

## **HIPS/18/43 - Assessing the Impact of Minimum Unit Pricing on Homeless and Street Drinkers: A qualitative study**

Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) increases the price of alcohol with the aim of reducing the amount people drink. It was introduced in Scotland in May 2018, after much opposition from the alcohol industry. Evidence suggests it may be effective, but the impact on very vulnerable people, specifically those who are homeless or drink on the streets, is unknown. These highly marginalised groups may be more susceptible to MUP given their limited income and propensity to consume cheap alcohol. For example, it could lead to less drinking, switching to drugs or both.

We will interview homeless and street drinkers to explore how MUP has affected their drinking, health and other aspects of their life (e.g., involvement in crime, begging, relationships with family/friends). We will also interview professionals to explore their views on how MUP has affected vulnerable drinkers and the services they provide to this population. The Scottish Government is legally bound to review the policy after a five-year period and our research will be completed in time to contribute to its decision. Our research will also inform the public and other governments about the policy.