

PARALLEL SESSION 1C

UK licensing legislation. The good, the bad and the indifferent

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Objective: To determine patients' opinions and perceptions as to how the new UK licensing law will impact on them and their communities.

Design: Qualitative semi-structured face to face interviews.

Subjects: 30 Participants were allocated to one of three groups based on drinking behaviour as defined by assessment utilizing AUDIT and SADQ.

Methods: Qualitative semi structured face to face interviews conducted within a clinical setting. The respondents were chosen purposively to represent age and sex, and were subdivided into three groups determined by drinking behaviour;

1. Hazardous/Harmful Drinkers scoring between 8 and 16 on AUDIT screening questionnaire and no evidence of alcohol withdrawal.
2. Drinkers Dependent on alcohol scoring greater than 30 on the SADQ
3. Sensible Drinkers consuming 14 or fewer unit's female, 21 units or fewer male per week

Main Results: Respondents reported a belief that increased availability of alcohol in clubs and pubs would have a negative impact on their communities. Several patients made particular reference to the cultural shift in drinking from small pubs with plenty of seating to larger bars and clubs in town, with very little or no seating to make people drink more. Concern was expressed that this would be an increase in alcohol-related crime and disorder with particular reference to young people who frequent these new age bars and clubs. Interestingly very few participants highlighted health as an issue of concern.

Conclusion: This study shows that irrespective of usual drinking behaviour attitudes towards drinking are predominantly ambivalent. We did not find any differences in attitudes based on age, gender, sex, alcohol related harm or drinking patterns.