

warned that although a change to confirm 0.5% as alcohol-free was sensible, raising the limit to 1% could "scare a lot of people".

"Customers and the alcohol-free drinks makers have always asked for clarity that 0.5% is considered alcohol-free like the rest of the world," she said. "At the moment, government guidance is confusing. 0.5% and below is a trace element of alcohol naturally occurring in many foods and drinks.

"Consumers need clear guidance on the level of alcohol in drinks that will impact them if they are driving, pregnant or avoiding alcohol. The science is clear on 0.5% ABV. Confirming this level as alcohol-free makes sense."

Alcohol Change UK, commented that a distinction between products of below 0.1% and those between 0.1-1% was needed "for both religious purposes and for pregnant women".

Women's Health Strategy in the UK

The Women's Health Strategy for England policy paper was presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on 20th July.

The paper acknowledges the need for better access and join-up of substance misuse treatment with other health services, particularly mental health, domestic abuse, and maternity and perinatal services.

Existing initiatives to raise awareness of the risks of drinking alcohol include the 'Better Health' campaign which includes online tools such as the Drinks Tracker app and the 'How Are You' health quiz. The Start for Life website provides information for pregnant women, to support them in reducing the risks of alcohol-related harm.

Through the 10-year drug strategy, published in 2021, drug and alcohol treatment and recovery funding received £780 million of additional investment over 3 years, between 2022 to 2025. The funding will benefit people seeking treatment for alcohol misuse, as alcohol and drug services

are commissioned together. This is in addition to the money local authorities already spend on substance misuse services from the public health grant.

The drug strategy also committed to rebuilding the professional workforce of the substance misuse treatment sector. As part of this, the government are developing workforce standards, including an expectation that the workforce is trained to have the breadth of skills to respond to the clinical complexities and co-morbidities, including different mental health conditions, substance misuse and homelessness.

The government is also developing the first UK-wide clinical guidelines on managing alcohol misuse. They provide guidance on women-specific needs, including pregnancy and parental alcohol use, domestic abuse, and physical and mental health comorbidities.

[gov.uk/government/publications/womens-health-strategy-for-england/womens-health-strategy-for-england#ministerial-foreword](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/womens-health-strategy-for-england/womens-health-strategy-for-england#ministerial-foreword)



Age verification technology in alcohol sales

The Home Office and Office for Product Safety and Standards regulatory sandbox provides an opportunity for industry and retail to test innovative approaches to age verification, such as digital ID and other products with age assurance attributes, in the specific context of the sale of alcohol under the Licensing Act 2003.

The government has now published the first working version of the digital ID and attributes trust framework. As this framework develops, the trials under this sandbox will contribute to this work by testing the practical use of age verification technology in real world situations and building our understanding of the implications.

Nine trials were conducted across England using different technologies and covering a range of alcohol retail environments. All trials were completed by 30 June 2022. Trials will be subject to an evaluation process with findings disseminated in due course.

[gov.uk/government/publications/age-verification-technology-in-alcohol-sales-regulatory-sandbox?](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/age-verification-technology-in-alcohol-sales-regulatory-sandbox)

Carlsberg Sweden opens underwater bar

To remind Swedes to abstain from alcohol when sailing, Carlsberg Sweden has created an underwater bar at the bottom of the sea.

According to statistics from the Swedish Transportation Agency, more than every second person who dies in recreational boating accidents has alcohol in their blood (2011-2020). The "Don't drink and boat" campaign is a call to the Swedes to abstain from alcohol at sea.

"As a leading brewery and distributor of alcoholic beverages, we have a responsibility for how our beverages are consumed. Our ambition with the underwater bar is that it will be an important reminder to abstain from alcohol at sea, and instead choose an alcohol-free alternative," says Henric Byström, Communications Manager at Carlsberg Sweden.

The full-size bar measures 3.5 meters in width and 2.5 meters in height and comes complete with bar counter, bar stools, neon signs, beer cooler and taps.

Commitment to Responsible Party renewed

In July, Pernod Ricard and Erasmus Student Network renewed their common initiative, Responsible Party. On this occasion, they held a twofold event to debate the importance of cooperative partner-ships and to actively promote responsible drinking among European young adults.

