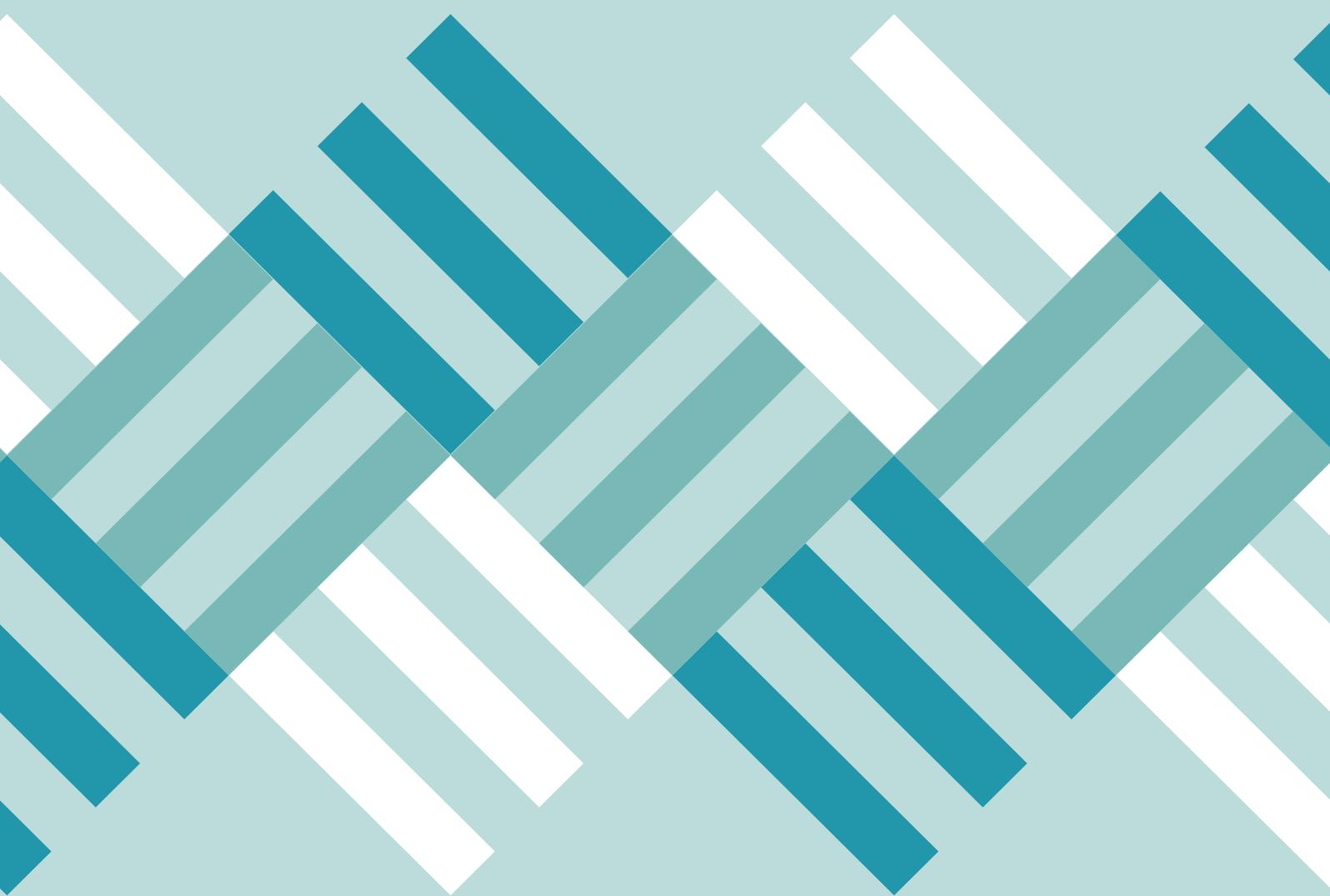




AlcoholAction
Ireland

Leading Change – A Society Free from Alcohol Harm



Annual Review **2019**



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Alcohol Action Ireland (AAI) is a non-governmental organisation which acts as an expert independent voice for policy change on alcohol-related issues, advocating to reduce levels of alcohol harm in Ireland and improve public health, safety and wellbeing.

It campaigns for the burden of alcohol harm to be lifted from the individual, community and State, and has a strong track record in advocacy, campaigning and policy research.

