

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Board Meeting
Tuesday, 26 October 2010

Board Paper No. 10/45

Director of Public Health

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of the City of Glasgow Licensing Board, Licensing Policy Statement

Recommendation:

The Board is asked to note the HIA of Glasgow City Council Licensing Policy and support its recommendations

1. Introduction

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde has an unenviable record in relation to alcohol misuse, with 4 local authorities within its boundaries in the top 5 of whole of the UK for alcohol related deaths among men for the period 1998 - 2004. Women fared a little better, with 4 of our local authorities in the top 12 in the UK for female deaths due to alcohol misuse in 1998 – 2004 (*Health Statistics Quarterly, Spring 2007. National Statistics, Palgrave McMillan*).

From 1998 to 2005 men and women in Scotland are more likely to binge drink than any other national group in the UK (*Smith L, Foxcroft D. Drinking in the UK, An Exploration of Trends. Joseph Rowantree Foundation. May 2009*).

Local data has shown that the prevalence of alcohol misuse in our health board area is worse than the rest of Scotland, with binge drinking in our local population at 65% for males compared to Scotland's 40%, while figures for women were 51% and 33% respectively. (*An Unequal Struggle for Health, Report of the Director of Public Health into the health of the Population of Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Priorities for Action 2009 – 2011*).

Glasgow Health Commission 2009 recommended that the city make use of its powers under the licensing legislation to tackle some of the issues around alcohol misuse in the city. Alcohol Licensing Policies are reviewed on a three yearly basis, and the Glasgow City Licensing Board must review its Licensing Policy by November 2010. Thus the opportunity was presented in the last year to influence the development of its new Policy.

At the end of 2009, with the approval of Glasgow City Licensing Forum, a multi-agency group was established to carry out a health impact assessment of Glasgow City's Alcohol Licensing Policy. A health impact assessment is an internationally recognised tool which examines all the potential effects of a particular Policy on health whether good or bad and allows them to be reviewed and assessed.

2. Procedure

The Licensing Policy was screened by a number of reviewers to identify whether there were any potential health effects as a consequence of the Policy. Subsequent to this a meeting of Council officials, NHS staff, licence holders and community representatives identified which groups were likely to be affected by the different potential impact of the Policy both positively and negatively. An independent literature review was commissioned to research the international evidence of these effects. One to one interviews and meetings across the city were arranged to discuss the various aspects of the Policy ensuring that there was representation from all relevant stakeholders.

This evidence was synthesised by a Working Group which also ensured that the findings of the HIA review was sensitive to the differing needs of communities across Glasgow and that the recommendations would ensure equality of access and protection as a consequence of any future alcohol licensing policy. This included access to and provision for different sectors of the population within licensed premises in Glasgow City Council area.

The Health Impact Assessment has been circulated to all those who took part in the process.

3. Recommendations of the Health Impact Assessment

The Health Impact Assessment contains 64 recommendations. Most of these relate to the Licensing Board, though there are some directed at the local Council, Strathclyde Police and Scottish Government. Recommendations for the Council will be drawn to the attention of the Alcohol and Drug Partnership and relevant Council departments.

In general the recommendations relate to four main areas:-

- Improving accessibility of the licensed trade, local communities and individual members of the public to the licensing policy process as originally intended by national legislation;
- Developing a tool for use by the Licensing Board in assessing overprovision of licensed premise;

- Providing guidance to the Licensing Board on the relationship between public health and the Licensing Policy;
- Encouraging enforcement of existing laws to protect our communities.

A full list of the recommendations can be found on page 47 of the report (<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/9A5D1F11-78E4-4AEE-BD06-5DB872B2E494/0/Report.doc>)

4. Conclusions

While adoption of these recommendations will not transform our poor alcohol related health within Glasgow City, they will help to ensure that some of our more vulnerable groups and communities can use the Licensing Policy to limit to a degree the harm due to alcohol misuse. Adoption of these recommendations by the trade will also help to ensure that alcohol consumption may be enjoyed by those who use it sensibly and is likely to result in a more positive relationship with alcohol by our local population. The HIA has been shared with other local authorities.

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13 October 2010