



Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP  
 Chancellor of the Exchequer  
 HM Treasury  
 1 Horse Guards Road  
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2 December 2016

Dear Chancellor

We write in response to the compelling evidence published today by Public Health England about the most effective measures to reduce rates of alcohol harm, which currently cost the UK £21billion each year. Raising the price of the cheapest alcohol products has been identified as the most powerful tool at the disposal of this Government to tackle the burden alcohol places on our NHS, public services and economy. PHE has today echoed conclusions of the World Bank, World Health Organisation, Organisation for Economic Development and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, not to mention a plethora of scientific studies from home and abroad.

We urge you, as Chancellor, to take action at the Spring Budget 2017 to target the cheapest alcohol products that cause the most harm. You have the opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of some of our most vulnerable groups, ease the burden on our NHS and public services and improve economic productivity.

Strong, cheap drinks are preferentially drunk by harmful drinkers and children. High strength white cider containing the equivalent alcohol content as 22 vodka shots can be bought for as little as £3.50. Targeted pricing policies such as minimum unit pricing and tax increases on the cheapest high strength drinks would reduce the amount of alcohol-related death and disease in our country, and would place alcoholic products out of the financial reach of children.

Furthermore, increasing the price of the cheapest alcohol would improve workplace productivity. As outlined in today's report by PHE, alcohol is one of the leading causes of premature mortality in England and leads to 169,000 years of working life lost each year. By reducing alcohol-related death and disease, output would receive a boost.

Finally, these measures would save the NHS money, at a time when the health service is under severe financial pressure. Research has found that the introduction of a 50p minimum unit price would reduce healthcare costs by £1.3 billion over 20 years.





Tackling cheap alcohol through targeted measures such as minimum unit pricing and tax increases for the cheapest products would be good for health, good for society, and good for the economy. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these issues further.

Yours sincerely

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Jeremy Swain, Chief Executive, Thames Reach

Matthew Reed, Chief Executive, The Children's Society

Katherine Brown, Director, Institute of Alcohol Studies

Joanna Simons CBE, Chief Executive, Alcohol Concern

Professor Parveen Kumar CBE, Chair, BMA Board of Science

Alison Cox, Director for Cancer Prevention, Cancer Research UK

Dr Andrew Furber, President, Association of Directors of Public Health

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Professor Jane Dacre, President, Royal College of Physicians of London

Professor David Galloway, President, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow

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Colin Shevills, Director, Balance, the North East Alcohol Office

Ron Hogg, Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner

Professor Linda Bauld, Deputy Director, UK Centre for Tobacco and Alcohol Studies

Terry Martin, Trustee, alcoHELP

Andrea Crossfield, Chief Executive, Healthier Futures

Alison Douglas, Chief Executive, Alcohol Focus Scotland

Professor Graeme Alexander, President, British Association for the Study of the Liver

Vivienne Evans OBE, Chief Executive, Adfam

Michael O'Toole, CEO, Mentor UK

David Biddle, Chief Executive, Change Grow Live

Susan Fleisher, Executive Director, National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome UK

Christine Duncan, CEO, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs

Eric Carlin, Director, Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems

Dr Peter Rice, Chair, Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems

The Revd Lynn Green, General Secretary, Baptist Union of Great Britain





Revd Dr Roger Walton, President of the Methodist Conference

Mr Alan Yates, Moderator of General Assembly of the United Reformed Church

Ian Geary, Public Affairs Adviser, The Salvation Army

Professor Jonathan Shepherd, Director, Violence Research Group, Cardiff University

Cristina Fernandez, Head of Recovery Support, The Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust

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