

Cancer associations' policies & advocacy on alcohol control. Are associations standing up for alcohol control?

GAPC2013 Seoul, South Korea
C5-3-3 . Concurrent 5 (C5) 2:00-3:30 pm
Tuesday October 8, 2013

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- No conflicts of interest to disclose



Alcohol = carcinogen

- WHO International Agency for Research on Cancer
 - Alcohol: Group 1 Carcinogen: definitely carcinogenic to humans. The exposure circumstance entails exposures that are carcinogenic to humans.
- Alcohol consumption is one of the most important risk factors for human cancer & potentially one of the most avoidable factors
- “no level of consumption that is safe as far as cancer is concerned” Peter Anderson. Globe (3-2013)

UN Political Declaration on Prevention & Control of NCDs (2011)

	Tobacco use	Unhealthy diets	Physical inactivity	Harmful use of alcohol
Cardiovascular diseases	✓	✓	✓	✓
Diabetes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cancer	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chronic lung disease	✓			



WHO's alcohol policy “best buys “



- **Price:** increasing alcohol beverage excise taxes
- **Access:** restricting access to retailed alcohol beverages &
- **Promotion:** comprehensive advertising, promotion sponsorship bans

Advocated by cancer associations?



Recent advocacy assessment

Reducing alcohol consumption is an important & underemphasized cancer prevention strategy,

yet receives surprisingly little attention among public health, medical, cancer, advocacy, & other organizations in the US,

especially when compared with efforts related to other cancer prevention topics such as screening, genetics, tobacco, & obesity.

Nelson DE, et al. (Feb 2013) Am J Public Health

Selected CA Associations

- **Europe**
- **Australia-New Zealand**
- **Africa**
- **International**
- **North America**

Europe

- **Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)**
- **Members of Euro Parliament
MEPS Against Cancer**
- **Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)**
- **Cancer Research UK**
- **Cancer Focus Northern Ireland**
- **Irish Cancer Society**
- **Cancer Society of Finland**
- **World Cancer Research Fund UK**



Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)

- **Supported Scotland when challenged for attempting to pass minimum pricing legislation.**
- **ECL is monitoring impact of the EU's Alcohol Strategy on marketing to youth & reducing alcohol-related harm.**
 - **Calling for stronger recognition of alcohol causality of cancer & other chronic diseases**
 - **Working with Members of Euro Parliament (MEPs)**



Cancer Research UK

- Response on Government's Alcohol Strategy focused on the link between alcohol & cancer risk & the need to reduce consumption at the population level:
 - A minimum price would reduce consumption
 - Need to protect young people from the influence of alcohol marketing
 - Increased health information to change culture of drinking
 - Supported increasing the powers of local authorities & police to limit the density of licensed premises



Cancer Research UK supported Scottish Government 2008

Necessary measures:

- Ascertain effect of overall consumption levels & accessibility of alcohol
- Prevent irresponsible promotion by retailers
- Ban sales below cost price
- Packaging labels: alcoholic content & a health message - clear that the less you drink, the more you reduce your risk of a raft of chronic health conditions



Irish Cancer Society

- **European Week Against Cancer 2013 Conference**
 - Hosted by Irish Cancer Society partnering with the Association of European Cancer Leagues
- **Advocated for alcohol control policies**
 - **Workshop 2: Action on Alcohol**
 - **Labeling**
 - **Minimum pricing**
 - **Advertising and promotion ban in spirits**

Australia-New Zealand

- **Cancer Council Australia**
- **Cancer Council Victoria**
- **Cancer Council Western Australia**

- **Cancer Society of New Zealand**



Cancer Council Australia

- **Calls for**
 - alcohol pricing & taxation to reduce health harms
 - limit the exposure of alcohol advertising to children and adults
 - compulsory warning labels on all alcohol products so consumers can be informed that the product they are purchasing &/or consuming can have a serious impact on their health & wellbeing



Cancer Council Victoria

- Alcohol Policy Coalition: collaboration of health agencies – Australian Drug Foundation, Cancer Council Victoria, Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Centre & VicHealth –
- Shared concern relating to the misuse of alcohol & its health/social impacts on the community.
- Alcohol remains one of the major causes of preventable death & illness in Australia.
- Coalition advocates for evidence based policy to prevent & reduce the harms caused by alcohol.



Cancer Society of New Zealand

- **Supports WHO's key measures that governments, industry & other agencies can take:**
 - **Price: raise price through taxes to reduce individual consumption**
 - **Access:**
 - **Limit numbers, types & locations of outlets, & hours & days of sale**
 - **Raise legal purchase age &**
 - **Promotion: restrict advertising & marketing**



Cancer Society of NZ criticized Alcohol Reform Bill

“Why aren’t we doing more to restrict our most common drug?”

