

SHAAP

SCOTTISH HEALTH ACTION ON ALCOHOL PROBLEMS
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Welcome to SHAAP's weekly media monitoring service: 7 January – 14 January 2021

Women turned to alcohol 'more often than men' in the first lockdown

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/alcohol-lockdown-women-men-coronavirus-b1783416.html>

Women turned to alcohol more often than men in the first lockdown - raising fears they could suffer chronic diseases in years to come, a new study has found. Experts warned women are using alcohol to cope with stress triggered by bearing the brunt of homeschooling pressures and household income plummeting during the pandemic. The report, carried out by the University of East Anglia, found women drank more frequently, whereas men drank in larger quantities per drinking session. Researchers said the change in drinking habits was concerning as "*even relatively small changes*" in alcohol consumption can have a notable effect on people's long-term health. The study, which examined how lifestyle habits changed in the first month of lockdown in April last year, discovered women, young people and those who are overweight, were more likely to resort to unhealthy habits. [...]

Source: Independent, 7 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1111/bjhp.12500](https://doi.org/10.1111/bjhp.12500)]

One in four drinkers increased their alcohol consumption during coronavirus lockdown... with young middle-class women most likely to turn to booze to cope, study suggests

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9144995/One-four-drinkers-increased-alcohol-consumption-coronavirus-lockdown.html>

Young middle-class women are the most likely to turn to drink to cope with lockdown, a study says. A quarter of all drinkers increased their alcohol intake after stay-at-home rules were imposed last spring. Most of these were younger educated women on above-average salaries. Researchers suggest women may be more vulnerable to lockdown anxieties over money and jobs, and may also face an added burden of looking after children and home schooling. The University College London survey of 30,000 people, taken during the first fortnight of the first lockdown, follows widespread concern that boredom, loneliness, worries about family and friends, and difficulties with work and money led to a major

increase in drinking. A third of those surveyed did not drink during lockdown but researchers say those who drank more last year are likely to have increased their alcohol use again during the current lockdown. [...]

Source: Daily Mail (Mail Online), 14 January 2021

[Research article: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0376871620306268>]

Study finds one small alcoholic drink a day raises risk of irregular heartbeat

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/jan/13/study-finds-one-small-alcoholic-drink-a-day-raises-risk-of-irregular-heartbeat>

Having one small alcoholic drink a day raises the risk of developing an irregular heartbeat, a condition that causes dizziness and palpitations and leaves people more prone to strokes, a study has found. Researchers examined the heart health and drinking habits of 108,000 people aged 24 to 97 by combining records from Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Italy that stretched over 14 years. Their analysis confirmed the long-held belief that a small amount of alcohol protects against heart failure, with 20g of ethanol a day being optimum – but the same was not true for a condition called atrial fibrillation, or heart arrhythmia. [...]

Source: The Guardian, 13 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1093/eurheartj/ehaa953](https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehaa953)]

Nearly half of ICU staff suffering PTSD, depression, alcoholism or anxiety

<https://metro.co.uk/2021/01/13/almost-half-icu-staff-struggling-with-anxiety-depression-or-drinking-13894209/>

Almost half of intensive care workers have battled depression, anxiety or problems with drinking during the coronavirus pandemic, a study has revealed. The research, which surveyed staff from nine intensive care wards across England, found that 45% of workers met the clinical threshold for at least one of the following conditions: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), severe anxiety and depression, or a drinking dependency. One in eight workers said they had experienced suicidal thoughts or thoughts of harming themselves within the two weeks previous. The study, conducted by King's College London, found poor mental health was more common among nurses than doctors or health workers on the ward. The surveys were undertaken during the first wave of the pandemic, between June and July 2020. More than 700 healthcare workers took part. [...]

Source: Metro, 13 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1093/occmed/kqaa220](https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqaa220) / Advance article link:

<https://academic.oup.com/occmed/advance-article/doi/10.1093/occmed/kqaa220/6072139>]

Alcohol sales fall in 2020 as pubs and restaurants faced closures

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/alcohol-sales-lockdown-home-drinking-b1776504.html>

Alcohol sales fell in 2020 in the UK despite a rise in home drinking during the lockdown and other coronavirus restrictions. Beer sales fell 10%, while wine sales dropped 5%, according to a report due to be published in the next few weeks. Despite fears by health professionals that alcohol consumption could have increased while Brits remained at home, the annual market report by the Wine and Spirit Trade Association (WSTA) will show that the closure of pubs and restaurants and a rising interest in non-alcoholic drinks dragged down the industry in 2020. [...]

