

# Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Manitoba

A Provincial Summary Report

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# Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Manitoba: A Provincial Summary Report

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Figure 1

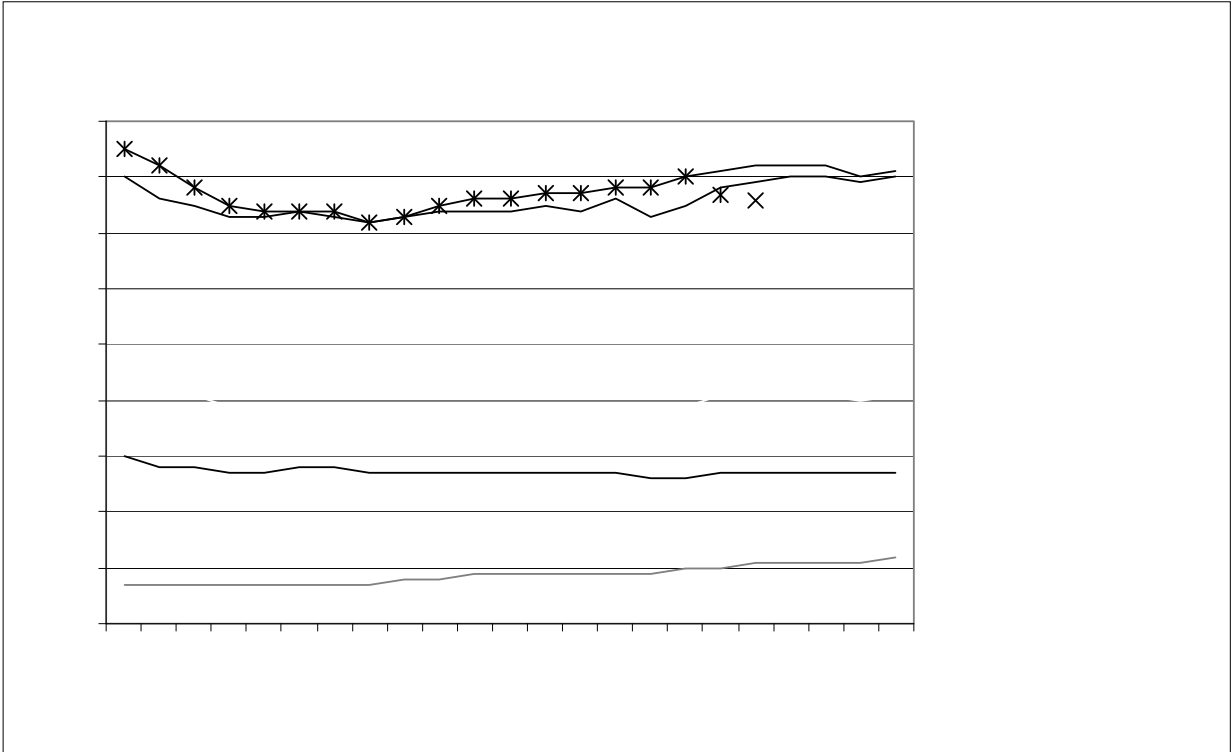
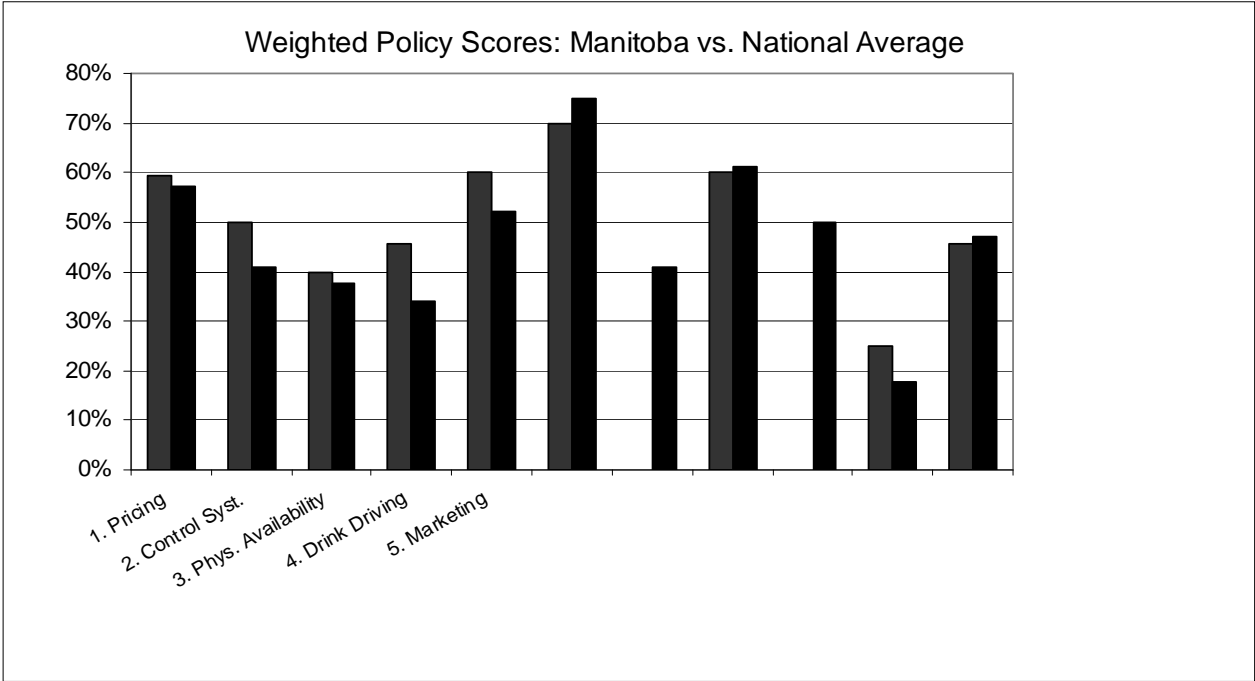




