# POLAR SELTZER PROGRAM 24W REPORT

Written by Elizabeth Barker and Connor Vogel Edited by the Polar Project Board and the SWC

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#### 1. GOALS OF THE PROJECT

In response to the President's institutional goal of supporting wellbeing, this project specifically aims to reduce risk associated with the misuse of alcohol by promoting healthy alternatives within our inclusive communities during higher risk events. The seltzer water project was implemented as a pilot during Summer '23 (23X) and continued in Fall '23F (23F) and Winter '24W (24W) to gauge the need for attractive non-alcoholic alternatives within events at Greek spaces. Along with registering Alcohol Management Program (AMP) events, Greek spaces have been encouraged to pick up as many as 10 cases of Polar seltzers per event at Stinson's Village Store. These seltzers were then distributed at events in public spaces, primarily at the designated bar. Continuing this winter term, we have implemented a delivery service for houses that attend and/or participate in the Polar Project Student Advisory meetings.

The goal of the project is to provide a viable, attractive alternative to alcohol at AMP events. Attractive non-alcoholic beverages were not available at AMP events prior to this program. We identified Polar Seltzers as an attractive option that students were more likely to drink over beer or other alcohol as opposed to water and expanded the program to include Liquid Death seltzers and Spindrift at certain events this winter. Our hope is that making these non-alcoholic seltzers readily available at AMP registered events will reduce general harm and binge-drinking, while creating more inclusive spaces.

This is not an unprecedented project. In the past, pizza and bottled water had been delivered to Greek spaces prior to AMP events by the Dartmouth administration. Additionally, most Greek spaces have or will soon have hydration stations installed, making water more readily available.

With careful consideration of the most appropriate avenue for seltzer pick-up/delivery, more data on student responses and harm reduction, further feedback from Greek spaces, and a solid plan for the continued funding of the seltzer initiative, we hope to expand the seltzer program into a long-lasting harm-reduction method, ideally with the support from the Offices of the President and Chief Health and Wellness. The students are extremely grateful for the support for the project from the Office of the President and the Dean of the College throughout 24W, and we plan to continue the project for the foreseeable future. In 23F, Brian Bowden, Connor Vogel, Maya Resnick, and Jess Bargamian met with Dean Brown, and he expressed his, and the College's, support for the project continuing. Additionally, we have instituted a funding partnership with Dartmouth Student Government (DSG) for large campus weekends such as Winter Carnival this past winter, and plan to continue that partnership for Green Key in the spring.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dartmouth College (2023, October 13). Dartmouth's Strategic Plan For Student Mental Health and Well-Beting. Commitment to Care. Tactic 2A.2. Reduce the role of alcohol in Dartmouth' social setting. p.48. Action 2A.2.4. Retrieved January 13, 2024, from https://mentalhealth.dartmouth.edu/

## 2. PROGRAM DURING 24W

#### a. Summary

During the 24W term, there were a total of 204 AMP events hosted by Greek organizations, with 86 of them (42%) receiving Polar seltzers. This is a conservative estimate since leftover seltzers from an event were likely used for subsequent events, but the leftover Polars are not accounted for in these numbers. When thinking about the use of leftover Polars, it is likely that between 50% and 60% of registered AMP events this term had seltzer water provided by this pilot. In 23F we saw roughly the same percentage of events with Polars (41%) and in 23X, 33% of events had Polars. These seltzer pickups and deliveries were spread over twenty-three (23) Greek spaces and organizations across campus. Participants included: Amarna, Alpha Chi Alpha, Alpha Phi, Alpha Theta, Chi Delta, Chi Gamma Epsilon, Chi Heorot, Collis Governing Board (Microbrews), Gamma Delta Chi, Kappa Delta, Kappa Delta Epsilon, Kappa Pi Kappa, Panarchy, Phi Delta Alpha, Psi Upsilon, Sigma Delta, Sigma Nu, Theta Delta Chi, Zeta Psi, and others. Participation also expanded to other student organizations and events outside of the Greek system, including The Dartmouth Outing Club (DOC) and West House. Deliveries were made to houses that attended the weekly polar project meeting to discuss feedback and serve as an advisory board. All houses or organizations were permitted to pick up from Stinson's if they chose to do so.

