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Dear Member of Parliament

Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP) wishes to support NTAKK's attempts to maintain Lithuania's evidence based approach to reducing alcohol harm.

SHAAP is a partnership of the Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties in Scotland and invited experts from other organisations. Since our formation in 2006 we have worked to promote and implement best practice as summarised in the WHO's Global and European alcohol strategies, with a particular emphasis on the high impact "best buys" of action on price, availability and marketing. Many of these measures were opposed by the major global producers of alcohol and the Scottish Government fought a series of legal actions over a five year period in order to introduce a "minimum unit price" for alcohol to reduce harm, including alcohol related mortality in Scotland.

We therefore have had an interest in the work in Lithuania which is pursuing similar goals and the high quality evaluation of Lithuania's measures attracts considerable international interest. The finding of falls in consumption and, crucially, mortality over the past 15 years is further evidence of the effectiveness of these policy approaches and the Lithuanian advocates, scientists and policy makers deserve much credit for this.

Tackling the commercial determinants of non communicable diseases requires an incremental and progressive approach as well as an expectation that these measures will be opposed by some economic operators. It is a pity, but not a surprise, that this opposition is now being seen in Lithuania, and Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems sends our support to you and your colleagues in your efforts to build on the progress Lithuania has made.

Best wishes
Elinor

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TACKLING SCOTLAND'S ALCOHOL PROBLEM | SUPPORTING RECOVERY

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