“We are extremely disappointed the government has not listened to our concerns about alcohol undermining community wellbeing & safety. There is convincing evidence that alcohol is associated with an increased risk for some cancers.”

Sept 2011

Africa

- **Cancer Association of South Africa**
- **African, Euro & UICC Cancer joint advocacy tool kit**

International Associations

- **Union for International Cancer Control**
- **World Cancer Research Fund International**



Union for International Cancer Control

UICC supported

- UN recommendations on NCDs & targets on all 4 major risk factors, including the harmful use of alcohol &
- measures recommended by the Global Alcohol Policy Alliance to
 - reduce the impact of alcohol marketing to young people & adolescents &
 - reduce total adult alcohol consumption



UICC ADVOCACY TOOL KIT

- **World Cancer Declaration Target 3: Decrease tobacco, alcohol consumption, & obesity.**
- **Reduce individuals' exposure to common cancer risk factors namely tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity & the harmful use of alcohol through the implementation of relevant international agreements and strategies, & education, legislative, regulatory & fiscal measures**



UICC: cancer patients & civil society

**Civil Society Organization toolkit sponsored by
Association of European Cancer Leagues & UICC:**

**Does national plan have alcohol among its
cancer prevention organized programs?**



UICC World Cancer Congress

Dec 2014, Melbourne Australia

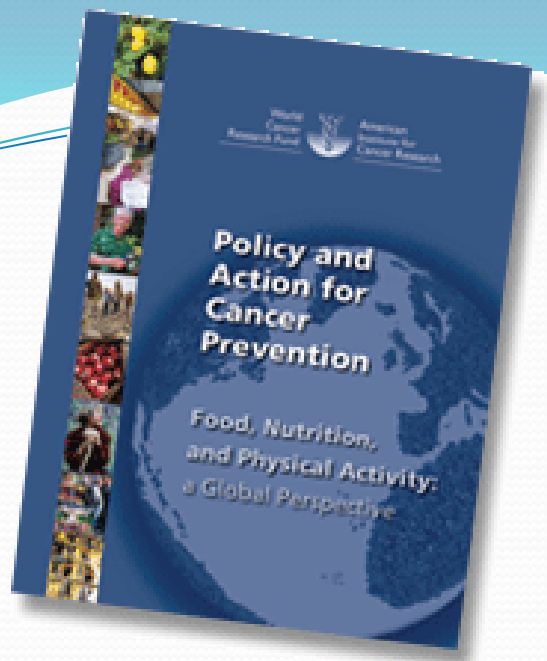
TRACK 1: PREVENTION AND EARLY DETECTION

- **1 of 3 sessions:**
 - **Alcohol and cancer: Are we making headway?**
Proposed by UICC & Cancer Council Western Australia
 - **Alcohol & cancer programs by cancer societies:** Matti Rautalahti, Cancer Society of Finland
 - **Alcohol policy issues - where is the biggest bang for the buck?** Todd Harper, Cancer Council Victoria



World Cancer Research Fund International

- **Member organizations**
 - **US (American Institute for Cancer Research)**
 - **UK (World Cancer Research Fund UK)**
 - **Netherlands (Wereld Kanker Onderzoek Fonds) &**
 - **Hong Kong (World Cancer Research Fund Hong Kong)**



WCRF

- **Increasing price of alcoholic drinks by taxation reduces sales & consumption.**
- **Policies restricting the supply & availability of alcohol are effective in reducing the harm caused by alcohol.**
 - minimum legal drinking age,
 - reduced hours of sale, &
 - policies on the number, type, or location of sales outlets.
- **Drink-driving countermeasures are effective when vigorously enforced**



World Cancer Research Fund

- Strong global report with good alcohol policies
- Supported NCD Global Action Plan & targets
- Strong caution about alcohol industry
- However not/less a priority by its member organizations
 - For examples
 - WCRF UK
 - WCRF USA AKA American Institute for Cancer Research

North American

- **American Institute for Cancer Research**
- **American Cancer Society**
- **Susan G. Kommen for the Cure**
- **Canadian Cancer Society**

American Institute for Cancer Research

Policy & Action for Cancer Prevention Food, Nutrition, & Physical Activity With an Added US Perspective **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (2010)**

- all focus on food and obesity
- No specific discussion of alcohol policies to reduce consumption





American Cancer Society

- **Cancer Facts & Figures 2005 to present – nothing on policies to reduce alcohol-related harms**
- **Cancer Prevention & Early Detection Facts & Figures 2012**
 - **15 pages on tobacco (9 on policy)**
 - **Alcohol: under “Overweight and Obesity, Physical Activity, and Nutrition” section &**
 - **Alcohol personal consumption - 3 paragraphs**



