



An Roinn Sláinte

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Developments in Relation to Alcohol Policy in Ireland

Alessandra Fantini

Tobacco & Alcohol Control Unit

Tús Áite do
Shábháilteacht **1** Othar
Patient Safety **1** First

Outline of Presentation

- Background
- Policy Development
- Provisions of the Bill
- Additional Measures
- Next Steps

Background

- 1.5 million Irish drinkers drink in a harmful pattern
- 88 deaths every month in 2008, 1 in 4 deaths in young men
- Contributory factor half of all suicides, deliberate self-harm

Background

- 2000 beds occupied every night in Irish acute hospitals
- Adult alcohol problems associated with 16% of child abuse and neglect cases
- Trigger in third of domestic abuse cases

Background

- Alcohol related illness cost = €1.2 billion
- Total economic cost = €3.447 billion

Policy Development

- Government decision to include alcohol in a National Substance Misuse Strategy March 2009
- Steering Group established Dec 2009
- Steering Group Report on a National Substance Misuse Strategy published in Feb 2012

Policy Development

- **Government Decision October 2013**
 - Public Health (Alcohol) bill
 - Additional measures - Recommendations of National Substance Misuse Strategy
 - Reduce average consumption from current level of 11.6 litres of pure alcohol per annum (2011) to OECD average of 9.1 litres by 2020

Public Health (Alcohol) bill

- Price
- Marketing and Advertising
- Structural Separation
- Health labelling
- Enforcement

Price

- **Minimum Unit Pricing**
 - University of Sheffield currently carrying out modelling study that will inform actual MUP per gram of alcohol
 - Study in conjunction with Northern Ireland (cross-border trade)

Marketing & Advertising

- Evening hours watershed for TV and Radio
- Cinema - ban unless film is for over 18s
- Outdoor media - restrictions
- Print media - restrictions
- Regulation of advertising content
- Regulation of sport sponsorship

Structural Separation

- Voluntary code to become statutory code

Health labelling

- Health advice and warnings (including pregnancy) on all alcohol drink containers and on promotional materials
- Display of grams of pure alcohol
- Display calorie count

Enforcement

- Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) will be empowered to monitor compliance with the provisions in the bill
- Sanctions and penalties

Additional measures

- Other recs from National Substance Misuse Strategy to be implemented:
 - Supply
 - Prevention
 - Treatment
 - Rehabilitation
 - Research
- Population-based approach - multi-sectoral approach

Next Steps

- Work is ongoing on the drafting of the Bill
- Watching developments in Scotland on MUP
- Engagement at EU level

Thank you for your time

Contact Details

Alessandra Fantini

Tobacco & Alcohol Control Unit

Department of Health

Tel. +353 1 635 4035

Email alessandra_fantini@health.gov.ie

www.dohc.ie