

2024

PEI Alcohol Policy Forum

Proceeding Summary



LIVE WELL PEI

together we can



1 Background

On the mornings of Wednesday, March 20th and Thursday, March 21st, 2024, 65 participants gathered online for the 2nd annual *PEI Alcohol Policy Forum*.

The purpose of this forum was to host a provincial learning and networking opportunity on alcohol policy best-practices and alcohol-related harms in PEI.

The design for each morning was based on the primary themes of a) Setting the Context and Connecting to Current Work/Community and b) Health and Safety Messaging and Building Skills to Take Action.

The audience included individuals and representatives from local and provincial community-based and government organizations. Both the attendance distribution and breakdown are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Attendance Distribution

Location	# Participants Registered
Queens County (Greater Charlottetown Area)	51
Nova Scotia	24
Ontario	15
Queens County (Rural)	11
East Prince County	8
West Prince County	6
New Brunswick	5
Canada (other)	5
Kings County	4
Newfoundland & Labrador	3
PEI (other)	2
Quebec	1
Saskatchewan	1
Alberta	1
British Columbia	1

Table 2: Attendance Totals

Wednesday, March 20, 2024		Thursday, March 21, 2024	
Time	# Participants	Time	# Participants
8:35am AST	45	8:35am AST	45
9:00am AST	56	9:00am AST	54
9:30am AST	65	9:30am AST	60
10:30am AST	59	10:30am AST	48
11:30am AST	48	11:00am AST	41
11:45am AST	37	11:30am AST	33

The forum process design was co-created between the Health Promotion Unit, Chief Public Health Office of the PEI Department of Health and Wellness and Barefoot Facilitation Inc.

Gerard Murphy, Founder/CEO of Barefoot Facilitation Inc. facilitated the forum process.

This document presents a summary and synthesis of the generative conversations hosted during the forum segments, as well as a capture of responses elicited during strategic questioning throughout the process.

The following proceeding's summary - including design, output synthesis work and theming - was put together by Nino Kovačević (Associate Facilitator) and Joss Pirker (Client Experience Coordinator) of Barefoot Facilitation Inc.

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Day One: Setting the Context & Connecting to Current Work/Community

Agenda – Wednesday, March 20

1. Setting the Stage

Presenter: Gerard Murphy
CEO & Founder | Barefoot Facilitation Inc.

2. Opening Remarks

Co-Presenter: Dr. David Sabapathy | Deputy Chief Public Health Officer
Department of Health and Wellness, Government of PEI

Co-Presenter: Megan Adams | Health Promoter Chief Public Health Office,
Department of Health & Wellness, Government of PEI

3. Keynote Presentation

Co-Presenter: Dr. Peter Butt | Canadian Guidance on Alcohol and Health

Co-Presenter: Dr. Norman Giesbrecht | Canadian Alcohol Policy Evaluation Project

4. Reflection Activity

5. Fireside Chat: How Does Alcohol Show UP

Panelist: Dr. Nicole Green | QEH Emergency Physician

Panelist: Brenda Simmons | Community member

Panelist: Eileen Conboy | Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Coordinator,
Government of PEI

6. Reflection Activity & Small Group Conversation

7. Day One Wrap Up

Alcohol Control Systems – Reflection Activity

Following the keynote presentations by **Dr. Peter Butt, Canadian Guidance on Alcohol and Health**, and **Dr. Norman Giesbrecht, Canadian Alcohol Policy Evaluation (CAPE) Project**, participants engaged in an individual reflection activity.

They were asked to reflect on two (2) questions and track their responses using a shared Padlet wall link.

Questions and responses are outlined below. The responses have been synthesized and, as best possible, reflect the actual words of participants. A thematic analysis has not been completed.

Question 1: What is the impact of currently having an alcohol retailer that is the same as the regulator in PEI?

- **Low accountability measures or lack of accountability** are significant concerns, potentially resulting from the inherent conflict of interest in the dual role.
- **Competing priorities** emerge, where regulations may prioritize revenue generation over health and safety, hindering effective regulation.
- **The conflict of interest** between acting as both retailer and regulator raises questions about the impartiality and effectiveness of regulatory decisions.
- **Concerns about the vested interest in generating profits**, potentially at the expense of public health, given the intertwined roles of retailer and regulator.
- **The normalization of alcohol use by the government** is seen as problematic, particularly when regulating its own retail operations, which **may undermine public health initiatives**.
- **Clarity in mandates and acknowledgment of harms** are needed.
- **Defining success is challenging** when objectives conflict.
- **Lack of motivation for stricter regulations** due to financial concerns.
- **Oversight is lacking**, risking regulatory lapses.
- **Economic dependence on heavy drinkers** complicates regulation.
- **Conflicts with community sponsorship and fundraising** arise.
- **Separating roles to avoid conflict of interest is crucial**.

Question 2: What would the benefits be if the alcohol retailer was separate from the regulator?

- Robust regulation **prioritizing public health interests**.
- **Improved oversight, accountability**, and potential for **policy enhancement**.
- Enhanced **control over messages and advertising**.
- **Prioritization of Islanders' health** using evidence-based policies.
- Better **consumer representation and transparency**.
- **Empowered consumers** through better information.
- **Effective enforcement of legislation and policies**.
- **Consideration of risks** beyond the alcohol industry.
- **Utilization of a health lens** to inform and protect consumers.
- **Reduced costs to the province** from alcohol-related harms.
- **Clearer separation of roles** for enhanced oversight and credibility.
- **Opportunity to influence** alcohol messaging, reporting, and tracking.
- **Potential for strategic decision-making** despite governmental reluctance.
- **Integration of specialized health expertise** to monitor and address health-related outcomes.



Fireside Chat Reflection - How Does Alcohol Show Up in My World

Following the Fireside Chat with Dr. Nicole Green, Brenda Simmons, and Eileen Conboy, the participants individually reflected on the three questions below using the Padlet tool.

Questions and responses are outlined below. The responses have been themed and as best possible, reflect the actual words of participants.

Question 1: Think about how alcohol is showing up in your household. What are you seeing?