Organizations were notified about the Polar initiative with several emails, discussions about the program in AMP 1-on-1 meetings with Brian Bowden, and encouragement by Stinson's staff to pick up seltzers when organizations picked up beer at Stinson's. Despite our best efforts to reach 100% participation among Greek organizations, some organizations still did not participate in the program. Greek organizations that did not pick up seltzers at least once in 24W include Alpha Xi Delta, Beta Alpha Omega, Bones Gate, Epsilon Kappa Theta, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Phi Tau, and The Tabard. It should be noted that a few of these organizations were either suspended or on alcohol probation for 24W, which could indicate why they did not pick up seltzers. Nevertheless, we saw an immense increase in the usage of Polar and other non-alcoholic beverages across all of campus during 24W.

Pilot Project meetings have been enthusiastically attended by members of Greek spaces who have dedicated time and energy to the organization and execution of the project. Weekly meetings were attended by house officers every Monday during 24W from 12 - 1 pm. The following groups have been consistent contributors; Alpha Chi Alpha, Chi Delt, Psi Upsilon, Theta Delt, Sigma Delt, Phi Delt, Gamma Delta Chi, and Chi Gam.

Responses gathered from each event at which seltzers were distributed throughout 24W are overwhelmingly in support of the program, and over 375 student attendee responses were gathered. The Greek officer survey that existed in 23X was ended since the feedback from officers was collected in a focus group style during the weekly meetings.

## b. Pilot Project Board Thoughts/Feedback

Pilot Project meetings have been attended by officers, mainly Risk Managers and Social Chairs, from multiple Greek spaces. The most frequent attendees include Connor Vogel (Chi Gamma Epsilon), Elizabeth Barker (Chi Delta), Siddharth Hathi (Phi Delta Alpha), Andrew Xu (Alpha Chi Alpha), and Marquist Allen (Gamma Delta Chi). A few weeks into the term we were joined by a DSG representative,

JJ Dega, to begin and strengthen our partnership with DSG. Meetings were facilitated by Connor Vogel (SWC Intern) and Brian Bowden (Student Wellness Center; Lead Counselor: BASICS & AMP).

Discussion topics from these meetings have included:

- The addition of other non-alcohol beverages such as Liquid Death and Spindrift to assess the most well liked option
- The creation of polls to best gauge seltzer water interest at Greek events and analysis of poll data
- Anecdotal notes as to what each member and their organization have experienced thus far in the Polar program
- Ideas about how to expand participation to organizations that do not currently participate
- Thoughts as to how this program can best cater to the needs of Dartmouth students and organizations
- Any potential ways to optimize the Polar program to make it most efficient for student organizations

Response to the Polar Seltzer Pilot Project Program from board members on behalf of their respective organizations has been overwhelmingly positive. Each organization has an interest in seeing the program continue and has also seen the seltzers actively used at many events. Many board members have personally witnessed event attendees choose seltzer over another alcoholic drink or along with alcoholic drinks and have heard affirmations toward the presence of seltzers from both organization members and event attendees.

#### 3. COSTS AND FUNDING

#### a. Current Costs 24W

This winter, the Polar seltzer program was funded mostly by the Office of the President and the Dean of the College with the goal of reducing harmful drinking at campus events, as well as small additional funding during Winter Carnival from DSG. Dean Brown expressed his appreciation for the project and its positive impact on campus indicating a hope for continued funding and expansion.

Organizations are permitted to receive up to 10 cases of seltzer per event. The board does not expect each event to use 10 cases of Polar, but this number is to ensure that organizations always have some seltzer in their house and are not running out of seltzer at events.

An important note is that during Winter Carnival, with the partnership funding from DSG, Spindrifts were also delivered to various houses across campus in addition to Polar seltzers. After that weekend, based on the Polar Project Survey distributed through the Campus Listserv and across campus, Spindrift received overwhelmingly positive feedback and 44% of students preferred Spindrift to Polar (26.6% had no preference and 25.9% preferred Polar). Due to this difference in preference, it was clear to the committee that Spindrifts would be a great addition to the project. Therefore, following the weekend of Winter Carnival, Greek houses and organizations that attended the Polar meeting received 5 cases of Polar seltzers and 4 cases of Spindrift per week (by decreasing the number of cases from 10 to 9 the weekly cost of seltzers stayed roughly consistent due to Spindrift being slightly more expensive than Polar).