AAI's work involves providing information to a variety of stakeholders – educationalists, media, political actors, public bodies and policy researchers on alcohol-related issues, creating awareness of alcohol related harm and offering policy solutions with the potential to reduce that harm, with an emphasis on the implementation of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018.

Alcohol Action Ireland adheres to the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidance that “the alcohol industry has no role in the formulation of alcohol policies, which must be protected from distortion by commercial or vested interests”, and Health Service Executive (HSE) guidance that “there is an inherent conflict associated with the alcohol industry playing a role in providing public health advice”. Therefore, we decline to work with the alcohol industry or its funded groups.

AAI provided, on a contractual basis, support to the HSE Alcohol Programme, informing strategic alcohol initiatives as an instrument of public health planning.

AAI acted as secretariat to an Oireachtas Cross-Party Group on Alcohol Harm, and Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland, which we co-founded in 2015 with the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland.



Following the significant achievement in October 2018 of the passage of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act, 2019 has been a year when Alcohol Action Ireland has renewed its commitment to the reduction of harm from alcohol.

Foreword from the Chair

Such harm is widespread in Ireland where unfortunately alcohol consumption is 45% above this country’s low-risk drinking guidelines. The resulting impacts include damage to individual’s physical and mental health while ‘second hand harm’ can range from children affected *in utero* by drinking in pregnancy to the impact on street safety across our towns and cities. All of this harm has significant consequences on Ireland’s health, social and justice services.

We have developed and launched our new strategic plan for 2020–2024 – *Leading Change: A Society Free from Alcohol Harm*. Our goals include the coherent and urgent implementation of the Act, an alcohol-free childhood and services for all affected by alcohol harm.

Professor Geoffrey Shannon, AAI Patron



To realise this vision we believe there is a need for the establishment of a statutory Office for Alcohol Control which will take the lead on co-ordinating all aspects of alcohol in Ireland including licensing, marketing and promotion, strategic development of treatment services, education/ prevention programming, commissioning of relevant data, plus monitoring and evaluation of policy in this area.

Since the foundation of AAI in 2003 we have established a strong reputation as a trusted source of information and have had significant achievements in influencing government policy on alcohol. Throughout the year we have worked to develop policy solutions in areas ranging from mental health and alcohol to internet advertising and marketing. We have engaged with government ministers, policy makers and the general public through meetings, conferences, reports and extensive media coverage.

In 2019 we have worked with many individuals and organisations, nationally and internationally to achieve our goals. I would particularly like to thank our Patron, Fergal Keane, who launched our Silent Voices initiative in January 2019. Silent Voices is lifting the last taboo in Irish life – the need to raise awareness and talk about the harm to children of growing up in a home with parental alcohol misuse, which impacts the child’s development and leaves legacy issues for the adult child with no understanding or specific supports.

Throughout the year we have also been able to draw upon the dedication and expertise of the Silent Voices Advisory Group for our work in this area.

Very many thanks are also due to Dr Geoffrey Shannon who launched our Strategic Plan and has agreed to act as a Patron for the work of Alcohol Action Ireland.

Our executive team have been highly committed and energetic. I would like to welcome our new CEO, Dr Sheila Gilheany who joined the organisation in February 2019 and our Policy Research Officer, Jennifer Hough who joined in August 2019. They have both brought extensive skills sets and experience. I would also like to thank our Head of Communications and Advocacy, Eunan McKinney, for excellent contributions throughout the year. I would also like to express my special appreciation to our research interns who worked with us in 2019 – Conall O’Brolchain and Eve O’Brien.

I would like to welcome our new three new Board members and to thank all of my Board colleagues for their advice and strategic support for the work of our organisation.

Finally, our work would not be possible without the financial backing of our funders including the Health Service Executive, Mental Health Ireland and individuals who have generously contributed to our work.

Carol Fawsitt
Chair



Leading Change

*–A Society Free
from Alcohol Harm*

In November, Alcohol Action Ireland (AAI) published a renewed strategic plan setting out its vision, mission, values, goals and actions for the next five years.

Our vision is of a society free from alcohol harm. Given the current levels of alcohol harm in Ireland there is a real urgency to maintain pressure on harmful alcohol consumption.

