



AD1 Raise awareness about substances, their use and effects.

OVERVIEW

For this standard you will need to raise awareness about substances (drugs and alcohol), the use of substances and the effects of substances. The awareness raising may be with children and young people, or with other people who need to know about substances e.g. because they use substances themselves, have friends or family who use or may use substances, or work on a formal or informal basis with individuals who use substances. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies. Version No 1

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You will need to know and understand:

1. legal and organisational requirements and policies requirements relevant to the functions being carried out
2. the legislation (national and European) which relates to the work being undertaken (e.g. Misuse of Drugs Act, Medicines Act, Child Protection Act, Customs and Excise Act, Road Traffic Act, Crime and Disorder Act)
3. government policy in relation to substance use: prevention and education; treatment, counselling, support and rehabilitation
4. key organisations that are designed to deliver the government's strategy on drugs and alcohol on the ground (ie Drug Action Teams in England and Scotland, Drug Co-ordination Teams in Northern Ireland, Drug and Alcohol Action Teams in Wales)
5. the differing responses which governments make to legal and illegal drugs, the reasons for this and the effect of this on treatment availability for different groups
6. the agency's policy and procedures regarding confidentiality of information and the disclosure of information to third parties, and the specific circumstances under which disclosure may be made
7. physical, social, psychological and emotional development of individuals and the ways in which such development can be affected; the nature of adolescence and how it affects behaviour and feelings
8. the different substances which are available and the effects they have on the body - stimulants, sedatives and hallucinogenics (including prescription and over-the-counter drugs)
9. street names for substances, how these change over time and in different locations, the need to check out understanding with users re the terminology used

- 10.the dangers of substance use: quantity, frequency, purity of the substances, polydrug use
- 11.issues of quality in illegal substances; impurities, adulterants and dilutents and their difference; the interest which dealers have in maintaining the quality of the substances they sell
- 12.methods of substance use (injecting, eating/drinking, snorting, inhaling, smoking) and the different risks associated with the different methods (blood borne diseases, physical harm to different parts of the body, reduced inhibitions/disorientation, death)
- 13.the inter-relationship between the background of individuals and the effect of substances on them: experience and expectations, mental and psychological state (including dual diagnosis), physical health problems (including related diseases), energy levels at the time of consumption, body weight
- 14.the reasons why individuals use substances: enjoyment, environment, curiosity, defence mechanism, rebellion, promotion and availability, cost in comparison to other substances
- 15.the effect of gender on substance use and the different perceptions that relate to the different genders and their use of substances
- 16.prevalence of substance use, age of use (particularly for children and young people) and relationship to substance type, relationship between (problematic) substance use and economic disadvantage and/or emotional deprivation
- 17.the difference between prevalence of substances in different social classes dependent on the legality and nature of the different substances
- 18.the relationship between the settings in which substances are used and the link of this to the activities of the individuals using substances: out-of-the-way places and lack of access to assistance when needed, implications of the setting on the use of substances (eg consumption in schools), risks associated with using machinery and equipment, lowering of inhibitions (eg sexual behaviour), over-exertion (eg use of ecstasy in dance clubs)
- 19.evidence for the inter-connectedness of different substances over time
- 20.methods of preventing/minimising the effect of substances that individuals use
- 21.perceptions of non-users of substances on those who use substances (eg families perceptions of their children's use, stereotyping)
- 22.the potential effects of substance use on others (eg neglect of children, domestic violence, street violence, theft, absenteeism from work)
- 23.the difference between legal and illegal drugs, the reasons for the different classifications under law and the social construction of the law in relation to substance use
- 24.the nature of dependence (psychological and physical) on substances
- 25.different services that are available to address substance use: preventive, treatment and support
- 26.the relationship between crime and antisocial behaviour and substance use: the risk factors that lead to crime and to substance use
- 27.the role of the agency and its services and how they relate to other agencies and services in the sector (e.g. when working in schools, substance use awareness raising must comply with any school policies covering substance use education)
- 28.how to monitor, analyse and evaluate implications of changes in the agency in which one works
- 29.your own role and responsibilities and from whom assistance and advice should be sought if you are unsure
- 30.how to apply the principles of equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice to your own work
- 31.the options you consider in your own work and the reasoning processes to be used

- 32.how to evaluate your own competence, determine when further support and expertise is needed and the measures which may be taken to improve your own competence; how to evaluate the effectiveness of your own actions and learn from experience
- 33.how to inform and consult with others on problems and proposals and encourage others to offer ideas and challenge
- 34.the need to develop your own competence and skills in line with changes in evidence, knowledge and practice
- 35.the rights of individuals with whom you come into contact.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to do the following:

- 1.enable individuals to talk about and identify:
 - 1.what they know and understand about substances
 - 2.the methods by which people take substances
 - 3.the effects of different substances on people's lives
 - 4.the reasons for people taking substances
 - 5.who takes different types of substances
 - 6.whether there is a difference between the use of different substances and why this is the case
 - 7.the different classifications of drugs under the legislative framework
 - 8.attitudes to substance use and misuse
- 2.ask individuals appropriate and searching questions about:
 - 1.the substances they have not mentioned
 - 2.their reasons for believing some substances are preferable to others
 - 3.what they mean when they use street terms for different substances, paraphernalia and modes of use
 - 4.the source of their information and the accuracy of their sources
- 3.enable individuals to explore:
 - 1.their feelings about substance use
 - 2.their feelings and values about people who use substances
 - 3.their feelings about why people use different substances
- 4.reflect individuals' views about substance use back to them to confirm that they have been understood and interpreted correctly
- 5.challenge individuals who discriminate against substance users
- 6.explore with individuals the strong feelings they have in relation to particular issues and the reasons for these feelings
- 7.acknowledge the experience and feelings of individuals who have suffered from others' use of substances
- 8.interact with individuals throughout the process in a manner that:
 - 1.is appropriate to the individuals' background, culture, circumstances and needs
 - 2.encourages an open exchange of views
 - 3.minimises any constraints to communication
 - 4.is free from discrimination and oppression
 - 5.is non-judgemental
 - 6.enables individuals to make their own contribution

9.identify:

- 1.the gaps in individuals' knowledge and understanding about substances, their use and effects
- 2.the values and beliefs of individuals that need to be challenged in their own interests and those of others
- 3.the learning styles that are most likely to help different individuals learn about substances and their use
- 4.the approaches that would enable different individuals learn about substances, their use and effects

10.enable individuals to learn about:

- 1.the different types of substances, their street names and how these change over time and in different places
- 2.the methods of using substances
- 3.the reasons people use substances
- 4.the effects that substances have on peoples' lives
- 5.the risks associated with multiple substance use
- 6.the range of services to address needs and issues related to substance use

11.provide learning opportunities:

- 1.at the time others need them
- 2.in a manner sensitive to their needs and confidence

12.make sure that the content of the learning is accurate and based on up-to-date evidence

13.remain open to the range of issues that individuals may wish to explore in relation to substance use and do not turn away from such issues

14.encourage others to contact you and other relevant sources of support when they need to

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health. It also appears in the Health and Social Care Standards as HSC365. This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004): Dimension: HWB1 Promotion of health and wellbeing and prevention of adverse effects to health and wellbeing. This standard has replaced HSC365.