

THE SECOND HAND HARM OF ALCOHOL IN THE NORTH EAST

MEDIA SUMMARY

- 57 per cent of people living in the North East, or around 1.2 million individuals aged 18 and over, have suffered at least once due to the drinking of others in the last 12 months.
- 62 per cent of people know at least one heavy drinker. Males, younger age groups and those who drink the most were more likely to know a greater number of heavy drinkers.
- 31 per cent had suffered at least one negative consequence as a result of the heavy drinking of someone known to them. The most common negative consequence experienced as a result of other people's drinking was that of 'having a serious argument that did not include physical violence', with 23 per cent reporting this to have happened at least once.
- 45 per cent had suffered at least one negative consequence as a result of the drinking of someone not known to them. The most common negative consequence experienced as a result of an unknown drinker was that of 'being kept awake at night by noise of others', with 25% reporting this to have happened at least once.
- The 18-44 age groups were at least four times more likely than the 65+ group to experience at least one negative consequence as a result of the drinking of known heavy drinkers or unknown drinkers.

BACKGROUND

Alcohol related harms are most commonly considered in terms of the impact that they have on the individual consuming the alcohol. However, they can also be considered in terms of the secondary impact, or Second Hand Harm (SHH), that they have on associated individuals^{1,2}. Examples of alcohol related harm to others can include; the victims of alcohol related injuries, such as victims of alcohol related abuse, ranging from verbal or physical aggression^{1,2,3}; victims of alcohol related accidents, such as road traffic or workplace accidents^{1,4,5}; damage caused to personal belongings or to the local community^{1,3,4}; an individual defaulting on their social role, such as the neglect of a child or spouse⁶; or those having to accommodate individuals who are not able to work due to risky drinking^{1,2,4,7}.

SHH SURVEY FINDINGS

CONSEQUENCES EXPERIENCED AS A RESULT OF OTHER'S DRINKING

The survey asked about a range of difference consequences that were suffered as a direct result of someone else's drinking. It was found that 31 per cent of people had in the last 12 months suffered at least one negative consequence as a result of the heavy drinking of someone known to them.

Table 1: Percentage of participants affected in specified way at least once by a known heavy drinker in the last 12 months

Because of known heavy drinkers have you:	Male	Female	Total
(n)	(628)	(672)	(1,300)
Had a serious argument that did not include physical violence?	23%	23%	23%
Were let down on something you were counting on being done?	19%	21%	20%
Ended up having to care for the person/people?	20%	15%	18%
Felt emotionally hurt or neglected?	10%	17%	14%
Had family problems or relationship/marriage difficulties?	12%	15%	14%
Had to stop seeing them?	11%	12%	12%
Felt threatened?	8%	9%	9%
Had financial troubles?	6%	6%	6%
Had something damaged that mattered to you?	6%	6%	6%
Not been able to bring friends or other family members home?	5%	5%	5%
Been put at risk in a car when being driven somewhere?	6%	3%	5%
Were forced to leave home to stay somewhere else?	3%	4%	4%
Been forced or pressured into sex or something sexual?	3%	3%	3%
Been hospitalised or had medical treatment?	2%	3%	2%
Because of a heavy drinking co-worker:			
Has your ability to do your job been negatively affected?	10%	8%	9%
Have you had to work extra hours?	10%	9%	9%
Had to take at least one day off work?	3%	3%	3%
Were you involved in an accident or a 'close call' at work?	2%	3%	2%

Harm caused by known heavy drinkers is however only part of the problem. It was found that an even higher proportion of people are affected by the drinking of people that they didn't know, with a total of 45 per cent of people being negatively affected at least once.

