

SHAAP

SCOTTISH HEALTH ACTION ON ALCOHOL PROBLEMS
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Welcome to SHAAP's weekly media monitoring service: 4 February – 11 February 2021

Covid: Pubs and restaurants could reopen in April amid lockdown easing but alcohol could be banned, reports suggest

<https://www.itv.com/news/2021-02-06/covid-pubs-and-restaurants-could-reopen-in-april-amid-lockdown-easing-but-alcohol-could-be-banned-reports-suggest>

Pubs and restaurants may be allowed to reopen in April so long as they do not serve alcohol, reports suggest. Other options thought to be under consideration by the government include keeping pubs shut until May but allowing them to serve takeaway pints from April. No official dates have been given over the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, with Boris Johnson previously saying England's lockdown will remain in place until at least March 8 when it is thought schools may be allowed to open. [...]

Source: ITV News, 6 February 2021

Beer and pub leaders plead for reopening date after sales halve in 2020

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-55995855>

Beer and pub sector leaders are pressing the government to give them a reopening date. The industry is desperate to get back to business after repeated warnings many pubs will not survive. The British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) is asking the government for a clear timeline and a "*roadmap to recovery*". The government insists that it has a plan for re-opening the economy which it will reveal after 22 February. The BBPA said trading restrictions and lockdowns knocked sales by 56% - worth £7.8bn - last year. [...]

Source: BBC News, 10 February 2021

Heineken cuts 8,000 jobs after Covid hits sales

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-55984400>

Beer giant Heineken has announced plans to cut nearly 10% of its workforce after a sharp drop in sales due to the coronavirus pandemic. It said 8,000 jobs would go, some of them at the head office in Amsterdam. Heineken chief executive Dolf van den Brink said 2020 had

been a year of "*unprecedented disruption*". Bars have been closed in many parts of the world, and some countries, such as South Africa, have imposed temporary bans on alcohol sales. The company is the world's second-largest brewer, with Heineken being Europe's top selling lager. It also owns the Tiger and Sol brands. [...] The cuts will affect less than 100 of the 2,300 Heineken employees in the UK, but jobs will go across the business. [...]

Source: BBC News, 10 February 2021

NI licencing law changes mean Easter 'could be overrun by alcohol misuse'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-55936074>

Easter holidays could be "overrun" by alcohol misuse if licensing laws are changed, a clergyman has warned. Rev David Clements told MLAs Christmas had been "overrun" by alcohol and said it would be a shame if Easter followed suit. He was speaking to Stormont's communities committee, which is examining a licensing laws reform bill. It would remove Easter drinking restrictions and allow longer opening hours. Current restrictions are in place from the Thursday before Easter until Easter Sunday. Alcohol drinks can only be served between 17:00 and 23:00 on Good Friday and pubs have to stop serving at midnight on Thursday and Easter Saturday. The changes have been welcomed by the drinks and hospitality sector. The bill is currently going through the legislative process at Stormont and is expected to become law in time for Easter 2022. [...]

Source: BBC News, 4 February 2021

Is the EU official really asking the EU alcohol industry to help write other countries public health policies?

<https://www.eurocare.org/cares.php?sp=trade-policies&ssp=is-the-eu-official-really-asking-the-eu-alcohol-industry-to-help-write-other-countries-public-health-policies->

The EU delegation of the European Union to South Africa has requested European alcohol producers to carry out "*activities.....around risks of alcohol abuse and mitigation measures*" following changes in Government alcohol policy introduced in South Africa in response to the Covid- 19 pandemic. This is understood as requesting them to participate in designing a strategy to influence alcohol policy in the South Africa and the EU delegation to South Africa appears to have offered to part fund the project. [...]

