

LONDON  
SCHOOL OF  
HYGIENE  
& TROPICAL  
MEDICINE

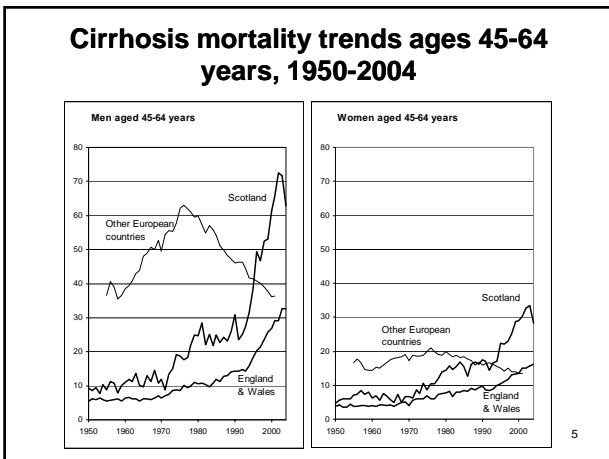
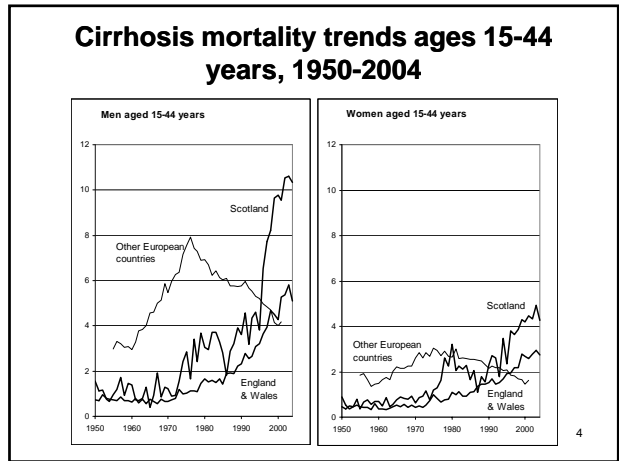
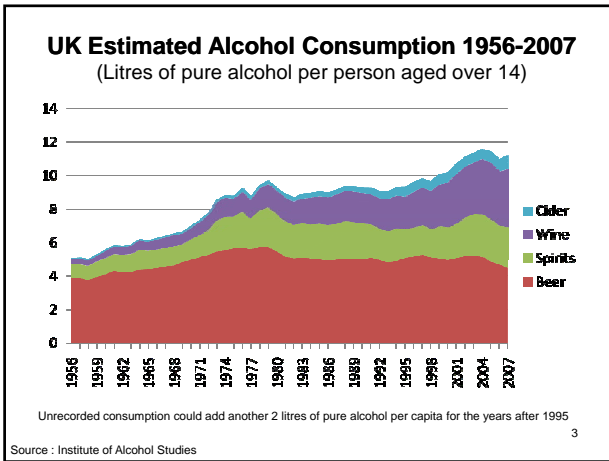
## Case Study 1 : Alcohol Policy

**David Leon**  
(London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine)

**Lost in Translation: Getting evidence into policy**  
BMA, Edinburgh  
21<sup>st</sup> April 2010

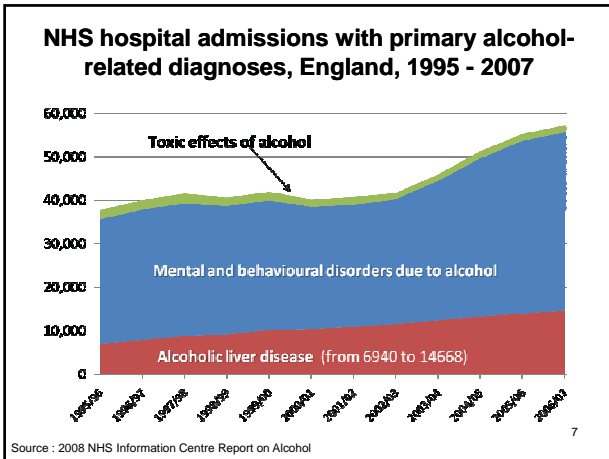
## Nobody is arguing about ...

