

Alcohol and Drug Snapshot

January 2024



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Dry January* is a campaign delivered by [Alcohol Change UK](#) where people sign up to 31 alcohol free days for the month of January.

One month alcohol-free has a lot of benefits including

- Lower blood pressure
- Reduced risk of diabetes
- Lower cholesterol
- Reduced levels of cancer-related proteins in the blood.



[Source](#)

People who are clinically alcohol dependent should not suddenly, completely stop drinking. It is important that if someone is alcohol dependent they should talk to a GP or local Alcohol and Drug Recovery Service who will be able to help to reduce drinking safely.

*The term "Dry January" is a registered trademark with Alcohol Change UK and was first registered in 2014.

Alcohol Change UK

Alcohol Change UK have developed a number of tools and resources to encourage conversations and support during Dry January. Visit their website for more information.



Try Dry app is the official app of Dry January and has been developed to support anyone who is looking to reduce their alcohol intake or go alcohol free. The app is free and can be downloaded by clicking on the app icon.

Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs



For people who have a family member or friend that is struggling with alcohol use support is available.

Scottish Families offer information and advice to many people helping with confidence, communication, general wellbeing, and local support services.

With You - Webchat



With You provides brief interventions, advice, referrals and emotional support via a Webchat service. Webchat is an accessible, free and anonymous service for everybody who is in need of drug, alcohol or mental health support.

For further information or to access support via Webchat please visit the With You website.



Alcohol Brief Interventions (ABI)

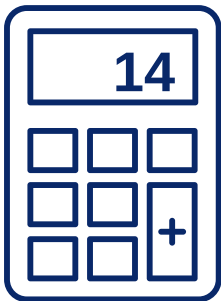
Alcohol is a part of many of our lives. For a lot of people, they are able to enjoy alcohol responsibly. For some people though, they can be drinking alcohol at a level that increases their risk of alcohol related harm.

Alcohol is a causal factor in over 60 different medical conditions. We know it is a causal factor in 7 different cancers, is linked to issues with cardiovascular health, and can lead to weight gain and gastrointestinal problems.

[Source](#)

At this time of year when people may overindulge, January can be an opportunity for people to make positive changes to their life. With this in mind, when you have contact with your patient / client /service user it can be an opportunity to discuss the topic of alcohol and make the most of this health improvement opportunity.

Guidance is clear that no alcohol is risk free, however, if you want to keep your risks to a minimum the guidance states that you should drink no more than 14 units in a week, and if you drink this much it should be spread evenly over at least 3 days.



Use the NHS Scotland drinks calculator to see how many units you or someone you are working with would typically drink.



One of the tools that can be used to support people who are drinking at harmful / hazardous levels (above 14 units per week, but not alcohol dependant) is Alcohol Brief Interventions (ABI).

	Never	Monthly or less	2-4 times per month	2-3 times per week	4+ times per week
How often do you have an alcoholic drink?	0	1	2	3	4
How many units of alcohol do you consume on a typical day when you are drinking? <small>(unit information overleaf)</small>	0	1	2	3	4
How often do you consume six or more alcoholic drinks on one occasion?	0	1	2	3	4
TOTAL SCORE					

ABIs can be used in all settings in an opportunistic, planned, or patient / client /service user lead way. These brief interventions can help to give staff the confidence they need to raise the topic of alcohol and give the appropriate information, advice, and support to their patient / client /service users.

Risk Level	Description
0-4	Congratulations! This score indicates that you are a low risk drinker. This means you are less likely to develop an alcohol related illness in the future.
5-8	This score indicates that you are drinking at increasing risk levels. Continuing to drink at this level could cause serious health implications later in life.
9+	This score indicates that you are drinking at higher risk levels. Continuing to drink at this level is likely to cause a serious alcohol related illness.

Drink	Units
Strong pint of beer/lager (568ml)	3 units
1 medium glass of wine (175ml)	2 units
Bottle of alcopop (275ml)	1.4 units
1 single measure of spirits (25ml)	1 unit
Bottle of wine (750ml)	10 units

Please indicate what level of intervention was given. 1. No Action ☐ 2. ABI Delivered ☐ 3. Referral ☐

Male: ☐ Female: ☐
Postcode:
Date of birth:

Logos: Glasgow City HSCP, Glasgow City Council, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

The use of internationally validated screening tools allows practitioners to assess a person’s alcohol consumption in an objective way, and according to how a person’s screening score is, they can have a conversation about the easiest way for them to reduce their alcohol consumption and thereby reduce their risk of alcohol related harm.



For more information about ABIs, or ABI Training, please email:
Graeme.Mathew@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Websites and Services



Alcohol and Recovery Drug Services are joint Social Work Services and Health Addiction Teams. Click on the NHS GGC Logo to access the contact details for both central and local ADRS Services



NHS Inform host a directory of health and wellbeing services in Scotland. Including GP practices and support groups.