



MINIMUM PRICING CAMPAIGN – ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND

Introduction

Alcohol consumption in the UK has more than doubled in the last 40 years. As consumption has increased, so has alcohol related harm. Such harm impacts on individuals, their families, friends and communities and wider society, costing Scotland over £2.25billion a year.

Scotland, in particular, has a distinct problem with alcohol. Excess alcohol consumption is no longer a marginal problem and today it is seen across all age and socio-economic groups. We have one of the fastest growing mortality rates from chronic liver disease in the world and alcohol related deaths are twice those of England and Wales.

Now is the time to take action. A minimum price for a unit of alcohol - as part of a wider package of measures including education and diversion – aims to reduce alcohol consumption across the country.

How would Scotland benefit from Minimum Pricing?

The relationship between the price of alcohol and consumption is convincing. As price falls, consumption increases and this is exacerbated by plummeting prices and aggressive promotion.

Recent research¹ into differing price policy options concluded that a minimum price is the most effective of a range of policy options. Modelling work undertaken by the University of Sheffield for the Scottish Government shows has quantified the effect of a range of minimum prices on improving health, reducing crime and improving productivity.

¹ Sheffield Study 2009

Minimum pricing would increase the price of drinks which are sold at an unacceptably low price such as own-brand spirits and white cider. It would not increase the price of all drinks.

Minimum pricing will affect heavy drinkers the most. Moderate drinkers – or those who drink within the sensible drinking guidelines – will hardly be affected. Everybody in Scotland will feel the economic and social benefits of minimum pricing through healthier, happier, safer families and communities.

Minimum Pricing and the Scottish Parliament

It is the Scottish Government's intention to introduce a Bill – including provisions on minimum pricing – to the Scottish Parliament by the end of 2009. This is part of a package of measures to reduce alcohol consumption outlined in the Government's Framework for Action.

What can be done to help the introduction of Minimum Pricing?

The more voices that positively engage influencers and the public about Minimum Pricing, the better. If you want to know more about minimum pricing or would like to help lobby for the introduction of minimum pricing, you can use the following documents:-

- Key Points
- Arguments by opponents
- Statistics to support minimum pricing