Our goals

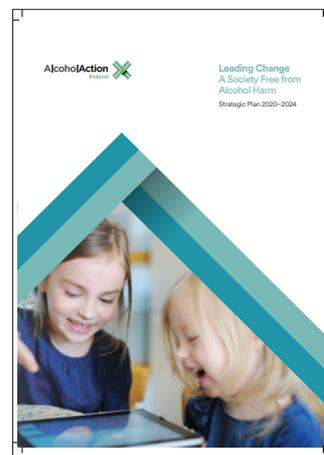
- 1 Coherent and urgent implementation of Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018 in full
- 2 A childhood free from alcohol harm
- 3 Services for all affected by alcohol harm
- 4 Establishment of a state sponsored Office to lead on alcohol policy
- 5 Be the authority on alcohol advocacy and policy in Ireland

The individual goals build on strengths within the organisation and are crosscutting. For example, the full implementation of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act will help to protect children from alcohol harm while advocating for the provision of comprehensive services will help to support children who are currently being harmed by alcohol. Alcohol harm intrudes into many aspects of life in Ireland and so has implications for multiple government departments. The establishment of a state-sponsored Office to take the lead in co-ordinating all actions around alcohol will have the effect of keeping government focus on this critical issue and reduce the impact of alcohol industry efforts to water down public health measures.

All of these actions will require innovative thinking, research, analysis and communication. Taken together the achievement of these goals has the potential to lead to a significant drop in the level of alcohol harm in Ireland and bring about a necessary cultural change in our relationship with alcohol.

For Ireland to achieve change we believe there is a clear need for both policy development and strong advocacy. AAI is seeking to build on its achievements in this area to establish itself as the thought leader in this space. On a stage where other actors are often duplicitous and dubious, we view our voice as both authentic and authoritative.

We seek to reinforce our position as the source of trusted information, analysis, opinion, research and data but also the leader in communication – dissemination, innovation and distribution.





Policy Development and Research

An essential element of Alcohol Action Ireland’s work is to research the issues around alcohol and then develop the policies to address the harms caused by alcohol to individuals, families and society.



Jennifer Hough, Policy Research Officer and Dr Sheila Gilheany, CEO

2019 was a very significant year with Alcohol Action Ireland entering into a partnership with Mental Health Ireland (MHI) which recognises the considerable overlap between alcohol harm and issues around mental health. This has led to the appointment of our new policy research officer, Jennifer Hough, with support from MHI.

During the year AAI has developed a series of themes and policy positions on alcohol harm. A major part of this work related to alcohol and mental health in a range of cohorts such as men, women, children and families, people with a Dual Diagnosis, people affected by Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, homeless people, people in conflict with the law and those in the workplace.

We updated our website with new information across a range of areas including women and alcohol, pregnancy, young people, marketing and much more. We developed strong policy positions on issues around children and adult children affected by parental alcohol misuse and contributed to a range of consultations both nationally and internationally. Such research is vital to our advocacy and communications work and we greatly appreciate the input from many international experts who have provided such foundational insights.

Along with this work, we used this research to inform our positions on a range of submissions to national and international public consultations as indicated below:

Ireland

Department of Justice; Consultation, Cosc – Mid-term review of the second national strategy on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence

Submitted a response from AAI calling for the systematic collation of data relating to alcohol consumption in cases of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.

Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources; Consultation on the Regulation of Harmful Content on Online Platforms and the Implementation of the Revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive

AAI submitted a response to this public consultation calling for stringent restrictions on alcohol advertisements on internet platforms. AAI also made a submission in relation to the proposed Children’s Digital Protection Bill suggesting that alcohol advertising should be included in the definition of harmful internet material.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs consultation on their new Statement of Strategy

In our submission to this consultation AAI emphasised issues around children’s exposure to alcohol both in the home and elsewhere.

Food Safety Authority of Ireland consultation in respect of regulations to be made under sections 12 and 13 of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018.

AAI made a detailed submission on the efficacy of labelling of alcohol products.



Policy Development and Research

European Union

EU Consultation on the Evaluation of the Common Agriculture Policy.

AAI worked closely with Eurocare and the European Public Health Alliance in a submission which called for changes to the marketing of wine subsidies in the EU.

Contribution to the EU TRIS Notification 2019/423/IRL

Ireland's Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018 (Sale and Supply of Alcohol Products) Regulations 2019

In a supporting submission, Alcohol Action Ireland outlined that the draft regulations were an opportunity to make a 'small but significant step by the Irish authorities to re-establish some level of public order to what has become a careless, and often reckless, marketplace'. The regulations will now come into force in January 2021.

