

REPORT TO: Safer Policy & Performance Board
DATE: 12 March 2013
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities
PORTOLIO: Community Safety
SUBJECT: Alcohol Harm Reduction Progress Report
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report contains details of progress to date in relation to reducing alcohol related harm and a multi-agency action plan detailing future proposed activity.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Members of the Board note the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Alcohol misuse is a major source of harm in our local communities and the range of harm includes alcohol related violence (including domestic violence), deliberate self harm, suicide, crime and anti-social behavior, short and long-term damage to physical and mental health, harm to unborn babies, child abuse including neglect and early mortality, as well as increased risk taking in sexual behaviour. Many accidental injuries and road traffic accidents are attributable to alcohol misuse and it is linked to negative effects on the economy and incalculable misery for individuals and families.

3.2 Alcohol misuse is associated with a wide range of health harms. The government recommends that men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units of alcohol per day and women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units of alcohol per day (1 unit =8g or 10ml of alcohol). Drinking above these limits increases the risk of contracting 13 conditions which are wholly attributable to alcohol consumption, for example alcoholic liver disease and chronic pancreatitis (alcohol induced), along with 34 conditions which are partially attributable to alcohol consumption such as some cancers, hypertensive diseases and cardiac arrhythmias.

3.3 Drug and alcohol misuse is a factor in a significant number of children in need and safeguarding cases. Research suggests that in safeguarding cases, alcohol is a factor in at least 33% of cases, and in care proceedings, drug and alcohol misuse is a factor in up to 70% of cases (Harwin and Forrester, 2003). In the Biannual Analysis of Serious Case Reviews 2005- 2007 (DCSF, 2009), of the 189 cases reviewed, 47 (25%) featured parental substance misuse. Many of these families were not known to children's social care.

3.4 Halton has been identified as the 15th worst affected Local Authority Area (out of 326) in England for alcohol related harm and the 8th worst Local Authority Area in England (out of 326) for under 18 alcohol specific hospital admissions¹.

¹ LAPE Data 2012

- 3.5 Estimates are that in 2011/12, there were 11,874 alcohol related admissions to hospital for Halton residents.
- 3.6 The main reasons for alcohol-attributable admissions are hypertensive diseases, (52% of alcohol admissions), cardiac arrhythmias (16%) and mental and behavioural disorders due to alcohol (7%).
- 3.7 Estimates are that that around 1 in 4 adults would benefit from reducing their alcohol intake to within DH recommended levels (this does not include dependent drinkers).
- 3.8 Nationally, there was a 25% increase in liver disease between 2001 and 2009. Alcohol-related liver disease accounts for around 37% of all liver disease deaths and the North West of England has some of the highest rates of both liver disease and alcohol related liver disease in England.
- 3.9 The average age of patients with liver disease is 59 and falling.
- 3.10 The cost of alcohol related harm per head for Halton Borough Council was £450.00. The national average was £387.00.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.1 In March 2012, the new National Alcohol Strategy was published and can be found at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk>
- 4.2 From April 1st 2013, Public Health will have responsibility for the commissioning of alcohol misuse services for both prevention and treatment. Guidance states that CCGs will have responsibility for commissioning 'Alcohol Health Workers' in a variety of settings, and the NHS Commissioning Board will have responsibility for commissioning brief interventions in primary care.
- 4.3 At the end of November 2012, Alcohol Attributable Admissions were fewer than expected (1762.6) and significantly less than both the target (2018) and the number of admissions at the same time the previous year 11-12 (1922).
- 4.4 At the end of November 2012, Wholly Alcohol Attributable Admissions were fewer than expected (573.9) and significantly less than the number of admissions at the same time the previous year 11-12 (701).
- 4.5 Many positive developments have taken place in Halton during the previous two years in relation to alcohol misuse. These include:
 - Innovative Outreach Bus and Street Based Teams, taking support to young people in identified hotspots at identified times and days.
 - Development of safe, creative spaces and diversionary activities for young people available at weekends.
 - Stay Safe which targets specific evenings throughout the year where Police and partners proactively work with young people.
 - Lifestyles survey conducted for Year 8 and 10 pupils in all 8 secondary schools in the Borough.
 - The 6 week Skills for Change programme aimed at children and young people affected by parental alcohol misuse, available in Halton high schools.
 - Modern, free, confidential service Young Addaction which offers

advice and support to young people with drug and alcohol concerns and takes into account other risk taking behaviours, available in Halton schools and community venues

