

Alcohol Health Alliance UK
c/o Institute of Alcohol Studies
Alliance House, 12 Caxton Street
London, SW1H 0QS

The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, SW1A 2AA

3 November 2022

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to welcome you to your new role and ask you to commit to tackling the harm from alcohol that grips our country by conducting an Independent Review on Alcohol Harm.

The Independent Review of Illicit Drugs led by Dame Carol Black laid bare the scale of drug-related harm and offered 32 recommendations that would reverse the disturbing trajectory of drug-related harm. The Review informed the Government's 10-year Drug Strategy: From Harm to Hope and is welcomed as a strategy that will improve and save the lives of many. Tragically, alcohol kills more people each year, yet the last Government Alcohol Strategy was introduced in 2012.

While the Government's proposed new strength-based alcohol duty system and the forthcoming alcohol labelling consultation are both welcome steps and should be delivered without delay, more action is needed. **We urgently call on the Government to commission an Independent Review on Alcohol Harm to inform a new national Alcohol Strategy, to complement the Black Review and the Khan Review of tobacco.**

As with the Independent Review of Illicit Drugs, the terms of reference for the alcohol harm review should include a focus on evidence-based interventions to reduce harm. There is strong evidence behind the effectiveness of measures to reduce the affordability, promotion and availability of alcohol, such as alcohol taxes and a comprehensive restriction of alcohol advertising.

High levels of alcohol consumption lead to unacceptable harm across the UK, beneath which hide many personal tragedies. Alcohol is the leading risk factor for death, ill-health, and disability amongst 15-49-year-olds. It causes more working years of life lost than the ten most common cancers combined. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the situation to crisis point, with deaths from alcohol rising to an all-time high. In total, alcohol costs our society at least £27 billion every year, of which less than half is offset by tax revenue on alcohol. This includes direct costs such as the £11.4 billion incurred by alcohol-related crime, as well as indirect costs such as contributing to overweight and obesity. The next generation will suffer hugely from rising alcohol harm, including the impact on children of alcohol dependent parents and those with foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), already estimated to cost the NHS £2 billion per year.

Recent research has shown that changes in alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to lead to thousands of additional cases of disease, premature deaths,

and hospitalisations, which will be compounded by rising economic and social harms and depleting treatment services.

These harms are not felt equally across society: people from the lowest socio-economic groups are significantly more likely to feel the adverse impacts of alcohol, despite drinking less alcohol on average. Addressing alcohol-related harm is thus essential to levelling up and reducing health inequalities, and will boost growth across the economy and in every part of the country.

We would be grateful for your support and would like to request a meeting with the newly appointed Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to discuss the merits of an Independent Review of Alcohol.

In its approach to illicit drugs, obesity, tobacco and gambling-related harm the Government has shown a willingness to take bold action to protect the public's health – the same boldness is now required to tackle alcohol harm.

We look forward to hearing your response and hope that we can work together in reducing the harms of alcohol.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Carden MP, Liverpool Walton, Chair of Drugs, Alcohol and Justice APPG
Alison Thewliss MP, Glasgow Central
Allan Dorans MP, Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock
Andrew Selous MP, South West Bedfordshire
Andy McDonald MP, Middlesbrough
Anne McLaughlin MP, Glasgow North East
Baroness Bennet of Manor Castle
Baroness Boycott
Baroness Finlay of Llandaff, Chair of the Alcohol Harm Commission
Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town
Baroness Jenkin of Kennington
Baroness Jolly
Baroness Walmsley
Baroness Watkins of Tavistock
Barry Gardiner MP, Brent North
Cat Smith MP, Lancaster and Fleetwood
Charlotte Nichols MP, Warrington North
Christian Wakeford MP, Bury South, Chair of Alcohol Harm APPG
Claudia Webbe, MP for Leicester East
Derek Thomas MP, St Ives
Dr Daniel Poulter MP, Central Suffolk and North Ipswich
Dr Philippa Whitford MP, Central Ayrshire
George Howarth MP, Knowsley
John McDonnell MP, Hayes and Harlington
Kate Hollern MP, Blackburn
Kate Osborne MP, Jarrow
Kenny MacAskill MP, East Lothian
Kim Johnson MP, Liverpool Riverside
Liam Byrne MP, Birmingham Hodge Hill
Lord Bishop of Carlisle
Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe
Lord Shipley OBE

