


Lockouts for reducing alcohol-related violence

Reducing alcohol-related violence by restricting admission to licensed premises.

First published
22 July 2021

Effect scale	Quality of evidence				
	Effect Impact on crime	Mechanism How it works	Moderator Where it works	Implementation	Economic cost What it costs
 Mixed findings	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> Low	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> Low	No information		No information

Focus of the intervention

Lockouts – also known as last entry – aim to reduce alcohol-related violence by restricting the times at which patrons can be admitted to alcohol licensed premises.

Lockouts aim to manage the movement of intoxicated patrons and prevent violence and disorder by controlling the times that patrons leave premises.

An example of a lockout method is restricting access to bars and pubs after a certain time, to minimise early morning club hopping.

This narrative is based on one systematic review covering eight studies. The review examined the effect of lockouts on the prevalence of alcohol-related assault (based on police data) and unintentional injury (based on accident and emergency department presentations and ambulance data). Seven of the eight primary studies were carried out in Australia and one in New Zealand.

- [See also limiting alcohol sales.](#)

Effect – how effective is it?

There is some evidence that lockouts have either increased or reduced crime, but as the review did not conduct a meta-analysis, no overall effect can be reported.

Two of the eight primary studies covered by the review reported a decrease in assault incidence. A third study found that reductions occurred only inside licensed premises (as opposed to outside). Two of the eight studies reported an increase in the incidence of assaults after lockouts were introduced, and three studies found no association between lockouts and assault.

Two studies found no association between alcohol lockouts and alcohol-related injury.

How strong is the evidence?

Although the review was systematic, many forms of bias that could influence the study conclusions remain.

The evidence reported here is taken from a systematic review covering eight studies. The review demonstrated high quality in terms of having a transparent and well-designed search strategy.

However, while the review assessed the risks associated with displacement, confounding bias, and seasonality, limitations within the included primary studies prevented any strong overall inferences about the effectiveness of lockouts.

Mechanism – how does it work?

Lockouts are assumed to reduce crime by restricting early morning club hopping and interactions between intoxicated individuals.

The review describes the interaction between intoxicated patrons in public places as a primary factor that leads to violence and vandalism. However, this assumption was not empirically tested, as the original studies did not provide the necessary information to do so.

Moderators – in which contexts does it work best?

The review did not examine under what conditions or for what population groups the intervention might work best.

Implementation – what can be said about implementing this initiative?

No details on implementation were provided other than the lockouts tended to start between 2am and 4am.

Economic considerations – how much might it cost?

The review did not mention the costs or benefits of lockouts. No formal economic analysis was provided.

General considerations

- The review authors noted that the limitations within the included primary studies prevented any strong inferences about the effectiveness of lockouts.
- The authors recommend that future studies on lockouts use suitable control sites and that lockouts are implemented with enough lead-in time for levels of crime or injury to be measured before the intervention starts.

Summary

There is some evidence that lockouts have either increased or reduced crime, but as the review did not conduct a meta-analysis, no overall effect can be reported.

Lockouts aim to reduce alcohol-related violence by restricting the times at which patrons can be admitted to licensed premises.

Lockouts seek to address problems associated with the management of public intoxication and minimise harm by restricting early morning club hopping and the potential for violent interactions between intoxicated individuals.

However, the design of the primary studies is limited, which may affect the reliability of the findings. More high-quality evidence is needed in order to be certain of the impact that this intervention may have upon crime.

Reviews

Review one

Reference

- Nepal, S., Kypri, K., Pursey, K., Attia, J., Chikritzhs, T., Miller, P. (2018). Effectiveness of lockouts in reducing alcohol-related harm: Systematic review. *Drug and alcohol review*, 37(4), 527-536.

Summary prepared by

This narrative was prepared by the College of Policing and was co-funded by the College of Policing and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). ESRC grant title: 'University Consortium for Evidence-Based Crime Reduction'. Grant reference: ES/L007223/1.

[Return to the toolkit](#)

Tags

- [Crime reduction](#)