ACS: Global Fight against Cancer

- **Global cancer burden will grow by adoption of behaviors & lifestyles associated with economic development & urbanization**
 - **smoking, poor diet, physical inactivity, & reproductive patterns) in low- & middle-income countries**
- **Tobacco use is a major cause of the increasing global burden of cancer**
- **No mention of alcohol**
- **Yet ACS' COO is on UICC board & supports WHO NCDs**

ACS policy on alcohol consumption

- ACS does “not advocate for policies aimed at the reduction in consumption of alcohol because we try to apply our limited resources to our defined legislative priorities where we know we can have significant impact (tobacco control, access to care, etc).”

- Email from ACS Action Network, March 26, 2013

ACS on alcohol tax

- “In the past, we have been asked to support an alcohol tax increase (to encourage people to reduce consumption), but we don't have a position on this proposal as there is not a whole lot of evidence out there concluding that increasing the alcohol tax 1) reduces excess consumption and 2) decreases cancer mortality.”

Email from ACS Action Network, March 26, 2013



So where are North American CAs on alcohol?

- **Stress individual warning & choice**
- **Lack policies to reduce alcohol as a risk factor for cancer**
- **Fall short of peers in UK, Australia, Europe, New Zealand & international**
- **Next steps? Getting CA associations to change**



Advocate/educate

- **enlist volunteer leadership**
- **what peer associations are doing**
- **alcohol control policies will reduce consumption**
- **don't emphasize alleged CVD benefit**
- **if not a high priority, join with/at least support domestic & global alcohol control efforts**
- **describe alcohol control policies in their documents, e.g. CA Facts and Figures**



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Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)

- **ECL and The European Alcohol Policy Alliance have jointly launched a new website devoted to evidence on alcohol and cancer.**
 - **www.alcoholandcancer.eu**
- **ECL: a founding member in the European Commission's Health and Alcohol Forum**



Members of Euro Parliament

MEPS Against Cancer

- **“Too few countries use effective policy options to prevent death, disease and injury from alcohol use.... wider implementation of policies is needed to save lives and reduce the health impact of harmful alcohol drinking. It is our duty to act, thus protecting health as well as well-being of our European citizens.”**

Alojz Peterle (Slovenia)

Member of the European Parliament

President, MEPs Against Cancer



Cancer Research UK Strategy 2009-14

- Proactively targets policy with potential for the greatest impact on cancer outcomes, particularly tobacco & excessive sun exposure
- Also supports Government efforts to tackle obesity, excessive alcohol consumption & sedentary lifestyles



Cancer Research UK's policy

- **Need a comprehensive strategy to reduce overall alcohol consumption levels & cancer deaths.**
- **Strategy should include:**
 - **measures to increase the cost of alcohol**
 - **further restrictions on the marketing of alcohol**
 - **public information campaigns**



Cancer Focus Northern Ireland

- unanimous agreement from 70 UK health organizations, including Cancer Focus, that a 50 pence minimum price per unit of alcohol sold should be a priority.
- Health First alcohol strategy ”sets out a comprehensive strategy for alcohol across the UK & includes 30 recommendations that focus on price, the product, the promotion of alcohol and the place of sale. It provides a blueprint for action – not just for today but for the longer term.”



Cancer Society of Finland

- Cancer 2015: “Societal decision-making must be developed & strengthened to improve cancer prevention.
- Requires implementing tobacco control policy, drug & alcohol policy changes & increasing exercise among the population.”
- 2011 Finnish Medical Association & Cancer Society for Finland now demand that the next government ban all alcohol marketing



Cancer Council Australia

- Alcohol taxation policy should acknowledge that alcohol is responsible for major harms in our community, including cancer.
- Increasing the price of alcohol through taxation would be one of the most effective ways to reduce alcohol consumption & associated harms.



Cancer Council Western Australia

- Major role in alcohol advertising review board
- Part of Western Australia Alcohol. Think Again campaign
 - includes policy education, legislation, community action
 - to reduce short & long term harmful drinking



McCabe Centre for Law and Cancer

- joint initiative of Cancer Council Victoria & the Union for International Cancer Control



Cancer Council Victoria (Australia)

- Our prevention programs strive to reduce the incidence of cancers attributable to tobacco, UV, radiation, alcohol, obesity and infection, particularly in high-risk populations.
- By:
 - Advocating for evidence-based policy reform.
 - Educating the community about reducing cancer risk.
 - Educating health professionals about effective cancer prevention.
 - Increasing cancer screening & vaccination.
 - Gathering evidence on the health and economic benefits of cancer prevention.