- **Through observing family members:**
 - My 13 year old son is starting to see his friends' older siblings experiment with drinking, and this seems "cool" to him. He likes when friends' parents seem "chill" about it.
 - With young children we already see how 4/5 year olds notice drinking choices of relatives.
 - My partner drinks more than he should but because he has a high tolerance he feels that as long as he's not getting drunk it isn't that bad - not true of course.
 - We have family members who are daily drinkers and we have tried so hard to help but they are still not ready even 30+ years later.
 - Have many alcoholics in family.
 - Very little at this point due to family and person histories of alcohol harms. That said, as parents we will need to have lots of proactive conversations about alcohol and other substance use.
 - My spouse has trauma from the alcohol abuse she witnessed as a child. Our family is financially supporting an in-law whose life has been brought down by addictions, including alcohol addiction.
 - Having difficult conversations with family members about concerns of ID.
- **As a way to unwind:**
 - Alcohol as a way to 'relax' at end of workday.
- **When hosting visitors:**
 - Hosting family and friends.
 - Alcohol is limited in my household to special events and social gatherings.
 - Alcohol as a given, a "polite" required offering for houseguests, especially during holidays and special occasions.
 - We have alcohol in our home and when we plan events one of the things on our checklist is making sure there is alcohol for our guests!
- **External environments such as school or media:**
 - Our elementary/middle school children are starting to ask questions about how often people normally drink alcohol.
 - Online, we are constantly bombarded with alcohol messaging on TV programming, social media, etc. Beyond ads too - from reality tv to children's programming with the parents drinking, it is so normalized.
- **Other:**
 - Making deliberate choices on whether a drink is necessary.
 - Some motivation and readiness to explore moderation and sobriety, but others having a total lack of readiness and awareness of issues/impacts.
 - Deliberately choosing to drink less and go dry most days; but when in social gatherings I'm looked at weirdly if I'm not drinking.



Question 2: Think about how alcohol is showing up in your neighbourhood or community. What are you seeing?

- **Social Interaction:**
 - I see alcohol featured everywhere as a means for social interaction.
 - I am new to my community and don't drink. This reduces my opportunities to make friends/attend social events.
 - Associated with community events such as fund raisers, associations or weddings.
 - In my community, people are expected to drink as per social expectations - pubs and wine with friends.
 - In community of young families, excessive drinking is still encouraged. You see some people choosing not to partake in the events due to the pressures one would expect to experience in high school/university. Very unfortunate.
 - Justifying why you don't or aren't drinking is still many peoples default. People assume pregnancy or addiction issues would be the only reasons to not drink.
 - There is a large amount of corporate social responsibility activity.
 - Still showing up in use and conversations as a very low risk substance.
 - Pervasive. I don't know how people in early recovery participate in community life in PEI. To say nothing of people without a SU disorder but who drink at risky levels.
- **Dry, or lack thereof, public spaces:**
 - There are no places to access (e.g. to rent for gatherings) that don't have a bar/server alcohol.
 - It seems every community centre, establishment, etc. sells alcohol to make money. There are no 'dry' places for people to go (young or old).
 - There is a lot of alcohol use in my community. It is often paired with entertainment. As a mother with a 5 year old daughter, it can be hard to find activities to do with children that don't include alcohol for adults. For example, the bowling alley sells alcohol.
 - Fortunately, my community hosts many alcohol-free/dry events. I feel more relaxed at these events than at typical parties.
- **Coping with daily stressors & trauma:**
 - So much talk about getting home to have that drink, moms and middle age women using alcohol for coping.
 - I see alcohol as a way community members cope with trauma.
 - 40-something mom friends still joking constantly about needing excessive amounts of wine to cope with normal life stresses.
- **With young people and in public spaces:**
 - So much impaired driving; increased conversation with my young adult about impaired driving among her friend group.
 - Empty alcohol containers everywhere - parks, roadside, etc.
 - It feels like it's the only way to connect with other peers (young people) - hanging out with friends, dating, etc. Alcohol is always central.
 - Common with parents in minor hockey trips. What example are they sending? Who is really being responsible for the kids if parents are intoxicated?
 - Pervasive in high school parties and condoned by parents.



**Question 3: Think about how alcohol is showing up in your workplace (directly/indirectly).
What are you seeing?**

- **Directly:**
 - I see the direct harms of alcohol EVERY SINGLE DAY within the health care system. It is an enormous burden on our system.
 - In pharmacy, we see people trying to stop drinking and not having supports available to them.
 - Workplace also hosts alcohol-free/dry events. A relief to know that everyone will be on their best behaviour.
 - Not noticeable in our workplace but has come up in stories particularly on drinking stories from the past and assumptions that people drink.
- **Indirectly:**
 - I suspect if you don't see it showing up, you're perhaps not seeing how it affects your colleagues on a daily basis.
 - Absenteeism.
 - Flexible work days - more pronounced with work from home/office hybrid.
 - The lingering trauma in adult children of alcoholics and their challenging relationships with parents/siblings... comes out as stress, anxiety, and even own alcohol use (outside of work).
 - Some people don't see the correlation between alcohol, mental health and productivity.
- **Both directly and indirectly:**
 - We have patients directly and indirectly impacted by alcohol.
- **Other:**
 - Very little, working in Addictions and Mental Health, and now Public Health.
 - Alcohol is a main driver of health harms yet it is seen as a controversial or political topic and therefore there are significant organizational barriers to addressing it in an evidence-informed way.
 - I haven't seen alcohol show up in my workplace.
 - Discussed in relation to other addictions (mostly overshadowing the prevalence or harms of other addictions); poor understandings of what addiction is, levels of risk/harms, and lots of stigma attached.
 - Focus at work is very much in conflict with the norms in the community.
 - The need to focus on harm reduction and trauma-informed approaches (i.e., not blame individuals).



Fireside Chat Breakout Reflection - 2024 Perspectives on the Culture of Alcohol in PEI

Following the individual reflection, participants engaged in breakout conversations using the breakout room feature on Zoom.

During these breakout conversations, participants were asked to reflect on three questions and record their answers via the Padlet wall.

Questions and responses are outlined below. The responses have been grouped according to general themes. The answers reflect the language of the participants as best as possible. Responses that did not provide enough of a sample size for theming were categorized as "other".

Question 1: Discuss how alcohol is showing up in your community, work and/or home.

- **Through advertising and community fundraising initiatives:**
 - Alcohol is showing up more in sponsorship, especially in hockey.
 - A lot of basket draws include alcohol; fundraising is for kids and they can't even drink it or access it.
 - Posters and messages targeting all age groups; using people to share alcohol messages.
 - Social marketing and sponsorship images appealing to young audience.
 - Alcohol sponsorships at the Canada Games (i.e., "children's Olympics").
- **As part of a larger drinking culture:**
 - Kids, at a young age, connecting alcohol with adults in their lives.
 - Sober curiosity becoming more common or more people exploring BUT still have very heavy binge drinking culture, especially in university.
 - Hard to teach kids in schools about appropriate use when it is so pervasive and normal at home.
 - People not able to recognize culture or binge drinking as a problem - not able to connect to that it is a problem or take a step back. just so normalized.
 - Alcohol (and cannabis) not seen as 'drugs' - gov't regulated.
- **Other:**
 - Some clients do not want to stay in a shelter due to alcohol use there.
 - Empty containers indicates drinking and driving and drinking in public spaces.



