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## **Abstract for symposium**

### **The influence of social factors on alcohol use among mothers**

The majority of adults in the UK drink alcohol and alcohol use is deeply ingrained in society. Interest and acknowledgement of the contribution of social factors to alcohol use has increased. Nevertheless, how social factors influence ways in which alcohol is integrated into family life warrants further exploration.

The majority of studies are quantitative with few qualitative studies and focus on the minority who engage in problematic alcohol use in specific population groups. There is little research on mothers' habitual alcohol use despite their central role in the socialisation of children and organisation of the family.

A multi-methods design captured patterns of, and perceptions on, mothers' alcohol use in relation to socio-economic circumstances. Social gradients were evident for alcohol use and qualitative data helped explain these patterns to some extent. The research adds to our understanding of how mothers' everyday contexts relate to subsequent patterns and perceptions of alcohol use.

## Presentation plan:

- Importance of examining health behaviours surrounding alcohol
- Importance of considering psychosocial factors in relation to health behaviours including alcohol
- Predominance of certain population groups in alcohol research
- Need to examine under-researched population groups in alcohol research
- Predominance of quantitative patterning of alcohol use in alcohol research
- Need for more qualitative exploration of alcohol use to understand the reasons behind patterns of alcohol use
- The research presented includes quant/qual exploration of alcohol use among mothers as a sub-group of the population with a focus on the influence of social factors
- Found distinct differences according to socio-economic factors (quant)
- Qualitative exploration points towards a number of social factors that influence these patterns
- Has implications for public policy, future research etc.