

SHAAP

SCOTTISH HEALTH ACTION ON ALCOHOL PROBLEMS
www.shaap.org.uk

Welcome to SHAAP's weekly media monitoring service: 28 January – 4 February 2021

Alcohol deaths hit record high during Covid pandemic

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-55900624>

Deaths caused by alcohol hit a new high during the first nine months of 2020, provisional figures for England and Wales show. Between January and September, 5,460 deaths were registered with this cause - up 16% on the same months in 2019. It is the biggest toll recorded since records began in 2001. The high rates spanned the period during and after the first Covid lockdown, the Office for National Statistics figures show. It reached a peak of 12.8 deaths per 100,000 people in the first three months of 2020 and remained at this level through to September - higher than in any other time on record. As in past years, rates of male alcohol-specific deaths were twice those seen for women. Experts say the coronavirus pandemic will have had little effect on how the data was gathered and recorded. But it is not clear how much it may have contributed to the deaths. [...]

Source: BBC News, 2 February 2021

[ONS provisional release:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/quarterlyalcohol-specificdeaths-in-england-and-wales-2001-to-2019-registrations-and-quarter-1-jan-to-march-2020-provisional-registrations>]

Minimum unit pricing calls despite fall in drink death rate

<https://news.stv.tv/scotland/minimum-unit-pricing-calls-despite-fall-in-drink-death-rate>

Health campaigners are calling for the minimum pricing for alcohol to be increased – even though new figures showed that drink-related deaths have fallen over the last two decades. Alcohol Focus Scotland chief executive Alison Douglas said that despite this “*encouraging decrease*” Scotland continued to have “*considerably more*” deaths linked to alcohol than in England and Wales. Her call was backed by Labour health spokeswoman Monica Lennon, who stated there was a case for reviewing the current level of minimum unit pricing (MUP). Ms Douglas insisted that it was now time to review the current 50p a unit level for this, saying that the “*impact of the current rate is likely to have been eroded due to inflation*”. [...]

Source: STV News, 2 February 2021

Europe Beating Cancer Plan

<https://www.alcoholandcancer.eu/post/europe-beating-cancer-plan>

[...] Europe's Beating Cancer Plan emphasizes alcohol-related harm is a major public health concern in the EU and that cancer was the leading cause of alcohol-attributable deaths with a share of 29%, followed by liver cirrhosis (20%), cardiovascular diseases (19%) and injuries (18%). The target is to achieve a relative reduction of at least 10% in the harmful use of alcohol by 2025. [...]

Source: #AlcoholAndCancer, 3 February 2021

[Europe's Beating Cancer Plan:

https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/non_communicable_diseases/docs/eu_cancer-plan_en.pdf]

Alcohol Health Alliance UK urges chancellor to increase alcohol duty

<https://www.talkingretail.com/news/industry-news/alcohol-health-alliance-uk-urges-chancellor-to-increase-alcohol-duty-02-02-2021/>

Alcohol Health Alliance UK, a coalition of more than 50 organisations, is calling on the government to reform alcohol duty in response to new ONS figures on alcohol-specific deaths. [...]

Source: TalkingRetail.com, 2 February 2021

Alcohol-related deaths in NI highest on record

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-55907412>

The number of alcohol deaths NI reached a record high in 2019, according to official figures. Data released on Tuesday by Statistics agency Nisra showed there were 336 alcohol-related deaths in 2019, the most recent year statistics are available for. The figure is more than a third higher than a decade ago and an 18% increase on 2018. The death rate is more than three times higher in NI's most deprived areas. Alcohol-related deaths are classified as deaths resulting from health conditions that are a direct result of alcohol misuse. [...]

Source: BBC News, 2 February 2021

UK supermarkets to tell delivery drivers not to hand alcohol to drunk people

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/jan/28/uk-supermarkets-tell-delivery-drivers-not-hand-alcohol-drunk-people>

Supermarket delivery drivers are to be told not to hand over alcohol to drunk people or children, as drinks companies seek to show they are acting responsibly amid a surge in online drinks orders. Twelve of the world's largest drinks brands will unveil the plans on

Thursday, drawn up in partnership with UK retailers such as Tesco, Sainsbury's and Asda, as well as the delivery specialist Uber Eats. Under the agreement, staff who deliver food and drinks to the door will be trained in how to spot signs of intoxication and check ID if they suspect someone is underage. They will be asked to refuse to deliver alcohol if need be, just as pub landlords are supposed to do if customers have had too much. [...] The companies will train staff on how to prevent trouble and de-escalate conflict when customers take exception to being denied service. [...]

