



## Alcohol Policy

# UPDATE

“Any licensed establishment that allows illegal activity on their premises should be put out of business, and if the offense is serious enough, kept out of business.”

—Ontario Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, Bob Runciman, October 19 press release.

## Building Safer Communities

### One bar at a time

Public concern over drugs, violence and illegal activities in bars, after-hours clubs and other licensed establishments is on the rise—and the Ontario government is listening.

On October 19, it issued a consultation paper called *Building Safer Communities: safer communities through cooperative enforcement*. The document contains recommendations from liquor board, addictions and law enforcement officials who attended a conference co-hosted by Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, Bob Runciman and Solicitor General David Tsubouchi at Toronto Police Headquarters in March 2000.

*Building Safer Communities* floats a number of policy options to encourage shady operators to clean up their act, including the idea that liquor licences be considered a privilege rather than a right under provincial law. The proposed change would expand the grounds for refusal of a liquor licence and make background checks of applicants and business associates more stringent. It would also broaden the grounds for licence suspensions and revocations, thereby allowing the police and the Alcohol and Gaming Commission (AGCO) to close problem locations more quickly.

Conference participants also recommended that fire, building, health and safety codes and zoning bylaws be enforced more stringently, and that the *Municipal Act* be amended to give local governments the authority to review, revoke or attach conditions to a licence based on community impact—something that community advocates like Simone Cusenza have been pushing for since 1997

when municipal powers were severely curtailed in this area. The province is seeking public input on five questions:

- Should there be a centralized unit composed of enforcement officers from municipal, provincial and federal agencies to deal with drug trafficking, prostitution and other illegal activity on licensed premises?
- Should grounds for a licence suspension and revocation under the *Liquor Licence Act* be expanded?
- Should a liquor licence be considered a privilege rather than a right?
- How can landlord accountability and liability be strengthened?
- How can offender accountability be increased through the courts to ensure penalties are seen as deterrents rather than as simply the cost of doing business?

The government is expected to reconvene the delegates who attended the March meeting in Spring 2001 to review progress and outline next steps. In the meantime, those who wish to participate in the consultation, may send a letter to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, 35th Floor, 250 Yonge Street, Toronto ON M5B 2N5, Fax: 416-326-8520.

*Building Safer Communities* is posted on the Government of Ontario website, [www.ccr.gov.on.ca/mccr/english/4SUPSE.htm](http://www.ccr.gov.on.ca/mccr/english/4SUPSE.htm). For a paper copy or more information, please call 416-326-8500.

## Research

### Corner

Below is a sampling of interesting articles published within the last three months. For copies or to borrow a journal, please contact the CAMH-ARF Library, [isd@camh.net](mailto:isd@camh.net), 416-535-8501 ext. 6144.

Cercarelli, LR et al (Nov 2000). *Road safety issues in remote Aboriginal communities in Western Australia*. **Accident Analysis and Prevention**, 32 (6) 845-848.

Corrao, Giovanni et al (Oct 2000). Alcohol and coronary heart disease: a meta-analysis. **Addiction** 95 (10) 1505-1524.

Gray, Dennis (Oct 2000). *Indigenous Australians and liquor licensing restrictions* (Editorial). **Addiction** 95 (10) 1469-1472.

Holder, HD (Nov 2000) *Community prevention of alcohol problems*. **Addictive Behaviors** 25 (6) 843-859.

Holder, HD et al (2000). *Effect of community-based interventions on high-risk drinking and alcohol-related injuries*, **JAMA** 284 (18) 2341-2347.

Horwood, LJ and D.M. Fergusson (Nov 2000). *Drink driving and traffic accidents in young people*. **Accident Analysis and Prevention**, 32 (6) 805 - 814. Abstract [jama.ama-assn.org/issues/v284n18/abs/joc90970.html](http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/v284n18/abs/joc90970.html).

Kelly, Adrian B et al (Oct 2000). *Maritally distressed women with alcohol problems: the impact of a short-term alcohol-focused intervention on drinking behaviour and marital satisfaction*, **Addiction** 95 (10), 1537-1550.

Lopez, DG et al (Nov 2000). *Complementing police road-crash records with trauma registry data - an initial evaluation*. **Accident Analysis and Prevention**, 32 (6) 771-777.

