

Effects of a community intervention to reduce the serving of alcohol to intoxicated patrons

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Abstract

Aims To assess the effects of an alcohol prevention programme to reduce the serving of alcoholic beverages to intoxicated clients on licensed premises. **Research design** A controlled pre- (2004) and post-intervention study (2006) design. **Intervention** A community-based programme combining law enforcement, responsible beverage service training, information campaigns and policy initiatives in one Finnish town (Jyvaskyla). **Participants and measurements** A male actor pretended to be clearly under the influence of alcohol and tried to buy a pint of beer at licensed premises. For the baseline measurement, every bar and nightclub was visited in the intervention and the control areas (94 licensed premises in total). Post-intervention data were gathered with the same principles (100 licensed premises in total). A researcher observed every visit and documented the results. **Results** In the post-intervention study there was a statistically significant increase in refusals to serve denials alcohol to the actor in the intervention area (from 23% to 42% of the licensed premises) compared to refusals in the control area (from 36% to 27% of the

licensed premises). Conclusion Previous research has documented that multi-component communitybased interventions can have a significant impact on over-serving of alcohol when training and house policies are combined with effective law enforcement. The present findings also demonstrate that comprehensive Responsible Beverage Service (RBS) interventions applied at a local community level can be effective in decreasing service to intoxicated clients in a Nordic context.

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