Alcohol & Injury in Atlantic Canada:
Creating a Culture of Safer Consumption

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Purpose & Methods

- Investigate alcohol & injury link & culture of use
- Produce evidence-based policy recommendations for reducing alcohol-related injuries
- Environmental Scan
  - Literature Review (academic & grey): 1998-present
  - Key Informant Interviews (21) from Atlantic Canada
Alcohol & Injury

- Alcohol use leads to:
  - Increased risk of injury resulting in emergency room visit
  - Increased injury severity
  - Increased number of body regions injured
  - Difficulty making diagnosis
Alcohol Related Injuries

- Literature
  - Motor vehicle collisions (MVCs) – on & off road
  - Falls
    - Young & older adults
  - Violence
    - Assaults
    - Sexual assaults
    - Domestic
  - Suicide
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

- Key Informants
  - Emphasis on off-road MVCs
  - Violence
  - Falls
  - Suicide
Culture of Alcohol Use in AC

It’s not that we’re drinking alcohol, it’s HOW we’re drinking alcohol.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Alcohol</th>
<th>Beer</th>
<th>Wine</th>
<th>Spirits</th>
<th>Coolers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>115.75</td>
<td>92.04</td>
<td>14.77</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NL</td>
<td>117.76</td>
<td>100.02</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>8.48</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>107.36</td>
<td>86.67</td>
<td>10.10</td>
<td>7.04</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>106.86</td>
<td>85.98</td>
<td>9.29</td>
<td>7.43</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NB</td>
<td>104.15</td>
<td>86.44</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>5.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to Canada:
- Atlantic Canada has highest rate of people consuming 5+ drinks in one sitting.
- A higher % of Atlantic Canadians drink in a manner considered hazardous (AUDIT)

Per capita consumption litres per annum, 2007

Also:
- Declining age of first drink
- Increasing rates of consumption among females
- Intoxication as a planned outcome

Literature Review
Culture of Alcohol Use in AC

- Findings – Alcohol Consumption:
  - Socially accepted & expected
  - Intolerance of alcohol abstinence
  - Excessive consumption & intentional over-consumption
  - Normalization of intoxication

- Findings – Alcohol & Injuries:
  - Alcohol-related injuries are “badges of honour”
  - Amusing stories

*It’s not that we’re drinking alcohol, it’s HOW we’re drinking alcohol.*

Key Informants
Creating a Culture of Hazardous Consumption:

- Heritage
- Industry
- Marketing, promotion & media
Final Report Recommendations

1. Decrease advertising
2. Decrease access
3. Increase pricing
4. Create support for change
Decreasing Advertising

- Countries with partial restrictions vs. none
  - 16% lower consumption rates
  - 10% lower MVC fatality rates
- Countries with full restrictions vs. partial
  - 11% lower consumption rates
  - 23% lower MVC fatality rates
- Ban alcohol sponsorships

USA: A full ban would save between 5000-10,000 lives per year
Decreasing Access

- Outlet Density
  - Increased rates of violence, crime, impaired driving among youth, binge drinking, overall morbidity

- Hours & Days of Sale
  - Increased rates of violence, impaired driving & MVCs

- Bar Hours
Increased Pricing

Results in:
- Reduced consumption overall
- Reduced harmful & hazardous consumption
- Reduced dependence
- Reduced alcohol-related harms (to self and others)
Creating Support for Change

- Use social marketing techniques to:
  - Create readiness for policy change among the public
  - Denormalize binge drinking, drinking to intoxication & underage drinking
  - Normalize help-seeking

- Assess capacity of stakeholders’ understanding of social marketing & best practices in alcohol policy & work to build capacity where needed

- Support training of healthcare professionals
Conclusion

- Low prices, high access & high exposure to advertising =
  - $\uparrow$ CONSUMPTION
- Increased CONSUMPTION =
  - $\uparrow$ Suicide & violence
  - $\uparrow$ Motor vehicle collisions
Questions?

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