Here is a table of the costs of the Polar, Liquid Death, and Spindrift seltzers funded by the College to student organizations during 24W (note, in some instances combinations of Polars, Spindrift, and Liquid Death were served at the same event. This is accounted for in the average cost per event):

Polar, Liquid Death, and Spindrift Seltzer Cost Break down

Chapter	# of Polar Events (Total # Cases Picked Up/Delivered in 24W)	# of Spindrift Events (Total # Cases Picked Up/Delivered in 24W)	# of Liquid Death Events (Total # Cases Picked Up/Delivered in 24W)	Average Cost per Event	Total Cost
Alpha Chi					
Alpha	7 (60)	3 (15)	1 (4)	\$179.46	\$1256.25
Alpha Phi	3 (30)	0	0	\$139.90	\$419.70
Alpha Theta	2 (13)	1 (2)	0	\$109.93	\$219.85
Amarna	2 (14)	0	0	\$97.93	\$195.86
Chi Delta	5 (40)	3 (11)	1 (4)	\$128.64	\$900.49
Chi Gamma					
Epsilon	9 (76)	4 (16)	0	\$170.89	\$1,367.08
Chi Heorot	6 (53)	1 (2)	0	\$129.91	\$779.45
Gamma Delta	5 (50)	1 (5)	0	\$158.89	\$794.45

Chi					
Kappa Delta	1 (5)	1 (5)	0	\$164.90	\$164.90
Kappa Delta					
Epsilon	3 (23)	1 (5)	0	\$138.91	\$416.72
Kappa Pi Kappa	3 (22)	0	0	\$102.59	\$307.78
Panarchy	2 (15)	1 (1)	0	\$114.42	\$228.84
Phi Delta Alpha	8 (69)	3 (13)	1 (1)	\$155.65	\$1245.18
Psi Upsilon	7 (65)	3 (8)	0	\$131.41	\$1051.27
Sigma Delta	2 (15)	1 (2)	0	\$123.92	\$247.83
Sigma Nu	1 (5)	1 (3)	0	\$126.92	\$126.92
Theta Delta Chi	8 (75)	2 (5)	0	\$143.03	\$1144.20
Zeta Psi	1 (5)	0	1 (1)	\$102.95	\$102.95
DOC	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (1)	\$32.99	\$65.98
Microbrews	1 (1)	0	6 (21)	\$118.66	\$711.94
West House	0	0	1 (4)	\$132.00	\$132.00
Delivery Fees					\$110.00
TOTAL:	77 (643)	27 (94)	12 (36)	\$128.76	\$11,989.64

Data gathered from invoices sent by Stinson's to the College.

Note: The number of Polar events estimation is likely conservative since officers rarely reported going through 10 cases of Polar at an event. Leftover Polars were likely used for future events, so it is very likely that more events had Polars than this estimation accounts for. Additionally, Alpha Chi, Beta, and Sig Nu would have likely picked up more cases of seltzer this term if they were not suspended. All three of these organizations were active participants in the program during 23X and in 23F before they were suspended. For houses that were placed on alcohol probation, they were still permitted to receive seltzers for dry events due to the understanding that students may still be intoxicated and benefit from non-alcohol beverages despite the organization not serving alcohol.

There were a total of 204 AMP events during 24W, and the initiative provided seltzers to 86 of them (approximately 42%). The project gained even more momentum this winter term compared to fall term, which can account for the increase in cost (\$11,989.64 during 24W compared to \$7041.48 during 23F). This is approximately a 60% increase over the quarter.

With the popularity of the project, the Advisory Board is anticipating a 50% growth/increase for spring term '24 (estimated \$18,000 in 24S). Spring term traditionally has the most registered AMP events of any term by a significant margin. We also anticipate needing a large amount of Polars for Green Key weekend, as this is the largest "big weekend" at Dartmouth with the highest number of events where alcohol will be present.

## b. Invoicing

Invoices are made during each Greek organization's polar seltzer pick-up from Stinson's. Invoices included the Greek organization's name, a signature from the organization's representative, as well as all expected standard information. Stinson's sent invoices from both pickups and deliveries to Brian Bowden and Christiana Fitzpatrick at the SWC. See example invoice below.

## Stinson's Village Store

2 Allen St, Hanover, NH 03755 stinsonsvillage@gmail.com (603) 643-6086

## **INVOICE**



BILL TO
---------

Brian Bowden and Christiana Fitzpatrick	Invoice No:	
Student Wellness Center at Dartmouth College	•	
6025 N Main St, Hanover, NH 03755	<b>Invoice Date:</b>	
Brian.Bowden@dartmouth.edu	•	
Christiana.Fitzpatrick@dartmouth.edu	Due Date:	

DESCRIPTION	QTY ( ≤ 8)	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
32-Pack Polar Seltzer		\$13.99	

**Balance Due: \$** 

Greek Organization:		
Member Name:		
Member Signature:		