Question 2: How have you tried to shift the culture of alcohol in PEI? How have you seen others/other organizations do the same?

- **Connecting with individuals in my social/professional circle:**
 - Speaking openly with friends, family, etc. about alcohol harms and normalizing drinking less or not drinking. "Creating space" for others.
 - We need to model using less alcohol within our organizations - consider dry social gatherings!
 - Trying to shift culture within workplaces (e.g., holiday gift giving with other staff not being alcohol)
 - Challenging events that are hosted directly by health organizations (e.g., fundraising) that promote alcohol giveaways.
- **Organizational/governmental examples:**
 - Canadian Cancer Society advocating at national level for increased alcohol policy in Canada
 - Even in PEI, alcohol was raised as an issue in the PEI legislature just this past week or two; trying to teach people about impaired driving but aren't telling people about the harms or consumption patterns in PEI.
 - Alcohol industry funds community events which impacts youth exposure to alcohol. Try to create guidance for not partnering with industry.
 - Reframing and acknowledgement that while our system works downstream, need to work upstream in framing the issue (not blame/shame).
- **Other:**
 - Prevalence of alcohol in culture makes it hard for people to maintain sobriety.
 - The number of alcohol free beverages has increased; it's more normalized - may also be a revenue ploy for retailer.

Question 3: How will you continue or start to shift the culture of alcohol in PEI?

- **Better controls on alcohol.** Limiting availability (i.e., no new agency stores). Changing norms at the same time. Policy change is a necessary condition for awareness/education campaigns to succeed. Both must happen.
- **Not accepting funds from alcohol industry** as method of fundraising (particularly as health orgs).
- **Continue to reinforce the national guidance on alcohol and health** - Less is Best/Better - any reduction is good.

End of Day 1 – Mentimeter Poll Responses

As the last activity of the day the participants were asked to reflect on one specific idea or moment that stood out to them and record their answers using the Mentimeter Poll platform.

Responses are outlined below. They have been synthesized and, as best as possible, reflect the actual words of the participants. A thematic analysis has not been completed.

- PEI is a recovery hostile environment.
- Need to think about the root of alcohol consumption in prevention.
- How poorly we are doing compared to the rest of Canada.
- Thinking that more access and more use won't lead to more harms is 'delusional'.
- How badly PEI is failing at preventing harms related to alcohol (CAPE report).
- The pain that impaired driving has caused to many.
- The power of connecting real stories to preventing harms from happening in the first place.
- Endless access to alcohol.
- As someone from NS, it was interesting to learn more about the context in PEI.
- There is a broad coalition of people and stakeholders that work to see alcohol harms reduced in PEI. Can a coalition be formed to advocate from outside of Government?
- That PEI has a lot of work to do to shift the culture away from the normalization of drinking alcohol - through policy change and education.
- Pervasiveness, complacency, normalized.
- The opportunity to target different demographics on PEI with health messaging. We can do so much better - PEI is small and nimble. Alcohol is so deeply engrained into our everyday culture and communities.
- The amount of people invested in this work here today.
- Belief that changes to policies to increase consumption can be made without increasing harm is delusional.
- The evidence to separate the government regulator and finances.
- Alcohol is a normative tool used in our social communities.
- Hearing from Brenda - really shows the power of listening to people with lived experiences of witnessing alcohol harms. It's motivating to do more to reduce these occurrences.
- Strength of industry lobbying.
- Need to unpack our drinking culture and role of Social Determinants of Health
- Dr. Green's statement of pervasiveness and complacency around alcohol in PEI. Unlike what she experienced in Ontario. This shouted out to me: we've got a problem!
- Need to change the narrative about alcohol being a part of what it means to be an Islander.
- The diversity of folks around this table can build a strategy.
- Data informed processes - need for made in PEI strategy or roadmap that is aligned and integrated with MH and A Strategy. Working together - collaborative public health approach!
- Islanders need to realize alcohol costs us so much and that we can do better.
- Alcohol is the number one date rape drug.

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Day 2: Health and Safety Messaging & Building Skills to Take Action

Agenda – Thursday, March 21

- 1. Welcome Back**
Presenter: Gerard Murphy
CEO & Founder | Barefoot Facilitation Inc.
- 2. Less is Best Campaign**
Presenter: Meghan Adams | Health Promoter Chief Public Health Office,
Department of Health & Wellness, Government of PEI
- 3. Keynote Presentation**
Presenter: Dr. Kara Thompson | Associate Professor
Department of Psychology and SHEA Lab | St. Francis Xavier University
- 4. Reflection Activity & Small Group Conversation**
- 5. Debunking Alcohol Myths & Reframing Language**
- 6. PEI Solutions Closing Circle**
- 7. Evaluation & Closing Remarks**

Conversation Circle – 2024 PEI Gallery of Alcohol Ads

After the opening remarks on Day Two of the Forum, participants engaged in a “conversation circle” activity facilitated through Zoom's breakout room feature. They were prompted to reflect on a series of social media images and advertisements utilized in alcohol marketing campaigns throughout Prince Edward Island.

Participants were tasked with discussing three specific questions and documenting their responses using a shared Padlet wall link.

The questions participants were prompted to reflect on for each of the 14 images/advertisements were as follows:

1. What message does the image convey about the infiltration of alcohol advertising into our lives?
2. Who is the target audience for this advertisement?
3. What implicit or explicit promise is the advertisement making to the consumer?

A thematic analysis was subsequently conducted, synthesizing participant responses to elucidate recurring themes and perspectives. Participant responses have been synthesized and incorporated to substantiate each identified theme.

Normalization and Integration into Everyday Life

Many images depict alcohol as an integral part of social activities, holidays, sports events, and even charity giving. This normalization makes it seem like alcohol consumption is not only acceptable but expected in various situations.

- "The link between alcohol and sport."
- "Associating alcohol with familiar landmarks."
- "Alcohol is frequently connected to our opportunities to socialize and participate in our communities."
- "Drinking is part of the holidays, it is fun and festive, everyone is doing it."
- "Drinking as a spectator sport. Alcohol is everywhere we go - this normalizes it for young children going to watch these games."
- "Bright and colorful signage for everyone to see."

