

# SCOTTISH ALCOHOL RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

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## Introduction

The Scottish Government is placing increasing priority on the alcohol harm reduction agenda, and on developing interventions which are informed by a strong evidence base. There is a considerable body of UK and international research on the extent and nature of alcohol problems and the effectiveness of harm reduction interventions. At present, new alcohol-related research in Scotland might be commissioned by a wide range of bodies including the Scottish Government, Information Services Division (ISD), Health Scotland and Alcohol Focus Scotland. This has the potential for overlap or omission. To date there has been no systematic process for feeding the developing evidence base into policy and for identifying gaps. The Alcohol Evidence Group was established in 2006 to oversee the development of a co-ordinated alcohol evidence base in which existing research (from Scotland, the rest of the UK and internationally) is consolidated and gaps identified, and the development and implementation of government policy on alcohol-related health, criminal justice and wider social issues is supported by research by agreed parties. Membership of the Group is given below.

The framework, which has been compiled by NHS Health Scotland and the Scottish Government with advice from the Alcohol Evidence Group, meets a commitment in the government's Updated Plan for Action on Alcohol Problems published in February 2007. The framework sets out existing and planned work, together with priority areas for new research should budgets allow. **It identifies research to directly support policy development.** The Scottish Government recognises that individuals and organisations will have other priorities and will wish to undertake research in other areas.

The framework was informed by a scoping of the research literature carried out by NHS Health Scotland in 2006-7. This review, which built upon a 2002-3 analysis of the gaps in research knowledge, identified current research and research gaps in the alcohol evidence base. A draft framework was circulated to stakeholders (including ADATs, health professionals, Community Health Partnerships, the alcohol industry, and academic researchers) for comment in March 2007. The final framework has been amended to reflect the responses to that consultation exercise. We would like to thank those who took part in the consultation.

The literature review and a summary of current research, which were published in March 2007 as part of the stakeholder consultation process, are available online at <http://www.alcoholinformation.isdscotland.org>

Alcohol Evidence Group membership (as at July 2007):

Deborah Smith	Head of Alcohol and Drugs Misuse, Public Health and Well-being Directorate, Scottish Government (Chair)
Sally Haw	Principal Public Health Advisor, NHS Health Scotland
Laurence Gruer	Director of Public Health Science, NHS Health Scotland
Steve Pavis	Assistant Head of Group, Epidemiology and Statistics, ISD, NHS National Services Scotland
Lesley Graham	Associate Specialist (Public Health), ISD, NHS National Services Scotland
Jack Law	Chief Executive, Alcohol Focus Scotland
Kerry McKenzie	Public Health Adviser, NHS Health Scotland
Maggie Watts	Vice Chair, Scottish Association of Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (SADAAT)
Peter Rice	Consultant Psychiatrist, Tayside Alcohol Problems Service
Karen MacNee	Senior Principal Researcher, Health Finance Directorate, Scottish Government
Iain MacAllister	Principal Researcher, Alcohol and Drugs Misuse, Public Health and Well-being Directorate, Scottish Government
Donna MacKinnon	Principal Researcher, Justice and Communities Directorate, Scottish Government
Colin Faulkner	Alcohol and Drugs Misuse, Public Health and Well-being Directorate, Scottish Government
Denise Coia	Principal Medical Officer, Chief Medical Officer Directorate, Scottish Government
Peter Craig	Research Manager, Chief Medical Officer Directorate, Scottish Government
Beatrice Cant	Research Manager, Chief Medical Officer Directorate, Scottish Government
David Pattison	Specialist Public Health Adviser, Chief Medical Officer Directorate, Scottish Government

## SCOTTISH ALCOHOL RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Research in shaded boxes are existing projects, or recently completed studies. The remainder are identified gaps. Priority gaps are shown in **bold**. For projects yet to commence, the start date and commissioning/funding body are indicative only.

### 1. Analysing current patterns and trends in alcohol consumption in Scotland

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
1.1	Limitations of survey data	To improve understanding of limitations of survey data on alcohol consumption.	Review of surveys and expert working group	Health Scotland	2006  Draft report stage	Health Scotland
1.2	Recording of drug and alcohol use in pregnancy	To audit current practice in recording of drug and alcohol misuse in pregnancy via SMR02.	Analysis of SMR02 data Interviews with staff from main maternity units	Scottish Centre for Social Research	2006  Fieldwork completed	Health Scotland & Scottish Government
1.3	Longitudinal data needs	To determine the needs of the Scottish Government and the wider user community for longitudinal data on the post-school transitions of young people in Scotland including data on health behaviours.	Option appraisal for inclusion of questions in Scottish School-Leavers Survey	Centre for Educational Sociology and BMRB	1998  Next report due in September 2007	Scottish Government