## 4. STUDENT FEEDBACK

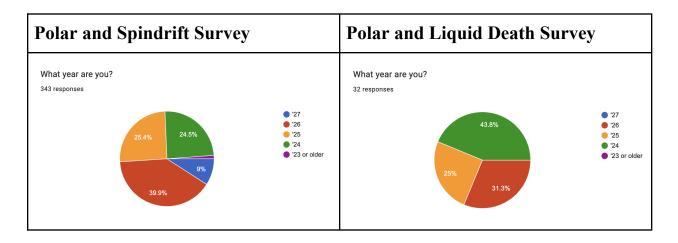
### a. Survey Responses

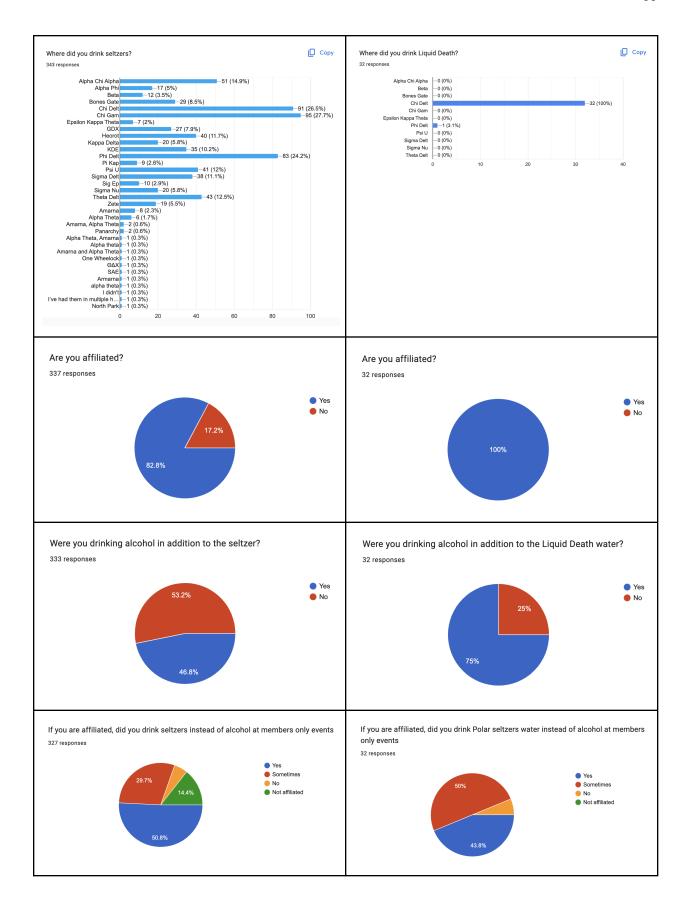
The SWC Polar Board sent out a survey for the attendees of Polar events. These surveys were sent out to attendees by event planners, posted at the bar as QR codes and sent to the campus events listserv by the SWC. The board also sent out a second survey to attendees of events that had Liquid Death seltzers to gather feedback on the Liquid Death pilot events. We modified the main survey to include questions about the differences between Polar and Spindrift because those were the most frequently offered seltzer options, but kept the Liquid Death survey separate due to how few events served Liquid Death. We had a total of 343 student responses on the Polar and Spindrift survey and 32 responses on the survey for events with both Polar and Liquid Death. Selected questions and responses from these surveys are listed below. In the data questions section, responses from the Polar and Liquid Death survey are on the right. In the Feedback Questions section, responses from both surveys are shown without distinction.