WHO Consultation Global Strategy

AAI made a submission to the WHO consultation on the implementation of a global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol which highlighted Irish legislation and drew attention to the need for a global framework similar to that of tobacco.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) Consultation

AAI made a submission to this consultation around pregnancy and alcohol warnings on labels.





Advocacy and Campaigning



Advocacy and Campaigning

Implementation of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018

For many years Alcohol Action Ireland campaigned relentlessly for the passage of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act (PHAA), which was finally passed in October 2018. In 2019, our attention turned to the task of ensuring its full implementation. Some sections of the Act have been commenced with a transitional period over the next three years (2019–2021) including restrictions on the placement of outdoor advertising, separation of alcohol products in mixed retail outlets and a prohibition on alcohol advertising in sports area and at children’s sports events.

These are all welcome but important instruments of the Act have not yet been commenced including Minimum Unit Pricing, (MUP), content of advertising, broadcast watershed and labelling of alcohol products.

Throughout the year. AAI has maintained a strong media campaign with a particular focus on the need for MUP, and has highlighted the impact of alcohol marketing to stimulate children’s early initiation with alcohol.

Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland

As part of the campaign for the full implementation of the PHAA, AAI renewed the Alcohol Health Alliance Ireland. The Alliance had been established in 2015 by Alcohol Action Ireland and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) and brought together over 50 NGOs, charities and public health advocates. Chaired by Prof Frank Murray, a liver specialist at Beaumont Hospital, Board member of AAI and former RCPI President, it provided a strong voice throughout the campaign to enact the PHAA and will now, under the guidance of AAI, work to ensure its implementation.

The Alliance was recognised by the Public Relations Institute of Ireland and the Public Relations Consultants Association with an award for the Best Public Affairs for the PHAA campaign at its annual awards event in June 2019.



“EU politics and policies have to change. After almost two decades of lost good health because of big industry influence in Brussels EU citizens are demanding that the Commission, the European Parliament and EU Member States up their game and start to walk the walk as well as talk the talk. We are done with nice words and bad health: People and public health must be put before multinational profits.”

Fiona Godfrey

European Public Health Alliance



Fiona Godfrey,
Secretary General European
Public Health Alliance

David and Goliath Symposium 12 November 2019

To mark the introduction of the first operational measures of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act, AAI hosted a symposium – David and Goliath: How can public health concerns sustain priority of government and win the battle against dominant vested interests? The event, which was held at Dublin’s Mansion House, was opened by our patron, Dr Geoffrey Shannon, and attended by colleagues from across the public health sphere. It highlighted the strategies and approaches used by dominant vested interests across Europe who market unhealthy commodities such as alcohol, processed food and drink, and tobacco and exert influence to impede policy barriers and deflect attention from an ever-rising pandemic of non-communicable diseases and increasing health inequalities.

The key-note speaker was Fiona Godfrey, *Secretary General European Public Health Alliance*. This was followed by a panel discussion, chaired by Alex White SC and a former Minister for Primary Care at the Department of Health and featured three guests: Dr Peter Rice – *Chair, Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP)*, Marcella Corcoran Kennedy TD also a former *Minister for Health Promotion* and Dr Norah Campbell – *Associate Professor in Marketing, Trinity College*.



Marcella Corcoran Kennedy TD,
Dr Peter Rice – Chair, Scottish Health
Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP),
and Dr Norah Campbell – Associate
Professor in Marketing, Trinity College



Fergal Keane OBE,
Honorary Patron,
Silent Voices initiative



Silent Voices workshop



Silent Voices
Oireachtas briefing

Silent Voices

Following significant preparatory work by a pioneering group of founders, Alcohol Action Ireland launched its Silent Voices initiative in January 2019. This initiative aims to specifically highlight the hidden harms to children from parental alcohol misuse and to advocate for policy solutions across all relevant areas of government. We estimate that around 400,000 people in Ireland are adult children from alcohol impacted families and a further 200,000 children are likely living with the trauma of parental alcohol misuse.

The initiative was launched by our Silent Voices, patron, Fergal Keane, OBE, BBC Editor and attracted significant media coverage and support from many national and international organisations.

