# A process and outcome evaluation of the Under The Limit (UTL) therapeutic drink driving program for recidivist and high range offenders

## Researchers

1. Emeritus Professor Mary Sheehan, the Centre for Accident Research & Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q), Queensland University of Technology
2. Ms Michelle Fitts, CARRS-Q
3. Ms Hollie Wilson, CARRS-Q
4. Miss Amy Schramm, CARRS-Q

## Summary

Drink driving is a major public health issue and this report examines the experiences of convicted offenders who participated in an established drink driving rehabilitation program *Under the Limit* (UTL). Course completers were surveyed at least three months after they had finished the 11-week UTL course.

The aim of this study was to examine whether the UTL program reduced the level of alcohol consumption either directly as a result of participation in the UTL drink driving program or through increased use of community alcohol program by participants.

The research involved a self-report outcome evaluation to determine whether the self-reported levels of alcohol use after the course had changed from the initial alcohol use reported by offenders.

The findings are based on the responses of 30 drink-driving offenders who had completed the UTL program (response rate: 20%). While a process evaluation was proposed in the initial application, the low response rate meant that this follow up research was not feasible. The response rate was low for two reasons, it was difficult to: recruit participants who consented to follow up, and subsequently locate and survey those who had consented to involvement.

## Outcomes

Respondents reported that their attendance at the program led to reductions in both drinking and drink driving. The majority reported decreasing their consumption and demonstrated a high knowledge of the effects of alcohol on the body. The majority also indicated that the course and the associated court appearance and licence suspension had led to a major change in their drink driving. The research also indicated that knowledge of standard drinks and different alcohol types needed further attention.

## Recommendations

There were a number of limitations to the study primarily related to the low level of recruitment and its selectivity.  It is recommended that further research is undertaken.

In addition, as a result of this research, a modification of the UTL program is being considered, to include pre- and post-test questionnaire assessment of knowledge scores. This will enable knowledge levels to be measured from the outset and allow the program to be tailored to the needs of participants.

## Further research

A recent evaluation, undertaken in parallel with this project, replicated these findings and found significantly reduced drink driving re-offence rates for multiple offenders completing UTL compared with a Queensland comparison sample.

[view the report](/wp-content/uploads/Evaluation-of-the-UTL-Program-PDF.pdf)