

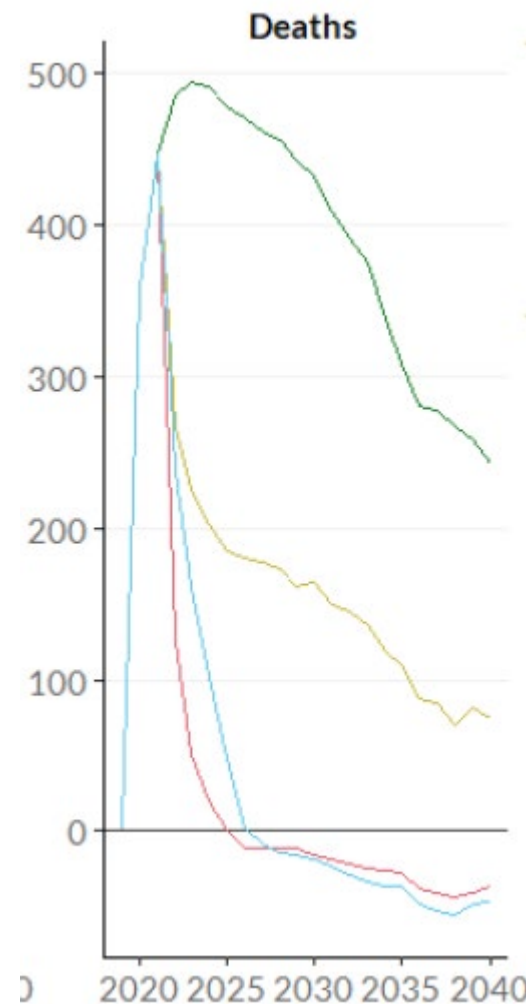
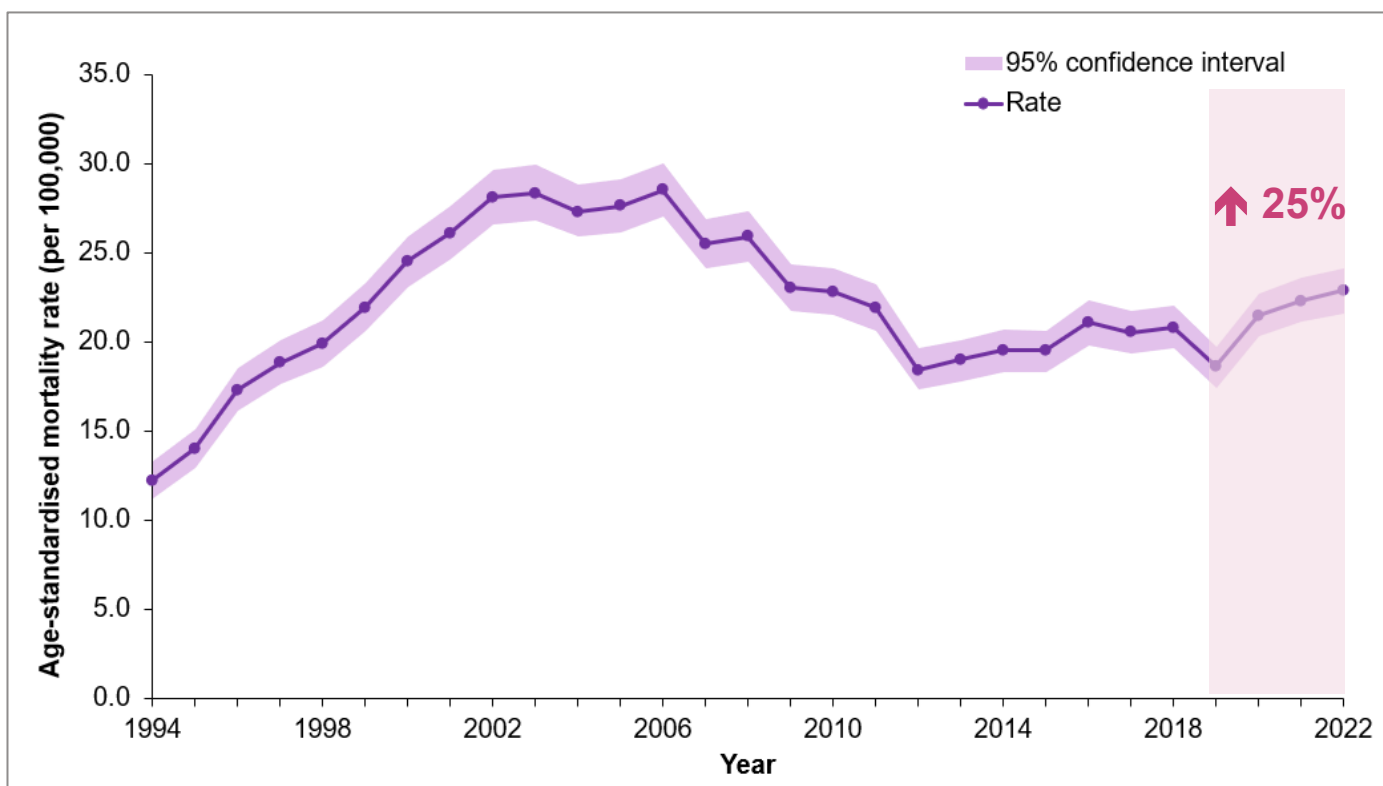
Alcohol Harm in Scotland

