

Guidance – Alcohol & Drugs / Substance Misuse

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to all line-managers in supporting a member of their team with suspected alcohol / substance misuse issues.

1. Recognising a problem

Substance misuse issues may affect performance and behaviour in a variety of ways and each situation will require an individualised response. Early signs of an issue may include for example:

- A member of staff attends work and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- A pattern of regular absences become apparent, particularly around start and finish of the working week which may indicate a substance misuse issue.
- Deterioration in the performance of familiar or routine tasks.
- Changes in conduct, behaviour and appearance.
- A change in attitude to colleagues or interpersonal difficulties.

2. Dealing with someone who has a potential or confirmed substance misuse issue

All cases should be dealt with in a confidential and supportive manner. If a worker is a contractor or agency worker then a designated manager must report their concern to the external contractor/agency manager. Disciplinary action will not normally be appropriate unless a manager has reason to believe that an employee has attended work while unfit to do so, due to use of alcohol, drug(s) or other substances.

When you become aware of the issue, you should:

1. Contact a member of the Operational Workforce Team to make them aware of your concern, seek their confidential advice and outline/ agree your initial plan for raising the concern with the individual.
2. Keep ongoing, accurate and confidential records of performance issues or other behavioural concerns.
3. Speak to the individual about your concerns in confidence as early as possible, the following may be helpful in doing so:
 - a) Explore the concerns that have arisen that day in relation to the individual's poor performance and/or behaviour.
 - b) Seek to understand any underlying reasons by asking the individual what they think may be contributing to the situation.

c) Discuss this guidance document and the help and support available within the Health Board and from organisations external to the Health Board and agree future action.

4. Refer the employee to the Occupational Health Department as soon as possible to advise on the extent of any alcohol, drug or substance misuse related problem and to determine the potential effect on the individual's role.

5. Arrange regular meetings to monitor progress and discuss any further problems if they arise. Keep an accurate and confidential record of all actions or referrals agreed.

6. Agree time off for treatment in accordance with other policies relating to leave, e.g. Managing Attendance at Work, Annual Leave Policy.

7. If performance and/or behaviour return to satisfactory levels following treatment and support, no further action will be required and regular reviews will continue as appropriate.

8. If performance and/or behaviour do not improve, line management will manage the situation in line with the organisation's prevailing policies.

3. Management of Employees at work suspected of being under the influence of substances

Step 1 - Should a member of staff arrive at work displaying a number of potential signs / symptoms of being under the influence, the manager should immediately arrange to meet with the employee privately and informally to determine:

- Whether they have consumed any drugs and/or alcohol within the last 24 hours; and if so, how much and when (including when they last took any drink and/or drugs).
- How they travelled to work; and
- If they go home, who is there to be with and, support them.
- Offer the individual an Alcohol or drugs / substance test to support any conclusions. Whilst an individual is entitled to refuse a test, any subsequent decision made by a line-manager will need to be on the basis of the available information and on the balance of probabilities.

Step 2 – Using the information gained at this meeting, determine whether there is a belief that they are fit for work. In all situations, caution should be exercised before allowing them to continue working. Advice may be sought from the Operational Workforce team.

Step 3 – If there is any doubt that they are fit for work, then either:

- Send them home. Ideally, they should not be sent home alone and they should not be allowed to drive. Consider contacting a family member to take them home or, alternatively, use a taxi;
or
- Take them to a room in which they will feel safe. Do not let them return to work unless they are completely fit to do so.

Step 4 - A determination may need to be made as to whether the situation requires the individual to immediately take annual leave or special leave, or consideration may be given to medical suspension. the relevant line-manager should consult the All-Wales Managing Attendance at Work policy and seek advice from Operational Workforce. An accurate and confidential record should be made of all actions undertaken.

4. Signpost to helpful services and resources

You might find it helpful to include information on or signpost to some of the following sources of information and advice:

Adfam National Organisation that works with and on behalf of families affected by drug and alcohol problems. Helpful for the family of the alcohol or drug user. Website: www.adfam.org.uk

Al-Anon Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Eire provide support for anyone whose life is or has been affected by someone else's drinking. Website: www.al-anonuk.org.uk Guidance for line managers Managing drug and alcohol misuse at work 8 A

Alcoholics Anonymous The largest self-help group for people who acknowledge they cannot handle alcohol and want a new way of life without it. Services are free. The comprehensive website explains the philosophy of AA, what to expect, and local groups. Helpline: 0800 917 7650 Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Alcohol Change UK Leading UK alcohol charity formed from the merger of Alcohol Concern and Alcohol Research UK. Work for a society that is free from the harm caused by alcohol. Website: <https://alcoholchange.org.uk/>

Cocaine Anonymous National self-help group specifically for cocaine users. Helpline: 0800 612 0225, open 10:00am to 10:00pm, 7 days Website: <https://cocaineanonymous.org.uk/>

Drinkaware An independent UK-wide alcohol education charity. Provides advice and information to anyone concerned about their own drinking or someone else's and a range of support tools to help people reduce their drinking, change their relationship with alcohol and improve their health. Free, confidential advice is provided through the online chat service, DrinkChat, and helpline, Drinkline (0300 123 1110). A workplace awareness training programme is provided by Drinkaware at Work. Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk

Narcotics Anonymous The largest self-help group for people who want to stop using drugs. Services are free. Helpline: 0300 999 1212 Website: www.ukna.org

Release A registered charity able to advise on specialist areas of drugs law. Helpline: 020 7324 2989 Website: www.release.org.uk

Talk to FRANK A government-funded free service offering information and sources of support. The website provides detailed information on drugs that the non-specialist can understand. Helpline: 0300 123 6600 Website: www.talktofrank.com

WDP Charity providing drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services across England. Also provide organisational training on drugs, alcohol, smoking, mental health and wellbeing. Website: www.wdp.org.uk

We Are With You (formerly Addaction) Drug, alcohol and mental health charity Website: www.wearewithyou.org.uk

Rehab 4 Addiction An advisory and referral service for people who suffer from alcohol, drug and behavioural addiction. Helpline: 0800 140 4690 Website: <https://www.rehab4addiction.co.uk/>