



Press Release: Friday 21st October, 2016

Scottish Families statement: Court of Session ruling on Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP)

Scottish Affected by Alcohol & Drugs (Scottish Families) welcomes today's ruling by the Court of Session that the Scottish Government's Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) policy is legal which paves the way for the Scottish government to implement. Scottish Families has strongly supported the case for MUP since legislation was passed in 2012 and challenged by the alcohol industry, a challenge led by the Scottish Whisky Association.

There is a strong evidence base to suggest that MUP would substantially reduce harm for the heaviest drinkers in our society with many benefits for individual health as well as safeguards for many families and communities across Scotland currently supporting addiction or another's alcohol use.

There are currently 22 alcohol-related deaths each week in Scotland and each of these is preventable yet it is still possible to purchase alcohol for a low as 18p per unit. The report from Alcohol Health Alliance (AHA UK) '*Cheap Alcohol: The Price We Pay*' says it is possible to buy almost seven and a half litres of high strength white cider for the cost of a standard off-peak cinema ticket.

We believe that this ruling is a step in the right direction in changing Scotland's relationship with alcohol. We are optimistic that the Scottish Government will implement this legislation as soon as possible to save lives, reduce risk and minimise harm to individuals living in communities across Scotland.

Christine Duncan, CEO, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs, said:

'This decision has been a long time coming and behind it lies the hard work and dedication of many people. We would like to see the implementation as swiftly as possible so that less families and communities have their lives blighted by the sale and targeting of cheap alcohol.'

Key facts & figures:

- 65,000 children are estimated to be affected by parental alcohol misuse.¹
- Family members affected by another's substance misuse had lower mental wellbeing scores than the average Scottish population, 65% scored within the moderate to severe category for anxiety and 50% scored within the moderate to severe category for depression.²
- 1 in 3 people know a heavy drinker, with 1 in 2 being negatively affected.³

¹ Scottish Government (2013). *Getting Our Priorities Right: Updated good practice guidance for all agencies and practitioners working with children, young people and families affected by problematic alcohol and/or drug use.*

² Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs and The University of Edinburgh (2015). *Exploring the impact and harms on families of those experiencing substance misuse: anxiety, depression and mental wellbeing.*

- Alcohol can be purchased for as little as 18p per unit in Scotland (3L 'White Ace' cider). The average child's weekly pocket money of £5.75 can buy more than double the Chief Medical Officer's weekly recommended adult limit (14 units) of alcohol. (4)

Notes to Editors:

Opinion of the Court: <https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/search-judgments/judgment?id=9a1821a7-8980-69d2-b500-ff0000d74aa7>

1. About Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol & Drugs

Scottish Families' is a membership organisation and hub of a national network of family support groups across Scotland providing information and support through:

- National Helpline - 08080 10 10 11,
- National Telehealth programme,
- Bereavement support service,
- Website & web-chat facility, www.sfad.org.uk
- Direct support through regional/local family support groups.

For further information and comment contact:

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³ Alcohol Focus (2013). *Unrecognised and under-reported: the impact of alcohol on people other than the drinker in Scotland*.

⁴ Alcohol Health Alliance UK (2016). *Cheap Alcohol: The Price We Pay*.