New Zealand CA branch survey on Alcohol & Smoke-free areas

- Canterbury West Coast Division: Alcohol is an emerging area of health promotion work for the Cancer Society.

Design of our communities has a great impact on the health of citizens.

Survey on key health areas Smokefree & Tobacco control, solar protection, and physical activity & nutrition (including alcohol) to show what opportunities exist to plan for improved health outcomes for our communities, improving healthy policy where we 'live work and play'.



African, Euro & UICC Cancer Prevention Advocacy Toolkit for Africa

- **Political Advocacy: Prevention**

The prevention of cancer can be advanced by government intervention. Policies can be developed to reduce cancer risk under the influence of NGOs. Targets for prevention campaigns might include tobacco control, sun exposure, alcohol, infections & obesity.



Cancer Association of South Africa

- Fact Sheet on Living a Balanced Lifestyle – personal choice/limit consumption
- Position Statement Cancer and Environment

In order to reduce the impact of environmental carcinogens and consequently the burden of cancer, the following measures have been taken by CANSA and in some cases made sustainable through governmental legislation –

only one at all related was “Education re healthy diet and exercise” – not alcohol



Canadian Cancer Society

2011 letter to Health Ministers

- About half of all cancers can be prevented through healthy living & policies that protect the health of Canadians, for example strategies that combat
 - tobacco use,
 - unhealthy diets,
 - physical inactivity &
 - excessive alcohol consumption



World Cancer Research Fund UK

- **Stresses chronic disease prevention through food, physical activity and obesity.**
 - – no mention of alcohol
- ***Recent change: Feb 2013 response to consultation on UK government's Alcohol Strategy**
 - minimum unit price level
 - ban on multi-buy promotions
 - price-based promotions, happy hours, & alcoholic drinks cheaper than a non-alcoholic version



UICC

World Cancer Declaration

2008

- **Declaration: a tool to help bring the growing cancer crisis to the attention of government leaders & health policy-makers in order to significantly reduce the global cancer burden by 2020.**
- **11 Targets by 2020**



TARGETS: BY 2025

World Cancer Declaration Refresh

- Global tobacco consumption, overweight & obesity, unhealthy diets & **alcohol intake**, & levels of physical inactivity, as well as other leading exposures to risk factors will have fallen significantly



UICC: cancer patients & civil society

- **Increase efforts to involve cancer patients in CA control planning at local & national level**
- **Push governments to implement policies that support risk reducing strategies at a community level**

**Civil Society Organization toolkit sponsored by Association of European Cancer Leagues & UICC:
Does national plan have alcohol among its cancer prevention organized programs?**



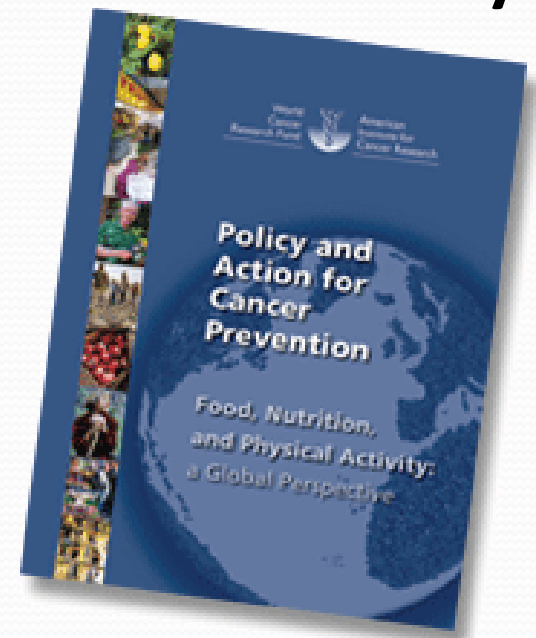
UICC World Cancer Declaration

Refresh Actions:

- Immediate actions for all countries
 - 3. Reduce modifiable risk factors for cancer
 - Increase efforts to reduce exposure to common cancer risk factors, including:
 - Harmful use of alcohol: Encourage implementation of the global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol

World Cancer Research Fund International

- Public health goals for cancer prevention
 - Re alcoholic drinks
 - The proportion of the population drinking more than the recommended limits to be reduced by **1/3 every 10 years**



Susan G. Komen for the Cure®



- **Only recommendations on personal consumption**
- **No mention or action to promote policies to reduction population consumption**

ACS: -CA vs +CVD

- While alcohol increases ones risk for certain cancers, moderate alcohol consumption can actually decrease risk for cardiovascular disease (although we would never encourage a non-drinker to drink) – “so you have to weigh the health impact of a particular policy.”
- Email from ACS Action Network, March 26, 2013