

Your Essential Guide: Tackling Alcohol Abuse in our Communities

Alcohol Awareness Week (14-20 November 2011) is turning the spotlight on the growing issue of alcohol misuse in our communities.

According to Alcohol Concern:

- **Every minute** alcohol-related problems cost the UK economy around £48,000
- **Every hour** more than 100 people go into hospital in England and Wales with an alcohol-related condition
- **Every day** more than 40 people die as a result of alcohol in England and Wales.

So how can we achieve a world free from alcohol harm? The Department of Health has highlighted the delivery of brief interventions as a 'high impact change' which encourages more people to drink less. So for anyone looking to reshape social norms and support sustainable behaviour change, we've developed a proven framework to help you deliver effective alcohol interventions in your communities:

- 1. Community intervention workers** meet target groups on their own terms and 'on their turf' - in locations ranging from GP surgeries and hostels to local gyms, care homes, leisure centres and pubs/clubs. This is underpinned by strong local relationships with statutory, voluntary and community organisations.
- 2. A 10 point audit tool** is used to assess current alcohol consumption behaviour and people's readiness to change. If someone is within safe drinking limits, intervention workers can talk to them about maintaining that behaviour and give them bespoke information to take away. If they aren't within safe drinking limits, they have a 'validated brief intervention'.
- 3. Validated brief interventions** are given to individuals in 'hazardous' or 'harmful' categories. These non-judgemental sessions provide information and advice, raise awareness of the issues and help people make long-term changes to their drinking habits.
- 4. Appreciative inquiry and motivational interviewing techniques** examine behavioural patterns around alcohol to maximise the impact of the brief interventions and reduce the possibility of people not following up.
- 5. Electronic handheld audit tools** are used to better understand how people's attitudes, understanding and behaviours towards alcohol have changed following the screening. They also support sustained support through motivational messages, helping individuals self-manage through tools such as drinks diaries and habit-breaking plans, and signposting to the wider support services that are best suited to them.



If you'd like to know more about our proven framework for change and how it could work for you, contact our Director of Health & Lifestyle Services, Simon Dudman on 07740 252144 or simon.dudman@icecreates.com