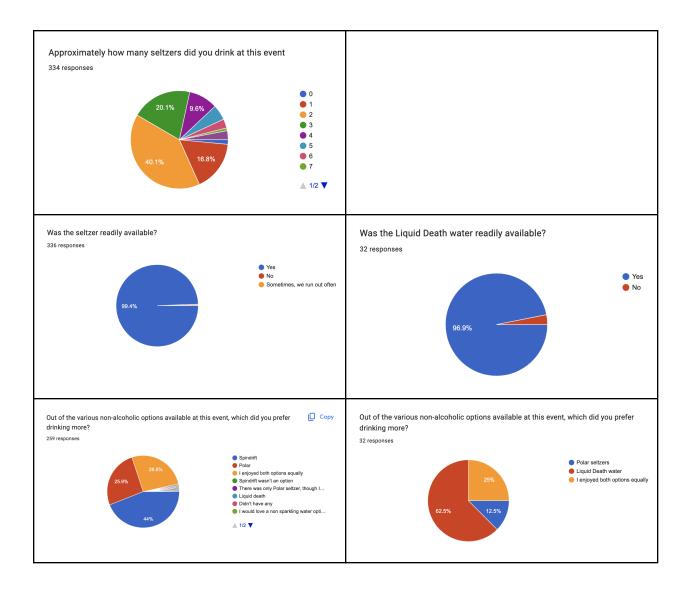
## b. Survey Results

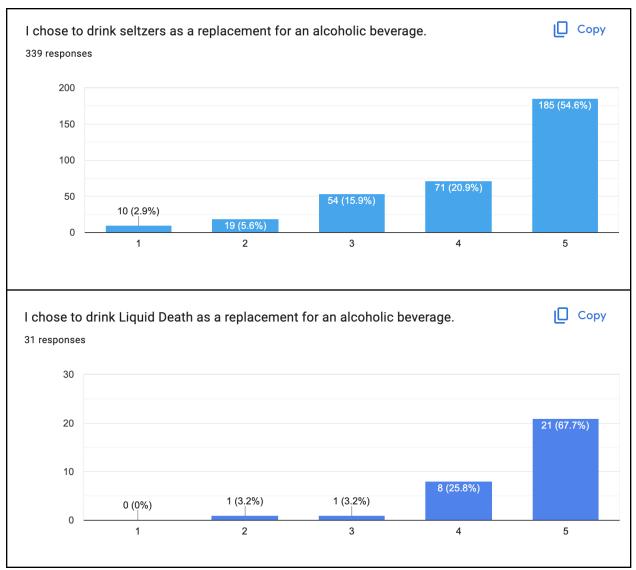
## i. Graphical Responses

## 1. Data Questions



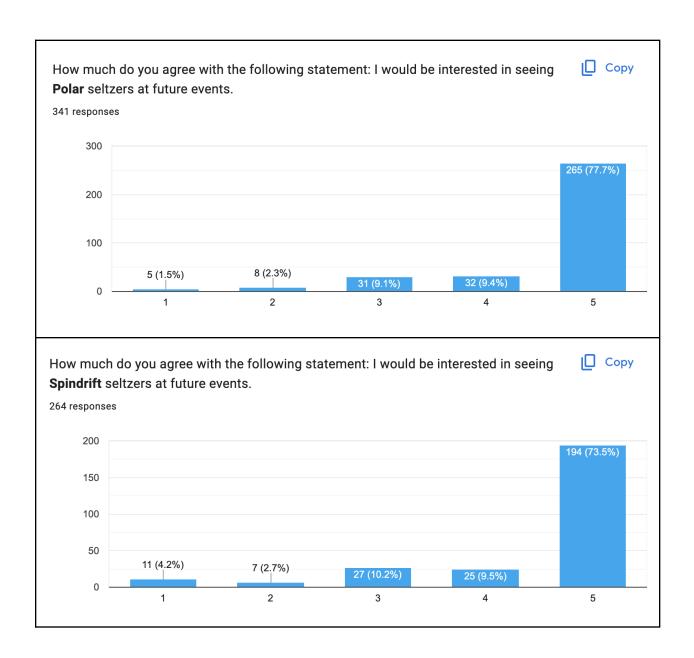


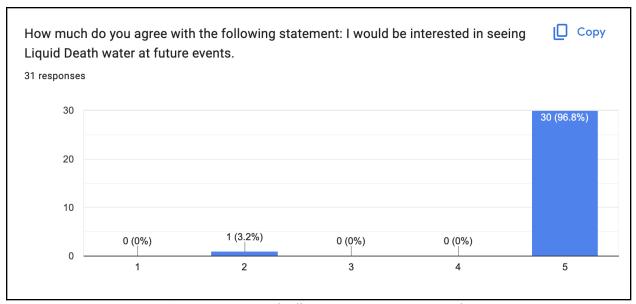




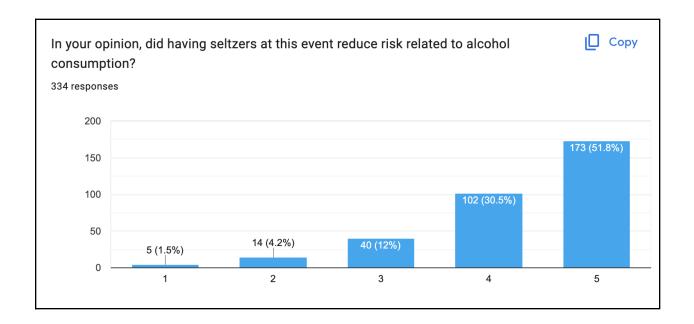
Response Items: (1)Not at all True ... (5) Very True