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
1.4	Pregnant women	To determine patterns of alcohol consumption in pregnancy amongst women in Scotland. To explore the understanding of the risks from consuming alcohol amongst women. To identify effective interventions to reduce alcohol consumption before pregnancy, during pregnancy and post pregnancy.	Systematic literature review Analysis of epidemiological and survey data. Interviews with target groups	PhD Studentship	2007  Student appointed	Scottish Government / Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
1.5	Homeless people	To explore existing routine data on homelessness and drug and alcohol use.	Pilot analyses of routine data sets on homelessness and drug and alcohol use	Dr C Dibben, Mr IM Atherton, Professor J Docherty, Dr A Baldacchino	2006  Completed	Scottish Government
1.6	Infants and young children	Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) study - a longitudinal study of two age cohorts: 5000 babies aged 10 months; and 3000 toddlers aged 34 months). To generate a better understanding of the impact of maternal alcohol consumption on infants and young children.	Secondary analysis of data	Primary data collection: Scottish Centre for Social Research & Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, University of Edinburgh.	2005  First stage of analysis undertaken. Request for further analysis to include alcohol	Scottish Government

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
				Secondary analysis: to be confirmed.		
1.7	Alcohol consumption and drinking patterns	Scottish Health Survey (SHeS) 2008-2011 is a large-scale household survey which provides robust data on health and health-related behaviours of people living in Scotland. To monitor and better understand alcohol consumption and drinking patterns in Scotland (including amongst population sub-groups).	National household survey	Scottish Centre for Social Research	2007  First annual report due summer 2009	Scottish Government
1.8	Alcohol consumption among young people	Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey (SALSUS) - biennial survey of young people in Scotland. To monitor national trends in alcohol consumption and drinking patterns among 13 and 15 year olds.	National survey of young people	Commissioned and managed by ISD; fieldwork BMRB	2006  National report published May 2007; local reports due summer 2007	Scottish Government
1.9	Improving estimates of alcohol consumption	To identify and collate data on alcohol consumption from industry & trade sources at a	Consultation with alcohol industry and retail trade	Scottish Government; secondee from	2007	Scottish Government

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
		Scotland level. To compare sales data with survey findings.		Diageo		
<b>1.10</b>	<b>Improving estimates of alcohol consumption</b>	<b>To identify what data on alcohol consumption can be derived from Customs &amp; Excise data at a Scotland level.</b>	<b>Consultation with Customs &amp; Excise</b>	<b>ISD</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>ISD</b>
<b>1.11</b>	<b>Alcohol purchasing patterns and location of consumption</b>	<b>To determine the proportion of alcohol consumed at home and on licensed premises in different population sub-groups.</b>	<b>Qualitative and quantitative research. Consultation with alcohol industry and retail trade</b>	<b>To be commissioned / Scottish Government</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>Scottish Government</b>
1.12	Longitudinal data needs	To identify longitudinal data on alcohol available across the UK and to identify gaps in Scottish data.	Scoping of longitudinal data sources in the UK	Scottish Government	2007	Scottish Government
1.13	Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and recent immigrant groups	To understand patterns of alcohol consumption in BME groups and recent immigrant groups.	Scoping of available Scottish data and data analysis	ISD	2007/08	ISD

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
1.14	Other specific groups: Young adults (16-25); women; adults in middle years; older adults; disability groups	To assess feasibility of conducting sub-group analyses of Scottish survey data on alcohol consumption. To conduct appropriate sub-group analyses.	Scoping of available Scottish data and data analysis	ISD/Scottish Government	2007/08	ISD/Scottish Government

## 2. Analysing current patterns and trends in alcohol-related harm

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
2.1	Aetiological fractions	To develop aetiological fractions for alcohol attributable problems for Scotland. To estimate the burden of alcohol-related disease. To determine the links between serious alcohol-attributable disease and deprivation.	Analysis of data and expert working group	ISD	2006  Report due December 2007	ISD
2.2	Drug injectors with HCV	To determine hospital utilisation, morbidity and mortality related to diagnosed HCV infection. To determine the association between alcohol and diagnosed HCV infection among injectors in Scotland.	Record linkage study	Sharon Hutchinson, Health Protection Scotland	2006  Due for completion February 2009	Scottish Government
2.4	Liver cirrhosis mortality	<b>To identify available data on alcohol-related cirrhosis mortality in Scotland.</b> <b>To develop a proposal for a portfolio of data analyses</b>	<b>To be determined</b>	<b>Dedicated person identified to lead development of portfolio</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>Health Scotland</b>

	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>Start date / status</b>	<b>Funding</b>
		<b>and research to determine causes of rapid increase in cirrhosis mortality in Scotland.</b>		<b>working closely with expert advisory group.</b>		
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Children of problem drinkers</b>	<b>To develop a methodology and estimate the prevalence of children living with problem drinking. To determine the needs of children of problem drinkers (including children &amp; young people's own drinking).</b>	<b>Review of data sources and statistical modelling. Needs assessment.</b>	<b>To be commissioned</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>To be confirmed</b>
<b>2.6</b>	<b>Alcohol and crime</b>	<b>To identify available data on alcohol and crime. To explore the relationship between alcohol, crime, public disorder and deprivation.</b>	<b>Review of available data sources and data analysis</b>	<b>ISD/ Scottish Government</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>ISD/Scottish Government</b>
2.7	Alcohol related brain damage (ARBD)	To estimate the incidence and prevalence of ARBD in Scotland.	To be determined	To be commissioned	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
2.8	Brain damage in substance misusers	The role of multiple risk factors in organic brain disease	To be determined	To be commissioned	To be confirmed	To be confirmed

