Strategies to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Canada: A Review of Provincial, Territorial, and Federal Policies

February 20th, 2019 Webinar


Project website: www.alcoholpolicy.cisur.ca
The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada or the other organisations acknowledged.
CAPE History

• First alcohol policy report was released along with 10 provincial summary reports in 2013 (no territories included) (Giesbrecht et al., 2013)

• Format based on: MADD Canada’s impaired driving report card/legislative review series and MacLean’s University rankings
CAPE– 2019

• Health Canada SUAP Grant (provinces and territories)
  – Second assessment of provincial alcohol policies
  – First assessment of territorial alcohol policies
  – Policy domains/indicators revised based on updated evidence and stakeholder feedback
  – Results presented as grades rather than rankings

• Public Health Agency of Canada Funding (federal)
  – First assessment of the implementation of federal alcohol policies
Project Rationale: Alcohol Harms

• ~ 80% of Canadians drank 1+ alcoholic drink in past year
• ~ 30-40% of drinkers (15+ years) report drinking above the low-risk drinking guidelines (after adjustment for under-reporting)
• In 2014, alcohol led to:
  - 14,800 deaths,
  - 139,000 years of productive life lost and
  - 88,000 hospital admissions
Project Rationale: Alcohol Costs

- The economic cost of alcohol in Canada for 2014 was estimated to be **$14.6 billion**, more than any other psychoactive substance, including tobacco;
- Net revenue from alcohol in Canada in 2014 totaled **$10.9 billion** i.e. only 75% of costs
- Each province and territory runs a **cost deficit** from alcohol, ranging from 6% in Quebec up to 96% in Nunavut.

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* Value in Millions

† Cost estimates do not include inpatient hospitalization, day surgery and emergency department costs for Quebec
Project Rationale: Evidence-based Policies

Alcohol policy domains with most evidence of effectiveness and greatest population reach were selected e.g. policies that:

- Decrease alcohol’s affordability
- Decrease convenience of access
- Restrict advertising and promotions
- Deter impaired driving

Advances in knowledge now enable more specific advice e.g.

- Apply consistent minimum prices per standard drink
- Use government rather than private retail systems
- Apply advertising codes both to new digital and traditional media
- Apply civil penalties for impaired drivers
Project Methods
Methodological Process (Fed & Prov/Terr)

**Developing the scoring rubric**

- **Selection of Domains and Indicators**
  - Domains and indicators selected based on review of the evidence e.g. Babor, Burton, Nelson etc.

- **Development of domain weighting**
  - Individual weighting exercise followed by team weighting consensus activity

- **Development of indicator scoring**
  - Teams of two Co-I topic experts updated the indicators to reflect current evidence

- **External peer review**
  - Rubric sent to 3 international peer reviewers and their feedback was incorporated

**Applying the scoring rubric**

- **Data collection (Phase I & II)**
  - Phase I: RAs collected public data
  - Phase II: RAs collected data from key contacts

- **Data validation**
  - RAs sent datasets to key contacts for validation

- **Data scoring**
  - Two Co-Is independently scored the data. Coordinators facilitated conflict resolution. PIs provided final ruling on conflicts