Source: Eurocare, February 2021

Covid-19: Pub closures 'will waste 87 million pints of beer'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-55572714>

Up to 87 million pints of beer will be thrown away as a result of pub closures during Covid lockdowns around the UK, an industry body has calculated. The British Beer and Pub

Association (BBPA) called the waste - equivalent to £331m in sales - "heartbreaking". Chief executive Emma McClarkin urged the government to give publicans more help in the Budget, including extending the VAT cut for the hospitality sector. The Treasury said keeping businesses going was its "priority". Barrelled beer not sold by its best-before date has to be returned to breweries and disposed of. [...] The BBPA has worked out, from industry feedback, that 70 million pints of beer were thrown away during the first lockdown. With publicans more alert to the risk of wastage - and amid ongoing restrictions imposed on large parts of the UK - they bought less stock after reopening. This meant that, when further lockdowns occurred around the UK last autumn, seven million pints were wasted, with another 10 million expected to go the same way during the current one, the BBPA found. [...]

Source: BBC News, 5 February 2021

Blackpool has the highest level of alcohol addiction in Britain, figures reveal

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/13972305/blackpool-britains-booze-battle-blackspot/>

Blackpool is Britain's booze battle blackspot, official figures show. The number being treated for alcohol addiction is triple the national average. NHS statistics reveal that last year in the town, famous for its golden mile, ballroom and tower, there were 4,188 adults dependent on alcohol. The rate of 36.22 per 1,000 people compares to the national average of 12.89. Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Sunderland and Hull are in the top five areas. [...]

Source: The Sun, 6 February 2021

Covid crisis is exacerbating LGBTQ alcohol abuse, studies find

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/covid-crisis-exacerbating-lgbtq-alcohol-abuse-studies-find-n1257008>

Social-distancing measures and lockdowns have disproportionately increased alcohol use in the LGBTQ community, studies find. [...] One study discovered around one-third of men who have sex with men (MSM) reported their substance use or binge-drinking had increased during the Covid-19 lockdown, with another survey of LGBTQ university students in the U.S. by the University of Maryland Prevention Research Center revealing 32 percent were drinking more since the outbreak. Drinking increased among the wider population during the pandemic, too, but at a lower rate compared to the LGBTQ community. [...]

Source: NBC News, 9 February 2021

6-month delay to government health protection agency

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/02/6-month-delay-to-government-health-protection-agency/>

England's new health protection agency – set to replace Public Health England – will not be 'fully staffed and up and running' until October, the executive chair of NHS Test and Trace revealed, despite the government's plan for it to be 'established and fully operational by Spring 2021', *HSJ* reports. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 5 February 2021

France's Macron aims to tackle tobacco and alcohol in 10-year cancer plan

<https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL8N2KA3VS>

French President Emmanuel Macron wants the generation that will turn 20 in 2030 to be the first tobacco-free one, and also promised on Thursday to do more to warn about the dangers of alcohol, as part of a 10-year strategy to fight cancer. Macron told the French Cancer National Institute - a public entity coordinating scientific research on cancer - that the government would dedicate 1.7 billion euros (\$2 billion) to the cause over the next five years, a increase of 20% compared to the 2016-2021 period. [...] *"Alcohol is responsible for one fifth of the avoidable cancers. Of course, alcohol is at the heart of our traditions, it's not about aiming for an alcohol-free society"*, Macron said. But he added all must be done to prevent excessive alcohol consumption, including more visible and detailed information on each product, as is already the case for food products. [...]

Source: Reuters, 4 February 2021

As alcohol abuse rises amid pandemic, hospitals see a wave of deadly liver disease

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-02-08/alcohol-abuse-pandemic-hospitals-liver-disease>

As the pandemic sends thousands of recovering alcoholics into relapse, hospitals across the country have reported dramatic increases in alcohol-related admissions for critical diseases such as alcoholic hepatitis and liver failure. Alcoholism-related liver disease was a growing problem even before the pandemic, with 15 million people diagnosed with the condition around the country, and with hospitalizations doubling over the last decade. But the pandemic has dramatically added to the toll. [...]

Source: Los Angeles Times, 8 February 2021

Analysis: AB InBev's \$1BN Hard Seltzer Drive

<https://www.thedrinksbusiness.com/2021/02/analysis-ab-inbevs-1bn-hard-seltzer-drive/>

It is bold to spend US\$1 billion on what is a relatively new market, but that is what the world's biggest brewer, Anheuser-Busch InBev, is doing in the next two years to expand production of hard seltzers. [...]