Target Audience and Appeal

Advertisements often target specific demographics such as youth, hipsters, moms, sports enthusiasts, and smart consumers. They use appealing imagery and messages tailored to resonate with these groups.

- "Target is microbrew enthusiasts."
- "Also using Canada Games logo to convey link to youth, athletes, and supporters."
- "Advent calendars appeal to kids."
- "Geared to young people."
- "Targeting people with breast cancer connection."
- "Appeals to the idea that Blondes have more fun."
- "A fun seasonal challenge!"

Promises and Associations

Advertisements make promises to consumers, such as fun, socialization, inclusion, rewards, and even health benefits (despite potential health risks associated with alcohol). They associate alcohol with positive emotions, festivities, rewards, and social connections.

- "Looks clean, fresh, light, and local."
- "It will be a fun, social event and you'll get to know PEI and our restaurants and beer better."
- "Alcohol is linked to chronic disease, yet we use it as an opportunity to fundraise?"
- "Promise: it's okay to drink every day in the holiday period, no health implications, etc."
- "You are helping a charity by purchasing alcohol."
- "Presents the idea that a beer a day is fine."

Controversial Associations:

Some images create controversial associations, such as linking alcohol consumption with charity (which can be seen as exploiting goodwill), sports events (potentially normalizing excessive drinking among youth), and health causes like breast cancer awareness (despite alcohol's links to cancer).

- "Challenging when alcohol sponsors children and youth events."
- "Again, associating drinking/alcohol with acts of goodness and giving."
- "Associating the labelling to other ribbon-like causes."
- "The promise may be that if you drink enough of this product you could get diabetes?"
- "Should we really be encouraging drinking to one of the diseases it is a contributor to?"
- "OMG. Alcohol which is considered a potential carcinogen supporting breast cancer awareness??"

Accessibility and Convenience:

Advertisements highlight the ease of access to alcohol, whether through bulk buying discounts, home delivery services, or the availability of alcohol alongside other everyday items.

- "Encouraging bulk buying (and by extension, consumption)."
- "No barriers to be able to access."
- "For the person who likes to drink alone, we can now deliver!!"
- "Alcohol is very accessible."
- "Erosion of alcohol policies that protect population health."

Perpetuating Stereotypes and Cultural Norms:

Several images perpetuate stereotypes and cultural norms, such as associating drinking with fun, glamour, social success (like "Blondes have more fun"), and even self-care, particularly for stressed parents.

- "Drinking is fun. More is better."
- "Wine solves problems."
- "Drinking is fun and playful."
- "Mom deserves alcohol for balancing her busy life."
- "Music is part of our culture, so is drinking, it's all in good fun."

Ethical Concerns and Criticisms:

Participants express concerns about the ethical implications of alcohol advertising, especially when targeting youth or associating alcohol with charitable giving or health causes. There's criticism of tactics like pink-washing (associating alcohol with breast cancer awareness), promoting excessive consumption, and exploiting vulnerabilities.

- "Canada games is for children under 19 right? So this is promoting a link between drinking alcohol and children's sport events?"
- "False appearance of social responsibility."
- "Pink-washing - trying to make you feel better about supporting by connecting to a cause... but the drink itself is the cause."
- "Encouraging drinking to one of the diseases it is a contributor to."
- "The alcohol industry is losing credibility."
- "Erosion of alcohol policies that protect population health."

Questioning Industry Integrity:

There's skepticism about the integrity of the alcohol industry, especially when it comes to corporate social responsibility campaigns or partnerships with health organizations, which may be viewed as attempts to regain credibility.

- "Last year I challenged the Canada Winter Games to defend their alcohol partnerships. They wouldn't or couldn't give a defense."
- "We need to get more health organizations on board with our alcohol cause."
- "Should we really be encouraging drinking to one of the diseases it is a contributor to?"
- "The alcohol industry is losing credibility."
- "Erosion of alcohol policies that protect population health."
- "We need to get more health organizations on board with our alcohol cause."

Keynote Presentation Reflection - What Are You Hearing?

Following the keynote presentation by **Dr. Kara Thompson, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and SHEA Lab at St. Francis Xavier University**, participants entered breakout rooms via the Zoom Chat feature, to have small group discussions.

The purpose of the discussion was to discuss the presentation, reflect on the three questions below and discuss their thoughts. These thoughts were captured via Padlet.

Questions and responses are outlined below. The responses have been synthesized and, as best possible, reflect the actual words of participants. A thematic analysis has not been completed.

Question 1: What stands out to you as key points from Dr. Thompson's presentation?

- A lot of cognitive dissonance - people know this but they are ignoring the message: 'won't happen to me'.
- Interested to see whether labels will make a difference; will it change behaviour
- Innovative, yet warning labels are an obvious solution. Commend her research, but wish that research wasn't needed in the first place to make it happen - how do we move the political needle to actually have these implemented?
- Interesting data re: "female" focus groups... would love to see data from "male" focus groups as well.
- Curious if the time to sell the 2000 cans with labels will increase due labels? Will that be captured?

Question 2: What is your gut reaction to what you heard? How does it leave you feeling?

- Partnership with industry; selling a product that causes health.
- Need for public messaging around alcohol -- Alcohol is a Popl'n health problem not an individual problem.
- Still having a strong gut reaction to the partnership with industry.
- Need better understanding of how breweries do? a lot of things that are detrimental to communities.
- Really love that there is a lot attention to detail around the language - so important.
- When worded in a way (this way) it helps people make informed choices, rather than feeling like we're "telling people what to do."
- Interesting comment around "causes cancer" vs "can cause."
- The push/pull of working with industry.
- Industry is big and powerful - huge amount of resources. Need to understand the power of what opposes "our" kind of thinking. How are they going to counter "Less Is Best" campaigns and labels?
- Frustrated / angry that industry has so much control, and by governments' complacency.



Question 3: What does all this mean for you? What action is called for?