Source: Independent, 7 January 2021

Nicola Sturgeon tightens lockdown rules including on takeaways and alcohol

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19007737.nicola-sturgeon-tightens-lockdown-rules-including-takeaways-alcohol/>

Nicola Sturgeon has tightened lockdown rules including around takeaways and the consumption of alcohol. The First Minister said the situation facing Scotland remains "very precarious and extremely serious". She announced tougher rules for takeaway and click and collect services, as well as banning drinking alcohol outdoors in public in level four coronavirus areas. [...]

Source: The Herald, 13 January 2021

New rules on sale of alcohol come into force today

<https://www.irishtimes.com/business/retail-and-services/new-rules-on-sale-of-alcohol-come-into-force-today-1.4453221>

Alcohol sales will be disallowed from supermarket voucher schemes from Monday, while popular multibuy deals will also be shelved. The changes come as part of the rollout of Government efforts to reduce the consumption of alcohol under the Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018. The Act has been introduced gradually over the past year or so – including features such as the recent introduction of barriers to keep alcohol away from general grocery areas – but will finally hit consumers in a more meaningful way next week. From January 11th, three new measures will be introduced. [...]

Source: The Irish Times, 8 January 2021

‘I deserve a glass’ – and four other lies you should stop telling yourself about drinking

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/jan/08/i-deserve-a-glass-and-four-other-lies-you-should-stop-telling-yourself-about-drinking>

Almost half of Britons drank more during lockdown than they would normally. If you're looking to change your relationship with alcohol, a good start is identifying (and challenging) the lies we tell ourselves about drinking. [...]

Source: The Guardian, 8 January 2021

Edinburgh, London, Brussels: what Scotland's alcohol pricing policy tells us about multi-level governance

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/alcohol-pricing-policy-scotland/>

The Scottish government's plans for a minimum unit price for alcohol were vehemently opposed by the alcohol industry leading to a six-year delay in implementation after legislation was passed. Benjamin Hawkins explains the consequences of devolution and European Union membership for the development of this policy in Scotland through the concepts of multi-level governance, veto points, and venue shifting. [...]

Source: LSE British Politics and Policy, 13 January 2021

Different behaviors could reduce death and health risks in regular alcohol drinkers

https://www.gla.ac.uk/news/headline_768688_en.html

A large study of UK adults who consume alcohol regularly has found that different patterns of alcohol consumption – including drinking wine, consuming alcohol with food and spreading alcohol intake over three to four days – could be associated with a lesser risk of alcohol-related negative health outcomes such as death. The study – from the University of Glasgow and published today in *BMC Medicine* – found that regular spirit and beer/cider drinkers had a higher adjusted risk of death, major cardiovascular events, liver cirrhosis and accidents/self-harm when compared to those who drank red and white wine, after adjusting for alcohol amount consumed overall. [...]

Source: University of Glasgow, 12 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1186/s12916-020-01878-2](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-020-01878-2)]

Genetic studies of alcohol consumption could be spoiled by people who misreport their behavior

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-01-genetic-alcohol-consumption-people-misreport.html>

A team of researchers with members affiliated with multiple institutions in Australia and China has found evidence that genetic studies of alcohol drinking could be tainted by people under study who misreport their behavior. In their paper published in the journal *Nature Communications*, the group describes using statistical analysis on information in the UK Biobank to study the problem. [...]

Source: Medical Xpress, 13 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1038/s41467-020-20237-6](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-20237-6)]

More than half of COVID-19 health care workers at risk for mental health problems

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/01/210112125159.htm>

A new study suggests more than half of doctors, nurses, and emergency responders involved in COVID-19 care could be at risk for one or more mental health problems, including acute traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, problematic alcohol use, and insomnia. The researchers found that the risk of these mental health conditions was comparable to rates observed during natural disasters, such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. [...]