- **Tabulation of scores**
  - Coordinators tallied domain and P/T scores
<table>
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<th>Policy indicator categories</th>
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<td>1. Pricing and Taxation</td>
<td>- Minimum pricing for alcohol sold on federally controlled lands/waters</td>
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<td>- Volumetric taxation (GST and Excise tax)</td>
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<td>2. Physical Availability</td>
<td>- Importation of alcohol, restrictions and exemptions</td>
</tr>
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<td>3. Impaired Driving Countermeasures</td>
<td>- Federal <em>Criminal Code</em> BAC limit</td>
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<td>- Random breath testing</td>
</tr>
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<td>4. Marketing and Advertising Controls</td>
<td>- Regulating alcohol marketing: content and coverage</td>
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<td>- Enforcement mechanisms</td>
</tr>
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<td>- Monitoring and reporting of alcohol marketing activities</td>
</tr>
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<td>5. Minimum Legal Drinking Age</td>
<td>- Federal minimum legal purchase age, status and level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral</td>
<td>- Federal SBIR support</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- SBIR tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- SBIR initiatives among priority populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Liquor Law Enforcement</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Control System</td>
<td>- Protecting government control systems and protecting public health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Regulation of duty free outlets</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. National Alcohol Strategy</td>
<td>- Implementation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Evidence-based recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. National Monitoring and Reporting</td>
<td>- National monitoring program (consumption, morbidity, mortality, crime, costs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Health and Safety Messaging</td>
<td>- Alcohol labelling, status, content, quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Alcohol messaging, status, content, coverage, dissemination mechanisms</td>
</tr>
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<td>Policy indicator categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1. Pricing and Taxation                       | - Minimum pricing  
- General pricing keeping pace with inflation  
- Pricing on alcohol content  
- Provincial/territorial taxation                                                             |
| 2. Physical Availability                      | - Regulating placement and density  
- Outlet density (practice indicator)  
- Hours and days of sale  
- Regulating availability within the establishment                                             |
| 3. Impaired Driving Countermeasures           | - Graduated licensing programs  
- Penalties, suspensions and revocations  
- Interlock programs                                                                          |
| 4. Marketing and Advertising Controls         | - Regulating alcohol marketing: content and coverage  
- Enforcement mechanisms  
- Marketing by the liquor boards (practice indicator)                                            |
| 5. Minimum Legal Drinking Age                 | - Level of MLDA  
- Supportive legislation and loopholes  
- Graduated drinking programs                                                                  |
| 6. Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral | - Practice guidelines  
- Tools and services  
- SBIR implementation (practice indicator)                                                      |
| 7. Liquor Law Enforcement                     | - Status of risk-based licensing and enforcement programs  
- Quality of risk-based licensing and enforcement programs  
- Penalties  
- Responsible beverage service training status, coverage and quality                            |
## Prov./Terr. Indirect Policy Domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indirect Policy Domains</th>
<th>Policy indicators categories</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **8. Control System**                   | - Type of alcohol retail system  
- Sales beyond on- and off-premise outlets  
- Relative emphasis on product promotion vs health and safety  
- Ministry responsible for the control and sale of alcohol                                                                 |
| **9. Alcohol Strategy**                 | - Focus of the strategy  
- Implementation mechanisms of the strategy  
- Range of evidence based strategy recommendations                                                                                                      |
| **10. Monitoring and Reporting**        | - Comprehensiveness of reporting  
- Accessibility of reporting  
- Leadership and support for reporting                                                                                                               |
| **11. Health and Safety Messaging**     | - Alcohol labelling: status and quality  
- Alcohol messaging: status and quality  
- Dissemination of messaging (practice indicator)                                                                                                    |
Overall Findings
Federal- Policy Domain Scores

Federal total policy implementation score: 38.4%  

Pricing and Taxation: 24% (4/17), Physical Availability: 100% (1), Impaired Driving: 50% (1), Marketing and Advertising: 20% (2), Minimum Age: 0% (0), Brief Intervention: 93% (3), Liquor law Enforcement: N/A, Control System: 40% (8/20), National Alcohol Strategy: 20% (4/20), Monitoring and Reporting: 82% (17/21), Health and Safety Messaging: 10% (2/20)

Domain scores

Domain score | Maximum possible score
---|---
Pricing and Taxation | 4/17
Physical Availability | 1/1
Impaired Driving | 1/2
Marketing and Advertising | 2/2
Minimum Age | 0/0
Brief Intervention | 3/3
Liquor law Enforcement | N/A
Control System | 8/20
National Alcohol Strategy | 4/20
Monitoring and Reporting | 17/21
Health and Safety Messaging | 2/20

University of Victoria

Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research

Institut canadien de recherche sur l'usage de substances
Provincial/Territorial-Unadjusted Policy Domain Scores

P/T unadjusted total policy implementation score: 44% F
Provincial/Territorial-Best Current Practices

These policies are achievable!

If we take the best current practice for each policy from each province and territory, Canada collectively achieves an A with a score of 87%.
Provincial/Territorial-Adjusted Total Policy Implementation Scores

Scores have been scaled up by comparing against best current practice in any P/T
A Detailed Look at the Provincial and Territorial Results
Pricing and taxation scores by province and territory.

Average: F
Pricing and taxation indicator scores by province and territory

- MB has nearly perfect volumetric minimum pricing for off-premise alcohol. ON and SK partially adjust their min. prices to reflect alcohol content.
- BC and NL implements the highest average min. price for on-premise and off-premise sales respectively.
- BC, SK, PEI, and YT tax alcohol at a higher rate than other goods.
Pricing and taxation indicator scores by province and territory

- QC only sets min. prices for malt-based beverages sold off-premise; AB does not set any off-premise minimum prices
- No prov./terr. sets on-premise min. prices that reflect alcohol content within beverage categories or indexes on-premise minimum prices to inflation
- Ten of the 13 jurisdictions do not set alcohol prices according to alcohol content
Provincial/Territorial Physical Availability

Physical availability domain scores by province and territory

AVERAGE
Physical availability indicator scores by province and territory

- There are some examples of regulations to restrict outlet density in SK and QC, but they are limited to specific outlet types or regions.

