

# Mental Health & Alcohol

# Overview

- The relationship between mental health and alcohol?
- The statistics
- What are the effects of alcohol on mental health?
- What to look out for?
- Supports
- Looking after yourself

# Alcohol and Mental Health

- Is there a relationship between mental health and alcohol?



Image sourced from:  
<https://www.blanchardstowndrugstaskforce.ie/index.php/alcohol/mental-health>

# Statistics

- Approximately 1 in 4 people in UK will experience a mental health problem each year
- Mental health and substance use disorders are the third largest cause of death and disability in Scotland after cancer and cardio-vascular diseases
- 1 in 4 people (24%) drink at hazardous or harmful levels (defined as drinking more than 14 units per week).

# Statistics

- Drinking more than 14 units a week was reported by 32% of men and 16% of women
- Men drink an average of 15.5 units of alcohol a week, and women drink an average of 8.8 units a week
- 17% of people say they are non-drinkers
- Estimated that alcohol alone costs the Scottish economy £3.6 billion a year in health, social care, crime, productive capacity and wider costs

## How can alcohol use affect mental health ?

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Suicidal Ideation
- Stress
- Poor concentration
- Loneliness/Isolation
- Relationship conflict
- Mood swings
- Panic attacks
- Difficulty regulating emotions
- Dependency

# Alcohol and Mental Health Cycle

Drink to  
cope/relax/forget

Feel better for  
a short period

Decline in  
mental  
health

Effects wear  
off

# What to look out for?

- Withdrawn
- Drinking more
- Feeling very low over a period of time
- Changes in personality
- Physical appearance
- Self harming behaviours
- Lack of interest in things they used to enjoy
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Social isolation



# Supports

## Self Help

- Connect with a supportive trusted adult
- Peer Support Groups
- Sleep hygiene
- Diversionary activities
- Helplines

## Services

- Supports who specialise in alcohol and mental health issues
- Doctor
- Counselling (Mental Health or Alcohol service)
- Alcohol and Drug Recovery Services

# Looking after yourself

Things I can do

.....by myself

.....with others

People I can talk to.....