

Using international collaboration and insights to widen the debate on alcohol marketing restrictions beyond impact on children and young people

Nicola Merrin (@NicolaMerrin)
Policy and Research Manager

**As required by the Alcohol Policy 19 Conference,
I/we have signed a disclosure statement and note the
following conflict(s) of interest:**

None



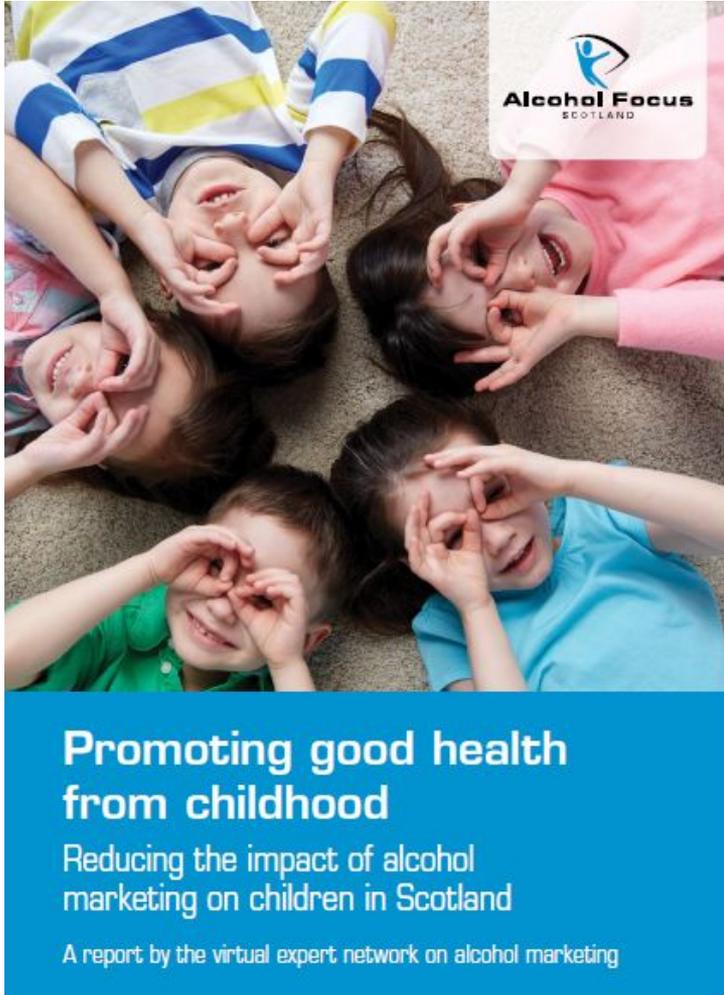
Evidence to Action: Building a Framework for Change
September 14-16, 2022 **Arlington, VA**

Alcohol Marketing Expert Network 2015-17



Experts from Europe, Australia and the US

Alcohol Marketing Expert Network 2015-17



- Research has found that alcohol marketing
 - Is appealing to children
 - Influences their attitudes
 - Encourages their drinking
 - Has a cumulative effect
 - Shapes perceptions of what is normal
- Self-regulation is failing
- Recommended that Scottish Government
 - restrict advertising in outdoor and public spaces and in print publications, and end sport and event sponsorship
 - work with UK Government to restrict advertising on TV, in cinemas and online.

Scottish Government Framework Commitments

IMPROVING
SCOTLAND'S
HEALTH



Alcohol Framework 2018: Preventing Harm

next steps on changing our relationship with alcohol

reduce alcohol harm

reduce health
inequalities

protect children
and young people

ACTION 9: we will press the UK Government to protect children and young people from exposure to alcohol marketing on television before the 9pm watershed and in cinemas – or else devolve the powers so the Scottish Parliament can act.

ACTION 1: we will put the voices of children and young people at the heart of developing preventative measures on alcohol. This will involve encouraging and seeking the views of children and young people.

ACTION 10: we will consult and engage on the appropriateness of a range of potential measures, including mandatory restrictions on alcohol marketing, as recommended by the World Health Organization, to protect children and young people from alcohol marketing in Scotland.

Expanded populations of interest

- Children and young people
- People with (or at risk of) an alcohol problem
- General population

The purposes of bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, promotion and sponsorship are:



to prevent young people from being exposed, which is known to influence the decision to start consuming alcohol and to increase alcohol use;



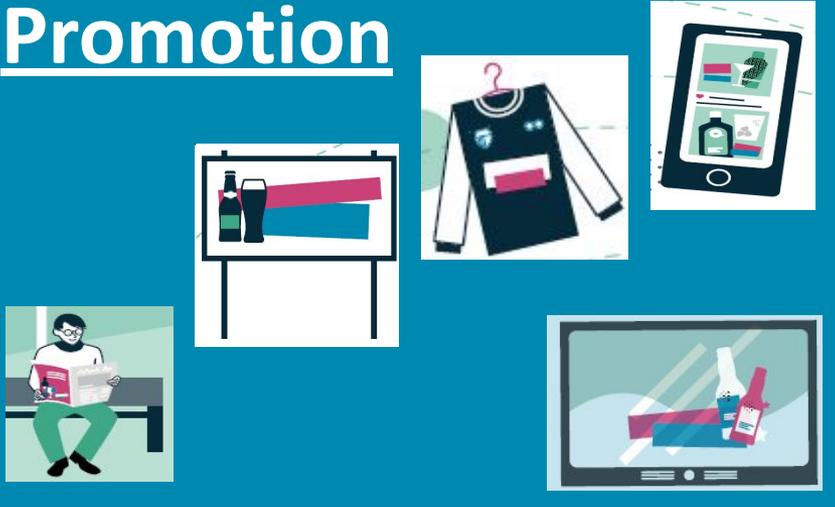
to reduce the presence of alcohol cues that can induce reactivity and craving in alcohol-dependent persons; and



to prevent industry influence on social norms relating to consumption in general, given the negative public health, economic and social consequences of alcohol use.

