

## **HIPS/19/01 - Does minimum unit pricing for alcohol have unintended consequences for diet and health? A natural experiment comparing Scotland and England**

Minimum unit pricing (MUP) for alcohol was introduced in Scotland in May 2018. It is intended to increase the cost of cheap off sales alcohol and reduce the amount of alcohol consumed. However, it is likely that households will spend more on alcohol and this will reduce the amount of money they have to spend on other things. This project will measure whether household food spending is reduced, the effect that this has on diet quality and the consequences for health. We will do this by comparing the change in household spending in Scotland before and after the introduction of MUP with the change in household spending in the North of England, where MUP does not apply. The comparison with England is used to control for any effects, such as price rises, which are common to both areas. We will also look at the change in volume and type of food purchased to see if this becomes less healthy as households might buy less fruit and vegetables, for example. A less healthy diet increases the risk of health problems such as those associated with foods high in fat, sugar and salt or with low consumption of fibre and oily fish.