Source: ScienceDaily, 12 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1016/j.jpsychires.2020.10.045](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2020.10.045)]

Celebrity influence on users of alcohol reduction app

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/01/celebrity-influence-on-users-of-alcohol-reduction-app/>

Smartphone apps are used for health-related behaviour change but do users differ by mode of app discovery? *BMC Public Health* compared users who discovered Drink Less app before and after national media coverage. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 11 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1186/s12889-020-10011-0](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-10011-0)]

Lifestyle changes may reduce risk for alcohol related cirrhosis

<https://www.healio.com/news/hepatology/20210108/lifestyle-changes-may-reduce-risk-for-alcohol-related-cirrhosis>

Weight loss, intensive treatment of diabetes or prediabetic states and coffee or tea consumption may decrease the risk for alcohol-related cirrhosis, according to a study published in the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*. [...] Weight loss, intensive treatment of diabetes or prediabetic states and coffee or tea consumption may decrease the risk for alcohol-related cirrhosis. [...]

Source: Healio, 8 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.14309/ajg.0000000000000833](https://doi.org/10.14309/ajg.0000000000000833)]

Substance use disorder, comorbidities and autism

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/01/substance-use-disorder-comorbidities-and-autism/>

Taiwan's Tri-Service General Hospital studied 6,599 people with autism spectrum disorder and 26,396 controls without ASD, – and found that autism linked to a higher risk of substance use disorder, even greater in those with behavioural comorbidities. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 7 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1001/jamapediatrics.2020.5371](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2020.5371)]

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders: an overview of current evidence and activities in the UK

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/archdischild-2020-320435>

Estimates for the UK suggest that alcohol consumption during pregnancy and prevalence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)—the most common neurodevelopmental condition—are high. Considering the significant health and social impacts of FASD, there is a public health imperative to prioritise prevention, interventions and support. In this article, we outline the current state of play regarding FASD knowledge and research in the UK, which is characterised by a lack of evidence, a lack of dedicated funding and services, and consequently little policy formulation and strategic direction. We highlight progress made to date, as well as current knowledge and service gaps to propose a way forward for UK research. [...]

Source: *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, 13 January 2021

Drinking Alcohol May Reduce Risk for Rheumatoid Arthritis

<https://www.docwirenews.com/docwire-pick/rheumatology-picks/drinking-alcohol-may-reduce-risk-for-rheumatoid-arthritis/>

Alcohol consumption may be associated with a decreased risk for developing rheumatoid arthritis (RA), according to a recent study. Further, among people who smoke, a known risk factor for RA, drinking alcohol may have a protective effect, the researchers concluded. Despite the results of the study, the researchers did not recommend that non-drinkers begin drinking alcohol to reduce their odds of developing RA. Instead, they called for future research to help unveil a better understanding of why this relationship was observed. “Further studies are needed to understand the mechanisms behind the findings which may contribute to define ways to achieve protection against RA by other means than alcohol consumption,” they said. [...]

Source: docwirenews, 12 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1136/rmdopen-2020-001379](https://doi.org/10.1136/rmdopen-2020-001379)]

New Horizons grant awards announced, exploring new areas of alcohol harm

<https://alcoholchange.org.uk/blog/2021/new-horizons-grant-awards-announced-exploring-new-areas-of-alcohol-harm>

“We are thrilled to announce the four research studies funded under our New Horizons grant programme, following our open call for applications in May 2020. Our New Horizons grants programme for academic research is focused on developing a greater understanding of 'Groups, Communities and Alcohol Harm'.” [...]

Source: Alcohol Change UK, January 2021

Alcohol Abstinence Monitoring Requirement: 94% compliance

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/01/alcohol-abstinence-monitoring-requirement-94-compliance/>

Over 2 years in London, 1,014 people received an Alcohol Abstinence Monitoring Requirement, and wore a ‘sobriety tag’ to monitor adherence to the requirement for an average of 61 days. Drug & Alcohol Findings analyses the 94% rate of compliance. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 13 January 2021

Drinking when in recovery from other substances

<https://recoveryreview.blog/2021/01/09/drinking-when-in-recovery-from-other-substances/>

When we consider the things that make us vulnerable to addiction – trauma, poverty, lack of opportunity, stress, stigma, genetics and environment, it’s no surprise that relapse and the development of problems with other substances occur after treatment. These problems don’t resolve quickly, if at all. The attempt to soothe cares, pain and distress with alcohol, the permitted drug, is understandable. I hear stories every week from my patients about their experiences of putting down one substance and picking up alcohol (or other drugs) only to find their problems worsening. [...]