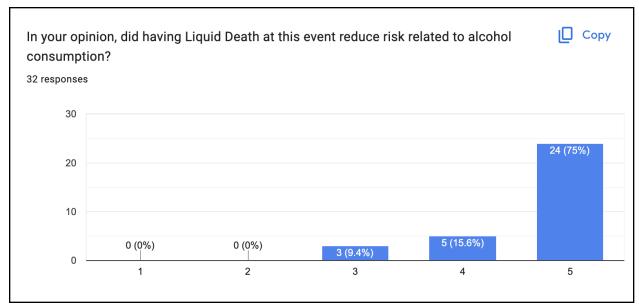
## 2. Feedback Questions



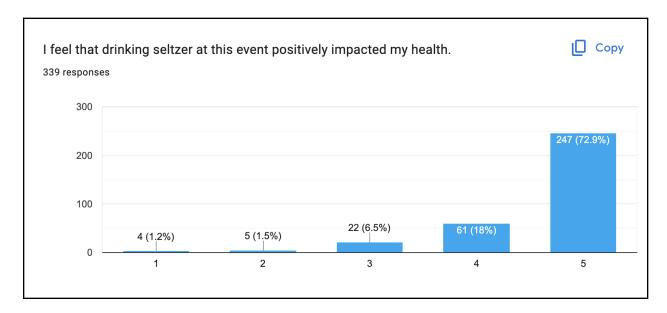


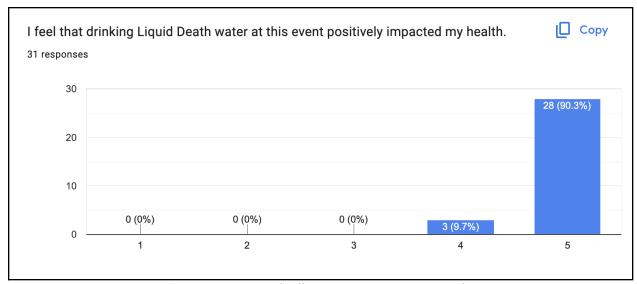
Note: 1 represents strongly disagree; 5 represents strongly agree



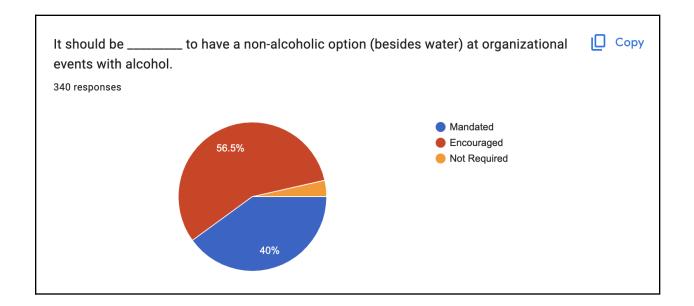


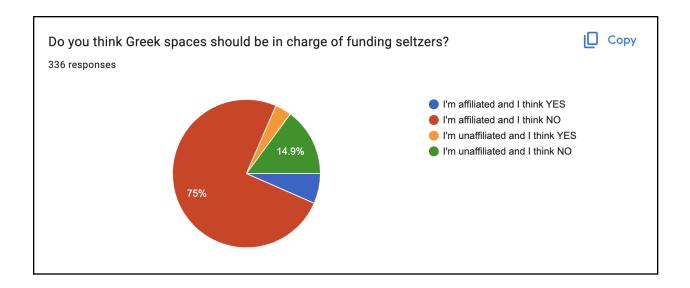
Note: 1 represents strongly disagree; 5 represents strongly agree





Note: 1 represents strongly disagree; 5 represents strongly agree





#### **Summary of Graphical Response Data and Feedback**

#### a. Data

Based on survey responses, Polar consumption was generally even between '24s and '25s, with a higher proportion of '26s and a lower proportion of '27s drinking seltzers. There is a significantly higher portion of affiliated people who report drinking seltzers. The lower number of responses from '27s and unaffiliated people is likely because it is more difficult to distribute the survey to them. Students most often (10% or greater share of responses) drank Polars at Alpha Chi, Chi Delt, Chi Gam, Heorot, KDE, Phi Delt, Psi U, Sigma Delt, and Theta Delt. Students only drank Liquid Death at Chi Delt and Phi Delt since these were the two organizations piloting Liquid Death this term. Around half of respondents drank Polar instead of alcohol, and the other half drank Polar in addition to alcohol. Both of those behaviors are consistent with low-risk drinking recommendations and create a more inclusive atmosphere compared to the events without seltzers. Seltzers are frequently consumed at members only events, often as a substitute for alcohol, in addition to open to campus events, and the seltzers are almost always readily available at open to campus events. Most respondents drank around 2 seltzer waters per event. Out of the various seltzer options offered this term (Polar, Spindrift, and Liquid Death), most students preferred Spindrift and Liquid Death to Polar.

