Newly at risk? Using Health Survey for England data to retrospectively explore the characteristics of newly defined at-risk drinkers following the change to the UK low risk drinking guidelines

**BACKGROUND**

- Why focus on alcohol?
- Alcohol guidelines

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To establish the number of additional males in England who have been drinking at increasing risk levels over the past 5 years according to the new low risk drinking guidelines.
   **How many men are affected?**

2. To establish whether this group of newly defined increasing risk male drinkers are distinct from those men who were
   a. previously defined lower risk drinkers, and
   b. previously defined increasing or higher risk drinkers.
   **What kind of men are affected and can we target these men specifically?**

**METHODS**

**Health Survey for England (HSE):**

- Annual, nationally representative, cross-sectional survey using a clustered, stratified multi-stage sampling design to select a random sample of private households in England.

**MEASURES:**

- Average weekly alcohol consumption, regrouped:
  - non-drinkers (0 units/wk)
  - lower risk drinkers (≤14 units/wk)
  - newly defined increasing risk drinkers (>14 to ≤21 units/wk)
  - increasing/higher risk drinkers (>21 units/wk)
  - age; socioeconomic classification; marital status; geographical region; ethnicity; smoking status, physical health.
METHODS

Sample:
- Obj 1: All men aged 16+ (including non-drinkers) excluding men with missing data from HSE 2011 - 2015. (Annual n=3487-3790)
- Obj 2: All male drinkers aged 16+ excluding men with missing data from HSE 2015. (n=2982)

Statistical analyses:
- Obj 1: Annual population prevalence estimates for newly defined increasing risk male drinkers (>14 to ≤21 units p/wk) were calculated.
- Obj 2: Multinomial logistic regression used to assess which risk factors were significantly associated with men being newly defined increasing risk drinkers.

RESULTS

Obj 1: Number of additional males in England who have been drinking at increasing risk levels over the past 5 years according to the new low risk drinking guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population prevalence estimate</th>
<th>% male population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2,325,896</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2,265,788</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2,258,825</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2,182,401</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,369,984</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Obj 2: To establish whether this group of newly defined increasing risk male drinkers are distinct from lower risk drinkers and increasing or higher risk drinkers

Percentage of men per alcohol risk group using 2015 data (N=2982)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alcohol Risk Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New (14-21 units/wk)</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing Risk (21-28)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Risk (1-13)</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSIONS

How many men affected?
- Over 2 million men each year
- 10% to 11% of the male population of England
CONCLUSIONS

What kind of men are affected?

• Compared to lower risk drinkers, newly defined increasing risk drinkers more likely to be:
  - Aged 55 - 64
  - Living in the North East, North West, West Midlands or South West
  - Working in professional or managerial occupations
  - Ex-regular or current cigarette smokers

Newly defined increasing risk drinkers broadly similar to increasing / higher risk drinkers – specific targeting not possible

THANK YOU

- Dr Nicola Shelton & Dr Linda Ng Fat
- Health and Social Surveys Research Group