

## ALCOHOL STRATEGY CONSULTATION

Q14 Harmful drinking – where alcohol consumption is causing harm to self or others. This may be physical, mental, or social (e.g. violence, relationship problems, work problems, debt)

Q17 Early interventions are essential and by necessity are linked to awareness raising across the community and professions. Client choice regarding service provision and service accessibility.

Training – cognitive behavioural and motivational therapies, harm minimisation approaches, solution focussed therapy, and relapse management. Professionals should all be trained to treat this client group with respect and as individuals.

Q18 There is still a reluctance from many, particularly doctors to address issues around alcohol misuse. There is a need for both appropriate training and support services to be made available/accessible to enable such early interventions to take place. Previous work within our service has highlighted the positive impact which a GP referral can have on DNA rates. If used alongside brief interventions offered by G.P. or practice staff.

Q22 Our service is piloting some joint work with Stoke-on-Trent Social Services Mental Health Team because of the high correlation recognised between alcohol and mental health problems. Our Arrest Referral scheme identified a high link between violent offenders, alcohol and mental health issues. So far both projects are having positive outcomes.

Q23 Local Community Safety Partnerships are highlighting a growth in alcohol related violence in town centres. YOTs partnership is identifying high levels of anti-social behaviour relating to under age drinking. Arrest Referral scheme highlights the impact of alcohol on offending rates.

Q24 Our partnership work with the Probation service has highlighted the link between alcohol and re-offending, particularly in relation to violence and domestic violence. Data collected through arrest referral scheme would highlight alcohol re-offending.

Q35 Alcohol is used by Domestic Violence perpetrators for many different reasons (as with any other misuser), but is often used by the victim as a coping mechanism. Awareness raising, training and support services are essential, within the community and more particularly for targeted groups such as the police officers on the street, strengthened partnership working between agencies is essential.

Q36 All young people are vulnerable due to lack of knowledge and awareness about alcohol as a substance and consequence of its misuse.

Q37 Homeless, older people (particularly those bereaved) women, mental health clients, pregnant users, young people, ethnic minority groups (e.g. Sikh community have high incidents of substance misuse).

- Q38 Offering some kind of structure to the individual and a support network. Partnership working can be invaluable. Locally our County Youth Offending Service offers a positive model. Barrier of using services – lack of understanding of cultures. Barrier to joining up of services: lack of planning, lack of understanding and respect of the different agencies' roles and expertise, lack of commitment from all parties and mistaking assimilation for integration – the latter should seek to value/utilise the different philosophies and skills of partners which is what strengths partnerships.
- Q41 Objectives – hopefully to enable people to make informed choices. Full information should be provided by advertisers.
- Q43 Sensible drinking message has been very muddled. And is still very unclear to many. A bottle of wine should maybe indicate the number of units as opposed to the percentage volume.
- Q45 Focusing just on the young, will ignore many other problematic drinkers including the elderly who are still encouraged to believe that alcohol can do either their health or social life good. There should be a consistent message for everyone.