2



## Trends in alcohol-related hospital admissions

6



## Government (Whitehall) response

2003 - 2010

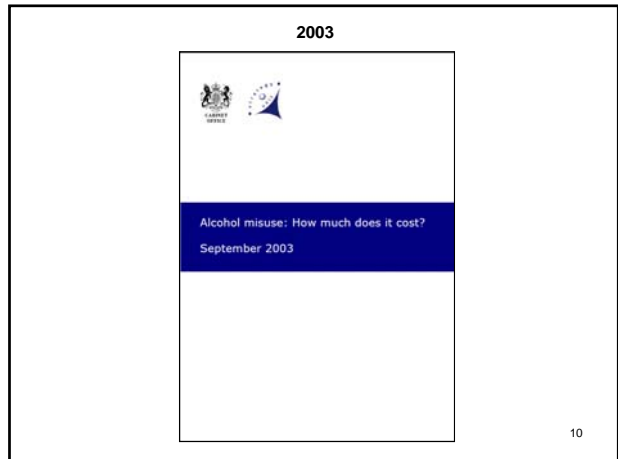
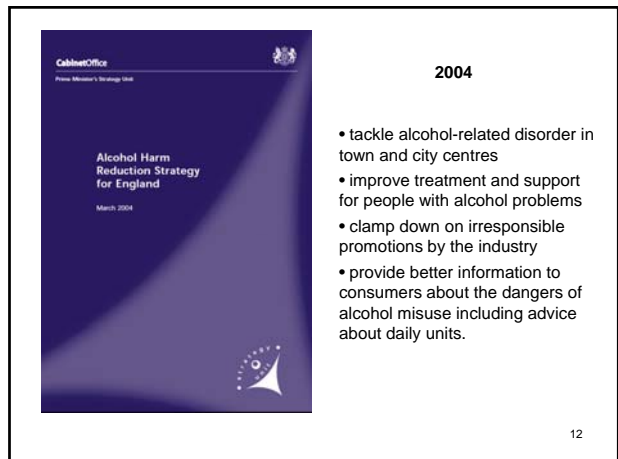


Table 46 Overall Costs of Alcohol Misuse (£ millions)		
	First Estimate	Second Estimate
<b>Health Care Costs</b>		
Hospital inpatient (day) visits	128.2	128.2
Density attributable to alcohol misuse	344.2	399.8
Partly attributable to alcohol misuse	222.8	448.6
Accident and emergency visits	305.2	305.2
Ambulance services	205.0	205.0
Fracture nurse consultations	39.1	39.3
NHS GP consultations	27.8	48.7
Laboratory tests	N/A	N/A
Dependency prescribed drugs	1.6	1.6
Other health care costs	35.3	35.3
Specialist treatment services	96.2	96.2
<b>Workplace and Wider Economy Costs</b>		
Lost output due to absenteeism	1,213.6	1,785.9
Lost output due to reduced employment	1,726.1	2,153.7
Lost output due to reduced employment efficiency	N/A	N/A
Lost output due to premature death	2,254.3	2,481.8
<b>Costs of alcohol-related and alcohol specific crime</b>		
<b>Criminal Justice System costs</b>		
Alcohol specific offences	29.9	29.9
Alcohol-related offences	1,720.4	1,720.4
Property health and safety services	2,531.2	2,531.2
Costs in anticipation of crime (alarms etc)	1,494.6	1,494.6
Lost productive output of victims	989.8	989.8
Emotional impact costs for victims of crime	4,676.6	4,676.6
<b>Drink driving</b>		
<b>Criminal Justice System costs</b>		
Cost of drink-driving casualties	77.3	77.3
<b>Lost output</b>		
Serious casualties	33.8	33.8
Slight casualties	25.9	25.9
Medical and ambulance	20.5	20.5
Serious casualties	11.0	11.0
Slight casualties	232.8	232.8
Human costs	123.8	123.8
Serious casualties		
Slight casualties		
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>18,817.1</b>	<b>20,944.8</b>



