

COV/STG/20/15 - Examining policy options to manage the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on licensed premises and ambulance-call outs in Scotland

With the closure of all licensed premises in Scotland due to Covid19 (CV), conflicting reports have emerged about impact on alcohol consumption and ambulance callouts. It is unknown to what extent the restrictions have eased pressure on the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) with concerns e.g. about house parties and domestic violence. Furthermore, whenever restrictions ease, businesses will seek to recoup losses, whilst people may drink more/celebrate/party when they are allowed out – potentially increasing call-outs above pre-CV levels, whilst SAS will remain vital first responders to CV. We will: interview premises owners & key stakeholders about options for managing/staggering the lifting of restrictions to minimise pressure on services and about infection control practices/innovation in licensed venues. We will examine ambulance call-outs before, during (and if possible after) CV restrictions. If timing allows, we will examine & observe customer behaviour and venue operation when restrictions are lifted. This study will feed quickly and directly into policy regarding lifting of CV restrictions on licensed premises, guidance for re-opening premises, and the management of any future on/off restrictions.