- NU and ON have relatively low outlet density.

- NL, NB, and YT have high on-premise outlet density.

- NB and PEI do not grant municipalities the power to restrict the placement or number of off-premise outlets.
Physical availability indicator scores by province and territory

- NB limits off-premise sales to a maximum of 11 hours per day by regulation
- Most jurisdictions permit re-corking of unfinished for take away and restrict the number of drinks served to a patron at one time
- The majority of jurisdictions have loopholes that allow for the extension of hours of operation for off-premise stores and on-premise establishments
# Provincial/Territorial Marketing and Advertising Controls

## Marketing and Advertising Controls Domain Scores by Province and Territory

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<th>Score</th>
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The average score across all provinces and territories is **60%**.
Marketing and advertising controls indicator scores by province and territory

- The majority of jurisdictions have marketing restrictions beyond the CRTC code
- QC and NU have a mandatory pre-screening process set in the regulations for alcohol advertising
- AB takes a balanced approach to the messaging they disseminate via social media
Provincial/Territorial Marketing and Advertising Controls

Marketing and advertising controls indicator scores by province and territory

- NL does not regulate alcohol advertising beyond the federal CRTC code
- In some jurisdictions the liquor boards self-monitor their advertising
- Only NU forbids alcohol sponsorships, some jurisdictions permit branded scholarships (ON, NS, PEI)
Provincial/Territorial-Health and Safety Messaging

Health and safety messaging domain scores by province and territory

BC  AB  SK  MB  ON  QC  NB  NS  PE  NL  YT  NT  NU
Provincial/Territorial-Health and Safety Messaging

Health and safety messaging indicator scores by province and territory

- YT and NT have implemented a form of enhanced alcohol labeling to convey alcohol-related health and safety information.
- Enhanced alcohol warning labels on alcohol containers are non-existent in 11 out of 13 jurisdictions.
- YT and NT labels are applied as a matter of policy in-store as opposed to being a legislated manufacturer requirement.
Health and safety messaging indicator scores by province and territory

- BC and ON have legislation requiring mandatory warning signs be placed at point of sale
- QC has a variety of alcohol warning signs on FASD, chronic disease, and LRDGs
- Ten of the 13 jurisdictions did not have mandatory alcohol warning signs in locations where liquor is sold
- The quality of voluntary warning signs produced by the liquor control boards was not strong
Recommendations
Federal Recommendations

Pricing and Taxation

• Excise taxes are increased and based on alcohol content for all alcoholic beverages
• A standardized national minimum price per standard drink is negotiated with all provinces and territories

Marketing and Advertising

• The CRTC advertising code is updated and expanded

A National Alcohol Strategy

• The federal government initiates a process to develop a new national strategy for reducing alcohol-related harm

An Alcohol Act for Canada

• Alcohol is responsible for more economic costs in Canada than either cannabis or tobacco, both substances which have their own Acts, a federal Alcohol Act is needed.
Provincial/Territorial Recommendations

**Pricing and Taxation**: indexed minimum price per standard drink of $1.75 for off-premise stores and $3.50 for on-premise establishments

**Physical Availability**: set upper limits on density and regulate maximum trading hours (off-premise: 11am-8pm; on-premise: 11am-1am the next day), no extensions.

**Impaired Driving**: Introduce *mandatory* vehicle impoundment for all drivers with a .05% BAC and require successful completion of ignition interlock programs as a condition of re-licensing for all alcohol-related Criminal Code impaired-driving offenders

**Marketing and Advertising**: Implement comprehensive restrictions covering placement, quantity, and content of ads as well as sponsorship restrictions for all media and advertisers; implement mandatory pre-screening by an independent authority
Provincial/Territorial Recommendations

**Minimum Legal Drinking Age:** increase the MLDA or give consideration to graduated drinking policies

**SBIR:** Implement SBIR practice guidelines endorsed by a credible professional association (e.g. the College of Family Physicians of Canada) and fund online or in-person SBIR programs

**Liquor Law Enforcement:** Implement Risk-Based Licensing and Enforcement programs for all liquor outlets

**Alcohol Control System:** Discontinue plans for privatisation of retail alcohol sales; maintain a government-owned and run retail network for off-premise outlets that reports to a ministry with a mandate to protect health and safety; legislate earmarked funds to support harm reduction and health promotion initiatives
**Provincial/Territorial Recommendations**

**Provincial/territorial Alcohol Strategy:** Develop and fund a government-endorsed alcohol-specific strategy incorporating a full range of evidence-based interventions and policies independently from the alcohol industry.