Challenges and Opportunities

Laura Mahon, Deputy Chief Executive
North Lanarkshire Alcohol Summit

Alcohol emergency since 2021

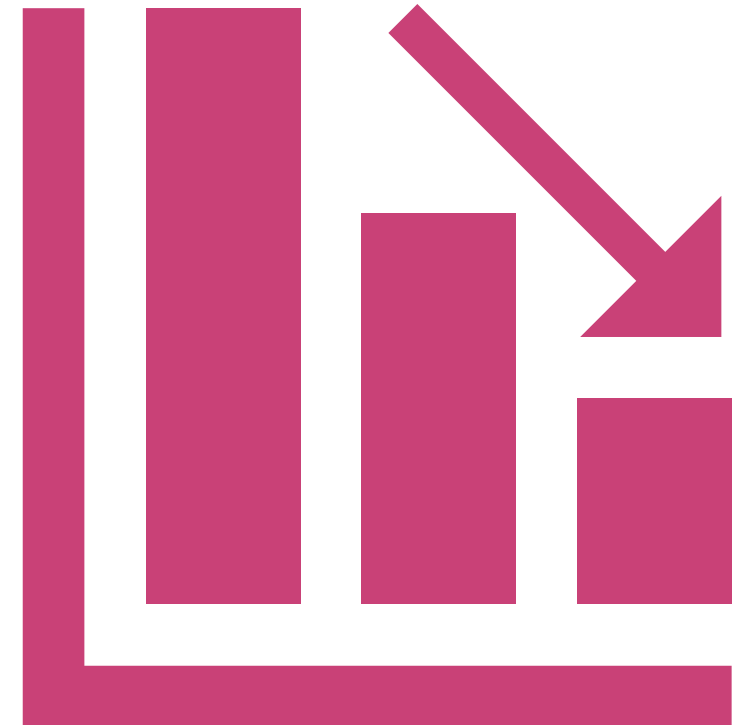
Alcohol harm has been recognised as a public health emergency by the Scottish Government since 2021



Over 20 years,
+8,000 deaths,
+90,000
hospital
admissions,
+£110m cost
to NHS

Access to treatment

- From 2013/14 to 2021/22, 40% decline in number of people starting specialist alcohol treatment
- Scottish Government has commissioned Public Health Scotland to investigate this
- Clear that there is a failure to prevent harm and a gap in treating it



Emergency response

- In April 2023, 36 organisations – including 12 ADPs - called for an emergency response
- AFS and SHAAP use this call in our national advocacy.
 - A member's debate in Parliament in Sept 2023 led to cross-party recognition of need to do more across alcohol
 - Letters to Government and Parliament, including to Public Audit Committee in January.
 - Parliamentary questions in chamber

... BBC

Call for emergency response to alcohol deaths

Campaigners in Scotland want deaths from alcohol to be treated as seriously as drug fatalities.

29 Aug 2023

➡ STV News

Urgent action needed to tackle alcohol emergency, ministers warned

Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems and Alcohol Focus Scotland accused the Government of lacking ambition in its alcohol plans.

4 days ago

Emergency response 2.0

SPECIFIES FOUR URGENT ACTIONS

1

Expanding the use of non-invasive liver tests like FibroScan in community alcohol settings

...those at high risk are identified sooner and provided with care and support

2

Establishing Alcohol Care Teams (ACTs) in all acute hospitals

...patients with alcohol problems are identified early and provided with specialised, multidisciplinary support

3

Improving access to effective detoxification services

...drinkers can access help to reduce or stop drinking safely, avoiding acute withdrawal

4

Urgent investment in alcohol services

...to provide the resources required to deliver necessary improvements,—incl. rec's of Audit Scotland and PHS

Emergency response 2.0

+ CALLS FOR NEW ALCOHOL STRATEGY

A new alcohol strategy should develop a comprehensive and integrated preventative system drawing on PHS's public health approach to prevention:

Primary prevention

Invest in the building blocks of health to stop problems happening in the first place.

Secondary prevention

Focusing on early detection of a problem to support early intervention and treatment or reducing the level of harm.

Tertiary prevention

Minimising the negative consequences (harm) of a health issue through careful management.

High

Impact on population health

Low

What's on the horizon?

- **Public Health Scotland** will publish findings from their [investigation into the decline in access to alcohol treatment](#) (imminent)
- **Scottish Government, PHS and COSLA** [10-year Population Health Framework](#) (focus on primary prevention) (imminent)
- A ['refreshed' alcohol and drugs strategy](#) from the Scottish Government following from the National Mission [National Mission 2.0?] across treatment, whole systems, harm reduction and long-term prevention for those most vulnerable to complement PH framework
- **Scottish Government** [National Specification](#) for alcohol and drugs services (early 2025), informed by new UK [clinical guidelines](#) for alcohol treatment (imminent)
- **Scottish Parliamentary** [elections](#) in May 2026

Local action leading the way?

- 30% of ADPs report having an **Alcohol Harms Group** to give specific focus to alcohol harm reduction work at a local level (increased from 21% in 2022/23)
- **Pilots** and “**test of change**” projects at a local level:
 - North East Glasgow Fibroscanning Initiative
 - North Lanarkshire Alcohol Summit!
- **Alcohol death reviews/audits** to evaluate future opportunities to prevent deaths due to alcohol
 - AFS Alcohol Death Researchers Network attended by 17 individuals.
 - Scottish Borders alcohol death review driving change and improvement in communication and workforce support in the hospital.

Thank you!

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