Source: The Guardian, 28 January 2021

Amazon is fuelling alcohol addiction by offering customers a discount if they subscribe to regular deliveries of their favourite drink, experts warn

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9203887/amp/Amazon-fuelling-alcohol-addiction-offering-customers-subscription-discount.html>

Amazon is fuelling alcohol addiction by offering customers a discount if they subscribe to regular deliveries of their favourite tippie, experts warn. The online retailer knocks up to 10 per cent off some high-strength spirits if customers commit to receiving a new bottle as regularly as every fortnight. And the savings can rise to 15 per cent if they take five or more at a time. A typical five-bottle delivery would contain enough units of alcohol to last one person at least ten weeks, according to Whitehall guidelines. Critics claim the combination of a subscription and discount is a '*recipe for disaster*' that encourages people to buy more than they need and drink to a deadline. [...]

Source: Daily Mail, 30 January 2021

UK Alcohol Sales Surged by 30% in January

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/alcohol-sales-uk-january-spike-b1796810.html>

Sales of alcohol surged by 30 per cent in January, new research has found. Analysis conducted by market research company Kantar found that the closure of pubs and clubs during the nationwide lockdown has led to an increase in the number of people drinking at home, with the percentage increase in alcohol sales equivalent to £234m. In order to gather its findings, Kantar examined shopping data for England, Scotland and Wales for the previous month. The analysis also found that in addition to alcohol, products such as fresh pasta, peanut butter and chocolate spread proved more popular in January compared to the same time last year. Vegan foods were also more popular, going up by nearly one quarter while non-alcoholic beer sales increased by 12 per cent. [...]

Source: Independent, 3 February 2021

How lockdown is pushing women towards an alcohol crisis, with mums at the front

<https://metro.co.uk/2021/01/30/in-focus-how-lockdown-is-pushing-women-towards-an-alcohol-crisis-13960279/>

[...] *'It sounds silly but I hated the thought of anyone judging me if my recycling bin only had empty alcohol bottles in it.'* Prior to the pandemic, Anna, who has two teenagers, admits she could easily get through quite a few bottles of wine a week. Then, when the country was put under the first lockdown in March last year, she began to drink even more. [...]

Source: Metro, 30 January 2021

'Promising Young Woman,' Covid and the women giving up alcohol to fight the patriarchy

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/promising-young-woman-covid-women-giving-alcohol-fight-patriarchy-ncna1256229>

After decades of thinking that alcohol liberated them, increasing numbers of women are wondering if it actually created new prisons. [...] Is alcohol having a #MeToo moment? Director Emerald Fennell's debut feature, *"A Promising Young Woman,"* centers on medical school-dropout Cassie, played by Carey Mulligan, as she takes revenge on men who prey on inebriated women at bars. Flipping the script on our often alcohol-fueled rape culture, Cassie pretends to be plastered on her nightly missions to see how many "nice guys" try to take advantage of her. A disturbingly high number do. One by one, they receive her dead-sober message: You made a really bad call, bro. Fennell's film, now receiving Oscar-buzz, is the latest sign of a new form of female empowerment with a sober face. [...]

Source: NBC News, 31 January 2021

Maintaining a Public Health Approach to Alcohol Policy During COVID-19

<https://www.ccsa.ca/maintaining-public-health-approach-alcohol-policy-during-covid-19-policy-brief>

This policy brief identifies ways to address higher-risk alcohol use during the COVID-19 pandemic. These include limiting sales through reduced access to alcohol, lower numbers of alcohol sales outlets in a given geographical area, and minimum pricing. Policy changes that increased alcohol use in some areas are also highlighted. [end]

Source: Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, January 2021

Uber's \$1.1 Billion Drizly Deal Set to Turbocharge Online Alcohol Delivery

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/uber-to-buy-drizly-for-1-1-billion-in-stock-and-cash-11612276216>

Uber Technologies Inc. said it reached a deal to buy alcohol-delivery service Drizly for \$1.1 billion in stock and cash, signaling the company's ambitions to provide a wider range of

items to consumers' doorsteps. The deal could further accelerate the growth of online alcohol sales, traditionally a small slice of U.S. booze consumption that widespread shelter-in-place orders boosted last year. [...] Delivery has become an unexpected lifeline for Uber as the pandemic has hammered its core ride-hailing business. [...]

Source: The Wall Street Journal, 2 February 2021

Coronavirus: South Africa lifts alcohol ban as Covid rules ease

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-55896717>

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has eased some restrictions imposed due to coronavirus, including lifting an unpopular ban on alcohol sales. Beaches will reopen and limited religious gatherings will be allowed. The announcement came as Mr Ramaphosa hailed the arrival of the first shipment of vaccines - one million AstraZeneca doses - as a chance to "*turn the tide*" on Covid-19. South Africa has had the most Covid infections and deaths on the continent. [...]

