



AH10.2014 Work with individuals to encourage a reduction in harmful alcohol consumption and drinking behaviour

OVERVIEW

This standard is about working with individuals to encourage them to recognise drinking behaviour that may be risky or harmful to health and wellbeing. It also involves providing support and guidance to help them cut down drinking alcohol. It addresses identifying who may be appropriate to receive interventions that help people reduce the harm or risk to their health caused by excessive drinking. This standard is for a wide range of workers who may come into contact with people drinking above medically recommended levels, exhibiting risky behaviour and/or experiencing difficulties relating to their alcohol use. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Version No 2

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You will need to know and understand:

1. legal, organisational and policy requirements relevant to your role and the activities being carried out
2. how to adapt communication styles in ways which meet the individual's needs, strengths and capabilities
3. local systems, procedures and protocols for safeguarding children and young people
4. your responsibility and accountability for the wellbeing of individuals
5. how to support the choice and wellbeing of the individual which is appropriate to their needs and preferences
6. how alcohol, as a drug, affects the body and mind, how this can affect behaviour
7. the characteristics of dependence
8. legal implications of alcohol use in specific circumstances, including road traffic legislation and issues around consent while intoxicated
9. the impact alcohol can have on an individual's health and wellbeing, including:
 1. the immediate risks that can arise from being drunk
 2. the potential health and social risks associated with longer term risky drinking
 3. the risk to the emotional and physical wellbeing of others including families

4. the risk to the unborn foetus for pregnant women
5. the risk to those using prescribed medication, controlled drugs and other substances
10. the unit system of measuring alcohol content and what constitutes lower risk, hazardous, harmful and dependent drinking as defined by current medical guidelines
11. the changes which can be made to drinking behaviour to improve health, wellbeing and personal safety
12. the extent and limit of your own role and expertise in relation to alcohol interventions
13. the evidence base for the efficacy of identification and brief advice
14. how to administer and interpret results from an appropriate screening tool
15. how to present and explore options with different individuals
16. how to present information and advice fully, accurately, concisely and in ways appropriate to people's needs
17. how age, gender, cultural and social background can affect the working relationship
18. the principles of equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice and how they are applied
19. the principle of confidentiality and the implications for your practice
20. the cycle of change model and how to help individuals make and review decisions and establish priorities
21. how to identify the contributing factors alcohol has on risky situations
22. the importance of brief interventions to enable individuals who are not dependent on alcohol to change their drinking behaviour to improve their health
23. the services available to treat individuals with alcohol problems
24. the importance of keeping full and accurate records, and how to do so in line with organisational requirements

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

You must be able to do the following:

1. create an environment suitable for an open, confidential discussion
2. identify, using recognised screening tools or techniques, individuals who:
 1. are drinking at risky levels and may respond to brief advice
 2. are dependent drinkers or drinkers with complex problems who need referral for specialist help
3. explain why you have a concern about the individual's drinking
4. check the individual's understanding of the impact of their drinking behaviour on themselves and others and whether they are motivated to change this behaviour
5. initiate discussions about risky drinking behaviour and respond to individuals who express concern about their drinking levels
6. encourage the individual to identify what benefits there might be from changing their drinking behaviour
7. provide accurate information and feedback about the risks associated with current alcohol use
8. provide options for alternative strategies for changing drinking behaviour,

including specialist help for those with established alcohol dependence and/or serious alcohol related problems

9. support the individual in:
 1. setting drinking goals
 2. identifying and overcoming barriers to changing their drinking behaviour
10. support the individual to identify how they drinking may impact negatively on others
11. provide relevant supplementary information leaflets or resources and signpost local specialist services if the individual wishes to seek further help
12. offer a follow-up appointment to review drinking behaviour
13. keep an accurate record of your screening results, intervention and the information and advice you gave

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health. This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: HWB4 Enablement to address health and wellbeing needs