Throughout the year AAI, in tandem with the Silent Voices advisory group, has progressed many of its initial development plans, building a presence through meeting with groups and individuals in family support, therapists and counsellors, education at primary, second and third levels, health and justice. Presentations were made at events across Ireland including, the AGM of the Addiction Counsellors of Ireland in Kilkenny, Health Promotion in Education Conference, NUI Galway and a public event in Listowel.

A breakfast briefing event was held in April for members of the Oireachtas. AAI have also met with Minister for Health, Simon Harris, TD., and corresponded with other Ministers to highlight the issues.

In December, Silent Voices co-hosted a public lecture in conjunction with Aware in St Patrick’s Hospital, Dublin, which facilitated the experienced voice to discuss pathways to recovery.

Many individuals have generously shared their stories anonymously on the dedicated webpage, which also points to a wide set of resources in this area.

Following an intensive workshop in October, we developed a Manifesto for Silent Voices, which details the policy direction needed to address, and reduce, the harm experienced both by children currently and for the adult children living with legacy issues of parental alcohol misuse. This Manifesto has been supported by a number of organisations including Barnardos and the Children’s Rights Alliance.

“His drinking was an ever-present part of our life, but we never really talked about it. No one else wanted to talk about it either ... The silence was part of the problem.”

Emily Pine, author and academic.
Contribution to Shared Voices



Barbara Whelan and Dr Katie Baird
at the 2019 Aware / Silent Voices
public lecture



Alcohol Awareness Week 18–22 November 2019

This year’s theme was ‘Alcohol and Mental Health’ and was the 7th Awareness Week on Alcohol Related Harm. The aim of the Week is to raise awareness among EU policymakers of the issues around alcohol harm.

AAI took a leading role in a social media campaign highlighting messages about alcohol’s impact on mental health across a range of cohorts – women, men, young people, older people, vulnerable groups and had a particular focus on the problems of dual diagnosis.

AAI Pre-budget Submission

Alcohol Action Ireland published its 2020 Pre-Budget Submission in August 2019, which outlined a number of considerations for the Minister of Finance:

- No reductions on alcohol excise duties and fix current rates to cost-of-living index
- Begin the process of reducing persistent subsidy to the alcohol industry
- Establish a social responsibility fund from levies on off-trade alcohol sales to:
 - *Establish an Annual ‘Youth Recreational Activities’ allowance*
 - *Invest in primary care psychology services*
- Allow residential dependency treatment health expenses qualify for tax relief at the higher 40% rate.
- Commence Minimum Unit Pricing immediately.

Market Review and Price Survey

Alcohol Action Ireland published its annual ‘Alcohol Market Review and Price Survey’ in August 2019. It demonstrated the remarkable affordability of alcohol to every day shoppers and the urgent necessity to commence Minimum Unit Pricing of alcohol products to tackle the low cost of the strongest, cheapest alcohol.

- Men in Ireland can drink a weekly low-risk guideline limit of 17 standard drinks for as little as €7.48, and
- It is possible for women to reach a weekly low-risk limit of 11 standard drinks for only €4.84.

The survey highlights the sophisticated pricing model for alcohol across the Irish Off-Trade market that enhances affordability at all levels of retail experience, as well as the value of the Irish Off-Trade shared amongst a small number of major retail operators.





Total Consumption of
Personal Income in Ireland
on Alcohol Beverages
(incl. pubs) was **€7.447 billion**
(CSO, July 2019).

Advocacy and Campaigning

Complaints to Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland

Throughout the year, AAI has monitored alcohol advertising and submitted complaints to the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland. None of the complaints submitted were upheld.

Alcohol and Education

AAI have advocated that all post-primary schools should not engage with the drinks industry, or the organisations they support e.g: DrinkAware, to facilitate alcohol education to students. In 2016 the Minister for Education issued a Circular to all primary schools in this regard and similar guidance is required for Post-Primary Schools.

AAI also provided expert advice and support to the development of the HSE alcohol and drug resource for schools, *Know The Score*.