Responsible Party started in 2009 as a collaborative project between Pernod Ricard and Erasmus Student Network, Europe's largest volunteer structure. The preventive program, with a peer-to-peer approach, aims to tackle alcohol misuse among young adults by reducing alcohol-related harm during events and raising awareness. The empowerment of young adults is the key to the programme's effectiveness and success by supporting them to make the right decisions for themselves and for their peers. It's 13-year implementation on the field has been extended online through the disruptive Drink More Water digital campaign, targeting over 144 million people in 34 countries since July 2021.

The meeting held in Brussels, aimed to drive this initiative but also to encourage private and public stakeholders to join forces in this journey to build a more sustainable and responsible Europe. A panel of speakers featuring European officials, Pernod Ricard's CEO Alexandre Ricard, and both active and former ESN members, debated the high stakes of such a cooperation. The contribution of past and present ESN board members highlighted the evolution of the programme and symbolized the spirit of a united and convivial Europe.

Alexandre Ricard, Chairman and CEO of Pernod Ricard stated: "Responsible Party and its Drink More Water campaign are concrete examples of the collaboration between Pernod Ricard and the Erasmus Student Network that dates back to 2009, demonstrating our lasting commitment to promoting responsible and sustainable behaviour among young adults. Now that they are able to gather together again, we believe it is crucial to remind young people that there is no conviviality in excess."



Increasing alcohol consumption in Estonia

A study commissioned by the Ministry of Social Affairs in Estonia and conducted by the Estonian Institute of Economic Research found that in 2021, the Estonian population consumed an average of 11.1 litres of absolute alcohol per adult (15+) population, representing a 2.3% rise in consumption from the previous year. Consumption decreased 2012-2018 but since 2019, the trend has been upward.

In 2021, Estonian residents consumed an average of 11.1 litres (+0.3 litres) of alcoholic beverages per adult (aged 15+) in absolute alcohol, of which the largest share (almost 60%) was light alcoholic beverages, including 4.1 litres of beer, 2 litres of grape wines and half a litre of other mild alcoholic drinks. Spirits accounted for 4.5 litres of alcohol consumed, including 2.4 litres of vodka per adult. The increase in consumption overall was mainly due to an increase in the consumption of spirits and a small increase in the consumption of beer, wine and other light alcohol. Vodka consumption did not increase.

Marje Josing, Director of the Estonian Institute of Economic Research. "As excise duties have been stable, alcohol has become increasingly affordable against the background of general wage growth. In 2021, incomes grew by an average of 6.9%, while the price of alcohol grew by only 0.5% on average. The growth of consumption may also have been facilitated by the long-term closure of catering and accommodation establishments during the pandemic, because then alcohol was bought cheaper for home consumption than the trade" She added that "Unfortunately, Estonia has been moving away from the goal set in the Green Paper on Alcohol Policy that alcohol consumption is permanently below 8 litres of absolute alcohol per capita in recent years. To reduce consumption,



measures could be considered to make alcohol less available and to restrict advertising, especially for young people. Excise duties must take account of neighbouring countries in order to prevent the re-emergence of frontier trade."

Due to the continuation of restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, purchases from abroad, purchases of tourists from Estonia and tourists' alcohol consumption on the spot in Estonia decreased further, but sales to Estonian residents increased. Alcohol excise duty amounted to 223 million euros in 2021, which was 12 million euros more than a year earlier, but 5 million less than forecast for 2021. According to EKI, the lower collection of excise duty was caused by a 23% decrease in tourists' purchases of alcohol and local consumption.

According to preliminary data from the National Institute for Health Development, 695 people died of diseases directly caused by alcohol abuse in 2021, 76 more than in the previous year. Deaths due to alcohol were highest among people aged 45-64.

sm.ee/en/news/survey-alcohol-consumption-and-harm-increased-2021

Hangover prevention pill that breaks down alcohol in the body goes on sale

A new anti-hangover pill has gone on sale in the UK marketed by Swedish firm Myrkl. It claims to rapidly break down alcohol in the body.

The pill is said to break down up to 70% of alcohol after 60 minutes. This means that if someone drinks 50ml of 40% spirits, which contains 20ml of pure alcohol, as little as 6ml of the alcohol will enter the bloodstream. This is the same as the person only drinking 15ml of spirits.