Offord, DR (Nov 2000). *Selection of levels of prevention*. **Addictive Behaviors** 25 (6) 833-842.

Shepherd, Jonathan et al (Dec 16, 2000). Editorial. *Using injury data for violence prevention*. **BMJ** 321 1481-1482. Full text [bmj.com/cgi/content/full/321/7275/1481](http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/321/7275/1481)

Simantov, Elisabeth et al (Oct 2000). *Health-compromising behaviors: why do adolescents smoke or drink? Identifying underlying risk and protective factors*. **Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine** 154 (10) 1025-1033. Abstract [archpedi.ama-assn.org/issues/v154n10/abs/poa00007.html](http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/issues/v154n10/abs/poa00007.html)

Tanskanen, Antti et al (Nov 2000). *Joint heavy use of alcohol, cigarettes and coffee and the risk of suicide*. **Addiction** 95 (11) 1699-1704.

Wechsler, Henry (Oct 20 2000). *Binge Drinking: Should We Attack the Name or the Problem?* **The Chronicle of Higher Education**. Full text [www.hsph.harvard.edu/cas/alcohol/op-edchronicle10\\_16\\_00.shtml](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/cas/alcohol/op-edchronicle10_16_00.shtml)

Whetten, K et al (Nov 2000). *Civil liability, criminal law, and other policies and alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities in the United States: 1984-1995* **Accident Analysis and Prevention**, 32 (6) 723-733.

## Alcohol Policy

### Round Up

#### Minister calls for mandatory drug testing for welfare recipients

On November 14, as community groups across the province were preparing for drug awareness week, Minister of Community and Social Services, John Baird launched province-wide consultations on mandatory drug treatment for welfare recipients. Under the proposed plan, those who refuse to take drug tests on request or who refuse treatment will be cut off social assistance. The government wants feedback on 5 questions: 1) what are the best practices, tests and instruments to determine addiction? 2) What level of treatment capacity may be needed to address the anticipated demand? 3) what range of addictions exist and how can they best be addressed? 4) would people on the *Ontario Disability Support Program* be left behind if they were not included? 5) how can the government work with caseworkers, agencies and treatment providers to make the initiative work? The proposal has been strongly opposed by many groups, including the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. In a position statement released in November, the provincial arms-length agency notes that drug testing can detect the presence of substances but does not determine dependence or addiction. Denying social assistance benefits to those who cannot comply with abstinence-based programs fails to take into account harm reduction approaches and neglects the fact that the majority of individuals experience at least one relapse during the first year of treatment. It also points out that those who are on welfare are no more likely to use drugs than the working population; that mandatory treatment is generally used in cases where people break the law—and poverty is not a crime; and that it would probably be an infringement of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. The Centre recommends that case workers be trained on how to screen, identify and refer people with addictions and mental health problems, and that case managers be trained in motivational strategies to more effectively engage clients. It also recommends that the government provide adequate housing, child care and vocational supports to people on social assistance and redirect resources for mandatory drug testing towards enhancing the capacity of the addictions treatment system to meet the needs of all Ontarians. The government is expected to unveil its new Drug Treatment Policy for welfare recipients early in the new year. For a copy of the CAMH position statement visit [www.camh.net](http://www.camh.net). For more info on the government's drug consultation plan, see [www.gov.on.ca/CSS/page/news/nov1400.html](http://www.gov.on.ca/CSS/page/news/nov1400.html).

“ Got a question? comment? announcement? Subscribe to the APOLNET Listserv, [www.apolnet.org](http://www.apolnet.org). ”

#### **Human Rights Commission revises alcohol; drug testing policy**

On September 27, the Ontario Human Rights Commission approved a revised policy on alcohol and drug testing. Among other things, the 11-page document reiterates the Commission's longstanding position that substance abuse, addiction or dependency, present or past, is a disability and therefore a protected ground from discrimination under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. Testing for alcohol or drugs is discriminatory under Canadian human rights law but can be justified in cases where a person's ability to fulfill the essential requirements of the job is impaired and/or this is shown to have a negative impact on workplace or public health and safety. Random alcohol testing, if done through minimally intrusive means such as breathalyzers, is acceptable in certain cases but only if the employer meets its duty to accommodate the needs of those who test positive by offering access to a rehabilitation program or using progressive discipline and performance management techniques, for example. "For cause" or "post-incident" testing for alcohol or drugs may be acceptable in situations such as when there is evidence of dangerous behaviour or following an accident. Pre-employment testing would be difficult to justify in most cases. The Commission concludes by encouraging employers to institute effective performance management systems, comprehensive health policies and employee assistance, health promotion and drug education programs. For a copy of the new policy visit [www.ohrc.on.ca](http://www.ohrc.on.ca) or call 800-387-9080.