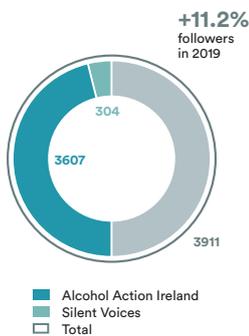
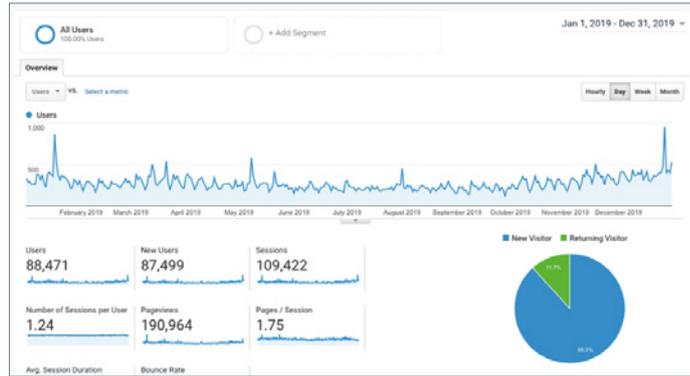
Throughout the year we have responded to schools requesting information on alcohol issues and have made presentations to several schools in the greater Dublin area.

Building our Expert Network

During 2019, AAI worked to develop contacts with like-minded organisations and individuals across the public health and social justice spectrum. AAI deepened connections and had conversations with Tusla, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the government's Prevention and Early Intervention Unit, the Children's Rights Alliance, Drugs and Alcohol Task forces and the Junior Cert Training SPHE training programme.

It also widened its knowledge base through attending masterclasses, conferences and seminars that were of interest to its work. During 2019 AAI attended:

- a three-day Masterclass on Alcohol Evidence in Policy, & Practice in Edinburgh. The event brought experts from around the world who showcased the very latest research around alcohol harm, availability, marketing and industry influence. The event also hosted a session for policymakers on winning the policy battle.
- the ACJRD, Behind Closed Doors: Crimes of Violence, Coercive Control and Abuse in Family and Intimate Relationships conference in Dublin. This provided an opportunity to network with other NGOs in the social justice sector.
- the Mental Health Ireland national conference which presented a valuable opportunity to network with colleagues and hear about grassroots initiatives from around the country.
- Mental Health Ireland & Mental Health Reform seminar: Mental Health and Human Rights in Practice conference.
- Trauma Informed Care in Practice Conference. This event, hosted by Novas, Quality Matters and Dr. Sharon Lambert, deepened AAI's understanding of how trauma informed care should operate on a practical level.



- Prevention and Early Intervention Network (PEIN), Every childhood lasts a lifetime. This event included the launch of two PEIN Position Papers on Child Health and Adverse Childhood Experiences which were considered by a panel of academics, policy makers and practitioners.
- ACEs to Assets Conference, Glasgow 2019. This helped further inform Silent Voices on the scientific evidence around Adverse Childhood Experiences, the importance of trauma informed approaches to the work needed for children and adult children and the actions being taken in Scotland.

Institutions of the European Union

AAI contacted all candidates standing in the European Parliamentary Elections in 2019 seeking a commitment to support the World Health Organisation view that the alcohol industry should play no part in formulation of alcohol policies. Following the commencement of the new Parliament, we have engaged with MEPs seeking their support for public health driven initiatives.

We are monitoring the strategic initiatives evolving within a new Commission and are keen to contribute to the proposed Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan and highlighting the direct link between alcohol and fatal cancers.

AAI Media Communications

The Alcohol Action Ireland website continues to be a trusted source of independent analysis and information for a variety of stakeholders both from a media and public policy research perspective.

In 2019, the site had over 88,000 users, who in turn had 192,000 pageviews, with ‘How much do we drink?’ proving the most popular page with over 18,000 views.

Traditional Media Presence:

Broadcast: **199** contributions to local and national radio and television programmes;

Press: **100** contributions, quotes and/or commentary to both local and national press titles.

The earned media value of all press and online features was €1,032,488 and estimated audience reach of 78,551,380.

Social Media Profile:

Total Twitter activity overview – 648,284 impressions; 15,285 engagements, 2,455 link clicks.

Total followers: 3,607. Follower gain in 2019: 11.2%. Tweets Issued: 355.

Our ‘Silent Voices’ initiative has a separate twitter handle; its Total Fan/Followers is 304 and it issued 88 tweets in 2019.

We encountered some difficulty in consistently recording analytical data from our Facebook Page/ Instagram account in 2019.



Strategic Partnerships

Throughout the year, AAI worked with a range of organisations to advance issues that address harm from alcohol. We are pleased to have such collaborative opportunities to bring our expertise to a range of issues and welcome the support of others for our objectives.