Source: Recovery Review, 9 January 2021

Clinicians’ attitudes to recovery

<https://recoveryreview.blog/2021/01/11/clinicians-attitudes-to-recovery/>

[...] In 2014, Pillay, Best and Lubman took a look at Australian clinicians’ attitudes to recovery in a research paper. [...]

Source: Recovery Review, 11 January 2021

Assist-Lite screening tool: how to use

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/01/assist-lite-screening-tool-how-to-use/>

Public Health England has updated its guidance for health and social care professionals using the Assist-Lite tool to identify substance use and provide appropriate intervention, with tools for mental and general healthcare services to include volatile substances. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 7 January 2021

Alcohol & other drug services in the mental-health system

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/01/alcohol-other-drug-services-in-the-mental-health-system/>

Australia's 360edge report outlines health service gaps integrating complex or comorbid clients with both alcohol and other drug and mental health issues at a system, service and treatment level. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 13 January 2021

[360edge Report: <https://360edge.com.au/resources/#aod-in-mental-health-report>]

One week alcohol-free - what's happening in your body?

<https://alcoholchange.org.uk/blog/2021/one-week-alcohol-free-whats-happening-in-your-body>

At one week alcohol-free you might be starting to see changes on the surface – no hangover, more energy, brighter skin – but what's going on inside your body one week into your booze-free journey? [...]

Source: Alcohol Change UK, January 2021

Shifting culture: How do we reshape the UK's unhealthy relationship with alcohol?

<https://ahauk.org/shifting-culture-how-do-we-reshape-the-uks-unhealthy-relationship-with-alcohol/>

In the spirit of New Year's resolutions and Dry January, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on our relationship with alcohol as a society – and on the society that we want to live in in the future. In summer 2020, we asked people affected by alcohol harm and professionals working in the sector what they hope our society will look like in 2025, regarding alcohol consumption, harm and treatment. In this blog, Sarah Schoenberger, Policy and Advocacy Manager at the Alcohol Health Alliance, reflects on what we heard, and how we can make it a reality. [...]

Source: Alcohol Health Alliance UK, January 2021

Recovery and Community with Anna Byberg and Matt Statman

<https://recoveryreview.blog/2021/01/12/recovery-and-community-with-anna-byberg-and-matt-statman/>

“This podcast involves three of my favorite people. It’s a conversation about recovery in the context of community. It’s brief and well worth your time.” [...]

Source: Recovery Review, 12 January 2021

Stories from the festive period (17 Dec 2020 – 7 Jan 2021)

Disquiet over nation's health as Scots hit the bottle during lockdown

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18975375.disquiet-nations-health-scots-hit-bottle-lockdown/>

Almost one in four drinkers in Scotland are guzzling alcohol at increasing or high risk levels during the Covid-19 pandemic leading to serious concerns about the health of the nation in lockdown. More than two-in-five (43%) Scots who already drink at increasing or higher risk levels - more than 14 units a week - reported they are now quaffing more than they would usually, according to the study by alcohol education charity Drinkaware. [...] The study has also found certain groups – including those on furlough and those with caring responsibilities and parents – are drinking more and are displaying "*worrying drinking habits that could become ingrained*". [...] The Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP) which has launched a manifesto for the 2021 Scottish Parliament election has called on all parties and candidates to recognise that alcohol-related harm has implications for physical and mental health, and to commit to policies that will help tackle Scotland's alcohol problem. [...]