Source: the drinks business, 8 February 2021

A minimum price for alcohol helped curb problem drinking in the Northern Territory — is it time for a national rollout?

<https://theconversation.com/a-minimum-price-for-alcohol-helped-curb-problem-drinking-in-the-northern-territory-is-it-time-for-a-national-rollout-154829>

The “floor price” for alcohol introduced by the Northern Territory in 2018 reduced the consumption of cask wine by half, without significantly impacting sales of other types of alcohol, according to our new analysis of the policy’s effectiveness. [...] Considering the effectiveness with which this policy reduced consumption of cask wine in the NT, it is time for other state and federal governments to consider following suit. Internationally, minimum pricing policies have already been implemented in Scotland and Wales, and the Republic of Ireland has also passed legislation to implement a floor price at a later date. Other potential benefits of a minimum unit price for alcohol include higher tax revenue, and various social benefits from lower alcohol consumption. Both of these could conceivably help Australia recover from the financial burden of COVID-19. [...]

Source: The Conversation, 9 February 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1111/1753-6405.13055](https://doi.org/10.1111/1753-6405.13055)]

Putting people in recovery into decision-making roles

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/02/putting-people-in-recovery-into-decision-making-roles/>

President Biden is slowly filling out his cabinet. One of those up for the president’s inner circle is Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, who is in long term recovery. He is a former head of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and now heads the Recovery Appointments Project, working to get people in recovery into decision making roles in Washington. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 5 February 2021

No light at the end of the bottle...

<https://www.nhsapa.org/post/no-light-at-the-end-of-the-bottle>

Head of Quality and Governance for NHS APA members Inclusion, Kieran Doherty, reflects on the latest ONS alcohol data from an alcohol treatment perspective. This is not a good news blog. There is no positive twist coming at the end. The fact is that the outlook remains grim in regard to alcohol treatment and that there is no evident plan to address the issues that have led to this ongoing rise in alcohol-related deaths. [...]

Source: NHS Addictions Provider Alliance, February 2021

Alcohol as a coping response: Hyperkatifeia and how it influences our drinking

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/nicoleroberets/2021/02/07/alcohol-as-a-coping-response-hyperkatifeia--how-it-influences-our-drinking/>

[...] During the NIAAA's 50th Anniversary symposium Dr. George Koob, Director of the NIAAA used his opening remarks to talk about hyperkatifeia, what he calls "*deaths of despair*," and Covid-19. Given that fewer than 10% of the estimated 14.5 million American's that suffer from alcohol use disorder (AUD) receive treatment, the implications of increased drinking as a coping mechanism during the coronavirus pandemic could be devastating. Which means, as he highlighted, there is no time to waste in understanding what is happening psychologically and physically as a result of increased alcohol use as a coping response. [...]

Source: Forbes, 7 February 2021

Addiction: research papers

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/02/addiction-research-papers-4/>

Academic journal *Addiction* has listed the main discovery for each addiction research paper it published, organised issue by issue. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 5 February 2021

[*Addiction* – Key Findings: <https://www.addictionjournal.org/newsroom/key-findings>]

Neural roots and origins of alcoholism identified

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-02-neural-roots-alcoholism.html>

The physical origin of alcohol addiction has been located in a network of the human brain that regulates our response to danger, according to a team of British and Chinese researchers, co-led by the University of Warwick, the University of Cambridge, and Fudan University in Shanghai. The medial orbitofrontal cortex (mOFC) at the front of the brain senses an unpleasant or emergency situation, and then sends this information to the dorsal periaqueductal gray (dPAG) at the brain's core, the latter area processing whether we need to escape the situation. A person is at greater risk of developing alcohol use disorders when this information pathway is imbalanced in the following two ways [...]

