



Freedom of Information Request

Date of receipt: 28 May 2022

Date of response: 31 August 2022

Hospitalisations and cost of policing for alcohol and cannabis use

Request:

Can you please provide me with the following information under the Freedom of Information Code:

1. The number of hospitalisations in Guernsey directly caused by alcohol consumption from 2020 to 2022.
2. The number of hospitalisations in Guernsey directly caused by cannabis usage from 2020 to 2022.
3. The cost to HSC/Guernsey's health care system of treating people with illnesses directly attributed to alcohol from 2020 to 2022.
4. The cost to HSC/Guernsey's health care system of treating people with illnesses directly attributed to cannabis misuse from 2020 to 2022.
5. The annual cost of policing in Guernsey directly spent on dealing with alcohol related incidents (domestic violence, fights and assaults etc.)
6. The annual cost of policing in Guernsey directly spent on dealing with incidents directly related to cannabis use.

The responses to questions 1 to 4 are provided by the Committee *for* Health & Social Care:

1. This is a very broad request and it is difficult to quantify the number of hospitalisations caused by alcohol consumption. It can sometimes be difficult to determine the role and extent alcohol plays in any given case. For example, whilst there is a clinical code for

individuals with alcoholic liver disease, there is not for something like pancreatitis which may be caused by alcohol. Similarly, falls resulting in injury while drunk are not always coded as being linked to alcohol, and some patients have alcohol recorded as a comorbidity but the specific episode may be unrelated to alcohol consumption.

The relevant measure, 'alcohol-attributable hospital admissions,' has been produced in the past (last produced for Guernsey and Alderney in 2012 covering the period 2008/09) but was then discontinued as source data failed to meet the quality standard for reporting. However, as part of the [Combined Substance Use Strategy 2021-2026](#), Key Performance Indicators will be developed and introduced to be able to measure this in future (see KPI 1.4 and 1.5 on p.17 of the Strategy).

2. At a broad level there is no validated methodology for calculating cannabis-attributable hospital admissions, and this is not currently something that Health & Social Care produces.

There is currently only one clinical code for hospital admissions (patient admitted to ward) that is specific to cannabis use, which is 'Mental and behavioural disorders due to cannabinoids.' Medical complications due to cannabis use cannot be identified as there is no specific code. The data for this is shown below:

Year	Hospital admissions - mental and behavioural disorders due to use of cannabinoids: harmful use	Hospital admissions - Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of cannabinoids: unspecified mental and behavioural disorder
2020	2	1
2021	2	4
2022 (up to 24.08.2022)	0	2

Emergency Department attendances are not clinically coded and so are not measured in the same way. The [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Substance Use](#) does contain some data which may be relevant (however this data is from 2018 and does not separate out cannabis related cases from all drug-related cases).

3. Health & Social Care has not carried out an economic cost analysis for illnesses relating to alcohol consumption. This data is therefore unavailable.
4. Health & Social Care has not carried out an economic cost analysis for illnesses relating to cannabis misuse. This data is therefore unavailable.

The response to questions 5 and 6 is provided by the Committee for Home Affairs:

Bailiwick Law Enforcement are unaware of any existing local studies into the cost of policing alcohol- versus cannabis- related incidents, nor would it be possible to readily calculate the costs as requested. It is not always possible for officers to know whether cannabis or controlled substances are a factor when offences are committed, and additionally it is not necessarily an either-or scenario since alcohol and cannabis/controlled substances are sometimes ingested concurrently.

31 August 2022