The reduction in the amount of alcohol absorbed by the body is mirrored by a reduction in the short-term effects of alcohol, such as euphoria and reduced anxiety. The company that makes this supplement recommends that two pills are taken one to 12 hours before drinking alcohol.

theconversation.com/myrkl-new-anti-hangover-pill-said-to-break-down-up-to-70-of-alcohol-in-an-hour-what-you-need-to-know-186357

Nearly half of young adults in Germany live alcohol-free

A new YouGov survey shows that almost half of German Gen Z (young adults between 18 to 24 years of age) live alcohol-free.

European countries were examined by the YouGov analysis. Compared to other European countries, more German youth between 18 to 24 years lived alcohol-free (Germany, 49%; United Kingdom, 43%; France, 39%; Austria and Bulgaria, 37%; Poland, 33%; Belgium, 32%; Switzerland and Portugal, 30%).

The results of the survey come from the YouGov Global Profiles data that was collected in April 2022. The survey covered 43 countries and included over 1000 uniformly asked questions.

The survey also found that in Germany, people who are between 45 to 54 years are the demographic group with the lowest number of people living free from alcohol, at 41%. Out of those who are between 25 to 34 years, 47% live alcohol-free and among both the 45- to 54-year-olds and the over 55-year-olds 46% stay alcohol-free in Germany.

Previously, the alcohol survey of the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) for 2021 showed a trend among young people in Germany reducing alcohol consumption. In 2019, only 8.7% of 12- to 17-year-olds said they were consuming alcohol regularly (at least once a week). This figure remained the same in 2021. Comparatively in 2004, 21.2% in this age group said they were using alcohol regularly.

During COVID-19 alcohol availability declined in Germany due to closure or restrictions on bars, pubs, and restaurants. Therefore, sales of beer – one of the most consumed types of alcohol in Germany – reduced in both 2020 and 2021.

The reduced alcohol availability during the COVID-19 pandemic led to fewer people, specifically young people, being intoxicated with alcohol. The Federal Statistical Office recently reported that significantly fewer people came to a hospital in the first year of the pandemic due to alcohol harm. This positive trend was even more prominent among adolescents.

The Pan-American response to alcohol and violence against women

The pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) has produced a new factsheet on Alcohol and violence against women.

The factsheet presents current, objective and easy-to-understand information about alcohol, violence against women, and health. Violence against women is prevalent in the Region of the Americas, and heavy episodic drinking and heavy drinking are also prevalent in the Region, particularly among men. Alcohol consumption is considered as risk factor associated with sexual violence and intimate partner violence. The fact sheet highlights the consequences faced by women in alcohol-related violence and the problems with heavy drinking. It also provides a concise list of how these harms can be addressed.

The factsheet is part of your Live Better, Drink Less campaign, which has the broad objective of raising public awareness about the harms caused by

alcohol and was the first ever regional campaign PAHO developed on alcohol. 13 factsheets were created in support of the campaign, including on alcohol and health, cancer, COVID-19, the brain, cardiovascular disease, violence, unrecorded alcohol consumption, depression, pregnancy and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD), suicide, hepatitis C, sleep, and alcohol epidemiology in the Americas.

paho.org/en/documents/alcohol-series-alcohol-and-violence-against-women



Responsibility.org – impact report

In 1991, a group of vintners, brewers and distilled spirits producers formed The Century Council, united by a shared commitment to fight drunk driving and underage drinking. By 1997, the national not-for-profit was funded solely by America’s leading distillers. In 2014, with a new five-year strategic plan and a refreshed vision, missions and values, The Century Council became the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, more commonly known as Responsibility.org.

Over the past thirty years, the organization has united with community stakeholders to work to reduce drunk driving and underage drinking and promote responsible decision-making around alcohol consumption, including not drinking. It has also led a change in the country’s thinking about how best to address alcohol-related societal issues.

The 2021 Impact Report illustrates how it has played a key role promoting responsible behaviors around alcohol consumption.