Figure 2



Recommendations: Manitoba's alcohol pricing policies can be strengthened significantly by implementing minimum prices for all beverages sold from off-premise retail outlets. The research team recommends that off-premise minimum prices be set at a minimum of \$1.50 per standard drink. As well, Manitoba should consider increasing the minimum price per standard drink for coolers, wine and beer sold from on-premise establishments to \$3.00 per standard drink. Finally, Manitoba's off-premise alcohol prices have been keeping pace with inflation. To help ensure this trend continues it is recommended that alcohol prices be automatically indexed to the Canadian Price Index (CPI).

## 2. Alcohol Control System

Promising Practices: Manitoba has a mixed system of private and publicly owned off-premise retail outlets. Manitoba is unique in that the province does not allow privately run ferment on premise (FOP) outlets but has one government FOP outlet. The government run retail outlets in Manitoba have a strong commitment to upholding their social responsibility mandate. Manitoba's legislation directs a portion of alcohol revenue to support alcohol and drug programs and the provincial liquor board disseminates social responsibility messages across several mediums including: posters, pamphlets, online content, print advertising, bus ads and an alcohol and youth summit.

Areas for Improvement: Approximately 10% of off-premise retail outlets in Manitoba are publicly owned. In addition to on-premise and off-premise outlets, alcohol is also sold through liquor delivery services and made available by ferment at home kits. Manitoba also has licensed beer vendors which are hotels that are authorized to sell beer and coolers for off-premise consumption.

Recommendations: It is important for Manitoba to maintain a government run retail system. Government run monopolies play a key role in regulating access to alcohol by maintaining effective alcohol control strategies such as legal drinking age and enforcement, the regulation of alcohol pricing, hours and days of sale and upholding a socially responsible mandate (Babor et





duration of the administrative licence suspension, and increasing the licence reinstatement fee to a minimum of \$150.

## 5. Marketing and Advertising

**Promising Practices:** Manitoba's provincial marketing regulations extend beyond those required by the CRTC and include restrictions on the placement of advertisements such as forbidding advertisements on the outside of a vehicle or inflatables to be displayed on or adjacent to school property. The provincial liquor commission and inspection services are responsible for the enforcement of the provincial advertising regulations and corporations can be fined up to \$50,000 for advertisements that do not meet the required standards.

**Areas for Improvement:** There are currently no restrictions on the quantity of alcohol advertising in Manitoba; the frequency and duration of the advertisement is at the discretion of the advertiser. There are also no restrictions placed on sponsorship. Alcohol manufacturers may sponsor charitable events, contests and events involving motorised vehicles.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended that Manitoba limit the quantity of the alcohol advertisements (see CPHA, 2011; Giesbrecht et al., 2011) and the province is urged to tighten restrictions on sponsorship specifically, banning sponsorship of events involving motorized vehicles or other events that portray skilled activities that are made more dangerous when combined with the use of alcohol.

## 6. Legal Drinking Age

**Promising Practices:** The minimum legal drinking age in Manitoba, which is 18 years of age, is supported by legislation prohibiting the sale of alcohol to a minor and the purchase of alcohol by a minor. Enforcement of the minimum legal drinking age in Manitoba is strong. The minimum legal drinking age is enforced by way of liquor inspection program and collaboration with law enforcement in on-premise licensed establishments and by the implementation of a mystery shopper program in off-premise retail outlets.

**Areas for Improvement:** The minimum legal drinking age in Manitoba is 18 years of age. Regulations pertaining to social hosting laws in Manitoba permit a parent, guardian, spouse or common-law partner who is of legal drinking age to serve alcohol to their underage child, spouse or partner. Social hosting laws permit alcohol to be served to a minor within a private residence as well as in certain licensed establishments such as licensed dining rooms, sports facilities and private clubs. The alcohol must be purchased and provided by the parent, guardian, spouse or common-law partner of the individual who is below the legal drinking age and be consumed with a meal.

**Recommendations:** The legal drinking age is 18 in Manitoba. There is some evidence from Canada for a higher minimum legal drinking age (Whitehead et al., 1975; 1977) however, the more robust evidence comes from the United States (Wagenaar & Toomey, 2002). Research findings from the United States support implementing a higher minimum legal drinking age, such as 21 years of age, to help reduce drinking and driving incidents and delay the onset of

drinking (Babor et al., 2010). Manitoba is encouraged, at minimum, to increase their legal drinking age to 19 years of age and consider increasing the minimum legal drinking age to 21 years of age. Manitoba is also encouraged to revise their social hosting laws to prohibit the provision of alcohol to any individual below the legal drinking age.

outlets and on-premise licensed establishments to challenge and refusals and make this information available for monitoring and evaluation activities.

### 9. Provincial Alcohol Strategy

Areas for Improvement: Manitoba does not have a provincial alcohol strategy nor does it have a provincial strategy that encompasses alcohol or includes interventions or policies highlighted by the WHO Global Strategy to Reduce Harmful use



harm from alcohol and conduct pilot evaluations of these initiatives prior to implementing them on a province wide basis.

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