Table 2: Percentage of participants affected in specified way at least once by an unknown drinker in the last 12 months

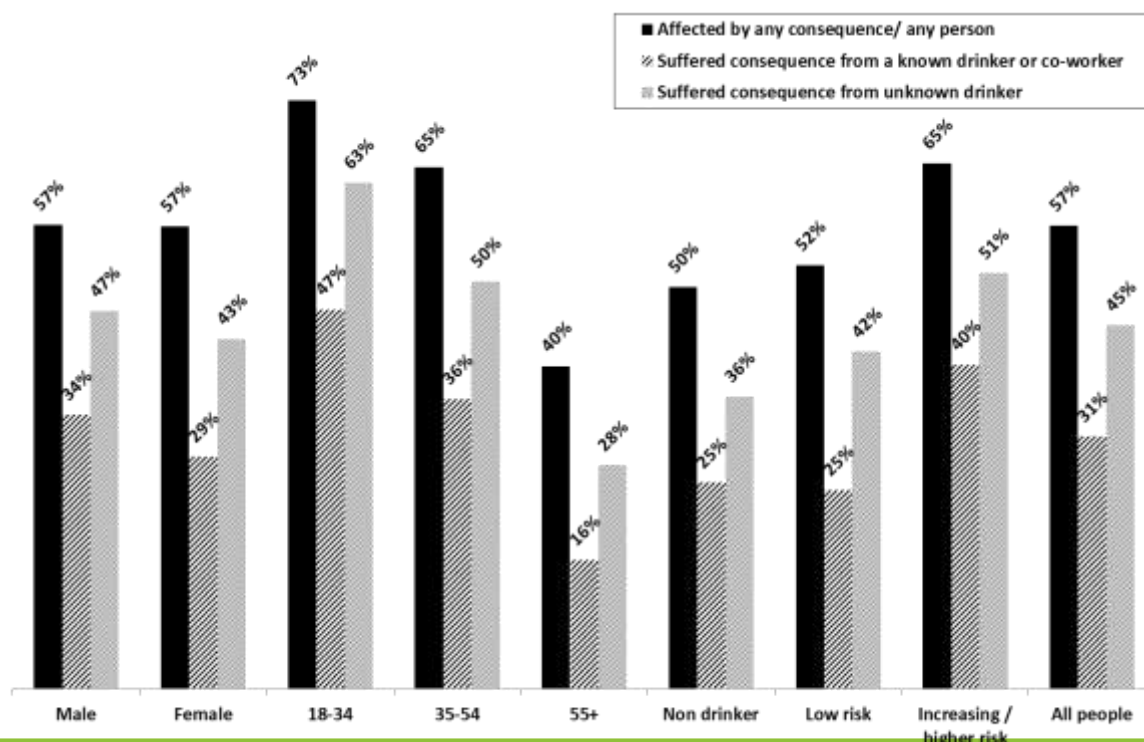
Because of unknown drinkers have you:	Male	Female	Total
(n)	(628)	(672)	(1,300)
Been kept awake at night by noise of others?	26%	25%	25%
Has your ability to do your job been negatively affected?	21%	26%	24%
Have you been verbally abused at work?	23%	24%	23%
Been harassed/afraid/felt unsafe on the street or in a public place?	17%	19%	18%
Been verbally abused?	19%	14%	16%
Been harassed at a party or other private setting?	9%	8%	8%
Had your house, car or property vandalised?	5%	4%	5%
Were you involved in an accident or a close call at work?	4%	4%	4%
Been hit or assaulted?	4%	2%	3%
Have you been hit or assaulted at work?	2%	3%	3%
Been hospitalised or had medical treatment?	2%	1%	2%
Been involved in a traffic accident?	2%	1%	1%

POPULATION AFFECTED BY THE DRINKING OF OTHERS

Results from the survey show that 57 per cent of people living in the North East have suffered at least once (based on 30 different types of harm) due to the drinking of others in the last 12 months. Given the steps taken to make the survey representative of the North East demography, this would translate to approximately 1.2 million resident individuals aged 18 or over⁸.

Age was found to be the most significant predictor of an individual experiencing at least one negative consequence as a result of other people’s drinking, having taken into account demographic factors and drinking behaviour.

Figure 2: Percentage of people affected by known heavy drinkers and unknown drinkers



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