#### **Ministry of Health consults on draft Mandatory Public Health Programs**

On October 23, 2000, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care released draft guidelines for programs and services delivered by local public health units in

Ontario. These guidelines focus on five areas of public health responsibility: 1) Chronic Disease, 2) Child Health 3) Reproductive Health, 4) Early Detection of Cancer, and 5) Injury and Substance Abuse Prevention. The technical review committee charged with drafting the substance abuse and injury prevention section is recommending that the 1997 guidelines be replaced with a more condensed and targeted set of priorities to prevent and reduce 1) falls in older adults, 2) motorized vehicle injuries, 3) child and youth unintentional injuries, 4) alcohol use among youth and adults, 5) drug use by adolescents and youth, 6) suicide and 7) violence. Gambling was acknowledged as an emerging health issue but not specifically included as a programming priority. The Public Health Branch is seeking input on the draft guidelines. Feedback is due **January 30, 2001**. To view the full Guidelines and feedback template visit [ww3.eagle.ca/phb/trc/trc.asp](http://ww3.eagle.ca/phb/trc/trc.asp). For more information, call Lorraine Cass, Public Health Branch, 416-327-7389.

#### **Ontario Legislature passes Ignition Interlock Bill**

On December 20, *Bill 131* finally passed in the Ontario legislature. The new law requires individuals convicted of repeat drinking and driving offenses to put an ignition interlock device on their cars as a condition of reinstatement of their driver's licence. The device, installed and maintained at the driver's expense, keeps a car from starting or remaining in motion if it detects more than .02 alcohol on the driver's breath. If the driver attempts to use the car with a blood alcohol level over the limit, the information is stored in the device's logs. This will help Ministry of Transportation officials to determine whether the person is likely to re-offend and therefore make more informed decisions regarding licence reinstatements.

Similar legislation is already in place in Alberta and Quebec. The private member's bill is a victory for Simcoe North MPP Garfield Dunlop. It received widespread support from anti-drinking and driving groups including MADD Canada. Efforts are now under way to phase in the bill's implementation. Meanwhile, spotchecks during the holiday season revealed an upswing in the number of novice drivers in the GTA testing positive for alcohol. It remains to be seen whether this was a statistical "blip" or the beginning of a trend. Still, Toronto Police Chief Julian Fantino is calling on the provincial government to endorse year-round RIDE programs. No word yet on whether Ontario's Solicitor General agrees to top up the \$1.2 million in RIDE funding provided to 122 police forces across Ontario in 1998/99. For more information on recent drinking and driving initiatives, please visit the Hot Issues section of APOLNET, [www.apolnet.org](http://www.apolnet.org).

#### **Canadians go to the polls**

On November 27, Canadians went to the polls. To help public health and addictions practitioners determine where each party stands on issues ranging from drinking and driving to the future of *Canada's Drug Strategy*, APN put together an election primer with the help of a number of organizations, including the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. The document includes a summary of relevant election issues, excerpts from and links to individual party platforms, useful statistics and sample questions for federal candidates—also helpful for post-election follow-up. For a hard copy contact Jennifer Hance, 416-367-3313 x23, email: [apolnet@opha.on.ca](mailto:apolnet@opha.on.ca). A shorter, electronic version was distributed to members of the APOLNET Listserv. It is archived at [www.web.ca/~apolnet/apolnet/msg00004.html](http://www.web.ca/~apolnet/apolnet/msg00004.html).

