EVALUATING LATER OR EXPANDED PREMISES HOURS FOR ALCOHOL IN THE NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY (ELEPHANT)

Study update for the Glasgow - November 2022

We are now in month 26 of this three-year study, all aspects of the study are progressing well. We held our first local public involvement groups with venue-goers and residents from Glasgow in January 2022, and from Aberdeen in June 2022. Both groups inputted to the development and finalisation of materials for focus groups that will soon be conducted with members of the public within Workpackage 2.

Workpackage 1: We have finalised our strategy for selecting stakeholders for interviews/discussion groups and began recruiting in March 2022 and are continuing to recruit. This strand of the fieldwork aims to understand why the changes to opening hours came about, what effects were expected, and any ways in which public services/businesses were affected. Our interviews/discussion groups will also explore views on a range of possible policy options that could reduce alcohol-related harms without adversely affecting recovery of the night-time economy post COVID-19. We have currently conducted 34 interviews with a range of stakeholders in Aberdeen and Glasgow including premises owners/managers, police staff, frontline NTE staff (taxi marshalls/street pastors), A&E staff, Licensing Board members and Licensing Standards Officers.

We have identified precise changes in opening hours over time for licensed premises in Aberdeen and Glasgow, using public registers, local authority websites and social media analysis. We plan to interview venue owners/managers in Glasgow who have applied for the extra hour as well as those who considered but decided not to apply. We are reaching the end of this phase of interviews but would still welcome hearing from anyone who might want to take part.

We are keen to get hold of any documentation that can assist us in understanding how and why the pilot came about in Glasgow including consultation documents and responses.

Workpackage 2: Ethical approval has been sought and secured for 'deliberative' focus groups with the public which have been taking place in Glasgow and Aberdeen and will be completed by Christmas. In this process, participants are given a balanced range of evidence to consider before being asked questions about their views. This method is innovative in how it seeks to help the public reflect on their views and opinions about the pros and cons of later opening hours as part of the focus group process. We are currently exploring recruitment options in each city and preparing to recruit participants.

Our social media analysis work to establish precise changes in opening hours over time is now completed for all ten Glasgow venues, and for 30+ venues in Aberdeen. We are now in the initial stages of planning fieldwork visits to later opening venues.

Workpackage 3: We have held meetings with representatives from the Scottish Ambulance Service and have agreed how they will share data with us on alcohol-related ambulance callouts in Scotland. We have received an initial batch of data and are awaiting progress on a second request. We have completed main and subgroup statistical modelling analyses for Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh and these analyses are now being repeated using a different statistical package. We have received data on crime data from Police Scotland and have started to analyse that.

Workpackage 4: We have finished drafting our Health Economics Analysis Plan and we are making good progress on scoping work on the availability of various data sources to identify potential economic benefits or costs of later hours, to assist us in developing the economic evaluation.

Workpackage 5: We have drafted questions for a survey of local authorities on their approach to late night trading – we are considering the best way to gather this data. We have begun a review of the links between alcohol consumption and harm outcomes in specific situations including ambulance call outs and assaults to help us develop new models. These models will help us to assess the potential impacts of late night licensing hour changes on different subgroups of the population.

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