



'Working Together for Healthy Communities'



Alcohol use in the Campaspe Shire

Scoping alcohol sub-cultures in the Shire of Campaspe

*Presentation to Healthier Campaspe
Forum*

November 19th 2018

Results of the scoping project:

Collaborative research project
between the Shire of Campaspe,
Campaspe Primary Care Partnership
and The University of Melbourne.

Funded by VicHealth

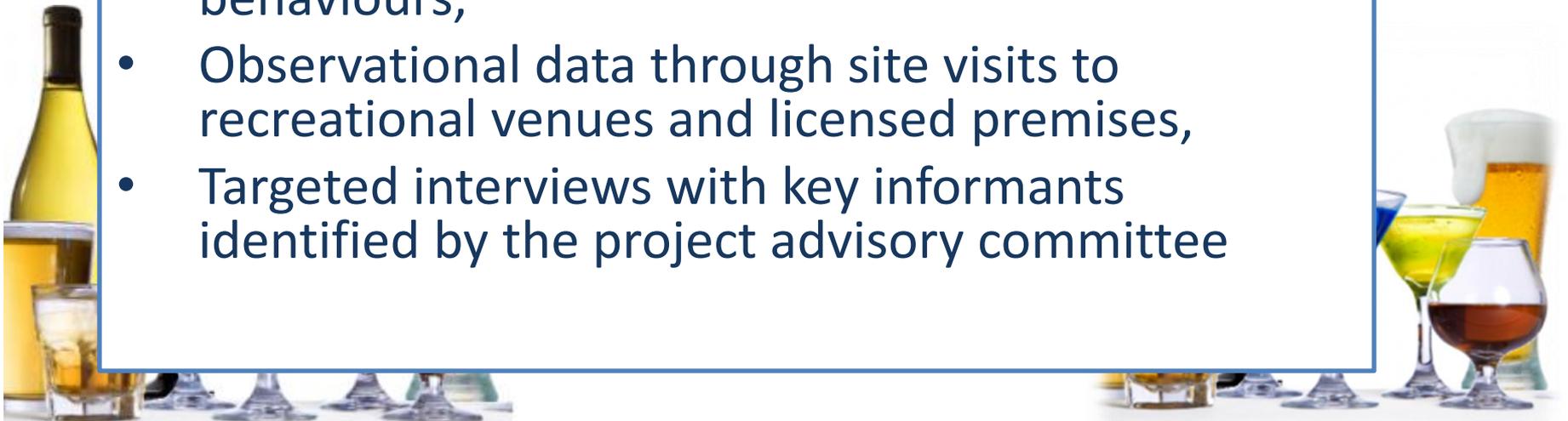
Project lead – Emma Brentnall

Research lead – Kaye Ervin

Ethically approved funded project from Dec 2016 to February 2017

The overall objective of the project was to test the assumptions of previously identified risky drinking sub-cultures within the Shire of Campaspe through:

- A community survey to identify risky drinking subcultures and related patterns, trends and behaviours,
- Observational data through site visits to recreational venues and licensed premises,
- Targeted interviews with key informants identified by the project advisory committee



A mixed method research design was agreed by the research team and project advisory committee

- Pre existing surveys developed by the Centre for Alcohol Research Policy were adapted for the community survey and disseminated electronically by members of the project advisory committee.
- A short paper based survey determining demographic profiles, risky drinking intention and harm minimisation interventions was administered to visitors at major events in Echuca.
- Semi structured interview questions were constructed to explore alcohol related harm and opinions regarding potential interventions for key community stakeholders.

Results

- 554 participants completed the electronic survey
- 400 participants completed the paper based survey (200 at each event – Southern 80 and Riverboats festivals)
- 20 key stakeholders agreed to interviews

Results of the electronic survey

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Average age was 42 years (ranged from 12 – 80 years)
- 74% female
- 91% employed
- 20% were nurses

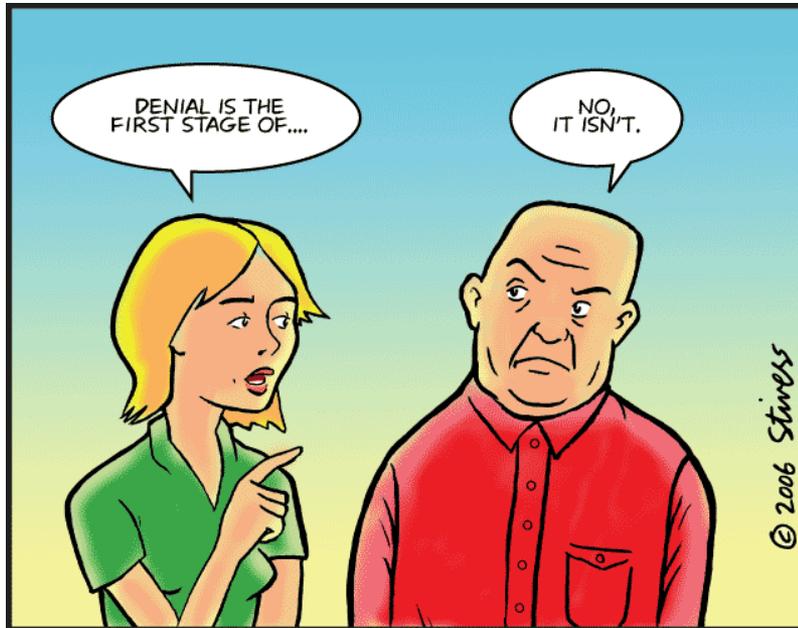
Electronic survey - knowledge

- Only 20% correctly identified what constitutes risky drinking (5 or more standard drinks in a four hour time period)
- More than 50% identified far higher amounts as constituting risky drinking

