

Date set for alcohol unit pricing



Shona Robison

Minimum unit pricing for alcohol will come into force on 1 May next year and Health Secretary Shona Robison revealed there were 1,265 alcohol-related deaths last year.

That figure is up 10 per cent on 2015 and the Minister also indicated statistics showing a two per cent annual increase in alcohol-related hospital stays.

She added: "These numbers are completely unacceptable. Behind every one of these statistics is a person, a family and a community.

"With alcohol on sale today at just 18 pence a unit we have to act to tackle the scourge of cheap, high-strength drink that causes so much damage.

"Research shows a minimum unit price of 50 pence would cut alcohol-related deaths by 392 and hospital admissions by 8,254 over the first five years of the policy.

"I anticipate setting the minimum unit price at 50 pence per unit. We now want to hear from retailers, representative bodies and Licensing Standards Officers about the practicalities of implementation."