Source: BBC News, 2 February 2021

'Open arms': new report explores the role of pubs in tackling loneliness

<https://www.alcoholpolicy.net/2021/02/open-arms-new-report-explores-the-role-of-pubs-in-tackling-loneliness.html>

A new report by Dr Thomas Thurnell-Read, Loughborough University, explores pubs as a source of social and community resources [...]

Source: Alcohol Policy UK, 2 February 2021

['Open arms' Report:

https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Open_arms_the_role_of_pubs_in_tackling_loneliness/13663715]

Alcohol-specific deaths in the UK: registered in 2019

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/alcohol-specific-deaths-in-the-uk-registered-in-2019>

Deaths caused by diseases known to be a direct consequence of alcohol misuse by sex, age, region and deprivation. [...]

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2 February 2021

Local Alcohol Profiles for England (LAPE): February 2021 update

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-alcohol-profiles-for-england-lape-february-2021-update>

Update of Indicators in the Local Alcohol Profiles for England (LAPE) interactive tool. [...]

Source: Public Health England, 2 February 2021

Substance misuse treatment in secure settings: 2019 to 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/substance-misuse-treatment-in-secure-settings-2019-to-2020>

Statistics for alcohol and drug misuse treatment in prisons and other secure settings from PHE's National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS). [end]

Source: Public Health England, 28 January 2021

Substance misuse treatment for young people: statistics 2019 to 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/substance-misuse-treatment-for-young-people-statistics-2019-to-2020>

Alcohol and drug treatment data for under-18s from PHE's National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS). [end]

Source: Public Health England, 28 January 2021

Alcohol, Calories, and Obesity: Could Labelling Make a Difference?

<https://newsroom.wiley.com/press-releases/press-release-details/2021/Alcohol-Calories-and-Obesity-Could-Labelling-Make-a-Difference/default.aspx>

Mandatory calorie labelling of alcoholic drinks could possibly address both alcohol consumption and obesity. An analysis published in *Obesity Reviews* summarizes the results of studies that have examined consumer knowledge of the calorie content of alcoholic drinks, public support for labelling of calorie content on such drinks, and the effect of labelling on consumption. In the analysis of 18 relevant studies, there was moderate evidence that people were unaware of the calorie content of alcoholic drinks and that they supported labelling. Studies found no evidence that labelling affected consumption levels, but most studies were of low quality and were not conducted in real-world settings. [...]

Source: Wiley Newsroom, 3 February 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1111/obr.13198](https://doi.org/10.1111/obr.13198)]

Alcohol causes immediate effects linked to heart malady

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-01-alcohol-effects-linked-heart-malady.html>

A daily alcoholic drink for women or two for men might be good for heart health, compared to drinking more or not drinking at all. But while there is some evidence that drinking in moderation might prevent heart attacks, now a randomized, double-blinded clinical study of 100 heart patients has added a new wrinkle to the contours of the debate over alcohol and

heart disease. UC San Francisco researchers found that alcohol has an immediate effect on the heart in patients with atrial fibrillation (AFib), the most common life-threatening heart-rhythm disorder. [...]

Source: Medical Xpress, 28 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1016/j.jacep.2020.11.026](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacep.2020.11.026)]

Trajectories of alcohol-induced blackouts in adolescence

<https://www.dbrecoveryresources.com/2021/01/trajectories-of-alcohol%E2%80%90induced-blackouts-in-adolescence/>

Alcohol-related blackouts can be linked to later alcohol use disorder, and females appear to be at higher risk, NDARC at University of New South Wales warns. [end]

Source: DB Recovery Resources, 29 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1111/add.15415](https://doi.org/10.1111/add.15415)]

How do binge eating and drinking impact the liver?

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/how-do-binge-eating-and-drinking-impact-the-liver>

A new study simulated the food and alcohol consumption typical of so-called tailgate parties to assess how binge eating and drinking are likely to impact the body. The researchers found that, both during and the day after the simulated “party,” participants presented with increased levels of lipogenesis, or fat formation. Levels of liver fat differed greatly between participants after the experiment, leading the authors to hypothesize that the amount of carbohydrates consumed by each participant may have an important role to play. [...]

Source: MedicalNewsToday, 31 January 2021

[Research article doi: [10.1016/j.alcohol.2020.11.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcohol.2020.11.001)]

An Epidemic of Problematic Alcohol Use

<https://publichealth.nyu.edu/events-news/news/2021/01/29/epidemic-problematic-alcohol-use>

In March and April, a survey was administered via Facebook to over 13,000 participants [...]. One of the questions we explored in our report published in *Preventive Medicine* was that of changes in alcohol use patterns during the pandemic. [...] The most interesting finding was that older adults with anxiety and depression saw a sharper increase in their risk for harmful alcohol use. [...] Our findings underscore the need to focus on those with existing mental health conditions, and argues for the double need to tailor public health messaging by age as well as to intensify outreach and treatment efforts to those who are more likely to

engage in problem alcohol use in response to traumatic stress, such as older adults with mental health conditions. [...]