Source: The Herald, 30 December 2020

[SHAAP Manifesto for the 2021 Scottish Parliament Election:

<https://www.shaap.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-briefings/293-shaap-2021-manifesto.html>]

SPFL slammed over Glen's vodka sponsorship as football bosses told to blow whistle on booze deals

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/spfl-slammed-over-glens-vodka-23207751>

Scottish football bosses have been urged to "blow the whistle" on alcohol advertising in the beautiful game after signing another deal with a booze firm. Glen's vodka was yesterday announced as a corporate partner of the SPFL under a contract that will run until the end of the 2022/23 season. League supremo Neil Doncaster insisted it was "an exciting partnership with a well-respected Scottish brand" at a time when the professional game north of the border is already struggling financially due to Covid. But Scottish Labour's health spokeswoman said signing sponsorship deals with distillers sent the wrong message to young fans. MSP Monica Lennon urged the SPFL to follow the example of the women's game and distance itself from deals with distillers, brewers or bookmakers. [...] Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems and Alcohol Focus Scotland called for a ban on booze advertising in sport as part of a wider package of restrictions to "*control alcohol marketing*". Research from the University of Stirling revealed alcohol marketing references featured once every 15 seconds in a live Six Nations rugby match and once every 98 seconds during an SPFL game. [...]

Source: Daily Record, 23 December 2020

[SHAAP/Alcohol Focus Scotland Report: Time to blow the whistle on alcohol sports sponsorship: <https://www.shaap.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-briefings/231-time-to-blow-the-whistle-on-alcohol-sports-sponsorship.html>]

Scots urged to cut back on drinking in January amid 'worrying' hospitalisations

<https://www.scotsman.com/health/scots-urged-cut-back-drinking-january-amid-worrying-hospitalisations-3086233>

Despite tougher restrictions on alcohol sales, including minimum pricing, hospitals in Scotland are treating thousands of patients with alcohol related conditions. The latest figures from Public Health Scotland show over 23,000 patients were admitted to hospital with an alcohol related condition in 2019/20. That number has remained relatively stable over the last five years. Dr Richard Piper, chief executive of the charity Alcohol Change UK, said hospital admissions related to alcohol "*continue to remain far too high*". [...]

Source: The Scotsman, 5 January 2021

Record number of Britons to take part in dry January

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/dec/31/record-number-of-britons-to-take-part-in-dry-january>

A record number of Britons are planning to forego booze during so-called dry January, after re-evaluating their home drinking habits during lockdown and as sales of "no and low" alcohol alternatives soar. The charity Alcohol Change UK said its polling shows more than 6.5 million adults intend to participate in dry January – up from 3.9 million last year. That is the equivalent of one in five of people who drink alcohol. [...]

Source: The Guardian, 31 December 2020

[Dry January – Alcohol Change UK: <https://alcoholchange.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/dry-january>]

Seven in 10 adults are motivated to get healthier in 2021 due to COVID-19

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/seven-in-10-adults-are-motivated-to-get-healthier-in-2021-due-to-covid-19>

The survey showed 8 in 10 adults aged over 18 have decided to modify their lifestyle in 2021, with 7 in 10 adults saying that they are motivated to make healthier lifestyle changes due to coronavirus (COVID-19). Compared to last year, almost half of the population (43%) feel more motivated to make changes to their life in January. Around 6 million adults aged 40 to 60 plan to: eat more healthily (40%) lose weight (39%) exercise more (41%) [...] In addition, 4 in 10 (43%) regular smokers plan to make a quit attempt in 2021 and nearly half of those who increased their alcohol intake during the second lockdown (45%) intend to reduce their alcohol intake this year. [...]

Source: Public Health England, 4 January 2021

One in five are spending £66 more a month on alcohol during Covid pandemic with seven in 10 splashing more cash on luxuries

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9106255/One-five-spending-66-month-alcohol-Covid-pandemic.html>

One in five people spent £66 more a month on alcohol during the coronavirus pandemic, with seven in ten splashing more cash on luxuries this year. A survey undertaken by AA Financial Services revealed 71 per cent of people had upped their spending in 2020. Alcohol was found to be the item a significant number of people had splurged on most, *The Times* reports. People also spent more money on food luxuries (13%), books (11%), music and film subscriptions (7%) and movie box sets (6%). Other spending increases, within the 2,000 people surveyed, were seen on 'feelgood impulse buys' - with one in six reporting a jump in how much they were paying. [...]