# News & Views

## Upcoming Events

Youth active in impaired driving issues will have three conferences to choose from in the next few months. The *11th Annual 2001 Canadian Youth Against Impaired Driving (CYAID) Conference* will take place **March 22-25, 2001** in Yellowknife. *Toronto Youth Against Impaired Driving* will host its Youth Leadership Conference **March 23-25** in Toronto. Finally, *Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving* will hold their annual conference, **April 19-22** at the Delta Meadowvale in Mississauga. For details see APOLNET Events & Milestones, [www.apolnet.org/events.html](http://www.apolnet.org/events.html)

The *27th Annual Alcohol Epidemiology Symposium* will be held **May 28-June 1, 2001** at the Delta Chelsea in downtown Toronto. The event attracts researchers, policy-makers and practitioners from around the world. The deadline for abstracts is **February 1**. Early bird registration (before April 1) is \$385; \$310 for those who decide to skip the Symposium Dinner. For a registration package email [KBS2001@camh.net](mailto:KBS2001@camh.net). Or call the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 416-535-8501 ext 6907.

## Media Campaigns

On **November 15, 2000**, the Ontario Drug Awareness Partnership will launch its annual Drug Awareness Week Campaign in over 150 communities across Ontario. This year's theme, "Drug Awareness...we can make a difference" will reinforce three key messages: 1) that drug use can be associated with problems and risks; 2) that these risks can be reduced through awareness and action; and 3) that people, particularly youth, seniors and parents, can reduce their risk of alcohol and other drug problems. The campaign features radio psas, print ads, news stories and "scratch and learn cards." For more info contact Pat Sanagan, 800-746-3852. Or visit [sano.arf.org/odap](http://sano.arf.org/odap).

## New Resources

Still guessing who's doing what in public health? Then check out the latest edition of the *Directory of Substance Abuse and Injury Prevention Contacts in Public Health*. It's updated, it's free and it's online! This year's version includes a comprehensive calendar of events, two quick indexes organized by issue and public health unit, and a new guide to on-line research and statistics related to substance abuse and injury prevention. Free directories were mailed to over 100 contacts across the province. To download your copy go to [www.apolnet.org/resources/apndir.html](http://www.apolnet.org/resources/apndir.html).

Just in time for the holidays and the seasonal responsible hosting campaigns: a glossy new mocktail guide from the LCBO. For print copies while supplies last contact the Social Responsibility Department by fax 416-864-2431 or email [elizabeth.kruzel@lcbo.com](mailto:elizabeth.kruzel@lcbo.com).

## APN News: APOLNET Listserv officially launched during Drug Awareness Week (DAW)

The APOLNET Listserv was officially unveiled during DAW. It features monthly discussion topics moderated by experts in the field and bi-weekly news digests prepared by APN staff. To join go to [www.apolnet.org/subscribe.html](http://www.apolnet.org/subscribe.html) or email [majordomo@list.web.ca](mailto:majordomo@list.web.ca). In body type <subscribe>. Leave subject blank. For info on upcoming topics or to become a moderator, email [apolnet@opha.on.ca](mailto:apolnet@opha.on.ca) or visit [www.apolnet.org](http://www.apolnet.org).

## About Us

*Alcohol Policy Update (APU)* is a free quarterly fax-newsletter of the Alcohol Policy Network (APN), a project of the Ontario Public Health Association. Our mission is to facilitate the development of policies that prevent problems associated with alcohol use and enhance the health, safety and well-being of individuals and communities across Ontario.

APN fulfills its mission by offering a range of products and services including information and referral, regional workshops and seminars, publications and a comprehensive website called APOLNET.

APN does not take public positions on issues although its members and its host, the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA), may do so.

Information appearing in this newsletter in no way constitutes an endorsement by OPHA or its members. Submissions are welcome. Printing is subject to space availability.

*APU* is distributed via fax to over 600 subscribers active in substance abuse prevention, injury prevention and public health. It is also available on APOLNET, [www.apolnet.org](http://www.apolnet.org).

For more info on this newsletter or APN's other products and services, please contact Paula Neves, Project Manager, [apn@opha.on.ca](mailto:apn@opha.on.ca), or Jennifer Hance, Web Administrator, [apolnet@opha.on.ca](mailto:apolnet@opha.on.ca).

Alcohol Policy Network

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| I have the following comments/suggestions:                     |           |           |      |      |      |