Source: NYU School of Global Public Health, 29 January 2021
[Research article doi: [10.1016/j.ypped.2021.106422](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypped.2021.106422)]

PhD Symposium Session 3.1: Addiction and Cognition

<https://www.addiction-ssa.org/phd-symposium-session-3-1-addiction-and-cognition/>

Session 3.1 of the PhD Symposium focused on the impact of cognitive aspects on addictive processes [...]

Source: Society for the Study of Addiction, 3 February 2021

How Can We Apply CBT to Addiction Treatment?

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/the-addiction-connection/202102/how-can-we-apply-cbt-addiction-treatment>

Learn how CBT can be applied to treating substance use disorders. [...]

Source: Psychology Today, 2 February 2021

During lockdown, drinking has become a worryingly easy way to punctuate the day

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jan/30/lockdown-drinking-alcohol-stress-boredom>

“Well,” I said to my flatmate one night last March, as I poured red wine into my glass, the liquid glugging throatily. *“I suppose we will just have to drink through it.”* That was early on in the pandemic, about the time that the word “lockdown” made its way from heist movies and song lyrics into common parlance. [...] Although I’ve never suffered from an addiction to alcohol, I found myself steadily drinking more during the first lockdown. [...] After the first lockdown, I got sick of mornings spent with foggy headaches, and as the days got longer and restrictions eased a little, it became easier to cut down. But by the middle of the second lockdown in November, when it was dark all the time, and the festive period loomed, I was drinking more habitually than ever, reflexively pouring one out as I finished work most evenings. [...] On New Year’s Eve, I decided to take up dry January. [...]

Source: The Guardian, 30 January 2021

All or Nothing

<https://www.drinkanddrugsnews.com/all-or-nothing/>

Condemned as 'Russian roulette', allowing dependent drinkers non-abstinence treatment goals was tested in some of the most controversial studies ever seen in alcohol treatment. Mike Ashton dips into the fascinating history of 'controlled drinking'. [...]

Source: Drink and Drugs News (DDN), 1 February 2021

The Feeling's Mutual

<https://www.drinkanddrugsnews.com/the-feelings-mutual/>

The impact of COVID-19 has shown that mutual aid groups like AA may be even more beneficial than we realised, say Lisa Ogilvie and Jerome Carson. [...]

Source: Drink and Drugs News (DDN), 1 February 2021

The Alcohol 'Problem' Podcast - Ep 4: Lockdown drinkers? COVID-19 and alcohol use

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/1275176/7545079>

In this episode guests talk about the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on alcohol use. Guests include: Dr Sadie Boniface and Habib Kadiri from the Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAS) who provide an overview of some of the key indications from the research and importance of looking beyond media headlines. Dr Emily Nicholls and Dr Dominic Conroy talk about their research based on interviews with a number of drinkers reflecting on their alcohol use in response to the pandemic. Dr Gillian Shorter talks about British Psychological Society guidelines to support healthcare professionals in addressing alcohol issues. Daren Lee, a counsellor at a national addiction service and trainee psychologist currently researching the experience of people previously engaged in face to face recovery groups and have tried their online equivalent during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rosy and Martin, who offer their insights into their relationship with alcohol over the last year. [...]

Source: Buzzsprout, 29 January 2021

[SHAAP/SARN *Alcohol Occasionals* event with Drs Nicholls and Conroy:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/alcohol-occasionals-drinking-transitions-during-lockdown-tickets-136971737153>]

Susannah Constantine: *'As a high-functioning alcoholic, it's very difficult to ask for help.'*

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p095r9b1>

Susannah talks to Emma Barnett on Woman's Hour about the shame she felt, and the moment she realised she needed help. [...]

Source: BBC Woman's Hour, 1 February 2021

Interview with Millie Gooch: *'Being anti-alcohol harm is very different to being anti-alcohol'*

<https://nouse.co.uk/2021/02/01/interview-with-millie-gooch-being-anti-alcohol-harm-is-very-different-to-being-anti-alcohol>

As Dry January ends, Alice Manning talks to sober influencer and author Millie Gooch about society's relationship with alcohol in these unique times [...]

Source: Nouse, 1 February 2021

***'I feel so good I may never drink again!'* Readers on their success – or failure – during dry January**

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/feb/01/i-feel-loads-better-without-booze-readers-on-the-ups-and-downs-of-doing-dry-january>

Readers explain whether they looked, felt and slept better – or if they turned back to alcohol to cheer up a miserable month [...]

Source: The Guardian, 1 February 2021

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

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

A month alcohol-free sees many people with more energy, a boosted mood and extra cash in their pocket - but there are lots of brilliant benefits under the surface too... [...]

Source: Alcohol Change UK, January 2021