Addressing underage drinking

Since 1991, the percentage of teens who have consumed alcohol has dropped from 80% to 36 and binge drinking has declined by 67% among American youth and by 43% among college students. The percentage of 8th graders who have consumed alcohol has dropped from 70% to 22%.

Responsibility.org has worked to provide science-based education content for youth, has helped parents and educators communicate on this issue, and has developed innovative partnerships to produce engaging content and to enhance measurement and evaluation of changing attitudes so that content can be tailored and recalibrated for target audiences.

Eliminating drunk driving

Since 1991, drunk driving fatalities have declined 26%, and among those under age 21 they are down 69%.

Responsibility.org has maintained focus on high-risk and high-needs offenders through development of practical, evidence-based resources; expanded public-facing campaigns and messaging to increase understanding of drunk and impaired driving, with a rapidly growing focus on multiple substance impaired driving; and

supported research and evaluation to identify future road safety challenges in order to provide solutions in advance.

Empowering adults to make responsible alcohol choices as part of a balanced lifestyle

The organisation has expanded easy-to-use, evidence-based tools and resources to help individuals to make responsible alcohol choices—and targeting those resources to those who need them most; forging new partnerships to improve the organisation’s effectiveness and to reach as many people as possible; expanding messaging that responsible drinking can be part of a balanced lifestyle; and providing resources, content, and messaging to emphasize the negative consequences of overconsumption, including at-home consumption and multiple substance consumption.

Looking to the future, the organization will continue to collaborate with other agencies to eliminate underage drinking, drunk driving and other forms of impaired driving, and empower adults to make responsible decisions. For the coming year, they will increase their focus on

- 1) the impact of multiple substance consumption on impaired driving and alcohol responsibility overall, following the gradual legalization of recreational marijuana through the United States.
- 2) The impact of changing consumption habits linked to the past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have driven an increase in at-home consumption.
- 3) The impact of current mental health and wellness trends, which present both risks and opportunities when it comes to driving responsible alcohol consumption behaviours.

responsibility.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2021_R_org_Impact_Report.pdf



Newfoundland and Labrador Government - Alcohol Action Plan

The provincial government in Newfoundland and Labrador has released an Alcohol Action Plan aimed at reducing the harm caused by the consumption of alcohol. The provincial government says in 2017, alcohol-related costs amounted to \$318 million dollars including costs related to lost productivity, health care, and criminal justice. The plan includes a list of 13 actions to be completed by March of 2026 that include medical interventions and treatments and potential changes to pricing and marketing.

Proposed actions include increased awareness about the impact of alcohol on health, the inclusion of screening, intervention and referral tools at all points of care, the establishment of appropriate treatment approaches, including home-based withdrawal management, and the monitoring of alcohol sales and consumption rates. The plan calls for amendments to the Liquor Control Act to develop regulations surrounding alcohol-related marketing, advertising, sponsorships and promotions to support moderate and responsible consumption.

Alcohol pricing is also part of the plan, with a review of the current statutory minimum price per standard drink defined in the Liquor Control Act for on-premise establishments and the concept of minimum pricing for off-premise outlets.

gov.nl.ca/hcs/files/ProvincialAlcoholActionPlan.pdf

Northern Territory government facing calls to pause new post-intervention alcohol laws

The Northern Territory government is being urged to pause the lifting of intervention-era alcohol restrictions. Alcohol bans, first introduced by the Commonwealth during the NT intervention in 2007, expired in some remote communities in July. Frontline services report a spike in alcohol-related incidents and health presentations, and a rise in liquor sales, since the changes.

Independent MLA Robyn Lambley is set to move a motion in parliament calling for the lifting of the alcohol restrictions to be paused, saying the end to alcohol restrictions in some remote communities is fuelling domestic incidents.

The NT government has been criticised for creating an "opt in" system for individual communities to continue alcohol bans and not consulting widely enough with the dozens of communities impacted.

Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) chief executive John Paterson has previously said the organisation had concerns about the "hasty" transition process following the end to the legislation and that more consultation was needed.

Earlier this year, Mr Paterson said he had written to the federal and Northern Territory ministers requesting a delay to allow Aboriginal organisations to prepare.

Half of all new ready-to-drink beverages have an ABV of 5% or higher

The ready-to-drink (RTD) category continues to grow, with more brands introducing products with higher ABV, new IWSR research shows.

