

Wealth link to alcohol crime

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Rich rural towns show higher levels of alcohol-related crime than poorer communities, according to new research from the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre.

Wealthier [rural communities](#) have higher rates of alcohol-related [crime](#) than their poorer counterparts, according to findings from the largest randomised controlled trial ever undertaken of [alcohol](#) consumption, risk factors and interventions in rural NSW.

The study also found that alcohol-related traffic accidents that result in injury are twice as common in rural areas. Alcohol-related fatalities are seven times as common - approximately one fatality every two years for every 10,000 people.

Researchers at UNSW's National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre

(NDARC), and the University of Newcastle, found that the more pubs and clubs a town has, the higher rates of alcohol-related crime.

The five-year Alcohol Action in Rural Communities (AARC) project has studied 20 communities in NSW since 2005.

Study co-leader Associate Professor Anthony Shakeshaft presented the findings this week at the NDARC Annual Symposium.

“Our study has found that one trade-off for the obvious benefits of higher socio-economic status appear to be higher rates of alcohol-related crime,” he said.

The findings indicate the need for a mix of interventions, rather than focusing on single interventions working in isolation.

“At the Commonwealth level, interventions targeting the price of alcohol to impact on disposable income - either introducing a floor price or some kind of volumetric tax - seem promising. Complementary action by local and state governments could seek to limit the per capita number of pubs and clubs.

“While the intervention options are not new, this study begins to establish an evidence-base for the relative weight of effort that may be applied to different strategies,” said Associate Professor Shakeshaft.

Provided by University of New South Wales ([news](#) : [web](#))

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