HSE Alcohol Programme

AAI has provided expert policy and communications advice to the HSE Alcohol Programme on multiple areas ranging from the Ask About Alcohol actions on alcohol free pregnancy to issues around alcohol and mental health. Throughout the year we have reviewed multiple reports, research and media campaigns bringing our detailed knowledge, skills and network of international contacts to the Programme.

Beaumont Hospital Alcohol Care Initiative

AAI is a member of the Beaumont Hospital Alcohol Care Initiative which was set up to audit the burden of alcohol on the Hospital and to secure support for the development of an Alcohol Care Team (ACT). ACTs provide specialist interventions and input into the care of alcohol dependent patients admitted hospital for any reason, ensuring high quality and appropriate care. ACTs serve to reduce and prevent A&E presentations and/or hospital admissions. ACTs liaise with community alcohol services and others, to ensure continued alcohol treatment, where necessary, following discharge from hospital. By identifying and ensuring treatment for patients with alcohol dependence, they reduce future alcohol-related readmissions, morbidity and mortality. AAI attended meetings throughout the year and provided input to the initiative's strategic goals.

Irish Cancer Society's Cancer Prevention Committee

AAI sits on this Advisory Committee of the Society which provides advice and oversight on services, policy and research for improving cancer prevention and early detection in Ireland. In May, our CEO, made a presentation to a European Code against Cancer workshop organised by the Society and attended by representatives of over 20 European cancer policy and advocacy societies.

Local and Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Forces

Throughout the year, AAI has provided expert alcohol policy advice and support to a number of the Local and Regional Task Forces throughout Ireland.

Men's Health Forum Planning Group – Men's Health Week 2019

AAI sits on the Men's Health Forum planning group that organises this annual All-Island awareness event. Men's Health Week ran from 10–16 June 2019, with the theme Men's Health Matters. One day of the week was dedicated to alcohol issues and AAI led a social media campaign 'Drink less matters....' exploring the impact of alcohol on men's health and well-being.



Strategic Partnerships

HSE Mental Health Engagement and Recovery

This national initiative is aimed at developing more recovery-orientated mental health services. AAI is a member of its Family Recovery Advisory Group and its NGO Advisory Group.

North-South Alcohol Policy Advisory Group

AAI is a contributing Member of this group which aims to strengthen collaboration and co-ordination on alcohol on a North-South basis. AAI attended both NSAPAP 2019 meetings in May and November.

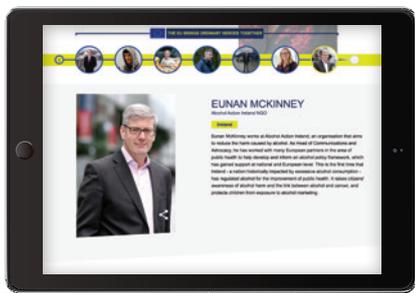
Global Alcohol Policy Alliance Conference Dublin 2020 | Department of Health

The Global Alcohol Policy Alliance (GAPA) is a network of not-for-profit organisations and people working in public health agencies who share information on alcohol issues and advocate evidence-based alcohol policies, free from commercial interests. This major international conference which was hosted by the Department of Health in Ireland, brought together alcohol policy makers, advocates, researchers, civil society activists and practitioners.

Throughout 2019 AAI provided advice and support to the planning of the event through its membership of the National Organising Committee.

Given the global nature of the alcohol industry and in the context of Ireland's membership of the EU, it is essential for AAI's work to be in contact with like minded organisations on an international basis. Membership of a range of organisations and alliances has proved invaluable in building up both our own expertise and contacts and also in supporting the work of other groups.





Alcohol Health Alliance UK

AAI is a member of the Alcohol Health Alliance UK. This is an alliance of more than 40 non-governmental organisations who work together to promote evidence-based policies to reduce the damage caused by alcohol misuse.

AAI met with DG SANTE, Head of Cabinet in February 2019 and with the new Director General of DG SANTE, Anne Bucher in October as part of a Eurocare delegation. There was ongoing engagement with the Eurocare/Labelling co-ordination group around the EU Reg 1169/2011 and CAP reform legislation.

European Alcohol Policy Alliance – Eurocare

AAI is a member of Eurocare – a Brussels based alliance of NGOs across Europe working to reduce alcohol harm and Sheila Gilheany is a member of its Board.