Electronic survey – alcohol use

- 96% drank alcohol
- Almost half (44%) at risk of long term harm due to frequency of drinking more than 4 days per week
- 74% reporting consuming 5 or more standard drinks in one session in the past 12 months

Electronic survey – alcohol use



16% drink at both short term and long term risk by consuming 5 or more drinks more than 4 times per week (only 6% reported being concerned about this level of drinking)

Electronic survey – who actually are drinking at risky levels?

Low numbers of respondents in <25 year age group. This was weighted to correct for under representation.

- Respondents <25 years reported drinking at short term risky levels (too much)
- Respondents >60 years reported drinking at long term risky levels (too frequently)



Electronic survey – who actually are drinking at risky levels?

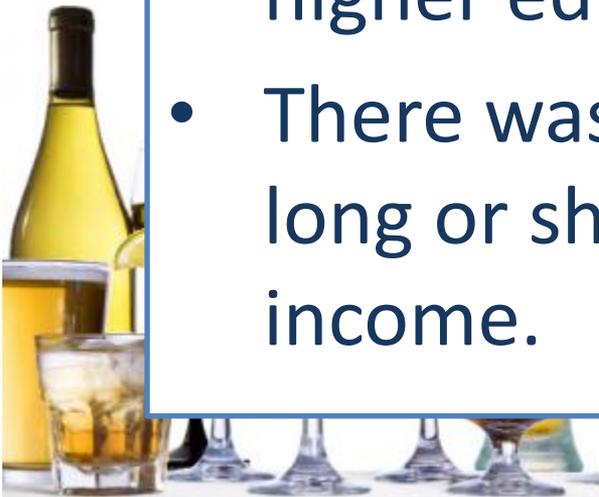
No statistical differences between gender, but when weighted to correct for over representation of females

- Males are 3 times more likely to be short term risky drinkers (too much)



Electronic survey – what other relationships to risky drinking?

- Negative correlation between risky drinking and education with lower educated respondents reporting higher frequency and amount than higher educated respondents.
- There was no relationship between long or short term risky drinking and income.



Tourist surveys

200 participants at the southern 80 ski race and 200 at the riverboats music festival agreed to complete a survey



Tourist survey - results

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Southern 80 participants were predominantly in 20-40 year age group with more males (78%)
- Riverboats music festival were mostly in the 40-50 year age group with slightly more females (56%)



Tourist survey - results

Those who intended to consume more than 4 standard drinks:

- 65% of Southern 80 participants
- 67% of riverboats festival participants



Tourist survey - results

- Of those who intended to consume more than 4 standard drinks more than half (53% and 51% respectively) reported that they would attend the events if they were alcohol free.
- Risky drinkers at Southern 80 were 20-40 year age group
- Risky drinkers at Riverboats festival were predominantly 50 year age group.

Observation at major events

Many of the riverboats festival participants were in family groups and no obvious inebriation was observed.

In contrast, some participants at the Southern 80 event displayed obvious inebriation, aggression and criminal behaviour, such as theft.

Stakeholder interviews

20 stakeholders agreed to an interview with the principal researcher.

Stakeholders included:

- Concerned community citizens
- Tradesmen
- Law enforcement
- Health service personnel
- Tourism operators
- Liquor licensees
- Members of sporting clubs
- Members of the manufacturing industry

Stakeholder interviews

Stakeholders suggested various interventions, including;

- Resurrection of the Liquor Accord meetings
- Targeting drink driving on roads around farms
- Providing parenting information about under-age drinking
- Offering subsidised RSA to secondary schools, trade schools and sports clubs

Stakeholder interviews

Many of the stakeholders did not view alcohol consumption as problematic and were concerned about the economic consequences if interventions which limited alcohol were introduced (such as reduced income for sports clubs or less tourism if alcohol free events were promoted).



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Short term risky drinking is widespread with 74% of respondents to the survey reporting 5 or more standard drinks in the past 12 months
2. There is low awareness of what constitutes risky drinking
3. Age is significantly associated with short term (<25) and long term (>60) risky drinking
4. Low education is significantly correlated with short and long term risky drinking
5. Most respondents drink at home
6. More than half of wine drinkers would drink low alcohol wine if it was available



Limitations of the research study

- Very short time frame to conceive methodology, submit ethics, conduct scoping and analyse results
- Trades and manufacturing hard to reach groups
- Few young people participated
- Most interview participants fearful of identification

Consideration of potential interventions

- The association between low education and risky drinking means that interventions should consider broad literacy levels.
- No, low or mid-strength alcohol at major events is acceptable.
- Key stakeholders concerns about economic impact should be addressed.

