Supporting midlife men and women to reduce their alcohol consumption
Findings from the DrinkCompare Calculator

Dr John Larsen, Ben Butler and Kishan Tosar
Drinkaware
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What we will cover

Key issues

- Introduce **Drinkaware** – who we are and our mission
- **Alcohol brief advice (or IBA)** – what it is and why it’s worth doing
- **Campaign overview** – targeting midlife men drinking routinely
- Introducing the **DrinkCompare Calculator** – how it works
- **Our data so far** – user profile and impacts
- What have we **learnt so far** – and what next?
Who we are:

Drinkaware

The Drinkaware Trust is

- an independent UK-wide alcohol education charity.

- It is established through an agreement between government and the alcohol industry, and is funded primarily by voluntary and unrestricted donations from UK alcohol producers, retailers and supermarkets.

- The Drinkaware Trust is governed independently and works in partnership with others to reduce alcohol-related harm by helping people make better choices about their drinking.
What we seek to achieve through our work

Drinkaware

Our mission:

We are here to reduce alcohol-related harm by helping people make better choices about their drinking.

We will achieve this by:

• Providing impartial, evidence-based information, advice and practical resources.
• Raising awareness of alcohol and its harms.
• Working collaboratively with partners.
Alcohol brief advice - IBA
What it is and why it’s worth doing
An evidence-based tool to reduce harmful drinking
Alcohol Identification and Brief Advice

What is IBA?

IBA
'Identification and Brief Advice'

Identification of drinking levels is achieved by using a validated screening tool, offering feedback on drinking levels – e.g. AUDIT C

The advice involves considerations of possible benefits of cutting down and how the person may do this
What are the ‘active ingredients’ in IBA?

**FRAMES**

- **Feedback** (on the person’s risk of having alcohol problems)
- **Responsibility** (change is the person’s responsibility)
- **Advice** (provision of clear advice)
- **Menu** (what are the options for change?)
- **Empathy** (an approach that is warm, reflective and understanding)
- **Self-efficacy** (optimism about the behaviour change)

Alcohol Identification and Brief Advice

Why use IBA?

Evidence from use of IBA in primary care:
It can help people reduce the amount they drink by around 20 g/week
(Kaner et al. 2018)

BUT..
Although IBA is widely considered an effective tool to reduce harmful drinking

Effective delivery and large-scale implementation is challenging
(Thom et al., 2014)

Kaner et al (2018). "Effectiveness of brief alcohol interventions in primary care populations." Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews(2)
Thom et al. (2014). Delivering alcohol IBA broadening the base from health to non-health contexts: Review of the literature and scoping. Report by Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, Middlesex University, submitted to Alcohol Research UK.
Digital or computer-based alcohol brief interventions may offer effective large-scale delivery to the wider public.

Although this is only an emerging field recent summaries of research evidence are promising (Kaner et al., 2017; Nair et al., 2015).


Midlife men campaign
Targeting routine home drinking
Targeting midlife men

Based on segmentation analysis of drinking in the UK we identified midlife men drinking routinely over the low risk drinking guidelines as a key target.

Midlife Male Drinking
Qualitative insight research  Dr Simon Christmas and Amanda Souter

Methodology:
• 42 individual qualitative interviews with men drinking 30+ units/week (in North West, West Midlands and South West)
• 18 follow-up interviews including the partners of the men

Key findings:
• Much of their drinking is every-day and overlooked
• Aware that excessive alcohol causes harms, but don’t view their drinking as excessive
• Links not made between existing health conditions and alcohol consumption
• Poor understanding of how alcohol impacts health
• No existing language to talk to someone who is not controlling how much they are drinking (‘over-drinking’)

Midlife Male Drinking
Findings from research with men aged 45 to 60
Simon Christmas and Amanda Souter
In order to engage the men it was important to use a language and terms that they could relate to as relevant to them.
Further message testing
‘No nonsense’ messages

We tested different campaign strategies and messages – including use of sport analogies to ‘draw in’ the men

They rejected it – wanting ‘no nonsense’ and respectful messages

**We ran 3 series of focus groups**
- 15 groups in total in three regions
- 90 midlife men drinking 30+ units per week

Have a little less, feel a lot better.

