Reducing Harms from Alcohol

Programme Outline
Too much alcohol causes ill health. A fresh look at how we identify and treat alcohol problems is required. We are working on projects which help healthcare staff to understand their patients’ alcohol risks; reduce levels of drinking, improve health and prevent premature death.

Wessex Headlines
Alcohol is the most common cause of death for men younger than 54—making them 20% more likely to die from drinking alcohol than anything else.

There are 60+ diseases which are caused by alcohol; including cancers of the breast, liver, stomach, mouth and throat as well as heart disease, high blood pressure, liver disease and mental health problems.

1.2 in 20 are high risk drinkers
• Men – 50 or more units per week
• Women – 35 or more units per week

33,290 hospital admission per year (non A&E)

1,285 alcohol related deaths per year

312 deaths from chronic liver disease per year

15,228 alcohol related crimes per year

Know Your Numbers
Changing the focus of how alcohol affects health to be in line with other risk factors such as blood pressure, cholesterol or weight; the Know Your Numbers intervention is improving the alcohol specific health literacy of healthcare staff.

Brief Treatment Pathway
People drinking at increasing and higher risk levels have few options available for help and usually become very ill. The brief treatment pathway helps to reduce drinking and stem or reverse the path to poor health.

This is a joint working project, with Lundbeck to develop and evaluate brief treatment pathways for increasing and higher risk drinkers.

• We will reduce drinking for those drinking at Higher or Very High risk levels by up to two risk levels
• We will reduce alcohol related A&E attendance, hospital admissions and reduce length of stay

Alcohol Related Liver Disease
Research shows that most of the deaths associated with liver disease are alcohol related. Evidence shows us that treating patients for their alcohol problems and not just for their liver disease will result in fewer deaths, less illness and less time spent in hospital. We have developed a tool which will help us to understand which patients need help with their alcohol, before their livers are damaged beyond repair.

Drink Informed
Patients with alcohol problems will benefit from an interactive tool which helps staff explain the ways in which alcohol causes harm. Playing a part in the care and recovery journey encourages positive behaviour changes towards a healthier lifestyle. The aim of the project is to empower and support clinical staff in a variety of settings, to enable them to educate and engage those individuals whose drinking habits cause them harm allowing patients to make an informed choice about their care and recovery by encouraging positive behaviour changes.

Soberistas Implementation
Some people, often drinking at home, do not actively seek help with their drinking problems from traditional healthcare settings, such as doctors or hospitals. This makes them hard to reach to provide the support and treatment they need. By introducing Soberistas, people will find the help they need to stop or reduce their drinking or remain alcohol free.

Soberistas as a psychosocial tool to support people who want to stop drinking.

The project will deliver:
• Improved health outcomes measured by reduction in drinking
• Quantitative study of Soberistas entity
• Qualitative study of Soberistas
• Pilot implementation of Soberistas to harder to reach groups

Clinical Lead: Dr Julia Sinclair, Associate Professor in Psychiatry at the University of Southampton
Project Manager: Cathy Rule

Wessex Academic Health Science Network

www.wessexahsn.org.uk
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Know Your Numbers

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- We will raise the alcohol specific health literacy of more than 4,000 healthcare staff by 50% to improve the identification of alcohol as a cause of health harm
- We will increase the identification of patients at increased and higher risk drinking levels by 20%
- Healthcare staff receiving the Know Your Numbers intervention are four times more likely to be able to calculate units of alcohol
- 900 staff have already received the intervention - these staff are more Confident and Competent around alcohol

Alcohol Related Liver Disease

Liver disease is the only major disease in the UK with a rising death rate. People with liver disease will feel well enough so that they come in to hospital less often and in time we will reduce the death rate by 5%.

Research shows that most of the deaths associated with liver disease are alcohol related. Evidence shows us that treating patients for their alcohol problems and not just for their liver disease will result in fewer deaths, less illness and less time spent in hospital.

The expected outcomes are to:

- Produce a pilot integrated treatment pathway for patients with ARLD
- Design and pilot and develop an audit tool and integrated treatment pathway for patients with ARLD so that they can be adopted by participating acute trusts in Wessex
- Reduce the number of unscheduled attendances at the pilot site by 25%
- Reduce the levels of mortality from ARLD

We are working with partners to identify and baseline patient flow relating to ARLD. HHFT have carried out a pilot of the audit tool and have presented an initial review of the data:

Left: 87% of liver disease admissions are unscheduled

Below: Alcohol related liver disease patients stay in hospital longer

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