

Community Integrated Care  
**Alcohol Services**

Merseyside House, 9 South John Street, Liverpool L1 8BN

Telephone 0151 707 1221

Fax 0151 709 1576

Service Manager Roger Newton email [cic@asliverpool.c-i-c.co.uk](mailto:cic@asliverpool.c-i-c.co.uk)

**National Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy**

**Response to the Consultation Document**

The numbers in this reply correspond to the D of H Consultation Document

**The Principles that should underpin the strategy**

1 Government intervention should begin at the level of whole population education and information about alcohol, its effects and dangers. There is wholesale community ignorance about alcohol strength, the detrimental effects that alcohol can have on mental and physical health and impact alcohol can have on behaviour and choices.

2 Government responsibility is at the level of financing local service provision. There needs to be a geographical consistent provision of all tier services.

4. Voluntary (or non statutory) groups have traditionally been excellent service providers, but because of their dispirit nature that provision is not consistent. Commercial interests are always going to be dominant, but must be responsible. Provision of reasonably priced non-alcoholic alternatives, in bars is one way the industry can assist. Is it responsible to sell high % abv drinks with taste and appearance of lemonade?

5 Free accessible advice, information and treatment at the earliest possible point of problem.

**The cultural and behavioural issues around alcohol use and misuse.**

6. Alcohol misuse has a bio/psycho/social impact. It should be defined by the number of units consumed, either on a regular weekly basis or in a short time binge in terms of harm to physical and mental health. It should also be defined in terms of actions and behaviour as impacting on others (irrespective of volume of alcohol consumed).

8. Take up of service has increased amongst young professional women. There has been a social impact of women being much more professionalized in the work-place, less tied to home responsibilities. This is to be noted in professional women who have delayed the onset of a family while they develop a career. ( That is not to say this is more of a problem than amongst men, only that women are catching up)

9. The focus on young people needs to be a whole systems approach rather than exclusively a substance misuse problem approach. It needs to be tackled in the context of education and recreation. The apparent under provision of youth services for 'non-problematic' children is a case in point. Is

---

Registered Office. Community Integrated Care, 2 Old Market Court, Miners Way, Widnes Cheshire WA8 7SP  
Registered Company Number 2225727 Charity Registration Number 519996

# Community Integrated Care Alcohol Services

Merseyside House, 9 South John Street, Liverpool L1 8BN

Telephone 0151 707 1221

Fax 0151 709 1576

Service Manager Roger Newton email [cic@asliverpool.c-i-c.co.uk](mailto:cic@asliverpool.c-i-c.co.uk)

this an arena for harnessing the resources of the 'faith communities' with 'scouting' type activities ?

## **Health Prevention Treatment.**

14 Consideration needs to be given to potentially harmful drinking. That is drinking today which will create biological harm in the future. Insufficient notice is taken of the immediate impact of alcohol on mental health, particularly depression, anxiety, low self esteem, lack of confidence. Many get caught up in the cycle of using alcohol to medicate these symptoms, failing to recognise they were cause by alcohol in the first place. What can be worse is when The GP adds medication to treat the effects without firstly recognising the cause. Harmful drinking can further be defined by its impact on behaviour and therefore affecting others.

17. An essential module of training is 'Motivational Interviewing' as set out by Rollnick and Miller.

18. Brief Intervention needs to take into consideration what stage the 'client' is in the 'cycle of change', as defined by Procheska and Di Clements. Failure to intervene according to appropriate stage is ineffective.

19. A person centred intervention that is freely accessible to people on request, offering a range of services from basic information to personal counselling, to consider the underlying issues, is proving to be effective. The problem is the provision of this service is not consistent, either in availability or quality. Another problem is that there is no consistent policy or provision in prescription type treatment. Within this city there is an inconsistency in the policy of prescribing Campral or Antabuse, there is no clear policy on detox medication or protocols. Consequently the treatment varies according to the opinion, knowledge or interest of the GP.

20. Drug treatment focuses on the heavy dependant users of crack and heroine. The alcohol strategy needs to begin with a whole population approach at tier one. With this in mind the 'models of care' could well be adapted to cover alcohol treatments.

22. The Care Plan Approach needs to consistently involve workers in Alcohol Services, where appropriate. This varies from one Authority to another.

## **Crime and Disorder**

34 Consistent, constant, widespread education supported by enforcement. Having said that the message is an easy one to deliver, 'Don't Drink and Drive'. The general message on alcohol use is a lot less coherent, but does need to be delivered with clarity.

# Community Integrated Care Alcohol Services

Merseyside House, 9 South John Street, Liverpool L1 8BN

Telephone 0151 707 1221

Fax 0151 709 1576

Service Manager Roger Newton email [cic@asliverpool.c-i-c.co.uk](mailto:cic@asliverpool.c-i-c.co.uk)

If we take up the 'Don't Do Drunk' message we fly in the face of popular culture, whereas, 'Don't Drink and Drive' does appeal to 'common sense and decency' culture.

## **Vulnerable Groups**

38 Consideration should be given to the current 'Care-Co-ordination' pilots being conducted by NTA.. In some areas these have automatically taken in alcohol services. This however is not consistent because of lack of a national alcohol strategy.

40. Vulnerable groups, need a combination of the CPA approach, care co-ordination and partnership working. All these approaches are breaking down the old isolations that were set up by a misconception of 'confidentiality'.

## **Education/Communication.**

41. The objective needs to take into account the triangle of Knowledge, skills/attitudes. An education/communication strategy does need to encompass all three to be effective.

Knowledge – Strengths of alcohol, understanding units, metabolism rate, what becomes harmful, when is the onset of dependency etc.

Skills – Assertiveness skills, not dragged in with the crowd, the ability to set and maintain a target for the evening etc.

Attitude – Drunk is macho, Drinking gives confidence. Celebration and drunkenness are inseparable.

Media messages are strong at this point and it varies from the amount of alcohol consumed at the 'Rovers Return' in each episode, to the assumption that the interviewer makes following a major sports success that the sports person will naturally celebrate with alcohol.

43. Lack of clarity contributes to lack of penetration.

45 We perhaps need some positive role models. We all know about George Best and Paul Gascoigne and the affect alcohol had on their career, what about some positive models. What are the drinking habits of Gary Lineker or Jonathan Edwards? I don't know. But perhaps moderation or even abstinence needs to be seen as cool.

46 The role of all these institutions are paramount to developing knowledge/skills/attitudes.

## **Market based solutions**

54/55. A proposition to turn 'Blackpool' into a 'Los-Vegas' type gambling resort, is accompanied by a commitment from the 'gambling industry' to fund counselling agencies to help people who become addictive to gambling. Perhaps the same model could be followed by the drinks industry. Perhaps a

---

Registered Office. Community Integrated Care, 2 Old Market Court, Miners Way, Widnes Cheshire WA8 7SP  
Registered Company Number 2225727 Charity Registration Number 519996

Community Integrated Care  
**Alcohol Services**

Merseyside House, 9 South John Street, Liverpool L1 8BN

Telephone 0151 707 1221

Fax 0151 709 1576

Service Manager Roger Newton email [cic@asliverpool.c-i-c.co.uk](mailto:cic@asliverpool.c-i-c.co.uk)  
percentage of all income in the drinks industry should fund treatment services.  
As profits increase, treatment provision increases to counter the harmful  
effects of that profitable industry.

Perhaps the same principle should also be applied to government taxation on  
alcohol.

Is it moral to profit from someone else's abuse without contributing in turn to  
their recovery?

Roger Newton  
December 2002