Source: Daily Mail, 2 January 2021

Health Notes: Surge in patients admitted to hospital for alcohol-related liver disease amid concerns many people turned to drink due to anxiety about the pandemic

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-9106391/HEALTH-NOTES-Surge-patients-admitted-hospital-alcohol-related-liver-disease.html>

The number of patients admitted to hospital for alcohol-related liver disease (ARLD) surged last year, amid concerns from experts that many people turned to drink due to anxiety about the pandemic. The liver unit at King's College Hospital in London compared

admissions in June 2020 with those in June 2019. It found a 48.5 per cent increase in admissions related to alcohol abuse, with a quarter of those admitted requiring intensive care to treat the potentially deadly condition. Doctors believe the problem could be endemic, with recent analysis from Public Health England showing the number of people drinking excessively doubled between February and March following the first Covid lockdown, matching the pattern seen at King's. [...]

Source: Daily Mail, 2 January 2021

People receiving Covid vaccines 'should avoid alcohol'

<https://metro.co.uk/2021/01/03/people-receiving-covid-vaccines-should-avoid-alcohol-13841592/>

Alcohol can reduce the immune system's response to a Covid-19 vaccine, experts have warned. People receiving jabs should avoid drinking alcohol because it alters the make-up of microorganisms in the gut that help stop bacteria and viruses getting through, according to Immunologist Professor Sheena Cruickshank. It came after Emergency medicine expert Dr Ronx Ikharia found three glasses of Prosecco reduced the levels of white blood cells, including lymphocytes which help attack viruses with antibodies, by up to half. She carried out an experiment showing this on *The Truth About... Boosting Your Immune System*, which airs on the BBC on Wednesday. Lymphocytes account for 20% to 40% of white blood cells in adults and help fight viruses in lymph nodes, the spleen and other areas where an immune response is likely to be needed first. [...]

Source: Metro, 3 January 2021

Alcohol takeaways to be banned in England until mid-February

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/alcohol-takeaways-banned-deliveries-england-b1782270.html>

Alcohol takeaways are to be banned from tomorrow until mid-February in England as Boris Johnson clamps down on socialising under the new lockdown regime. All restaurants, pubs and other hospitality settings must close their doors to customers from tomorrow under the new rules announced by the prime minister in a televised statement from 10 Downing Street. But in a tightening of the restrictions imposed under tier 4 of the PM's regionalised system, while restaurants will be able to sell food and soft drinks for delivery, click-and-collect and takeaway, venues will no longer be able to serve takeaway or click-and-collect alcohol. It is understood that the ban is driven by concerns that customers buying takeaway alcohol from pub and bar doors would then congregate with friends nearby to drink. [...]

Source: Independent, 4 January 2021

Lockdown drives up lager sales but wipes £180m off makeup

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/dec/18/virus-drives-healthy-lager-sales-wipes-180m-makeup>

Supermarket sales figures have captured the way Covid has caused big changes in the way we live, from lager-fuelled barbecues and home-cooked roasts replacing nights in the pub and ready meals, to lower sales of makeup, deodorant and even toothbrushes pointing to people letting themselves go a bit. With coronavirus restrictions often forbidding meals and nights out with friends, Britons put an extra £2.5bn of beer, wine, spirits and meat in their trolleys as the pandemic “shifted consumer shopping habits to the extreme”, according to The Grocer magazine’s annual Top Products Survey. After years when similar exercises have turned up more wholesome lifestyle trends such as the rise of the plant-based diet, the star performer of 2020 was lager, with sales soaring by more than a fifth, or more than £800m. Supermarkets also rang up an extra £1bn of cigarettes and rolling tobacco at the checkout. [...]

Source: The Guardian, 18 December 2020

Alcohol-related hospital admissions rise by 45 per cent in a decade, as charities warn of further cuts to treatment services

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/12/31/alcohol-related-hospital-admissions-rise-45-per-cent-decade/>

In 2018-19 there were 1,261,907 hospital admissions where the primary or any secondary reason for admission was linked to alcohol in England [...]

Source: The Telegraph, 31 December 2020 [*Subscription / Free Trial*]

Modernisation of Isle of Man alcohol licensing regime proposed

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-isle-of-man-55355745>

Decisions over the granting of licences to sell alcohol could be taken out of the hands of the courts under proposals put forward by the Manx government. Currently applications are considered by the island's High Bailiff and a panel of magistrates. The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) wants to set up an independent Licensing Authority instead. Views on the planned changes are being sought in a consultation on the modernisation of Manx licensing laws. [...] The new laws would see the rules governing the sale of alcohol largely remain the same. The legislation would make it possible for minimum unit pricing and below cost price sale restrictions to be gradually introduced in future. [...]