Source: Medical Xpress, 4 February 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1126/sciadv.abd4074](https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.abd4074)]

Researchers find a more accurate method to gauge prenatal alcohol use

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-02-accurate-method-gauge-prenatal-alcohol.html>

When health researchers ask pregnant women about their alcohol use, expectant women may underreport their drinking, hampering efforts to minimize alcohol use in pregnancy and prevent development of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD) in children. In a recently published study in *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*, University of New Mexico scientists found that pregnant women's reporting of their own risky drinking varies greatly depending on how key questions are worded. [...]

Source: Medical Xpress, 4 February 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1111/acer.14545](https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.14545)]

Non-school friendships may drive adolescent alcohol use more than in-school ties

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-02-non-school-friendships-adolescent-alcohol-in-school.html>

A survey of more than 80,000 adolescents has revealed factors associated with having friends outside of school, and shows that non-school friendships are more strongly associated with alcohol use than school friendships. [...]

Source: Medical Xpress, 10 February 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1371/journal.pone.0245837](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0245837)]

Adult neurogenesis may hold clues for more effective treatment of alcoholism

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-02-adult-neurogenesis-clues-effective-treatment.html>

Neuroplasticity, the remarkable ability of the brain to modify and reorganize itself, is affected by or in response to excessive alcohol, whether through individual consumption or exposure in the womb. It is now well accepted that the birth and integration of new neurons continue beyond development and into adulthood. New discoveries and insights on how alcohol impacts this and other plastic processes are discussed in "Alcohol and Neural Plasticity," a special issue of *Brain Plasticity*. [...]

Source: Medical Xpress, 10 February 2021

Heavy drinking from adolescence to young adulthood is associated with an altered cerebellum

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcohol.2021.02.002>

"...Our results suggest changes in the cerebellum in healthy young adults with a history of heavy drinking from adolescence. The exact implications and significance of these findings require further research."

Source: *Alcohol*, 6 February 2021

Commentary on Hensler *et al.*: The public health case for promoting and valuing drinking reductions in the treatment of alcohol use disorder

<https://doi.org/10.1111/add.15429>

[...] Drinking reductions short of abstinence are achievable, sustainable and associated with improvements in how some individuals with alcohol use disorder (AUD) feel and function. The public health burden of AUD could be lessened if drinking reductions were more widely accepted and promoted as a treatment goal in addition to abstinence. [...]

Source: *Addiction*, 7 February 2021

Europe makes alcohol policy a key element of cancer prevention

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/02/europe-makes-alcohol-policy-a-key-element-of-cancer-prevention/>

The European Commission has launched Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, with 4 key action areas and 10 flagship initiatives and multiple supporting actions. The 4 key areas are: prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, as well as improving quality of life, Movendi explains. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 5 February 2021

Booker prize winner Shuggie Bain sheds light on a growing issue for young people in lockdown

<https://www.drinkanddrugsnews.com/young-people-in-lockdown/>

By Alison Henderson, Family Worker at We Are With You in Lancashire. There is a passage in this year's Booker Prize winning novel Shuggie Bain that really hits home. It's a semi-autobiographical tale of a young boy growing up in Pithead in Glasgow with a mother who loves him and means well, but the hardship of her life leads her to take solace in 'the drink'. At one point Shuggie returns from school and loiters outside, desperately looking for signs of whether his Mother has been on a binge before entering. The next morning he brings her a mug of warm beer when she wakes up to help quiet down 'the shakes.' [...]

Source: Drink and Drug News (DDN), 9 February 2021

The new WHO Foundation — global health deserves better

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2021-004950>

This year the WHO Foundation has been launched as a way to broaden the WHO donor pool. [...] It is not difficult to envisage a scenario in which donations from alcohol or ultra-processed food producers, for example, come to exceed the extremely modest provision in the WHO budget for alcohol control and obesity initiatives. [...]

Source: *BMJ Global Health*, 5 February 2021

Reported road casualties in Great Britain, provisional estimates involving illegal alcohol levels: 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-in-great-britain-provisional-estimates-involving-illegal-alcohol-levels-2019>

Provisional estimates on personal injury drink drive accidents in Great Britain for 2019. [...]

