

Thank you for providing this opportunity.

One way of defining problematic alcohol use is when someone tells us they have a problem. When someone tells us that they have a problem with someone else's drinking or when it is clear that drinking (usually parental drinking) may be a causal factor in harming someone who cannot tell us themselves (usually children). Unlike other equally valid approaches there is no set amount of consumption that can trigger it. This kind of harm is very common. As someone who employs and educates social workers and nurses I see that professionals who have the training to work in specialist agencies or in generic practice are not common.

This is the problem with the drug strategy. It seeks to expand treatment but not the number of people who can provide it. When agencies advertise a job the field is often very poor. Several times recently we have not been able to fill posts. Professionals need training and a strategy should place alcohol together with drugs firmly within the curriculum for social work and nursing education. My colleagues here in the university agree with me and we have been active in this field for over ten years but we are the exception, not the rule. This makes our social work BA and MA just about the most popular in the UK. Most courses are struggling to recruit students. We are not.

Kind regards,  
Phil