Source: BBC News, 18 December 2020

Coronavirus: 'No liquor in teapots', South Africa's restaurants warned

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-55476832>

South Africa's police minister has warned restaurants not to hide alcohol in teapots to try and get around a fresh ban on the sale of liquor. President Cyril Ramaphosa said "*reckless behaviour*" caused by drinking increased the risk of spreading Covid as he announced the ban on Monday. A new, faster-spreading variant of the coronavirus was detected in South Africa about two weeks ago. [...] Speaking at a press conference on Tuesday after the new measures came into effect, Police Minister Bheki Cele warned that restaurants would lose their trading licences and owners prosecuted if they flouted the ban. "*Don't put alcohol in your teapots in restaurants. Don't put alcohol in the bottles written 0% alcohol. We know your tricks, don't do that,*" said Mr Cele. [...]

Source: BBC News, 29 December 2020

SNP fizzing over peers' luxury drinks orders

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18971804.snp-fizzing-peers-luxury-drinks/>

Hundreds of bottles of champagne have been sold in the House of Lords this year, new figures reveal. More than 200 bottles of Prosecco and champagne have been sold to both peers and at public events in 2020 despite peers only sitting for 113 days. According to a freedom of information request from the SNP, 61 bottles of the Lords own-brand champagne were sold in 2020, for £50 a bottle. [...]

Source: The Herald, 28 December 2020

Call for parties to pledge end to health inequality ahead of Holyrood election

<https://www.thenational.scot/news/18953227.call-parties-pledge-end-health-inequality-ahead-holyrood-election/>

Health experts are calling for political parties to commit to ending all forms of health inequality, ahead of next year's Holyrood election. The Scottish Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Facilities (the Scottish Academy) represents the views of different medical professions throughout Scotland. The Scottish Academy has proposed five key measures in their election manifesto which could help reduce health inequality in Scotland [...] The Scottish Academy also believes access to the NHS in Scotland can be improved by investing in digital resources, particularly for the most isolated in society, such as the elderly and those who live in the country's remote and rural areas. Its manifesto also calls for an increase in the number of medical student places as well as action to reduce drug and alcohol related harms. [end]

Source: The National, 18 December 2020

Mairi Gougeon named new Scottish public health minister

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-55400263>

Mairi Gougeon has been named the Scottish government's new public health minister, with responsibility for Covid-19 testing across the country. The move comes after Joe FitzPatrick lost his post in the government over drug deaths hitting a new record level. Ms Gougeon moves across from the rural economy brief, which will now be filled by Ben Macpherson. [...] She will report to Health Secretary Jeane Freeman, who the government said was "taking the lead" on the delivery of the vaccination programme in Scotland. [...] As well as the Covid testing programme, Ms Gougeon will have responsibility for sport, child and maternal health, public health improvement and problem alcohol use and recovery. [end]

Source: BBC News, 21 December 2020

Senior health and social care appointments

<https://www.gov.scot/news/senior-health-and-social-care-appointments/>

New Chief Executive of NHS Scotland, Chief Medical Officer and Chief Nursing Officer appointed. Health Secretary Jeane Freeman has welcomed the appointment of three new health and social care leaders in the Scottish Government. Caroline Lamb has been appointed Chief Executive of NHS Scotland and Scottish Government Director General Health and Social Care. [...] Dr Gregor Smith has been appointed Chief Medical Officer. [...] Professor Amanda Croft has been appointed Chief Nursing Officer. [...]

Source: Scottish Government, 23 December 2020

Australians spend an extra \$2 billion on booze in 2020

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/coronavirus-alcohol-spending-up-2-billion-in-australia-in-pandemic/f8bf2ec6-6ef7-4a5b-99f3-421c88297b70>

Household alcohol spending shot through the roof in Australia this year, with people spending \$2 billion more than normal on booze during the coronavirus pandemic. A Finder analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics data showed that in 2020, Australians spent an average of \$1891 on household alcohol – up \$270 on 2019. Spending shot up 17 per cent year-on-year in the September quarter to \$6.18 billion, just shy of June's record-breaking \$6.21 billion. [...]