#### b. Feedback

Based on this data, which is consistent with survey responses received in 23X and 23F, Dartmouth students are very satisfied with the program and would like to see Polar, Spindrift, and Liquid Death seltzers at future events. Students also felt that drinking Polar at AMP events positively impacted their health. Students generally believe it should be encouraged, but not mandated, to serve attractive alternatives to alcohol like the seltzers at AMP events, but there is a significant share of students that believe it should be mandated. The vast majority of students believe Greek organizations should not be responsible for funding the seltzers. Students also indicated that they believe having the seltzers at events reduced alcohol-related harm at these events and positively impacted their health, two main goals of the project.

#### ii. Narrative Feedback

## "Space to share any other comments/concerns/questions on the Polar Project/Spindrift Project"

- "this should be mandatory and funded by the college"
- "I love this project. Finally something to actually help students. I have taken advantage of this multiple times. 1) I drive to campus sometimes and don't want to drink and drive so I use seltzers then. I know for sure I would sip on something and if it weren't for the seltzers that would be beer. 2) just the other night I was drunk and grabbed two seltzers and drank them on my walk home. That really helped sober me up"
- "This is one of the best ideas possible! One night I was wanting to drink a lot less and playing pong with someone who did not drink too much and so we chose seltzer instead!"
- "Spindrift is made with real juice which has a much better taste and I'd be more likely to drink that rather than the current polar option provided."
- "I love and appreciate the polar project, it has made it very easy to choose water over beer"
- "I love seltzer at events. I like to sip on something and have a drink in my hand, but I do not want that drink to always be alcohol."
- "I love the new seltzer option! I'm trying to cut back on alc, and I like being able to participate in greek life with less pressured to drink:)"
- "Great to have them in greek houses, it's really inclusive for those that don't drink, and allows those wanting to drink less to have another option. I personally have them when wanting to be sober for a night, or when feeling unwell and not wanting to drink alcohol"
- "I absolutely LOVE having the option to drink something outside of water at an event if I'm choosing not to drink. Having the cans of seltzer makes it feel like I'm having a fun beverage in my hand rather than a cup of water. I'm a big fan of Polar as a whole, and seeing it being offered at social events has only increased my love of it."
- "Spindrifts are a much better alternative"
- "I think having polars or seltzers is a fantastic option for those not looking to drink, but still wanting to engage socially. It provides a great way for students to feel included still holding a drink, but totally removes any pressure to drink alcohol. I really enjoy having these around and I think they positively impact student health. Especially helpful in a crowded fraternity and it could be hard to get to the water fountain or bathroom. I think it would be fantastic for the school to continue funding these drinks because it does not make logistical sense for Greek spaces to have to spend money on these drinks. It would also discourage the mass distribution of the drinks because Greek spaces are already tight on money."
- "Polar Seltzer has been great for my undergraduate society and my Greek house. We have really embraced it as both something nice and as a "funny" alternative to alcohol. i.e., we play games with the seltzer and use the reuse cans for projects. Our members really love the polar and hope we can continue to receive them. In my undergrad society, it is really helpful—we have a small budget, and buying alcohol tends to wipe that out—the free polar has helped us better provide

- non-alc options, it has also had the effect of us reducing how much alc we buy because it no longer feels like the only option at a party and many people even prefer the seltzer."
- "HUGE fan of this project! I think that people often find themselves in greek spaces and want something to sip on, but do not want to consume alcohol. For example, I have been in my greek house and just wanted something to drink. Before the seltzer project, unless I happened to have a water bottle with me, my only option would have been alcoholic beverages. But this project allows me and my friends to engage in greek events without drinking alcohol if we choose not to. Seltzer is also very refreshing!"
- "Spindrift was a total game changer. I appreciated Spindrift in a way that I did not appreciate the Polar seltzers. If the college wants to encourage consumption of non-alcoholic beverages at events, and promote inclusivity at Greek events, it should switch all Polars to Spindrifts they are far better, more likely to be consumed, and effective in achieving the goals of this program."
- "I loved the spindrift so much. Having spindrift made me choose to drink spindrift instead of alcohol, whereas with the polars I usually still drink alcohol and maybe have a polar at the end of the night. But the spindrifts are SO MUCH BETTER that I actively wanted to drink them on their own. Thank you for bringing spindrifts and PLEASE BRING THEM BACK"

# "Space to share any other comments/concerns/questions on the Polar Project/Liquid Death Project"

- "I think this is such a great project and I am so happy to have great non-alcoholic options at events!!! the polars are great but liquid death is even better the can disguises so nicely and makes it so much easier to be in social situations and not drink. please keep funding this project!"
- "Appreciate you guys for doing this <3"
- "Liquid death was so good"
- "Liquid Death tastes so good and is less obviously non-alcoholic which I appreciate so much as someone who doesn't drink!"
- "I drank an alcoholic drink and followed it with a liquid death, which helped me stay hydrated. I like the liquid deaths more than the polars be the tall cans look like alcoholic drinks, so there is less "pressure" around whether you decide to drink or not drink alcohol at an event."