- Increased number of frontline professionals receiving training in how to identify alcohol problems and assist young people to access support.
- Effective partnership working between Adult and Children's Services is taking place and parents with substance misuse problems receive help to reduce the impact of parental drug & alcohol misuse on their children, break cycles of inter-generational misuse and improve the life chances of their children.
- Local awareness raising campaigns have been undertaken during identified times, to raise awareness of alcohol related harm and recommended drinking limits.
- Halton Borough Council and Public Health Department has a proactive, positive presence in regional forums which seek to bring about change in access to cheap alcohol, as this impacts on availability for young people.
- Halton & Warrington Trading Standards and Halton Borough Council staff carried out nine intelligence-led test purchase operations to see if off licences and retailers are serving to under-age people. These checks and inspections include serious enforceable penalties and fines and underpin the Challenge 21 initiative.
- More people are being screened for drinking at levels of increasing and higher risk and receive an intervention or onward referral to specialist services where necessary.
- Introduction of Alcohol Treatment Requirements and liaison with Problem Solving Courts
- Detailed data is now collated in relation to alcohol related hospital admissions (down to ward level) which is utilised by commissioners to inform service improvements.

4.6 However the most significant developments in terms of healthcare are the newly commissioned alcohol treatment service run by CRI and the Whiston Hospital Alcohol Nursing Scheme which went live on 17 September 2012.

4.7 CRI provide a modern, integrated, recovery orientated, substance misuse treatment service for adults in Halton who need support to recover fully from alcohol (and substance misuse) and get their lives back on track. The individuals that present to drug and alcohol services are often experiencing a range of challenges, with varying degrees of need, for example some individuals may be holding down a job despite their substance misuse, whilst others may be living extremely chaotic lifestyles with little structure or positive benefits. The purpose of the specialised treatment service is primarily to support people to break the cycle of dependence on drugs and alcohol and enable them to contribute fully to society. However, this cannot be achieved without a personalised approach which addresses holistically the underlying causes of substance misuse and has the flexibility to respond to the client's individual needs. The service undertakes community detoxification and assesses people for inpatient/detoxification (at the Windsor Clinic) and residential rehabilitation treatment.

4.8 The service has been live from 1st February 2012 and has ensured that there are no longer waiting lists for alcohol treatment.

- 4.9 On 17th September 2012, the Alcohol Liaison Nursing Service went live at Whiston Hospital. This service operates seven days a week and ensures that high quality interventions, alcohol screening and treatment interventions are carried out with people attending hospital with alcohol related harm. It will also ensure that people who require long term support are linked into the community services and that people who are frequently admitted to hospital for alcohol related harm are proactively managed by both the hospital and the community. Both services will be subject to rigorous performance monitoring.

Despite good progress in relation to alcohol related harm, Halton experiences an unacceptable level of alcohol related harm with significant impact on individuals, families, communities and health and social care services.

The multi-faceted, complex nature of alcohol related harm requires a comprehensive, co-ordinated approach and collaborative, partnership working is essential to avoid duplication, encourage innovation and to maximise the use of available resources.

5.0 NEXT STEPS AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

- 5.1 Now that there is a robust infrastructure and treatment offer in Halton for people who require support to tackle alcohol related problems, our strategic approach now has a prevention and early intervention focus.

6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 All proposed actions are aligned with the National Alcohol Strategy 2012.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Funding requirements will be met from within current budget allocations.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

8.1 Children & Young People in Halton

These are identified within the report.

8.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

These are identified within the report.

8.3 A Healthy Halton

These are identified within the report.

8.4 A Safer Halton

These are identified within the report.

8.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

These are identified within the report.

9.0 RISK ANALYSIS

9.1 Reducing Alcohol Related Harm has been named as a key priority by Halton's Health & Wellbeing Board.

9.2 To mitigate this risk, plans have been developed with Adult, Children's Commissioners and the Police and Community Safety Leads to ensure that any actions are essential core business and that key individuals are identified to take actions forward.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

10.1 Alcohol misuse can lead to significant health and family problems and it is imperative that adequate support and advice is available to all members of the community.

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

11.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.