Overserving at licensed premises in Stockholm: Effects of a community action program.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: The aim of this research was to study the sustainable effects of a community action program on alcohol service to intoxicated patrons at licensed premises.
METHOD: Since 1996, the hospitality industry and authorities in Stockholm, Sweden, have been cooperating to reduce problems related to alcohol consumption at licensed premises. The intervention has included community mobilization, training in responsible beverage service (RBS) and enforcement. A pretest in 1996 and follow-ups in the 1999 and 2001 designs were used to study licensed premises in Stockholm. Male actors portraying intoxicated patrons visited the licensed premises and attempted to order beer. Observers were present at each visit. At the pretest, 92 licensed premises were visited, 47 in north central Stockholm and 45 in south central Stockholm. In 1999, 103 establishments were visited, 61 in north central Stockholm and 42 in south central Stockholm. At the latest follow-up in 2001, 100 licensed premises were visited, 56 in north central Stockholm and 44 in south central Stockholm.
RESULTS: The results from the latest follow-up in 2001 showed a statistically significant improvement over those of earlier measures, with a refusal rate of 70% compared with 47% in 1999 and 5% in 1996. There were improvements in both study areas (i.e., north and south central Stockholm).

CONCLUSIONS: There has been a significant improvement in the rate of refusal of alcohol service at licensed premises in Stockholm during the project period. The reason for this is probably a combination of the intervention efforts: community mobilization, RBS training and a more efficient monitoring of alcohol service by authorities.

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