#### **Feedback Summary**

These additional comments are extremely supportive of the Polar seltzer program. The seltzers were beneficial to many different types of Dartmouth students who attend Greek events, including those who drink alcohol, those who do not, and athletes who are in season. Students feel that the program gives them more choice over whether they drink alcohol when going to Greek spaces. Before the Polar program, students felt more pressure to drink alcohol, but now that there is another attractive option readily available, students can have more agency over their choice of drink. Respondents agree with the board's sentiment that Greek organizations should not be required to pay for the seltzers, as this would likely result in a lack of seltzers at events, since cost is the greatest barrier to Greek organizations in providing seltzers at events. This feedback is very similar to feedback we have received in every term of this project. In addition to feedback that has remained relatively constant throughout the duration of this initiative (since 23X), this term also brought feedback related to our new ideas. While students still value Polars, survey responses indicate that students prefer Spindrift and Liquid Death seltzers over the Polars. This important feedback has pushed the board to include a permanent option for organizations that

actively participate in the project to receive a limited quantity of Spindrift seltzers for every registered AMP event that they host.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

In general, the Polar program was a major success this winter. Anecdotal evidence from board members and collected survey data both indicate that the seltzers are a popular alternative to alcohol at AMP events and were used frequently in Greek spaces in less formal settings when alcohol was present. Examples of these other events include meetings and other less formal events such as watching sports games. We believe it is important that organizations are using leftover seltzers for these less formal events because this is still an important method of harm reduction. In general, the board and the survey note that there was a large increase in the distribution and use of seltzers during the winter term, indicating that the project has gained even more momentum since the fall term.

Moving forward, we would like to see cost and popularity data throughout the rest of the 2023-2024 academic year (next term, 24S, marks the end of this academic year) and perhaps gather more specific harm reduction data. The board will utilize more student surveys toward this end while constantly working to refine survey questions to ensure that we are getting comprehensive and relevant feedback. Overall, the coordinators of the Polar Project continue to be satisfied with picking up the seltzers at Stinson's and Stinson's delivery options. The board has discussed the potential for a partnership with Dartmouth Dining Services to provide the seltzers, but this currently does not seem as easy as the current Stinson's options. The board will continue to explore the possibility of partnering with DDS for our seltzers.

The board and Greek organizations across campus are very excited about the Spindrift seltzers that we began providing at the end of this term. Dartmouth Student Government provided Spindrift seltzers for Winter Carnival weekend, and because they were very popular, the board decided to continue providing them in a limited quantity to organizations that send a representative to Polar Project Board meetings. This term, we also provided seltzers to dry Tier 0 events that were registered through AMP. Even though organizations did not serve alcohol at these events, the board thought it would be best to provide seltzers to these events since people likely were drinking before the event or somehow brought their own alcohol to the event. The board plans to continue providing seltzers to dry Tier 0 events because we believe that seltzers reduce harm related to alcohol consumption at these events. The board hopes to continue the open line of communication between the board, Office of the President, and the Dean of the College, which will help us realize a clearer goal of where to progress from here. The board also hopes to continue our partnership with Dartmouth Student Government who has been very helpful in guiding and funding parts of this project.

## a. Moving Forward

The coordinators of the Polar project are always looking for ways to expand and improve the program. The board has identified several goals and objectives for the project moving forward, and we are always open to more suggestions from students and the College. Some of our main priorities include:

• Increase participation among Greek organizations who do not currently participate or who participate in a limited capacity. Additionally, because of the successful pilots in Microbrews and

- the DOC, we hope to continue expanding the program beyond Greek organizations to all organizations that register AMP events.
- For Spring '24, we are initiating collaboration with Dartmouth Dining Services to potentially provide the beverages within existing purchasing contracts. This process has been initiated to investigate the potential cost savings associated with DDS involvement.
- Our ultimate goal is for the seltzers to be present at every event on campus that also serves alcohol.
- We hope to continue gaining participation at our meetings and collaboration across multiple
  organizations and support networks to build out the project and therefore reduce harm in various
  spaces across campus.