	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>Start date / status</b>	<b>Funding</b>
		in substance misusers (trauma, cerebro-vascular disease, Alzheimer's disease).				
2.9	Alcohol and sexual risk	To determine the links between alcohol consumption and sexual risk taking in schoolchildren and adults and any interactions with socioeconomic and geographical factors. To develop indicators for measuring prevalence of sexual risk in the general population.	Quantitative and qualitative research	Scottish Government / To be commissioned	To be confirmed	To be confirmed
2.10	Alcohol-attributable hospital costs	To model alcohol-attributable hospital costs using aetiological fractions and results from treasury study of hospital costs disease groups.	Statistical modelling	ISD	To be confirmed	ISD

### 3. Culture, media and marketing

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
3.1	Drinking cultures	To describe drinking cultures in Scotland. To inform the development of mass media communication and other alcohol interventions.	A rapid review of drinking cultures in Scotland, UK and 6 other countries. Qualitative study of drinking cultures in selected Scottish communities.	Susan MacAskill, Institute for Social Marketing, University of Stirling	2006  Review completed. Qualitative fieldwork underway	Health Scotland
3.2	Attitudes to drinking alcohol	To monitor attitudes towards alcohol consumption in the general population.	Module of questions in the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey	Scottish Centre for Social Research	2007  Report due March 2008	Scottish Government

#### 4. Prevention and education

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
4.1	School-based programmes	To determine the nature and effectiveness of drugs education practice in Scottish schools.	National survey	Martine Stead, Institute for Social Marketing, University of Stirling	2004 Report published February 2007	Scottish Government
4.2	<b>Working people</b>	<b>To audit workplace policies in Scotland against best practice.</b>	<b>Literature review to determine best/most effective practice. Audit of workplace policies.</b>	<b>To be commissioned</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>To be confirmed</b>
4.3	<b>Community-based programmes</b>	<b>To assist Angus Community Planning Partnership develop an integrated outcome focused plan for alcohol. To evaluate the model of approach developed by Focus on Alcohol Angus (FoAA). To assess whether the model is transferable to other local areas in Scotland.</b>	<b>Consultancy support and process evaluation</b>	<b>To be commissioned</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>Health Scotland and Scottish Government</b>

## 5. Provision of treatment and support services

	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>Start date / status</b>	<b>Funding</b>
5.1	Homeless people	To investigate the effectiveness of substance misuse services in reducing the level of homelessness.	Evidence review and mapping exercise	Under commission	2007 Report due March 2008	Scottish Government
5.2	Alcohol treatment capacity	To determine the prevalence of problematic drinking and map the proportion entering and/or requiring treatment against the configuration of existing services.	Statistical modelling / qualitative and quantitative research	Managed by SADAAT / Under commission	2007 Report due August 2008	Scottish Government
5.3	Primary care settings	To review awareness and implementation of the SIGN 74 guideline, identify examples of good practice, and support required to further the implementation of the guidance	Qualitative and quantitative research	Under commission	2007 Report due December 2007	Health Scotland
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Pregnant women</b>	<b>To identify effective interventions for reducing alcohol consumption in pregnancy</b>	<b>To be confirmed</b>	<b>To be commissioned</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>To be confirmed</b>

	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>Start date / status</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<b>5.5</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>To consider the models of brief alcohol interventions currently being delivered in Scotland and elsewhere – for example: via Keep Well; in the workplace; in prisons; in dentistry.</b>	<b>Mapping study</b>	<b>Scottish Government</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>Scottish Government</b>
5.6	Patients at risk of developing Wernicke-Korsakoff's syndrome	To determine the potential role of long-term thiamine supplementation in improving the outcomes for patients who are at risk of developing Wernicke-Korsakoff's syndrome.	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	To be confirmed

## 6. Protection and Controls

	Focus	Purpose	Method	Who by	Start date / status	Funding
6.1	Underage sales	To evaluate test purchasing pilot for illegal sales of alcohol to children under the age of 18.	Qualitative research	Scottish Centre for Social Research	2006 Published March 2007	Scottish Government
6.2	Off sales and problem drinking	To determine the relationship between off-sales and problem drinking in Scotland.	Interviews and observations Literature review	Human Factors Analysts	2006 Published June 2007	Scottish Government
6.3	Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005	To consider data requirements and the framework needed to successfully evaluation the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.	Review of data requirements and evaluation framework	Scottish Government	2008	Scottish Government