Professor Sir Ian Gilmore, Chair of Alcohol Health Alliance UK
Alison Douglas, Chief Executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland
Anna Gilmore, Professor of Public Health and Director, Tobacco Control Research Group, University of Bath
Belinda Phipps, Chief Executive of We Are With You British Medical Association
Crispin Acton, Expert Advisor for the Institute of Alcohol Studies
Dr Alison Giles, Interim Chief Executive of the Institute of Alcohol Studies
Dr Allen Gallagher, University of Bath
Dr Chris Record, Consultant Hepatologist, Newcastle University
Dr Dominique Florin, Medical Director at the Medical Council on Alcohol
Dr Emily Finch, Chair of the Faculty of Addiction, Royal College of Psychiatrists
Dr Jackie Applebee Turner, Chair of Doctors in Unite
Dr Olivia Maynard, Co-Director, Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group, University of Bristol
Dr Peter Rice, President of the European Alcohol Policy Alliance
Dr Richard Piper, Chief Executive Officer of Alcohol Change UK
Dr Sarah Clarke, President of the Royal College of Physicians
Dr Tony Rao, Consultant Psychiatrist and Visiting Research Fellow, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust/Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience
Elinor Jayne, Director of Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems
Eric Appleby, Chair of Alcohol and Families Alliance
Fiona Donald, President of the Royal College of Anaesthetists
Graham MacGregor CBE, Chairman of Action on Sugar and Action on Salt
Hilary Henriques MBE, Chief Executive of Nacoa
Julie Bass, Chief Executive of Turning Point
Justina Murray, CEO, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drug
Jyotsna Vohra, Director of Policy and Public Affairs at the Royal Society for Public Health

Margaret Ferrier MP, Rutherglen and Hamilton West
Patrick Grady MP, Glasgow North
Peter Dowd MP, Bootle
Rachael Maskell MP, York Central
Ronnie Cowan MP, Inverclyde
Tony Lloyd MP, Rochdale
Tracey Crouch MP, Chatham and Aylesford
Wayne David MP, Caerphilly
Wera Hobhouse MP, Bath
Yasmin Qureshi MP, Bolton South East

Kate Halliday, Executive Director of Addiction Professionals
Kevin Fenton, President of Faculty of Public Health
Martin Tod, Chief Executive, Men's Health Forum
Matthew Philpott, Executive Director of Health Equalities Group
Oliver Standing, Director at Collective Voice
Pamela Healy OBE, Chief Executive of British Liver Trust
Paul Townsley, Chief Executive Officer, Humankind
Phil Chamberlain, Managing Editor, Tobacco Tactics, University of Bath
Professor Colin Drummond, National Addiction Centre, King's College London
Professor Eileen Kaner, Newcastle University
Professor Frank Murray MD, Chair, Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland
Professor Jamie Brown, Director of Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group, UCL
Professor Jim McCambridge, University of York
Professor Jonathan Shepherd CBE, Trustee at the Royal College of Surgeons
Professor Keith Humphreys OBE, Stanford University
Professor Linda Bauld, Director of the SPECTRUM Consortium
Professor Martin McKee CBE, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Professor Rachael Murray, University of Nottingham
Professor Simon Moore, Violence Research Group and Security, Crime and Intelligence Innovation Institute, Cardiff University
Rachael Gormley, Chief Executive of the World Cancer Research Fund
Rebecca Jones, President of the British Association for the Study of the Liver
Sally Benton, Executive Director at Forward Trust
Sarah Hughes, Chief Executive at the Centre for Mental Health
Steven Masson, Alcohol Lead at the British Society of Gastroenterology
Susan Taylor, Head of Alcohol Policy at Balance North East
Vivienne Evans OBE, Chief Executive of Adfam