National Policy On Alcohol Soon

Grenada is preparing a National Policy on Alcohol. The draft Policy outlines a series of measures which the Government of Grenada would adopt regarding the sale, distribution and consumption of alcohol. It seeks to:

- Regulate physical availability through restrictions on time, place, and density of alcohol outlets.
- Regulate alcohol advertising and other marketing.

Under this Policy, the Drug Control Secretariat and Ministry of Health would advocate for the amendment of the Liquor Dealers’ Licences Act, including the integration of elements of the National Schools Policy on Drugs into the Act, as well as increased public education and enforcement.

Specific issues to be addressed in the Policy include:
- Licensing
- Purchasing and consumption
- Advertising
- Public education
- Enforcement

Alcohol consumption in Grenada is a national concern. Statistics indicate that in Grenada, an adult consumes an average of 10.35 liters of alcohol per year, compared to an average of 6.15 liters worldwide. About 6% of males and 1% of females in Grenada suffer from alcohol use disorders.

In the Third Secondary Schools Drug Prevalence Survey, 2013, nearly half of secondary students reported having at least one drink in the previous 30 days, and more than one-quarter reported having ever been drunk in their life. Medical evidence shows that alcohol consumption is associated with significant physical and social harm, including cirrhosis, liver cancer, heart disease, fetal alcohol syndrome, violence, traffic accidents, child neglect, and workplace absenteeism. It results in 2.5 million deaths globally each year.

Policy would reduce the burden of harm related to alcohol in Grenada and the resulting impact on individuals, families, and communities.

Michigan University and St. George’s University is providing ongoing technical assistance Grenada, for drafting the Policy. This activity is part of efforts by the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), to promote the development of such Policy in Caribbean countries.

A series of public consultations would be held during the next few months, to inform the general public about the Draft Policy, and to get their recommendations for the document.

It is therefore intended that the effective implementation of the
The approval of the National Anti-Drug Strategy 2013 to 2018, by Cabinet, demonstrates the Government’s commitment to the national anti-drug program. The Strategy is the blueprint of the Government of Grenada’s responses to the drug phenomena. It outlines all national concerns in drug control. It articulates national policies, define priorities, and apportion responsibilities for drug control efforts.

All national concerns in drug control are outlined in a comprehensive manner and structured in a logical framework by analyzing the country-specific drug problems through the use of statistical data, assessing the activities carried out until now, and identifying what needs to be undertaken during a specific period to attain the objectives agreed upon. Through the six pillars of the Strategy (Institutional Strengthening; Demand Reduction; Supply Reduction; Control Measures; International Cooperation Monitoring and Evaluation), several drug control measures and programs would be implemented by relevant Ministries/Departments. Non-Governmental Organizations.

The National Anti-Drug Strategy reaffirms Grenada’s willingness to fulfill all its obligations to all treaties, conventions, and agreements to which it is a party in the area of drug control.
Perception of Drug Use Among Secondary School Students

One of the areas examined in the 2103 drug prevalence survey in secondary schools in Grenada, was the issue of students’ knowledge and exposure to drugs. The students were questioned about issues such as: curiosity to try drugs; access to drugs; ease of access to drugs; risk perception, and use related risks.

The following is a summary of the responses to these issues.

Curiosity to Try Drugs:
28.5% of students reported they were curious to try any illicit drug. Many students were curious to try marijuana (22%) and to a lesser extent hemp (10%). Few students were curious about cocaine (4%), ecstasy (4%) and crack (2%).

Access to Drugs/Drugs at School:
38% of the students reported that drugs can be obtained at their schools and 57% reported that drugs are in close proximity next to their schools. 57% percent of students reported that students bring drugs to school and 50% reported that students try/deal drugs at school.

Ease of Access to Drugs:
Marijuana, which has the third highest prevalence of use in secondary students, is the easiest drug for students to obtain; 38% of the students reported it is easy for them to get. 20% of students would not be able to get marijuana. Of the other listed drugs, hemp is the second easiest to obtain (19%).

Risk Perception:
Most students recognize that use of drugs is very harmful. The range of student’s perception of harm is 35% (inhalants) to 60% (cocaine). Many students reported that they do not know the harm of ecstasy, inhalants, solvents, and tranquilizers and stimulants, when used occasionally. With the exception of alcohol and ecstasy, the majority of students perceive each drug listed as very harmful when used frequently. Student perception of harm ranged from 50% (ecstasy) to 72.6% (cigarettes). The majority of students (>51%) reported that inhaling secondhand smoke from cigarettes and marijuana and getting drunk were very harmful.

Use-Related Risks:
Students were asked about their experiences that were caused by their alcohol or illicit drug use. The majority (63%) of students did not experience the consequences of drugs listed in the survey. 18% of students reported issues with anger management, 17% had academic issues, 15% had problems with family and/or friends, and 7% had trouble with the police. Some students reported that they experienced mental health concerns; 11% had memory loss, 9% seriously considered thinking about suicide, 8% considered self-harm and have taken advantage of someone, and 6% had someone take advantage of them sexually.

The survey was administered to one thousand four hundred ninety-three (1,493) students representing a weighted sample of five thousand five hundred seventy (5,570) 2nd, 4th and 5th form students in Grenada in 2013. The full report of the survey the survey can be obtained from the Drug Control Secretariat.
**IN THE NEWS**

**J**

W Fletcher Catholic Secondary School, was the first school to officially receive newly reproduced copies of the National Schools’ Policy on Drugs. On 14 March 2014, Mrs. Elizabeth Japal, Assistant Drug Avoidance Officer, presented copies of the Policy to the Mr. Elvis Morain, Principal of the school. Copies of a brochure which summarizes the Policy were also presented to six students. Funding for production of copies were provided by PAHO.

![Elizabeth Japal presents copy of the National Schools’ Policy On Drugs to Elvis Morain, Principal, JW Fletcher Catholic Secondary School, 14 March 2014](image1)

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grenada was elected as the Vice Chair of the Pan American Network on Alcohol and Public Health (PANNAPH, at the 2nd Meeting of PANNAPH, held 9 to 11 April 2014, in Colombia. The meeting focused on issues pertaining to the consumption of alcohol and related matters. Grenada’s representative at the meeting, Mr. Dave Alexander, presented a paper on Grenada’s response to the issue of alcohol. This response included:

- Approval of the National Anti-Drug Strategy 2013 to 2018;
- Formulation of the Draft National Alcohol Policy.

The results of the 2013 Secondary Schools’ Drug Prevalence Survey were also presented at the meeting, with a focus on the prevalence of alcohol. The meeting was convened by PAHO, in collaboration with the Government of Colombia. Representatives from 36 countries and 15 Experts attended the meeting.

![Students who received copies of the National Schools’ Policy on Drugs, Along with & Principal, and Elizabeth, 14 March 2014](image2)

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