AAI’s Head of Communications and Advocacy, received a ‘local hero’ nomination for an EU ‘Together We Protect’ campaign, which highlights the works of individuals and organisations across Europe who are working to protect EU citizens: Together they make up a vast network of people responsible for keeping Europe safe.



AAI – National Delegate to the WHO European Region Civil Society Consultation



Strategic Partnerships

European Public Health Alliance – EPHA

AAI is a member of this Alliance and has contributed to a number of policy initiatives around cancer.

International Meetings

Alcohol and Tourism

AAI took part in the ‘Rethink your Drink’ – an international summit organised by the Balearic Islands to consider issues around alcohol tourism. AAI welcomed the later passage of a Bill in the Balearics Islands which bans ‘happy hour’s when drinks are offered a discount and open bars.

We also engaged with the Irish Aviation Authority as a follow-up to the Joint Declaration on Unruly Passenger Behaviour in Airports and Aircrafts: ‘Not On My Flight’ – to explore common ground for curbing the impact of alcohol during travel.

Alcohol Marketing

AAI participated in the European Centre for Monitoring Alcohol Marketing conference in Amsterdam in September

and our CEO spoke at the UK Institute of Alcohol Studies conference on marketing about the legislative changes in Ireland around alcohol advertising in October.

We participated in the Finnish EU Presidency conference on alcohol labelling in Helsinki in October and attended the Brewers of Europe/ EU Commission event on the voluntary future of labelling.

AAI and the World Health Organisation

Our Head of Communications and Advocacy was the National Delegate to the WHO European Region Civil Society Consultation in Portugal in January 2019, as part of the review process of the European Action Plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol 2012–2020.

AAI was also invited to contribute to the process around the World Health Assembly evaluation of the implementation of the WHO’s global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol during the first decade since its endorsement, and the way ahead.

AAI provided detailed information about alcohol issues to potential Irish delegates to the 69th WHO Regional Committee for Europe meeting in Copenhagen in September and provided input to the Eurocare statement to the meeting calling for transnational action around alcohol control measures.



Finnish EU Presidency conference on alcohol labelling



The Way Ahead

Alcohol Action Ireland appointed Dr Sheila Gilheany as its new CEO in February 2019.

The Board of AAI has also been strengthened throughout 2019 with three new appointments:

Dr Mary O'Mahony – Specialist in Public Health Medicine and Medical Officer of Health, HSE South;

Dr Colin O'Driscoll – Clinical Lead, HSE Mid-West Addiction Services and

James Doorley – Deputy Director, National Youth Council of Ireland.

Throughout the year the Board and staff of AAI worked closely to develop a new strategy to guide its work for the period 2020–2024 – *Leading Change: A Society Free from Alcohol Harm*.

AAI looks forward to working with our partners locally, nationally and internationally over the next five years.

Other Information

The Board members of Alcohol Action Ireland

Carol Fawsitt (Chair), Solicitor

Prof Joe Barry MSc, MD, FRCPI, FFPHM, Public Health Specialist

Dr Declan Bedford, Specialist in Public Health Medicine and former Acting Director of Public Health, HSE

Catherine Brogan, Mental Health Ireland

Pat Cahill, (Company Secretary), former President ASTI

James Doorley, Deputy Director, National Youth Council of Ireland

Prof Frank Murray, Consultant in Hepatology & Gastroenterology. M.B., B.Ch. B.A.O., M.D., F.R.C.P.I., F.R.C.P. (Ed)

Dr Mary O’Mahony, Specialist in Public Health Medicine and Medical Officer of Health, HSE South

Dr Colin O’Driscoll, Clinical Lead, HSE Mid-West Addiction Services

Dr Bobby Smyth, Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist

Tadhg Young, Senior Vice President, Chief Operations Officer, State Street Global Services

Silent Voices Advisory Group Members

Carol Fawsitt – Founding Voice

Marion Rackard – Founding Voice

Barbara Whelan – Founding Voice

Dr Sharon Lambert – Academic Adviser

Austin Prior – Clinical Adviser

Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

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Alcohol Action Ireland

Registered Office:

Coleraine House
Coleraine Street
Dublin 7, D07 E8XF
T: +353 1 878 0610.

E: admin@alcoholactionireland.ie

U: alcoholireland.ie



