Devon Drug and Alcohol Action Team

Alcohol Strategy – 2008/11

“Reducing Harm, Empowering Change”
Introduction

This booklet is a summary of the Devon Alcohol Strategy, produced by the Devon Drug and Alcohol Action Team.

The strategy describes some of the harmful consequences of alcohol misuse. It sets out how the Drug and Alcohol Action Team will tackle these harms using an additional £1 million pounds investment from Devon Primary Care Trust.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the strategy is to minimise the harmful behaviours and consequences associated with alcohol misuse to individuals, families and communities in Devon.

The Devon Alcohol Strategy will:

- Coordinate activity and add value to agency and partnership work to address alcohol misuse by developing an agreed framework within which services will be developed.
- Ensure coherence and consistency of activity across the Devon DAAT area.
- Ensure activity is rooted in evidence and targeted at greatest need.
- Improve information systems to support development and monitor progress.

Background

The large majority (90%) of adults in Devon, around 670,000 people, will consume alcohol on a regular basis and will do so in a way unlikely to lead to adverse consequences for themselves or other people.

However, approximately 111,000 people in Devon drink at hazardous or harmful levels and around 19,000 people are estimated to have an alcohol dependency.

Alcohol misuse can contribute to a range of problems which this strategy aims to reduce, for example:

- Persistent alcohol misuse can lead to chronic ill health. There are over 250,000 admissions to hospital in Devon every year. About 16.5% of these (41,250) are alcohol related.

1 Devon excluding Plymouth and Torbay
• Binge drinking often results in accidents and injuries. In A&E departments at peak times between midnight and 5am, 70% of all attendances are alcohol related.

• Drinking can bring out the worst in people, sometimes making them aggressive. During 2006/07 there were 3,904 recorded alcohol-related violent crimes across Devon – this makes up 37.7% of all recorded violent crime and 8.1% of all recorded crime in Devon.

• Alcohol dependency can affect people’s ability to be a good parent. The quality of upbringing of some 12,500 children in Devon is affected by parental problem drinking.

Priorities:

• Preventing alcohol misuse, identifying harmful behaviours early and providing help and support and where necessary, access to treatment services.

• Reducing the anti-social behaviour and crime and disorder commonly caused by alcohol misuse.

• Reducing harms to children and young people caused by alcohol misuse.

Actions:

• Provide, accurate and appropriate advice and information on sensible drinking

• Promote public safety by challenging attitudes to drunken, anti-social behaviour

• Get people who commit criminal and anti-social acts whilst drunk into alcohol treatment services

• Have a systematic approach to assessment and referral, ensuring people are quickly linked with the most appropriate intervention

• Develop services which are appropriate for the needs of people with mental health issues and vulnerable client groups, such as street homeless people

• Increase the availability of alcohol intervention and treatment services

• Work with parents who have alcohol misuse issues to reduce possible harm to children

• Work with licensees including, pubs, clubs and off licenses to ensure responsible retailing
Fig 1: Alcohol Harm Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Model

**How the strategy will be delivered:**

- A clear action plan with targets has been developed and is available on request.

- Services will encourage and support individual responsibility and will help people to help themselves.

- Services will:
  - encourage people to come forward for support
  - target areas where more help is needed
  - be open to people wherever they live and whatever community they come from
  - give clear information about what services are available, and how to get into them

A copy of the full strategy can be obtained from the Devon Primary Care Trust website [http://www.devonpct.nhs.uk/](http://www.devonpct.nhs.uk/) or by contacting the Devon Drug and Alcohol Action Team on 01392 449763. Newcourt House, Old Rydon Lane, Exeter, EX2 7JU.

* This strategy covers the administrative county of Devon, and excludes the unitary local authority areas of Plymouth and Torbay.