

Feasibility and acceptability of a browser plug-in blocking online alcohol imagery

Maree Patsouras¹, Emmanuel Kuntsche¹, Megan Cook^{1,2}, Amy Pennay¹, Benjamin Riordan¹

¹*Centre for Alcohol Policy Research, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia,* ²*Institute for Social Marketing & Health, University of Stirling, UK*

Presenter's email: m.patsouras@latrobe.edu.au

Introduction: Imagery of alcohol is very common online and there is a link between exposure to alcohol and alcohol use. A browser plug-in, which blocks all alcohol imagery online, may be an important tool for those aiming to reduce their drinking and an effective way to prevent alcohol use among young people. In this study, we examined participants support of an alcohol-blocking browser plug-in.

Method: We conducted twenty-five semi-structured interviews, with twenty adults aiming to reduce their drinking and five parents. We analysed the data using Reflexive Thematic Analysis. We explored participants feedback on the acceptability, feasibility, design, and potential features of a browser plug-in.

Key Findings: Participants endorsed the importance of personalising and tailoring the browser plug-in. The browser plug-in was described as being particularly useful for protecting minors and for people who were dependent on alcohol. The two most important features were a) offering a weekly or monthly feedback summary indicating how much alcohol people were exposed to b) providing information about the dangers of alcohol exposure when participants first downloaded the program. While the browser plug-in was considered an acceptable first step, several participants recommended stronger regulatory control of alcohol advertising and exposure, in a similar way to smoking.

Discussions and Conclusions: Interviewees were supportive of the browser plug-in and believed it would be useful for both minors and those who drink excessively. Given that it is a relatively easy way to intervene, it could be a simple adjunct to counselling and treatment.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: We declare no conflict of interests. This study was funded by an Internal Grant from the School of Psychology and Public Health, La Trobe University.