**Monitoring and Reporting:** Fund the tracking and public reporting of key alcohol-related harm indicators annually through a centralized system with an identified lead agency.

**Health and Safety Messaging:** Require prominent placement of alcohol labels that include rotating health and safety messages, standard drink information and low-risk drinking guidelines.
Next steps

• Detailed provincial/territorial summaries to be released in early Spring

• In-depth presentations of jurisdiction-specific results and recommendations may also be scheduled separately upon request to ashley.wettlaufer@camh.ca

• Five jurisdictions have scheduled presentations so far- Thank you for your interest!

• Post-release stakeholder interviews to follow KT activities

Project information, reports, webinars and other resources are available on the CAPE website:
www.alcoholpolicy.cisur.ca
We welcome participants to pose questions by typing them into the chat box.

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Strategies to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Canada: A Review of Provincial, Territorial, and Federal Policies

February 20th, 2019 Media Briefing


Project website: www.alcoholpolicy.cisur.ca
CAPE Info

History: the first alcohol policy report and 10 provincial summary reports was released in 2013 (no territories included) (Giesbrecht et al., 2013)

This is the first assessment of federal and territorial alcohol policies and the second assessment of provincial alcohol policies

Format based on: MADD Canada’s impaired driving report card/legislative review series and MacLean’s University rankings
Alcohol Consumption and Harms

• ~ 80% of Canadians drank 1+ alcoholic drink in past year
• ~ 30-40% of drinkers (15+ years) report drinking above the low-risk drinking guidelines (after adjustment for under-reporting)
• In 2014, alcohol led to:
  - 14,800 deaths,
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  - 88,000 hospital admissions
The Alcohol Deficit

- The economic cost of alcohol in Canada for 2014 was estimated to be **$14.6 billion**, more than any other psychoactive substance, including tobacco;
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Federal total policy implementation score: 38.4% **F**
Federal Recommendations

Pricing and Taxation
- Excise taxes are increased and based on alcohol content for all alcoholic beverages
- A standardized national minimum price per standard drink is negotiated with all provinces and territories

Marketing and Advertising
- The CRTC advertising code is updated and expanded

A National Alcohol Strategy
- The federal government initiates a process to develop a new national strategy for reducing alcohol-related harm

An Alcohol Act for Canada
- A federal Alcohol Act is needed to address issues such as:
  - Minimum age
  - Alcohol health and safety labelling
Canada achieved 44% (F) of its potential to implement gold standard alcohol policies.
Provincial/Territorial-Best Current Practices

Gold standard alcohol policies are achievable!

If we take the best current practice for each policy from each province and territory, Canada collectively achieves an A with a score of 87%.
### Provincial/Territorial-Adjusted Total Policy Implementation Scores

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<th>Score</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland and Labrador</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunavut</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ON, BC and AB achieved the highest scores but there has been significant deregulatory action announced in recent months.

Several provinces/territories have/are in the process of developing alcohol strategies since 2013 (e.g. MB, NU).

Rapidly expanding alcohol access and privatization since 2013.
Provincial/Territorial-(De)regulatory Trends

“Doug Ford is going to make beer cheaper in Ontario,” said Kenney. “I’m going to do everything I can to do the same thing in Alberta.”

Saskatchewan Liquor Store Privatization

The Saskatchewan government has announced the list of store locations and owners involved in the major privatization overhaul of its liquor system. The

N.B. Liberals promise to modernize liquor laws, expand where alcohol can be sold

B.C. urged to change liquor policy to allow more competition, lowering prices

DOUG FORD WILL FURTHER EXPAND THE SALE OF BEER AND WINE INTO CORNER STORES, GROCERY STORES, AND BOX STORES

Ford government extends hours at LCBO, Beer Store, licensed grocers starting Sunday

- Ferment-on-Premises: Albertans are able to make their own beer or wine at licensed facilities and then take it home.

Loblaw launches ‘no name’ beer, will be buck a bottle on Family Day weekend

University of Victoria | Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research
Institut canadien de recherche sur l’usage de substances

Published on May 18, 2018
Provincial/Territorial Recommendations

**Pricing and Taxation:** Set minimum prices per standard drink at $1.75 or higher for retail sales and $3.50 for restaurants and bars i.e. No ‘Buck-a-beer’ pricing

**Physical Availability:** Restrict liquor store hours to no later than 8pm and no later than 1am for bars; exclude alcohol sales from grocery stores

**Alcohol Control System:** Discontinue plans for privatisation of retail alcohol sales; maintain a government-owned and run retail network for off-premise outlets that reports to a ministry with a mandate to protect health and safety
Questions

We welcome participants to pose questions by typing them into the chat box

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Thank you!

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