Data from IWSR's innovation tracker shows that RTD product launches are leaning towards super-premium pricing and greater diversity of alcohol content. RTD brands are also focusing on packaging with less plastic, and are moving away from direct health claims. This is true across the key RTD markets – Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Japan, Mexico, South Africa, the UK and the US. These 10 markets represent 85% of global consumption of RTDs. The category is growing quickly in China, Canada and the US, which is the world's largest RTD market.

IWSR research reveals that around half of all new RTDs launched in the second half of 2021 had an alcohol content of 5% or higher. This trend has

been led by China, the US, and Australia; regions which have seen the highest percentage change in the market share of new launches with an ABV above 7.5%.

According to the IWSR report, the Chinese market may be focused on higher alcohol products, but a CBD product ban may be on the cards in Hong Kong, as the government adopts a "zero-tolerance" policy to cannabis. Retailers are arguing that they should be allowed to continue selling CBD products, including drinks, providing they have been verified for safe use.

The trend for higher alcohol ready-to-drink beverages does not carry into all markets, however. Countries such as Germany and Japan are seeing a decrease in new innovations with higher ABVs.

theiwsr.com/half-of-all-new-rtd-product-launches-have-an-abv-of-5-or-higher/



How restaurant music can influence your drinking

An article from Drinks business reveals some of the tactics a restaurant will use on customers to influence a meal, including how music can affect how much you drink.

James Picken, a behavioural science expert at Startle, which curates music for a number of UK restaurant chains, revealed how music can influence someone's dining experience, from making them spend more money to speeding up their meal.

"When you go out for a meal, you probably think you're in control of what you order, how long you stay and how much of a tip you leave. But the truth is, your dining experience is being influenced from the moment you step inside the door," Picken says.

Music plays a key role in influencing a meal, most especially the way alcohol is consumed. Picken suggests that turning up the music might increase the drinks bill and make people drink quicker. "Music is often used as a contextual cue to influence the speed at which you eat your meal – and hence, how long you stay and how much you spend," he commented.

He explained that depending on the time of day, a restaurant may play up-beat, fast-paced songs to encourage you to eat quicker. This is common during lunch hours, when the spend per table tends to be lower. Restaurants may also play slower-paced music during the evening service "to encourage you to settle in for the night and spend more."

DoorDash introduces dual ID verification for alcohol deliveries

DoorDash, which operates in US, Canada, and Australia is introducing a new in-app safety measure designed to ensure that alcohol is only delivered to people over the age of 21. The new measure requires the company's delivery people to scan a customer's ID with the DoorDash app to verify their identity before handing off and completing an alcohol delivery. Instead of simply presenting an ID to a delivery person, customers will need to have their ID scanned. The new safety measure is rolling out in addition to the company's current in-app pre-order ID verification feature. DoorDash says the enhanced dual ID verification builds on its efforts to ensure that alcohol is purchased and delivered in a safe way.

After a driver has verified a customer's identity and checked for any signs of intoxication, the delivery may be completed. DoorDash says customers will

also be reminded that they must be at the door with a valid ID when the delivery is being made.

A spokesman for DoorDash said that prior to completing each alcohol delivery, Dashers are reminded to check for common signs of intoxication. If they believe a customer is intoxicated, they are instructed to not complete the delivery and either dispose of the alcohol responsibly or return it to the merchant. To help DoorDash has developed practical and useful Alcohol Delivery Guidelines. Dashers must also complete any alcohol compliance or safety training if it is required in that jurisdiction.

The enhanced two-step ID verification was first piloted in Dallas, Detroit, Miami, Phoenix, Portland, Oregon, Seattle and Northern Virginia. The dual ID verification is now rolling out across the United States.

Law changes could keep pubs open later in Ireland

Changes to Ireland's nighttime economy could allow nightclubs and pubs to remain open late into the night. Major changes are expected to be progressed by the Irish government in early autumn. As well as later opening times, plans include support for cultural venues and the provision of better public transport services after hours in Dublin and outside the city.

Justice Minister Helen McEntee is to move forward with a review of the country's licensing laws when the Dáil resumes in autumn. The modernised "Sale of Alcohol Bill" is being implemented to reform

Ireland's licensing laws.

