Committee on Data Collection, Indicators and Definitions

Fourth Plenary Meeting of the European Alcohol and Health Forum

Brussels, 11 March 2009
“Develop, support and maintain a common evidence base at EU level” (One of the 5 priority themes identified in the Strategy)

Rationale: „Research and information systems are crucial for the development and implementation of effective actions at EU, national and local level to be able to prevent harmful and hazardous consumption ……..”

Aims:

- “To obtain comparable information on alcohol consumption, especially on young people; definitions on harmful and hazardous consumption, on drinking patterns, on the social and health effects of alcohol; and information on the impact of alcohol policy measures and of alcohol consumption on productivity and economic development.”
- “To evaluate the impact of initiatives taken on the basis of this Communication.”
Alcohol strategy 2006

What is needed in addition to the ongoing work on European Community Health Indicators (ECHI)

- Development of standardised definitions for data on alcohol use and alcohol related harm
- Initiate research to estimate cost and benefits of policy options
- Carry out regular and comparative European surveys
- Fill research gaps on alcohol related health and social harm, on the causes of harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption etc....
Council invites Commission to:
- develop measurable core indicators so that progress in the reduction of alcohol-related harm at Community level especially for the priority areas for action can be monitored

Council calls upon Member States to:
- collect relevant and comparable information on alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harm
Mentioned in Annex 1 of the Charter: “Forum Relations with other Structures”

rationale:
- “policy development and concrete action need to be based on reliable, comparable and regularly updated data on alcohol consumption, drinking patterns and alcohol-related harm, as well as on common indicators and definitions”

DG SANCO convenes Committee, composed of Commission services, WHO, ESPAD, EMCDDA + other relevant partners

close contact with all other related processes:
- Lifestyles Working Group of European Health Information System
- European Statistical System
- WHO’s global and European data base platform
Experts:
- Anderson, Peter (public health consultant)
- Fleischmann, Alexandra (WHO)
- Hibell, Björn (ESPAD)
- Møller, Lars (WHO)
- Rehm, Jürgen (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Canada)
- Maria Renström (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Sweden)

European Commission Services (including Eurostat and EMCDDA)
Main objective

- To discuss reliable, comparable and regularly updated data on alcohol consumption (volume and pattern of consumption and alcohol-related health harm, and (if possible)

- to identify one key indicator within each category:
  - Volume of alcohol consumption
  - Pattern of alcohol consumption
  - Alcohol-related health harm
Discussion

- **Structured approach**: for each category the experts looked at:
  - Suggested indicator + definition
  - Suggested source
  - Existing indicators/data

- **Consensus**

- **Summary report available at Commission’s public health website**
**Volume of consumption**

- **Indicator:** total adult per capita consumption of alcohol
- **Definition:** total (recorded and unrecorded) adult (15 years and older) per capita consumption of pure alcohol in litres
  - Possible sub-indicators for recorded consumption: beer, wine and spirits
- **Source:** production and sales, export/import data, based on official data, producer data and surveys
- **Existing indicators/data:**
  - **WHO:** adult per capital consumption of pure alcohol per litre, available in the Global Information System on Alcohol and Health
  - **ECHI:** litres of pure alcohol consumed per person per year, based on trade and production data, published in ECHI shortlist (SANCO website)
Conclusions

Pattern of consumption

- **Indicator:** binge-drinking

- **Definition:** intake of 60 grams or more on one occasion, monthly or more often, during past 12 months

- **Source:** European Health Interview Survey

- **Existing indicators/data:**
  - **WHO:** heavy episodic drinking and patterns of drinking score (would need definition)
  - **ECHI:** hazardous alcohol consumption
Alcohol-related health harm

- **Indicator:** alcohol-attributable years of life lost (YLLs)
- **Definition:** sum of all years of life lost prematurely attributable to alcohol (based on standard methodology of WHO/GBD)

**Possible sub-indicators:**
- Alcohol-attributable YLLs from chronic disease
- Alcohol-attributable YLLs from injury

**Existing indicators/data:**
- **WHO:** e.g. standardised death rates for selected causes of death (COD), data from WHO Mortality Database or WHO Health for All Database
- **ECHI:** alcohol-related deaths, e.g. collected from national COD registries, ICD-10 classification, EUROSTAT shortlist of 65 death causes
Conclusions

- Next to agreement on key indicators:
- Brief discussion on the development of key indicators in the area of the five priority areas identified in the Alcohol strategy; Commission services will circulate proposals
- Results of meeting will be discussed with Member States > meeting of National Competent Authorities (NCA) in February 2009
Way Forward

- February 2009 meeting of NCA: positive reception of suggested key indicators;
- The Commission services will take forward implementation of these indicators

- Discussion of alcohol-related data collection at national and European level
- Commission services will circulate proposals for indicators to Committee and Member States
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