

Alcohol campaign launched today

A new campaign aimed at encouraging Scots to think about the health effects of regularly drinking above the recommended alcohol guidelines has been launched this week.

The Scottish Government's Alcohol Behaviour Change is this year encouraging women to 'Drop a Glass Size' in 2012.

Figures in the Scottish Health Survey show that around 38 per cent of women regularly exceed daily and/or weekly sensible drinking guidelines. It is possible for a woman to exceed the weekly guidelines for less than £3. It is estimated that 1 in 30 female deaths in Scotland is alcohol-related.

The campaign encourages people to make small changes to the way they drink such as alternating alcohol with soft drinks or water and having two alcohol-free days a week.

The initiative, which also includes a national roadshow, aims to educate Scots about what they're drinking, how much is too much and how they can moderate their drinking.

As part of the campaign a new 'drinking time machine' smart phone app has been developed to show people the shocking affects of regularly drinking too much. The app is available exclusively from the Scottish Government free for one month and will show users how alcohol speeds up the ageing process.

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing Nicola Sturgeon said:

"Evidence shows us that most people who drink alcohol, particularly at home, have no idea of how much they are actually consuming. This campaign aims to show people how small changes to their drinking habits can have a significant

impact on their health and wellbeing.

“Scotland’s unhealthy relationship with alcohol is now widely recognised and much has been done in the last five years to address this. Our alcohol framework outlined a package of over 40 measures to reduce alcohol related harm. We have made considerable progress including banning quantity discounts and restricting promotions on off-sales. And we have invested a record £155 million over the last four years to tackle alcohol misuse.

“However I have been clear that there is more that can and must be done. Alongside educational efforts such as this campaign the introduction of the Minimum Pricing Bill is a significant step forward. There is a clear link between the price of alcohol and consumption levels which is why we have always made the case for the introduction of a minimum price.

“The support in favour of minimum pricing is now overwhelming, and I hope that this time around Scotland’s MSPs will do the right thing and back this policy.”

Audrey Birt, Scotland Director at Breakthrough Breast Cancer, comments:

“We’re happy to be supporting this new campaign from the Scottish Government. We’ve known for some time that regularly drinking alcohol can increase the risk of developing breast cancer as well as causing other health problems. The good news is women can reduce their risk of developing the disease in a number of ways, including decreasing their alcohol intake, as well as maintaining a healthy weight and being physically active.”

The nationwide campaign will feature three different sized wine glasses to emphasise the central theme of the initiative. The three different sized wine glasses highlight that by making a small change such as dropping a glass size women can see and feel a big difference in their health and well-being

now and in the long term.