- People have the right to know the impacts of alcohol use. Providing the image of how many drinks are in a can/bottle would be extremely beneficial.
- More we can do to advocate at the federal level; to follow the Bill and see what happens with this/support it.
- Publicizing internal big industry documents so that people know what they are doing - they know what their goals are.
- Think everyone should be writing to their MPs around Senator Brazeau's Bill S-254.
- Hopefully there will be some insight provided as to how to expand labeling beyond one brewery in one town.
- It's necessary to have alcohol align with cannabis and tobacco messaging; need to make this same shift with regards to alcohol so people are informed.
- Understanding demographics and differences in and across the population
- The absence of a Federal Alcohol Act makes a challenge. We need to have this.
- Need to have research and engage Indigenous populations around warning labels.
- Advocate for additional amendments to local legislation; understand jurisdictional issues (advertising mostly legislated by federal bodies, e.g., CRTC).
- Wonder about craft brewers who have developed NA Beer as early adopters/partners in labelling for Alcoholic beers.
- Acknowledging inequities experienced by certain populations - better engaging these groups in warning labels, campaigns and policy domains.
- PEI should be exploring this too (warning labels) - should be like all other substances.
- In PEI, if we could start with putting standard drinks in restaurant menus/drink ordering in these establishments, it would help.
- With amendments to support health and safety messaging, not controlled by the retailer, support Bill 116 raised in the legislature yesterday by Gord McNeilly.

Debunking Alcohol Myths and Language - Mythbusting Chat Waterfall

Following a small group activity involving the Flippity Quiz platform, participants returned to plenary to reflect on two questions that were brought up during their discussions.

Participants were prompted to respond to two questions via the Zoom Chat.

Questions and responses are outlined below. The responses have been synthesized and, as best possible, reflect the actual words of participants. A thematic analysis has not been completed.

Question 1: Other myths worth 'busting'? What have you heard/seen?

- We debated a significant amount about the centrality of policy in facilitating alcohol reduction.
- The central myth of the alcohol industry is that "responsible drinking" will make alcohol healthy and benign. The way to bring down this myth is to show that alcohol companies want just the opposite. Alcohol companies sell most of their product to heavy and severe drinkers. This is called the Pareto Effect, and has been documented in study after study, in country after country. If everyone "drank responsibly," industry revenues would collapse. "Drink responsibly" is hypocrisy.
- "Hard liquor" vs "just a beer."
- One thing we deal, with both alcohol and drugs, is I drive better when I am drunk/high. I hear that especially with respect to driving high.
- Decreased calories/sugar make the drink "safer."
- That it's all about individual choices, rather than trauma-informed approaches and our environments.

Question 2: How does the language or terminology we use impact the culture of alcohol use in PEI?

- Binge drinking is harmless and fun. This is something that is important for youth culture.
- I have been involved in many community activities where we felt we had to include alcohol to increase attendance and make more money.
- I'd rather give my kids alcohol in my home at 15 rather than have them drink outside the home. Assumption that kids aren't drinking when they aren't given the booze with mom and dad/home.

Power of Language: De-normalizing Alcohol Use

Following the previous Chat Waterfall discussion, participants were invited to return to their previous breakout rooms using the Zoom Chat breakout feature for a small group discussion on de-normalizing alcohol use.

In these discussion groups, participants reflected on a variety of different statements which encouraged the consumption of alcohol and offer solutions to reframe the language into new statements. Their thoughts were captured via the Padlet tool.

Statements and responses are outlined below. Participant responses have been synthesized and, as best possible, reflect the actual words of participants. A thematic analysis has not been completed.

Original Statement	Reframing Language – New Statement
<p>“It’s been a while! Let’s catch up over a drink soon”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let’s get together for a walk soon!” • “It’s been a while, let’s get together soon.” • “Would you like to grab a coffee or bite to eat sometime?” • “It’s been a while! Let’s grab lunch! “ • “I’m cutting back on alcohol, let’s go to Tim’s!”
<p>“I’ve had such a hard day. I need a glass of wine!”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’ve had such a hard day! I need to vent/talk! “ • Replacement behaviour – “I need to workout/hit a punching bag!” • “I’ve had such a hard day! I need to relax.” • Finding alternative activities - better on mental health to “go for a walk, getting away from screens, etc.” • Reframing how we manage our stress response- “yoga, mindfulness, meditation.” • “What a day; I need to chill out tonight. “ • “I’ve had such a hard day. I need a few minutes to myself.”
<p>“What! You’re not drinking tonight? Are you pregnant?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Can I get you something else?” Instead of, “Are you pregnant?” • Best thing a friend ever said to me in response: “Cool, but are you still gonna hang out with us tonight?” • “You’re not drinking, what else can I get you?” • “Would you like something to drink” - offer a variety of drinks?
<p>“You can only have fun if you let loose with some alcohol.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You can create fun wherever and whenever you want.” • “I don’t need alcohol to have fun!”
<p>“I’m just going to have one drink so that I can drive home.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’m not drinking so I can drive.” • “I’m going to have a drink tonight, so I’m planning to take a taxi home.” • “I don’t feel like drinking tonight!” • I think I’ll drink something else tonight.
<p>“She doesn’t drink anymore because she’s an alcoholic.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “She doesn’t drink. Let’s offer her another option.” • “They don’t drink. We don’t need to know why. It’s all good.” • “She’s made a conscious choice to not drink.”



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This isn't using person-centered language. "She chooses not to drink for her health."• Need to reframe this. "She's doing really well now", as opposed to pulling out the alcohol piece. Reframe it. This matters in social conversation. We don't need to label people this way.• "That's wonderful!" We do not need to offer excuses when someone refuses a drink.
"I'm going to drink hard liquor tonight to get drunk quicker."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Tonight, I'm only going to drink a few and still have fun!"• Need to get away from this language entirely as it encourages binge drinking.
"Oh, you're not drinking? Don't be such a buzz kill." (or "so lame")	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Oh, you're not drinking. I respect that. Good for you."• Silence (no comment needed).• "Oh, you're not drinking? Cool!"• "Good for you!"
"I can't believe how drunk he got at the show last night."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "It looks like they may have overconsumed alcohol last night. Maybe I'll check in on them."• "I'm concerned about how much he drank at the show last night."• "It's concerning that he got so drunk last night."• We need to get away from judgmental and unsupportive language.
"Why not just have one or two tonight?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "OK." (or silence)• "Let's grab a bite and talk."• "You're not drinking? I won't either."
"I'm going to bring a roadie."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "I'm going to bring snacks with me."• "I'll wait till we get there."• "I'll wait to have a drink until we arrive." (Unless I'm the driver - then "I'll pass").• Just strike this - further normalizing getting/staying drunk on the way to the next location.
"Why are you not drinking?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Silence (no comment).• "I respect that you are not drinking."• No need to ask.

