



Galway City Alcohol Forum **Strategy (2024-2029)**





Galway City Alcohol Forum

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Introduction

Galway City Alcohol Forum developed this strategy to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm, making Galway a safer and more pleasant place. It acknowledges Ireland's complex relationship with alcohol, which poses serious health risks and impacts families, communities, hospitals, health services, the broader economy and society.

Research shows that implementing public policies is essential to tackle alcohol-related issues, addressing price, availability, and marketing. This strategy builds on previous efforts and uses a community action approach informed by research. Effective prevention focuses on changes in public policies (regulation, enforcement, laws) rather than solely on individual behaviour change.

Background

In 2013, Galway was the first Irish city to develop a strategy to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm. This strategy used a multiagency approach in its development and implementation. Goals focused on prevention, alcohol availability, treatment, support services, and monitoring. A subsequent strategy was developed in 2019 building on this work and focused on increased awareness of alcohol harm, tracking alcohol availability in Galway City, and young people's assessment of alcohol marketing.

Now in its third strategy, the focus is to develop our communication and awareness raising actions. This will be guided by the research evidence and foster greater collaboration among a number of agencies and the wider community.

Consultation & Engagement

Galway City Alcohol Forum undertook a consultation process in March 2024 to inform the development of its third alcohol strategy. This involved numerous meetings of the Galway City Alcohol Forum, discussion with agency representatives, review of latest research and a consultation and engagement day with stakeholders, which included input from leading national experts.

All of this informed the development of the goals and objectives of the strategy for 2024-2029.

Implementation of the strategy

Galway City Alcohol Forum will have primary responsibility to oversee and drive implementation of the strategy and is committed to:

- Develop an annual action plan in consultation with forum members and other stakeholders
- Organise an annual planning and review meeting

Galway City Alcohol Forum

Galway City Alcohol Forum is a multiagency group led by HSE Health Promotion and Improvement, Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force, with other representatives from An Garda Síochána, Atlantic Technological University (Galway); Galway Children & Young People Services Committee; Galway City Community Network; Galway City Council; Galway City Partnership; Healthy Galway City; HSE - Addiction Services, Galway City Alcohol Service, Environmental Health, Public Health, University Hospital Galway, Nursing Division; Youth Work Ireland Galway.

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Goal 1: Communication & Awareness

Enhance communication & public awareness of alcohol related harm in Galway City.

1.1 Build awareness in the community of alcohol related harm	Collate and share information to educate the community on alcohol related harm (information materials, newsletters, social media, local radio, events) e.g. an annual plan linking with national health and wellbeing calendar.
1.2 Support implementation of national campaigns and initiatives e.g. HSE Alcohol Programme, Alcohol Action Ireland and Alcohol Forum Ireland.	Develop local plan to implement national campaigns and initiatives related to alcohol harm reduction e.g. Foetal Alcohol Awareness, Silent Voices, I-Mark, Alcohol Awareness Week etc.
1.3 Empower relevant stakeholders to implement evidence based actions.	Develop and distribute "What you can do" guides to provide practical guidance on what people can do at a community level to reduce alcohol related harm.
1.4 Advocate for a childhood free from alcohol harm through public awareness initiatives.	Create a multi-faceted public awareness campaign that educates parents, youth, and the broader community about the risks of underage drinking, its impact on brain development, and strategies for preventing alcohol use among children and teenagers.

2



Goal 2: Data Collection

Strengthen data collection and utilisation on alcohol related harm in Galway City.

2.1 Collate and share local data on alcohol consumption and related harms.	Identify and document who is collecting what data and develop and share infographics of Galway Alcohol data.
2.2 Promote the collection and utilisation of data on alcohol related harm.	Highlight the importance of data collection in addressing alcohol- related harm, illustrating how data-driven decisions improve services.

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Goal 3: Build the capacity of people and organisations

Develop the capacity of people and organisations to reduce alcohol related harm in Galway City.

3.1 Make information about support services widely accessible through organisations, media, community newsletters and other channels.	Collate and share information on alcohol-related support services (e.g., Smart Recovery, Drop-In Sessions, Recovery activities) using a variety of communication methods.
3.2 Promote and support implementation of Brief Interventions such as MECC (Making Every Contact Count) and SAOR (Support, Ask and Assess, Offer Assistance, Refer).	Promote MECC and SAOR training and implementation among organisations (e.g., Forum agencies) through engagement, communication and resource materials.
3.3 Advocate for improved resources to support people affected by alcohol and promote a culture of recovery.	Highlight gaps in resources for addressing alcohol issues and contribute to policy submissions and funding applications to secure additional support.
3.4 Promote the creation of alcohol-free spaces and environments for young people, families, and the broader community.	Collaborate with stakeholders to raise awareness and advocate for the creation and promotion of alcohol-free spaces and environments throughout Galway City.

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Ollscoil
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Galway City Partnership
Comhpháirtíocht Chathair na Gaillimhe
a tide for change
an taoide ag casadh



Healthy
Galway City