**PRIME MINISTER'S FOREWORD**



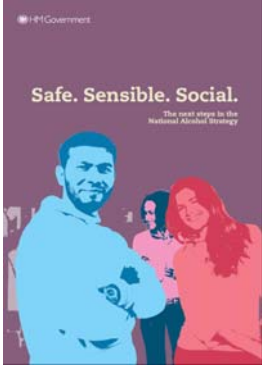
Millions of us enjoy drinking alcohol with few, if any, ill effects. Indeed moderate drinking can bring some health benefits. But, increasingly, alcohol misuse by a small minority is causing two major, and largely distinct, problems: on the one hand crime and anti-social behaviour in town and city centres, and on the other harm to health as a result of binge- and chronic drinking.

The Strategy Unit's analysis last year showed that alcohol-related harm is costing around £20bn a year, and that some of the harms associated with alcohol are getting worse.

This is why the Government has been looking at how best to tackle the problems of alcohol misuse. The aim has been to target alcohol-related harm and its causes without interfering with the pleasure enjoyed by the millions of people who drink responsibly.

13

**2007**

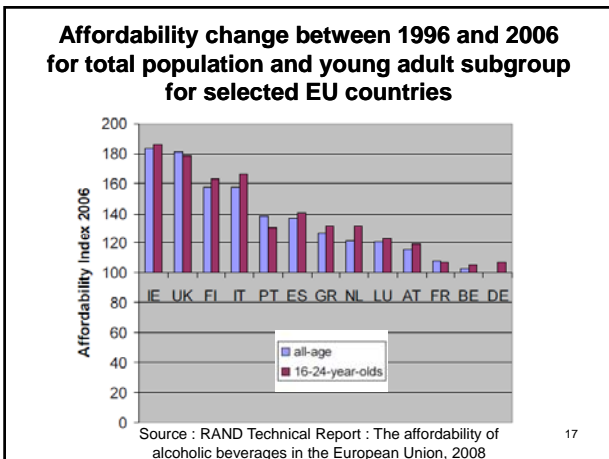
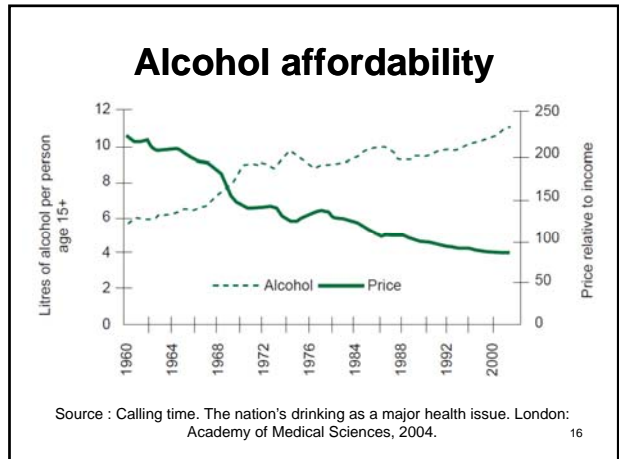


- sharpened criminal justice for drunken behaviour;
- a review of NHS alcohol spending;
- more help for people who want to drink less;
- toughened enforcement of underage sales;
- trusted guidance for parents and young people;
- public information campaigns to promote a new 'sensible drinking' culture;
- public consultation on alcohol pricing and promotion; and
- local alcohol strategies.

14

**One issue passed over ...**

15



**The contested issue :  
Price and Consumption**

Who is affected ?

18

## Evidence for significant price elasticity

- Sheffield (Meier) study, commissioned by DoH in 2008
- Oxford Economics Study commissioned by Beer and Pub Industry (2008)

19



2010

Faced by a mounting problem, the response of successive Governments has ranged from the non-existent to the ineffectual.