The 4 Ps of marketing

Promotion



Product



Place



Price



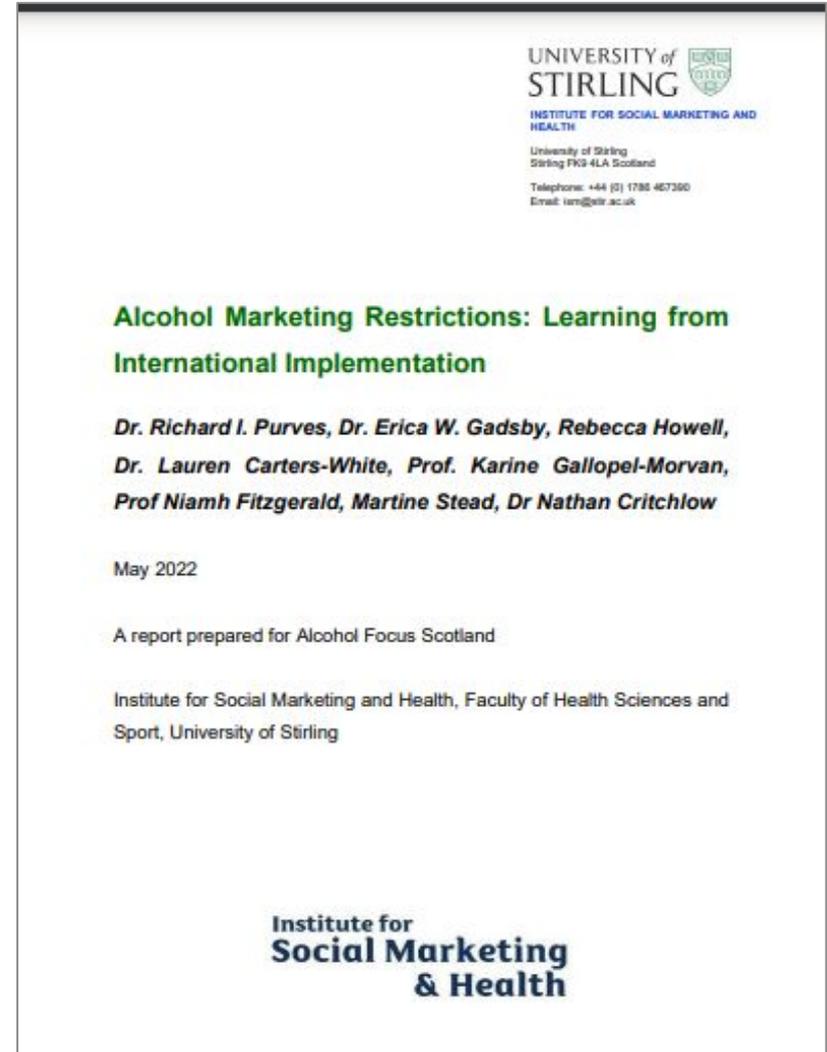
Literature review

- Looked at the impact of marketing on those with alcohol dependence, hazardous and harmful drinkers, and those in recovery. (Only 11 studies).
- Taken together, an effect is likely
- Influences on positive alcohol-related emotions and cognitions and alcohol craving, which may translate into consumption
- Perceived to act as a trigger by people in recovery from alcohol problems and pose a risk to recovery
- This should be a concern for marketing regulators
- More research needed



Case study research

- 7 European countries: Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden
- Lessons
 - ✓ Restrictions are possible
 - ✓ Be bold
 - ✓ Gain public and political support
 - ✓ Evidence
 - ✓ Prepare for challenges



What people say...

“Alcohol marketing makes it harder to maintain recovery when visually seeing alcohol marketed and promoted. A visual trigger.”

Person in recovery

“We see alcohol every day, up to a few times a day but we are just kind of used to seeing it.”

12-15-year-old

“It should be in adult-only shops.”

10-year-old, Member of Children’s Parliament

“It makes me feel angry – alcohol is a really dangerous chemical that destroys people’s health. Why are they trying to associate it with sport?”

Person in recovery

“The Rock advertises his own, like, alcohol brand on his Instagram. He takes pictures of it.”

12-14-year-old

Human rights-based approach

Health

UN Convention on the
Rights of the Child
(UNCRC)

Free from exploitation

Life, survival and development

Privacy

International Covenant
on Economic, Social and
Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

“Protection from alcohol-related harm... contributes to the fulfilment of the right to the highest attainable standard of health...”

World Health
Organization
Global Alcohol Action
Plan for 2022-2030⁷³

International focus

- General recommendations for any country wishing to take action to restrict alcohol marketing
- Recommendation for WHO on how it can support countries to do so
- Specific recommendations for Scotland



Benefits of international collaboration

- Adds credibility to the policy recommendations of a national advocacy organisation
- Enables access to valuable expertise
- Assists with identification of policy interventions in other countries
- Widens reach
- Contributes to efforts to deliver a Framework Convention on Alcohol Control



Thank you

Nicola Merrin, Policy and Research Manager

nicola.merrin@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

[@NicolaMerrin](#)

alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

[@AlcoholFocus](#)