Results and implications of the Newcastle experiment

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Kypros Kypri PhD
Professor / NHMRC Senior Research Fellow
School of Medicine and Public Health
The science to 2010


~ 14 controlled studies (Australia, Brazil, Canada, UK, USA,)

“the balance of reliable evidence…suggests that extended late-night trading hours lead to increased consumption and related harms.”

~ US Task Force on Community Preventive Services
~ Reviewed:
  • 10 studies examining changes of ≥2 hours
  • 6 studies examining changes of <2 hours

“There was sufficient evidence…to conclude that increasing hours of sale by 2 or more hours increases alcohol-related harms.

The evidence…was insufficient to determine whether increasing hours of sale by less than 2 hours increases excessive alcohol consumption and related.” [Not evidence of no effect but insufficient evidence]
Since 2010


- Rossow I & Norstrom T (2012). The impact of small changes in bar closing hours on violence. The Norwegian experience from 18 cities. *Addiction* 107(3) 530-7

14 pubs forced to close earlier: 3.30am (previously 5am)
Assaults per quarter 7 years before and 18 months after the change in closing time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before N</th>
<th>After N</th>
<th>After-to-Before incidence rate ratio (95% CI)</th>
<th>Relative After-to-Before incidence rate ratio (95% CI)</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CBD</strong> (Intervention area)</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>0.68 (0.58 to 0.80)</td>
<td>0.63 (0.48 to 0.82)</td>
<td>0.0005&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hamilton</strong> (Control area)</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>1.09 (0.88 to 1.35)</td>
<td>1.00 Reference</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> For area*time interaction term in negative binomial regression model
Were the effects sustained?

“The Sydney lockout: new location, but the same old mistakes” Sydney Morning Herald, 24 February 2014 (Nick Reece, Policy Fellow, University of Melbourne)

“In 2008, [the Victorian Premier] cited the "Ballarat model" as the basis for the lockout for inner-city Melbourne.”

“A recent a study of 10 years of crime data from Ballarat found the lockout had no discernible long-term impact on alcohol-related emergency department attendances. It remains to be seen what a similar study will find in Newcastle.”

No evidence of geographical or temporal displacement
### Assaults per quarter before and up to 5 years after the restriction in closing time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBD (Intervention area)</th>
<th>Mean number of assaults per quarter</th>
<th>Post/Pre Incidence rate ratio (95% CI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre Apr 2001 to Mar 2008</td>
<td>Post 1 Apr 2008 to Sep 2009</td>
<td>Post 2 Oct 2009 to Mar 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton (Control area)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assault incidents prevented in Newcastle

120-160 per quarter; 480-640 per year

2880-3840 assaults prevented in the 6 years since the hours were changed
Rossow I & Norstrom T (2012). The impact of small changes in bar closing hours on violence. The Norwegian experience from 18 cities. *Addiction* 107(3) 530-7

8 cities extend hours
→ 20% increase in assaults per additional hour of trading

15 cities restrict hours
→ 20% decrease in assaults per hour restriction

Note: Newcastle: 21% reduction in assault per hour restriction
Summary of the Newcastle experiment

• Beneficial effects large and sustained
• Consistent with international literature
• >500 assaults prevented each year
• No displacement to neighbouring Hamilton
• Lockouts in Hamilton not associated with reductions in assault
Sydney CBD

- A step in the right direction
- Lockout of dubious value
- 3am as time of last drinking, not last drinks purchase
- 2am would prevent thousands of assaults per year
- Surry Hills should be included in the precinct
- Independent evaluation crucial – should have been initiated before change
NSW

- Permit all communities to initiate earlier cessation of drinking in licensed premises
- Dispense with lockouts
- Address off-licence density
- Ensure independent evaluation is initiated well before regulatory change