McEntee plans to enact legislation to address the recommendations of the night-time economy task-force, which was launched in July 2021 to identify ways of securing a vibrant and more sustainable night-time culture.

A pilot programme is already underway in six towns/cities in Ireland to help boost the night-time economy. Late night opening at museums and galleries, and a new music festival in The National Concert Hall (NCH) have been included in the programme.



Search for plan to reduce city's alcohol availability after court ruling

Aldi and Home Bargains have been granted licences in two new stores in Dundee after a controversial council policy was dropped. Dundee City Council is seeking a new strategy for reducing availability of alcohol after a court ruling forced a rethink.

The council's licensing board had been refusing the majority of businesses applying to sell alcohol under its overprovision policy, but this was ruled unlawful by a sheriff in March and in August, Aldi and Home Bargains gained off-sales licenses for new stores due to the decision.

Convener of the council's licensing board, councillor Stewart Hunter, said: "Clearly the licensing board was disappointed that our overprovision policy fell after the legal challenge by Aldi". Despite this, councillor Hunter has not ruled out another move to introduce an adjusted policy. He said: "At the

start of every licensing board term we are obliged by law to review our statement of licensing policy which we will start shortly... During this review we will consider overprovision and will determine what our next steps will be."

Director of public health for NHS Tayside, Dr Emma Fletcher, has previously expressed concern about the number of alcohol retailers in Dundee. She described alcohol availability as an important environmental factor for "influencing patterns of alcohol use". This concern is shared by the council's licensing board.

Councillor Hunter added: "Clearly one of the main reasons we decided on our last overprovision policy was due to the impact of alcohol consumption on public health. "However, we will consider all evidence made available to us before we come to a decision on what we do next."

Lawmakers seek to increase legal drinking age in the Philippines

In the Philippines, Representatives Eric Yap (Benguet) and Paolo Duterte (Davao City) are proposing an increase in the legal drinking age to 21 from 18 and banning persons with disabilities from buying alcohol. House Bill No. 1753 aims to bar "unqualified individuals" from buying alcohol or alcoholic beverages and prevent others from buying alcohol and alcoholic beverages for them.

Under the proposal, unqualified individuals include those aged below 21 and those who are above 21 "but are unable to fully take care of themselves or protect themselves from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition."

The measure also seeks to prohibit presenting fake IDs to misrepresent one's age and allowing the consumption or possession of alcohol or alcoholic beverages by a person below 21 in an establishment's premises.

Under the bill, "unqualified individuals" who violate the measure for the first time would be sent for counseling. On their second offence, they will be required to attend two consecutive counseling sessions with their parents or guardians, which if they fail to comply with, their case would be elevated to the Department of Social Welfare and Development. "Unqualified individuals" who violate the measure's provisions for the third and

succeeding time will be handed over to the local DSWD "for appropriate counseling and proper disposition on the matter."

Anyone else violating provisions of the proposed law would be punished by a P50,000 fine or jail time of up to three months. Succeeding offenses will be meted with both penalties, in addition to the revocation of their business license.

Public officers who fail to implement the proposed law will also be punished with jail time of at least one month to six months and a temporary suspension from public service.

Global Roadmap on Illicit Trade

The World Spirits Alliance (WSA), which represents distillers and spirits producers from across the world at the international level, launched its Global Roadmap on Illicit Trade on 20 June 2022. Presented at the occasion of WSA's Annual Meeting in Geneva, the Roadmap, entitled "Countering Illicit Alcohol Trade Worldwide – Problems, Root Causes and Solutions" provides an overview of key drivers behind illicit alcohol trade and features a set of dedicated recommendations on how to tackle the issue in the future.

worldspiritsalliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/WSA-Illicite-trade-Web.pdf



AIM – Alcohol in Moderation was founded in 1991 as an independent not for profit organisation whose role is to communicate “The Responsible Drinking Message” and to summarise and log relevant research, legislation, policy and campaigns regarding alcohol, health, social and policy issues.

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, companies and associations to create programmes, materials or policies that communicate responsible alcohol consumption messages or work to reduce alcohol related harm.

AIM Social, Scientific And Medical Council

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