Closing Circle – PEI Solutions: Our Way Forward

In the penultimate activity, participants returned once more to a final breakout room using the Zoom Chat Breakout Room feature and were invited to discuss possible solutions on ways the province can begin to move forward in the individual, community, and societal levels.

The responses have been synthesized and, as best possible, reflect the actual words of the participants. A thematic analysis has not been completed.

Questions and responses are outlined below. The responses have been synthesized and, as best possible, reflect the actual words of participants. A thematic analysis has not been completed.

Individual Level
<p>Question 1: What will I do in my professional role and/or personal life to take action on reducing the impacts of alcohol-related harms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more mindful of the language that I use day-to-day i.e., decentralize alcohol as a means of relaxation, fun, etc. • Public consultation on how to reduce alcohol-related harms. • Host events or gatherings that are alcohol free, or ensure that non-alcoholic drinks are emphasized and provided. • Continue to challenge industry influence. • Official policy as a non profit that we don't take funds/sponsorship from alcohol companies, liquor store. • Share messaging learned here to friends and colleagues • Professional: Accounting for alcohol-related harms in work on illicit substance-related harms. • Personal: Continuing to have open, honest, non-judgmental conversations with friends and family about alcohol use, alcohol harms, and how to reduce harms. • Raise awareness within my workplace that alcohol is a population issue not an individual issue. • Provide comments when available to reframe dangerous policy decisions like: Making alcohol consumption legal in parks and on beaches. • We are working on updating the alcohol policy so will incorporate some of these learnings. • Continue to advocate for strong alcohol policy. • Support and practice shifting the language around alcohol. • Continue to promote the new guidance among my peers/family members so they better understand it.
<p>Question 2: What support do I need in my professional role and/or personal life to take action on reducing the impacts of alcohol-related harms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for ways to revitalize and better support Bill S-254. • Restrictions on industry lobbying and influence. Better government transparency. Organizations who do advocacy need to know they will not face government retribution for speaking out on alcohol. • Support from organizations being willing to move forward to make change happen.

- Not further relaxations around legislation - e.g., not having alcohol in convenience stores, parks, etc.
- Access to reports and evidence.
- Need the government to step in and take leadership - this would be a great support. Educate Islanders about alcohol harms.
- Improved awareness amongst people making legislation regarding alcohol. Maybe with more information and facts different decisions will be made if the full picture is realized?
- Politicians do not get it and are motivated to continue to not get it (buck-a-beer, home deliveries, parks, keeping prices down, increasing availability). A coalition external to the Govt of physicians, nurses, and community leaders is needed to get this on the agenda.
- Need to do more to challenge the view that breweries/local alcohol industries are prosocial when they strongly dictate alcohol culture.
- A commitment to not take money from alcohol to sponsor events.

Community Level

Question 3: What can my organization (or what can I do in my community) to reduce alcohol-related harms? Are there opportunities within my organization or community to build on?

- Use community lived/living experience of alcohol harms to leverage advocacy opportunities.
- Available, accessible and acceptable treatment options for individuals living with alcohol use disorder.
- Coalition building and advocating Government to put alcohol-related harms on the agenda.
- Be intentional about language that de-normalizes alcohol benefits (i.e relaxation, fun, etc.) and share information in community settings.
- Offering opportunities to socialize and participate in community life without the pressure of alcohol.
- Ask local politicians what they are doing for our community.
- Have community/fundraising events without alcohol.
- Seek public consultation on alcohol policy and community action.

Public/Society Level

Question 4: What opportunities are there in PEI to help strengthen alcohol policy and reduce population-level alcohol-related harms?

- PEI needs an alcohol strategy developed without industry involvement. Emphasis on improving control policies, reducing (or at least limiting) availability, and restricting advertising.
- How does Finance currently support alcohol policy? They get the revenues, interesting to know how involved they are on the public health side of things.
- There needs to be a separation of retailer and regulator.
- Change the legislative mandate of PEI LCC so that it aligns with scientific guidance on alcohol use.
- Give publicity to internal alcohol company documents that show the industry targets heavy drinking that leads to premature death.



- Can't talk about alcohol use and the harmful use, without looking at our systems-level issues. How do the social determinants of health impact the harmful use of alcohol? Empowering people to make informed choices includes looking at their environments and need to get away from blaming.
- Improve communication to decision makers about the cost of substance use - measure and communicate in a way that is impactful.
- Need to really look at transportation, housing, income, etc. but also alternative activities and "free-third spaces" - cannot finger wag and tell people what to do if environments aren't supportive.
- Avoid taking funding from companies that promote alcohol.
- Ban marketing to children (alcohol in rec spaces, sponsorship of children's events, etc).
- Collaboratively work with other provinces and territories, not just as a stand-alone PEI.
- Advocate for improved messaging about standard drink sizes at point of pour, point of sale, etc.
- Develop an alcohol strategy that builds on the guidance and CAPE results.

End of Day 2 – Mentimeter Poll Responses

The final activity of the day encouraged participants to reflect on one meaningful takeaway from the 2024 PEI Alcohol Policy Forum. Mentimeter was utilized as a tool to capture these reflections.

Individual reflections were captured and tabulated, with the highest answers being listed first, and the rest of the answers following in descending order.

Questions and responses are outlined below, supported with a Cloud Chart as seen in Figure 1. The responses have been synthesized and, as best possible, reflect the actual words of participants. A thematic analysis has not been completed.

Figure 1:



- Policy
- Denormalization
- Industry influence
- Language
- Industry power
- Normalization
- Alternatives to drinking
- Awareness
- Coalition
- Coalitions
- Communication
- Community pressure
- Culture
- Educate
- Education
- Educational
- Focus on social alternatives
- Funding
- Health over revenue
- Imperative
- Informed decision making
- Inspired
- Knowledge to policy
- Labels
- Need PEI Alcohol Strategy
- Need to Change the culture
- Net Cost to Government
- Organizational integrity
- Peer Pressure
- People should be informed
- Primacy of policy
- Right to know
- Right to know impacts of alcohol use
- Social and emotional learning
- Split retailer - regulator
- Strategy needed
- System level
- We can do it
- We need policy change

4

Feedback

In the weeks following the forum, participants were invited to share their feedback and comments. Responses were elicited using an online Survey Monkey questionnaire and are summarized in Figures 2-12, with additional comments below. Responses are in Raw format and have not been synthesized. (23 Total responses to the questionnaire)

Figure 2: Tell us about your overall satisfaction with the PEI Alcohol Policy Forum