In 2004 an Alcohol Strategy was published following an excellent study of the costs of alcohol by the Strategy Unit. Unfortunately, the Strategy failed to take account of the evidence which had been gathered. The evidence showed that a rise in the price of alcohol was the most effective way of reducing consumption just as its increasing affordability since the 1960s had been the major cause of the rise in consumption. We note that minimum pricing is supported by many prominent health experts, economists and ACPO.

We recommend that the Government introduce minimum pricing.

20



2010

- The Government accepts the evidence that price can influence the levels of consumption of alcohol and that different groups;
- Following publication of the Sheffield review, the Government committed to taking forward further work to develop the evidence base on cheap alcohol. The Home Office is now taking that work forward, with a view to developing a better understanding of the wider implications that any action on price might have on the economy, on levels of crime and disorder and on the public.

21

## Scottish experience

- Crucial evidence likely to come from developments in Scotland
- Need to have in place same set up as for smoking ban to monitor impacts of minimum pricing if this goes through

22

## Alcohol and Smoking compared

Building on success ?

23

## Two key differences

- Only 1/4 adults smoke (and going down), but 9/10 drink
- More difficult to draw on experience of other countries in way done with smoking ban, as UK alcohol trajectory is atypical

24

## Some potential parallels

- Scope for developing alcohol “harm to others” that is never given prominence (cf passive smoking)
- Scepticism about impact of smoking ban mirrors (to some extent) concern about impact of minimum pricing
- Experience of dealing with vested commercial interests

25

**But ... is there agreement about the nature of the problem ?**

26

## Areas for reflection

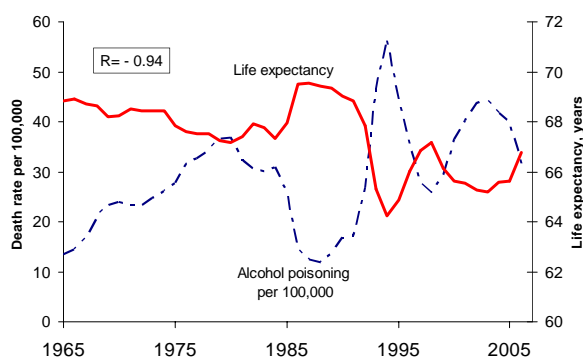
- Health is not the only issue. Issue of freedom to choose is a real issue - more so than with highly addictive habit of smoking.
- Deep roots to popular (and politicians’) idea that problem drinking is just in isolated “other” group
- Need for public debate and fora in which policy makers and scientists can hammer out a common understanding of what the problem is

27

**Things could be worse ...**

28

**Alcohol poisonings and life expectancy at birth  
Russia (M+F) 1965-2006**



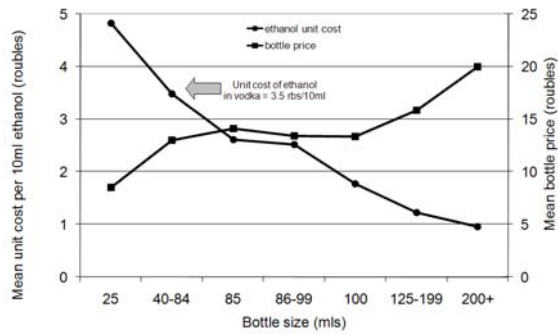
Source : VM Shkolnikov

**Alcohol containing medicines  
(very common)  
(70% - 90% ethanol by volume)**



30

**Unit cost of ethanol in non-beverage alcohols relative to standard Russian vodka**



Доклад  
Общественной палаты  
Российской Федерации

**ЗЛУПОТРЕБЛЕНИЕ АЛКОГОЛЕМ  
В РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ:  
СОЦИАЛЬНО-ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКИЕ ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ  
И МЕРЫ ПРОТИВОДЕЙСТВИЯ**

**Report of the  
Russian Public Chamber on the  
socio-economic consequences of  
alcohol drinking**

**Moscow, May 2009**

32