



Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Prince Edward Island

A Provincial Summary Report

Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Prince Edward Island: A Provincial Summary Report

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Overview

The overall objective of this project is to encourage greater uptake of evidence-informed prevention and policy initiatives that reduce alcohol-related harms in Canada. This project documents current alcohol policy initiatives across Canada and draws comparisons across the provinces. The project serves to highlight policy strengths across each of these jurisdictions, provide recommendations on how to improve weaker policy areas and disseminate this up-to-date information to major stakeholders and policymakers in each jurisdiction.

In March of 2013, the main report entitled: *Strategies to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Canada: A Comparison of Provincial Policies* (Giesbrecht et al., 2013), which documents the findings of this project, was released at an event hosted by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. The full report is available at:

http://www.camh.ca/en/research/news_and_publications/reports_and_books/Pages/default.aspx

This provincial summary report serves to provide more detailed results and tailored recommendations for the province of Prince Edward Island. This project seeks to disseminate this information to policy-makers, decision-makers and knowledge users in order to stimulate policy change. The project also hopes to inform provincial liquor boards and alcohol regulators on the additional roles they can play in helping to reduce alcohol related harms and costs.

Methods

This project builds on the model implemented by MADD Canada and is based on well established and rigorous systematic reviews on the effectiveness of alcohol prevention measures as well as other studies which take a comparative approach to assessing alcohol policies (Anderson et al., 2009; Babor et al., 2010; Brand et al., 2007; Karlsson & Österberg, 2011). The policy dimensions central to this project were selected based on a review of the literature and

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| **Recent Developments in Alcohol Policy in Prince Edward Island** (since November, [2012](#)).

well as a summit on impaired driving hosted by the department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal will help to move these strategies forward.

The PEI Liquor Control has recently partnered

recommends a minimum price of \$3.00 per standard drink for alcohol sold from on-premise outlets and \$1.50 per standard drinks for alcohol sold from off-premise outlets. case, table wine and coolers are \$3.00 plus tax, when this is converted to a price per standard drink, taking into account typical strength and size of drinks, all off-premise minimum prices are still below the recommended \$3 per standard drink. Prices from all channels, internet sales, and ferment on premise outlets should be in line with minimum price regulations. Furthermore, all prices should be indexed to inflation to prevent alcohol from becoming cheaper relative to other goods over time, and adjusted according to alcohol content so that the price per standard drink remains stable across products of different strengths.

2. Alcohol Control System:

Promising Practices: Prince Edward Island has maintained a strong government monopoly with approximately 62% of

Recommendations:

Prince Edward Island

are strongly urged to limit the quantity of alcohol advertising they permit. Mechanisms for dealing with breeches of codes or guidelines should be strengthened and streamlined so that the public is aware of how to launch a complaint. Finally, Prince Edward Island is encouraged to review its sponsorship policies – for example, practices that target youth, such as the sponsorship of academic scholarships should be prohibited as should the sponsorship of events that feature high risk activities when combined with alcohol.

6. Legal Drinking Age

Promising Practices: The minimum legal drinking age in Prince Edward Island, which is 19 years of age, is supported by legislation prohibiting the sale of alcohol to a minor and the purchase of alcohol by a minor. Overall enforcement of the legal drinking age is strong. A mystery shopper program is in place that monitors the enforcement of the legal drinking age in off-premise outlets and Prince Edward Island has a liquor inspection program/collaboration with law enforcement officials in order to enforce the legal drinking age in on-premise establishments.

Recommendations: The legal drinking age is 19 in Prince Edward Island. While there is some evidence from Canada (Whitehead et al., 1975) more robust evidence comes from the United States (Wagenaar and Toomey, 2002) that supports the implementation of a higher drinking age (such as 21) to help reduce alcohol-related harms, drinking and driving incidents, and to delay the onset of drinking (Babor et al., 2010).

7. Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral

Recommendations: At present, Prince Edward Island has no Screening, Brief Intervention and Referrals initiative in place. It

based on evaluated training interventions shown to reduce over-service or service to individuals below the legal drinking age and has not yet been evaluated.

Recommendations: For on-premise sales, Prince Edward Island is encouraged to extend the province wide mandatory server training to staff at all licensed events and festivals. It is recommended that the province implement programs that have been shown through evaluation to reduce over-service or service to minors and implement tracking of challenges and refusals. For off-premise sales, Prince Edward Island

associated with

Track challenge and refusals in on-premise establishments as well as private retail outlets and make this data available readily for monitoring and surveillance activities.

Implement mandatory warning labels on beverage containers with clear and direct health messages.

Expand the current repertoire of mandatory warning signs in on-premise and off-premise outlets to include clear and direct messages on other health topics such as moderate consumption, drinking and driving and alcohol as modifiable risk factor for chronic disease and risks associated with consuming alcohol during pregnancy.

Alcohol is no ordinary commodity (Babor et al., 2010; CPHA, 2011). It is imperative that Prince Edward Island continue to implement precautionary alcohol policies in order to reduce the harm and costs associated with alcohol use and to enhance the health and safety of its residents. Refining and implementing the recommendations listed above will require an evidence-based perspective, leadership, commitment to reducing alcohol-related harm and a spirit of collaboration among key stakeholders including various ministries and sectors of government, NGOs working on health issues, public health advocates and representatives from the private sector. As an immediate next step, Prince Edward Island is strongly urged to place a moratorium on the further expansion of liquidation outlets. Alcohol pricing policies are one of the most

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