Source: 9News, 22 December 2020

Minimum unit pricing: new research on individual factors affecting people's alcohol use

<https://alcoholchange.org.uk/blog/2021/minimum-unit-pricing-new-research-on-individual-factors-affecting-peoples-alcohol-use>

In this blog, we consider the findings of an important new piece of research from the University of Glasgow looking at the effects of Minimum Unit Pricing in Scotland on people's behaviour. The report helps us to understand the ways in which Minimum Unit Pricing acts

on individuals and suggests possible further interventions that may be needed to support those who drink at harmful levels. [...]

Source: Alcohol Change UK, January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1111/add.15382](https://doi.org/10.1111/add.15382)]

Just a Thimbleful of Alcohol Could Impair Driving Ability

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/the-athletes-way/202012/just-thimbleful-alcohol-could-impair-driving-ability>

[N]ew research suggests that blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels far below the legal driving limit of 0.08% may dramatically impair hand-eye coordination. These findings (Tyson et al., 2020) were published on December 17 in *The Journal of Physiology*. During this study, a research team from NASA's Ames Research Center identified how BACs as low as 0.015% can cause sensorimotor impairments related to human ocular tracking. Notably, first author Terence Tyson and colleagues at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Visuomotor Control Laboratory found that consuming the equivalent of less than half-a-bottle of beer or just a few sips of wine can result in previously unrecognized alcohol-induced impairments. [...]

Source: Psychology Today, 24 December 2020

[Research article doi: [10.1113/JP280395](https://doi.org/10.1113/JP280395)]

Increase in pleasurable effects of alcohol over time can predict alcohol use disorder

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/01/210105084649.htm>

A new study following young adult drinkers for 10 years has found that individuals who reported the highest sensitivity to alcohol's pleasurable and rewarding effects at the start of the trial were more likely to develop an alcohol use disorder (AUD) over the course of the study. [...]

Source: ScienceDaily, 5 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1176/appi.ajp.2020.20030247](https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.2020.20030247)]

National drug and alcohol treatment waiting times (1 July – 30 September 2020)

<https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/lifestyle-and-behaviours/substance-use/national-drug-and-alcohol-treatment-waiting-times/>

This release by Public Health Scotland reports on the waiting times for people accessing drug and alcohol treatment services between 1 July - 30 September 2020. It contains information on the number of people seen for treatment, types of treatment accessed, and length of time waited. The Scottish Government set a standard that 90% of people referred

for help with their drug or alcohol problem will wait no longer than three weeks for treatment that supports their recovery. [...]

Source: Public Health Scotland, 22 December 2020

The need to say it nicer: The language we choose when we talk about substance use matters

<https://theconversation.com/the-need-to-say-it-nicer-the-language-we-choose-when-we-talk-about-substance-use-matters-151055>

When Hunter Biden, son of President-elect Joe Biden, was recently interviewed by Amy Robach at ABC News, Robach brought up Hunter's substance use issues, noting that he had been "*in and out of rehab seven, eight times.*" Hunter responded, "*Say it nicer to me.*" He went on to correct Robach's language, saying that he had "*sought treatment for an issue, like most people*" and noted that the interviewer was "*insensitive.*" [...]

Source: The Conversation, 4 January 2021

The Alcohol 'Problem' Podcast, Ep 3: Alcoholics Anonymous and spirituality in recovery with Dr Wendy Dossett

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/1275176/6957548>

In this episode we talk to Dr Wendy Dossett, an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Chester, about spirituality in recovery. This is discussed in terms of its interpretations through Alcoholics Anonymous as well spirituality in Buddhist-orientated recovery movements. Issues include how people make sense of their 'higher power' and how this may function in recovery, as well as other issues such as stigma, the 'disease model' and the pros and cons of self-labelling as 'an alcoholic' in different contexts. [...]

Source: Buzzsprout, 22 December 2020

Alcohol Alert 2020 : The Year in Review

<https://instalstud.substack.com/p/alcohol-alert-2020-the-year-in-review>

As we reach the end of an exceptional year, we can reflect on the alcohol policy news that dominated the headlines. [...]

Source: Institute of Alcohol Studies, 22 December 2020

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