

Effects of alcoholic beverage server liability on traffic crash injuries

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Published

1991

Publisher

Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research

Type

Journal article

Volume

15

Issue

6

Page(s)

942-907

Abstract

We examined effects on the frequency of injuries due to motor vehicle crashes of a sudden change in exposure to legal liability of servers of alcoholic beverages in Texas. A multiple time-series quasi-experimental research design was used, including the Auto-Regressive Integrated Moving Average and intervention-analysis statistical models on injury data from 1978 through 1988. We controlled for the effects of several other policy changes expected to influence injury rates in Texas, and for broader nationwide changes in injury rates in the 1980s. Results revealed 6.5% and 5.3% declines in injurious traffic crashes following the filing of two major liability suits in 1983 and 1984, respectively. Server liability is one of several important public policy tools in efforts to achieve health objectives regarding reduced injury morbidity, and mortality.

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