Source: Department for Transport, 11 February 2021

PhD Symposium Session 4.0: Addiction and Policy

<https://www.addiction-ssa.org/phd-symposium-session-4-0-addiction-and-policy/>

Session 4.0 of the SSA PhD Symposium focused on addiction policy and included four presentations covering recreational cannabis, alcohol warning messages, treatment funding and alcohol guidelines. [...]

Source: Society for the Study of Addiction (SSA), 11 February 2021

Jamie Lee Curtis, Now 22 Years Sober, Reflects on 'Hidden' Battle With Addiction

<https://www.prevention.com/health/a35418550/jamie-lee-curtis-sobriety-instagram/>

Jamie Lee Curtis is 22 years sober. On Feb. 3, the 62-year-old actress took to Instagram to reflect on the past two decades without alcohol or drugs. In the post, Curtis shared a throwback photo of her holding a drink. *"A LONG time ago... In a galaxy far, far away... I was a young STAR at WAR with herself. I didn't know it then. I chased everything. I kept it hidden. I was [as] sick as my secrets,"* she wrote in the caption. [...]

Source: Prevention, 4 February 2021

Giving Up Alcohol in the Era of Covid-19

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/giving-up-alcohol-in-the-era-of-covid-19-11612587660>

Back in mid-March, as schools and businesses began to close and people headed home to hunker down, Amanda, a 44-year-old yoga instructor in Portland, Maine (who asked that her real name not be used for privacy reasons), decided to address one of the many worries that had begun to consume her day. *"And that was whether I was drinking too much,"* [...]

Source: Wall Street Journal, 6 February 2021

Stigma, humanizing terms, and taking on hostility

<https://recoveryreview.blog/2021/02/07/stigma-humanizing-terms-and-taking-on-hostility/>

I've posted quite a bit on language in advocacy over the years. Most recently I posted about the choice between words ("chronic brain disease") that evoke less blame but more pessimism about change, or words ("problem") that evoke more blame but more optimism about change. A couple of months ago, I examined a few examples of controversial language and the impact of attitudes vs. word choice. [...]

Source: Recovery Review, 7 February 2021

Drinking the deadlines away

<https://glasgowguardian.co.uk/2021/02/06/drinking-the-deadlines-away/>

As we make our way through dry January, one student shares their experience of just how damaging the alcohol-dependent student stereotype can be. [...]

Source: Glasgow Guardian, 6 February 2021

7 Of The Most Annoying Things People Say To Nondrinkers

<https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/annoying-things-say-nondrinkers-16019ad4ec5b6f41348c4a7a1>

Here's what not to do when talking about alcohol and sobriety and how you can be supportive instead. [...]

Source: Huffington Post, 5 February 2021

The Contradiction of Addiction

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/minority-report/202102/the-contradiction-addiction>

As an addiction specialist, one of the most common rebuttals I get from the general public and even those suffering from an addiction is the aversion to the belief of powerlessness. No one wants to feel "*powerless*" over a substance like drugs or alcohol or to behaviors like gambling, eating, or sex. We all want and inherently believe we make choices in life and need to be held accountable to them. [...] The core definition of addiction is doing something which negatively impacts you and your loved ones yet you can't stop and continue to do so. So how do we make sense of the nature of addiction? Is it a disease, a choice, or are we simply powerless? [...]

Source: Psychology Today, 8 February 2021

The pubs closing didn't stop us drinking, but our relationship with alcohol has changed

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/sober-alcohol-drinking-b1798776.html>

As the annual month-long sobriety pledge is over again, Olivia Petter examines how the UK can have a healthier attitude to drinking for the rest of the year [...]

Source: Independent, 10 February 2021

Addiction in animation

<https://recoveryreview.blog/2021/02/06/addiction-in-animation/>

An oddly affecting video from Studio Filmbilder that captures some of the elements of substance dependence that will strike a chord with many. [end]

Source: Recovery Review, 6 February 2021