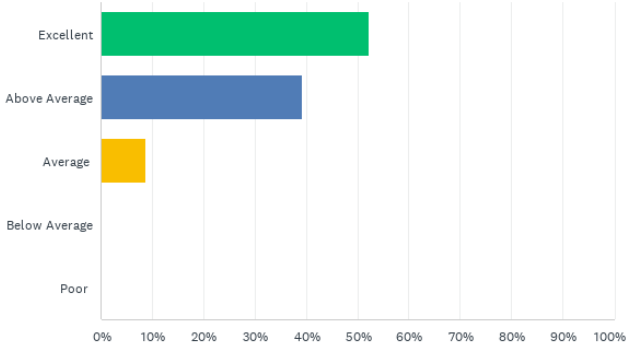
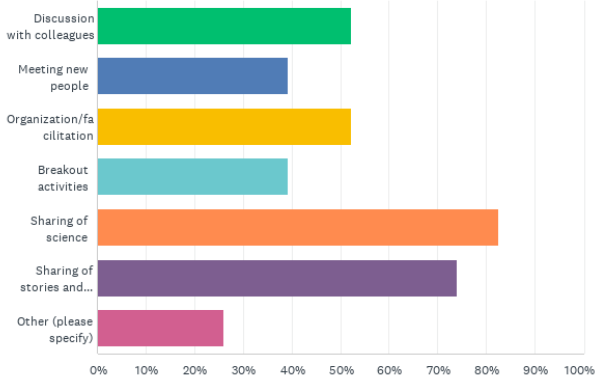


Figure 3: What did you enjoy about the forum? (Select all that apply)



Other comments:

- Kara Presentation
- Learning more about who is involved in alcohol harm reduction in our province, region and beyond
- Facilitator was excellent.
- Accounts by PEI residents about their experiences.
- All of the above
- Kept my interest!!

Figure 4: What would you like to see in future discussions/forums and learning opportunities?

use harms **action** funding **policy** change **alcohol** government
strategies taking discussion focused

- Continue to assist us to understand all the strategies being used to bring people to use alcohol.
- Less break out activities.
- More focus on policy action and how this can be achieved.
- More focused conversations among participants for what can be done if we all work together. Action planning.
- Strategies to effect policy change (how can small community organizations with limited funding and capacity band together to call on government to make change? how can these organizations collaborate to get funding to create an awareness campaign around the harms of alcohol? or, how can Live Well and other health agencies in the government be persuaded to dedicated some of the funding they receive to doing this? I would like to see more action and less talk. Clearly Live Well knows about the harms resulting from alcohol... what action are you taking to build awareness in the larger population, not just those of us who area already working in this sphere?).
- How to support universities with Alcohol policies.
- Harm reduction success stories from other countries with similar demographics and culture to PEI.
- I would prefer to see this take place in a face-to-face format - I think it would encourage better engagement and a better oppportunity for discussions outside of the breakout sessions.
- Some discussion of how local alcohol industry (e.g., breweries) promote alcohol culture and represent a barrier to healthy public policy for alcohol due to their influence on/lobbying of provincial and municipal governments. (E.g.: collaborating with industry, looking at the addiction problem, ways we can curb use upstream, etc.).
- I would like to hear about more real life examples of effective strategies to encourage low risk drinking in different populations, some taking a harm reduction approach.
- A discussion about how to get a more balanced approach by the media, that includes a discussion of harms from alcohol, when changes in alcohol distribution are reported.
- How to shape policy.
- A forum focused at the community level would be really interesting. Looking at the normalization of drinking and the language and strategies to flip the script.
- Continue with the scientific evidence - so important.

Figure 5: I gained knowledge about alcohol use and harms in PEI:

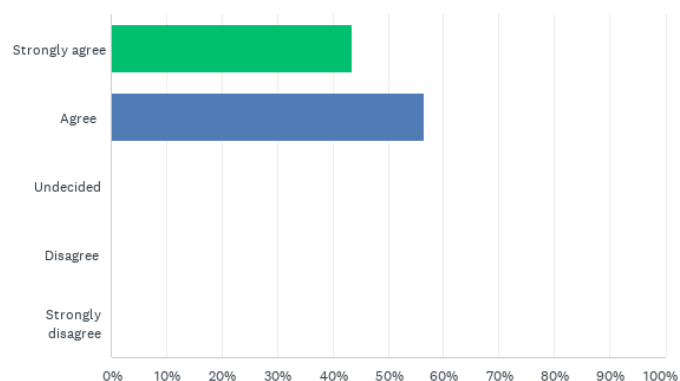


Figure 6: I gained knowledge about health and safety messaging, as it relates to alcohol use:

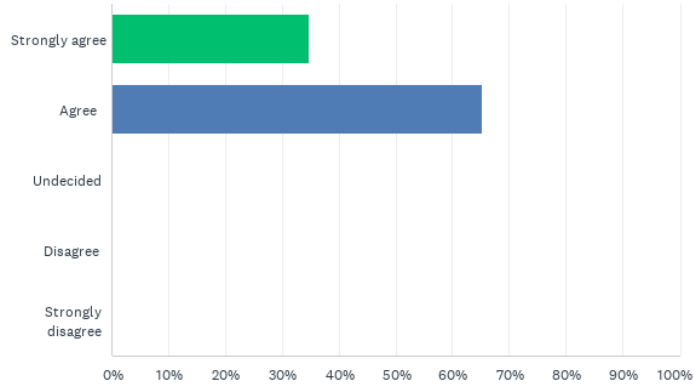


Figure 7: I gained knowledge about alcohol control systems, particularly in PEI:

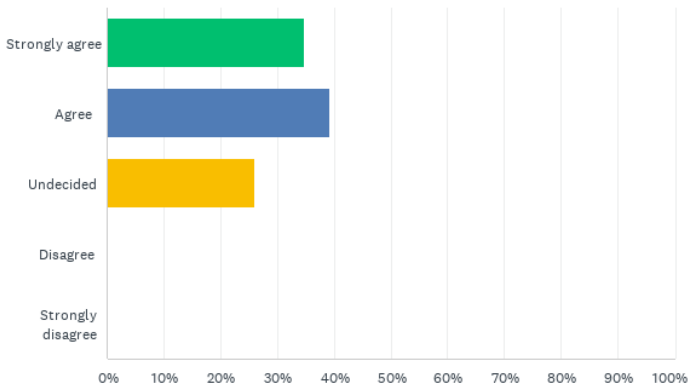


Figure 8: I gained knowledge about Canada's new Alcohol and Health Guidance and the risks associated with alcohol:

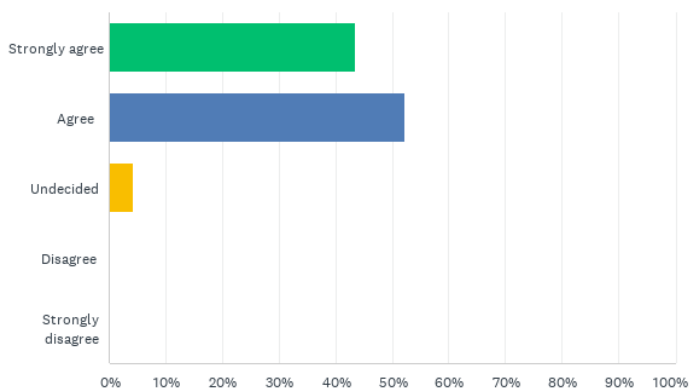


Figure 9: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement: I have increased my network and connections with people working on healthy alcohol policy.

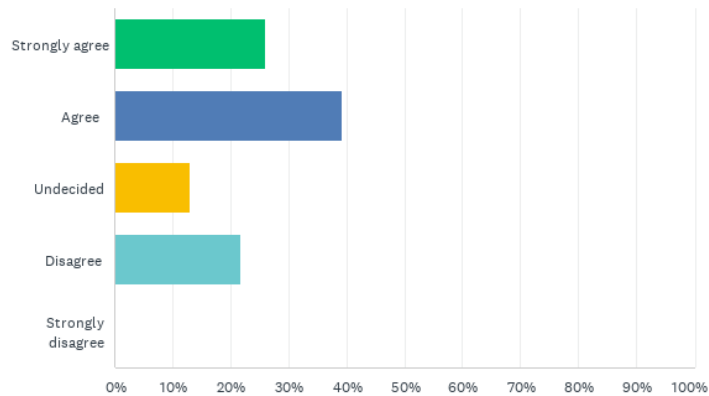


Figure 10: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement: I feel better motivated and equipped to take action on healthy alcohol public policy.

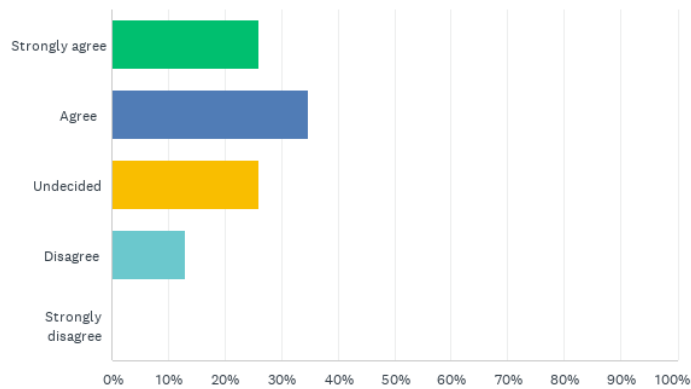
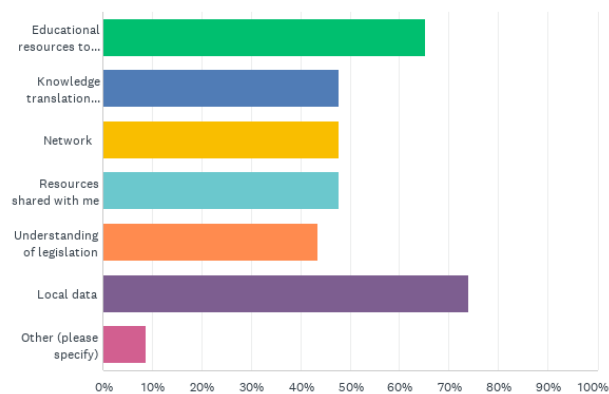


Figure 11: What knowledge/skills would help you in your work regarding healthy alcohol policy? (Select all that apply)



Other comments:

- Examples of effective strategies
- Action planning among public, private and non-profit entities

Figure 12: Do you have any other comments you'd like to share with the team behind the 2024 PEI Alcohol Policy Forum Event?



- Excellent facilitation.
- Great opportunity to talk about a topic that receives little attention. Need to keep this work focused and moving ahead.
- This event should be hosted in person. Support attendance. Targeted investment in attendees. There should be more action planning and identification of gaps and potential collaboration for research and other program related activities.
- Group Facilitation services were extremely well done. The overall group discussion, breakout rooms and ease of questions - very positive.
- some of the questions above suggest that you think it is up to participants to get it together and do the work of spreading awareness. While I agree in part, I think Live Well and health promotion agencies with the government must take a leadership role. I may be able to dedicate a small amount of time to writing a statement in support of MLA Gordon McNeilly's proposed amendment to the PEI Liquor Control Act, but my time is already stretched thin trying to address myriad health-related fires. Live Well should take leadership role in creating appropriate knowledge translation tools, with input from/engagement with various community members to ensure cultural relevancy/appropriateness (e.g., Indigenous communities, and not just the First Nations).
- Just an extra comment on a job very well done!
- Presenter on Day 1 was not very engaging. Please share all presentations.
- Congratulations on an excellent forum. I really appreciated the open approach and the efforts underway in PEI.
- I had the opportunity to hear Dr. Butt speak before on Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health. I found the presentation was framed a little differently this time.
- Great facilitator.
- Great job! Wonderful learning opportunity.
- Amazing job. Both days were well-balanced with different types of activities/sessions.
- Breakout sessions could have been a bit longer for the ones with many questions that were asked.
- Thanks for putting this together, interesting information. Would be engaging to see how other jurisdictions advocated for changes in alcohol policy -- possibly looking internationally? Evidence for effectiveness of policy change? Possibly a working community working towards identified strategies (i.e., most impactful first) - a community of practice?
- Very well organized and delivered.
- It was a great event. While this is more oriented around policy and prevention, it would be useful to bring some discussion around substance abuse, addiction and binge drinking. While we talked about harms and attitudes we didn't really get into the why. I don't come from a health promotion background so in some ways not the main audience for this forum. But pulling back to systems change an event with a broader focus might be helpful to help achieve the outcomes desired.
- The facilitation was excellent!!

The background features several diagonal bars in shades of teal and light teal, creating a modern, geometric design. A solid teal horizontal bar is at the top. The text is centered in a bold, teal font.

**Prepared By
Barefoot Facilitation Inc.
April 2024**