We used a campaign strap-line the midlife men could positively identify with:

- We sought to catch the men’s attention and encourage them to start **reflecting on their drinking** – considering the benefits they might experience.

- We developed videos to **explain the impact** of their level of drinking – avoiding notions of ‘problem drinking’ and alcoholism that we knew would put them off (‘not me’).
Have a little less, feel a lot better
A multi-level integrated campaign

Radio & poster advertising
Digital and mobile activation
Health harm videos
PR amplification Case studies

‘Alcohol and men manual’
Alcohol brief advice – IBA pilot Pharmacies, Health Champions, ASDA
Drinkaware at work
Digital advertising to get people to our IBA tool

DrinkCompare Calculator

Using messages our research had found engaged the midlife men.

Using A/B tests we continued to optimise messaging throughout the campaign period.

Is your drinking affecting your belly?

To find out, use our DrinkCompare Calculator >>

drinkaware.co.uk

Have a little less, feel a lot better.
How it works
DrinkCompare Calculator

Results

You are drinking at a level that could put your health at risk; some hidden damage may have already taken place.
Drinking even a little less now would make a big difference to how you feel and your long term health.

16 drinks each week 38.8 units each week

Fri 7 | Sat 6 | Sun 5

How do I compare to other UK men?

89% drink less than you

Statistics gathered from Drinkaware Monitor 2017 survey (6,174 people)
Our data so far
User profile and impact
Engagement with the DrinkCompare Calculator
Data from November 2017 to May 2018

109,578 people started using the tool
97,027 people completed the tool (89% completion rate)
993 people signed up to the ‘Little Less Challenge’ (1% sign-up rate)
192 people provided follow-up data (19.3% of sign-ups)

The majority (77%) only came back once to provide follow-up data, and only few came to do the assessment twice (19%) or three times (5%).
Gender profile of users  
Data from November 2017 to May 2018

While initial engagement was dominated by women, men were increasingly represented among those engaging at deeper levels

81% women among tool completions (total n=123,492)
61% women among sign-ups (total n=993)
54% women among people providing follow-up data (total n=192)
Reduced harmful drinking
Data from November 2017 to May 2018 (n=192)

Engagement with the DrinkCompare tool and the ‘Little Less Challenge’ was effective in driving behaviour change

The AUDIT-C scores fell from an averages of:

- 9.18 to 7.82 (-1.36 points) among men
- 8.59 to 7.12 (-1.47 points) among women

Among people providing follow-up scores:

- 67% (n=128) achieved a reduced score
- 20% (n=39) experienced no change
- 13% (n=24) had increased their score

Alcohol use disorders identification test consumption (AUDIT-C) – scores:
- 0 to 4 indicates low risk
- 5 to 7 indicates increasing risk
- 8 to 10 indicates higher risk
- 11 to 12 indicates possible dependence
The age group experiencing the greatest benefit are those aged 45-54.

In this age group AUDIT-C scores reduced:

9.35 to 7.87 (-1.48 points) for men
9.34 to 7.42 (-1.92 points) for women

However, in this age group there is a some difference between men and women in respect to the proportion who experienced a reduction in their score – whereas 71% (n=27) out of the 38 women experienced a reduction only 61% (n=19) out of 31 men did the same.
### AUDIT-C scores by age/gender groups

Data from November 2017 to May 2018 (n=192)

<table>
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<th>Demographics</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>% of M/F</th>
<th>% of all return users</th>
<th>Average first AUDIT-C</th>
<th>Average follow-up AUDIT-C</th>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M: 25-34</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>M: 35-44</td>
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<td>8%</td>
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<td>35%</td>
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<td>16%</td>
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<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>8.59</td>
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Key learning
And next steps…
What we have learnt
Using the insights to inform our work

- Likely that better sign-up can be achieved through **improved tool design**: The information provided in the tool ‘results’ section is too complex – and the ‘Little Less’ sign-up is lost at the end.

- Regular email (or text?) communication with people signing up can be improved – **more personalised, better content** informed by behaviour change theory

- Better **inter-linkage between our different digital tools** can improve user journey and sign-up

- Campaign messaging can have stronger and more persuasive **call to action** – to improve sign-up
Questions and discussion
jlarsen@drinkaware.co.uk