



Report to the Health & Adult Social Care

Title:	Director of Public Health Annual Report; Alcohol & Us
Committee date:	19 th September 2019
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Purpose of Agenda Item

This report is for information to enable the select committee to discuss the Director of Public Health Annual Report.

Background

It is a statutory duty for the Director of Public Health to produce an annual report on the health of their population. The report is an independent report for all partners in Buckinghamshire. The theme of this year's annual report is the impact of alcohol on the health and wellbeing of our residents.

The report sets out an overview of alcohol in Buckinghamshire and the harms it can cause and includes stories from Buckinghamshire residents about the impact alcohol has had on their lives as well as stories from frontline staff about the issues they see due to alcohol in Buckinghamshire.

This report includes evidence about what works in tackling alcohol related harm and information about what services are available in Buckinghamshire and links to useful resources.

The full report is accompanied by a short summary of the key facts in relation to alcohol in Buckinghamshire.

Summary

It is estimated that more than 1 in 4 adults in Buckinghamshire drink at levels above the Chief Medical Officer for England guidelines. This equates to more than 100,000 adults in Buckinghamshire who are at risk of damaging their health. Most of these people are not dependent on alcohol and may not realise they have a problem.

The focus of this report is closely aligned to the following priorities in the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy

- Priority 1: Give every child the best start in life
- Priority 2: keep people healthier for longer and reduce the impact of long term conditions
- Priority 4: Protect residents from harm
- Priority 5: Support communities to enable people to achieve their potential and ensure Buckinghamshire is a great place to live

Alcohol is widely consumed, legal and widely available and has been part of the social fabric of life for many years in England. However it also contributes to a wide range of physical and mental health problems including breast and bowel cancer, heart disease, stroke, liver disease, depression and dementia. From a health perspective there is no “safe” level of alcohol consumption only lower risk drinking. The more people drink, the higher the risk of developing problems. Alcohol is the third leading risk factor for death and disability after smoking and obesity.

Alcohol misuse doesn't just affect the individual who is drinking too much but impacts on the people around them including their children and families and the wider community. Alcohol misuse contributes to domestic violence and child abuse, violent crime and road traffic accidents and deaths. The total national annual cost of alcohol to society is £21 billion, including £11bn on alcohol related crime, £7.3 billion due to lost productivity and £3.5 billion to the NHS.

Addressing the harms from alcohol requires national and local action.

This report aims to stimulate conversation and action across partners and communities in Buckinghamshire to increase awareness of safer drinking levels and what we can do to help reduce the harms from alcohol. There is a role for all partners in this, but particularly for frontline staff in health and social care to routinely ask the simple questions that might result in someone getting the help they need and changing their life for the better.

Key issues

The recommendations in the Director of Public Health Annual report are:

1. Continue to develop multi-agency communications campaigns to
 - promote current advice on safer drinking,
 - raise awareness of the particular risks of drinking in groups at greater risk of harm (pregnant women, adults aged over 65 and young people)
 - promote the benefits of a completely alcohol free childhood
 - promote the full range of services available
2. Ensure that schools are prepared for the implementation of the statutory Health Education element (which includes education on alcohol) of the Personal, Social Health and Economic education, (PSHE curriculum).
3. Increase the knowledge and provide training for key frontline staff on the health risks and wider risks of alcohol and the importance of assessing alcohol intake.
4. Roll out training on identification and brief advice (IBA) across the health and social care integrated care system (ICS) and ensure all ICS partners have processes for assessing and recording alcohol intake through the use of the Audit C tool and increase early referral to appropriate services.
5. Undertake engagement work with target groups to increase uptake of alcohol treatment and support services for under-represented groups
6. Continue to develop and improve services for those with co-existing substance misuse and mental health problems.
7. Implement shared care for alcohol misuse between primary care and specialist services across Buckinghamshire.
8. Work with partners to promote safe drinking in their employees.

Resource implications

There are no direct resource implications arising from this report. The recommendations are for all partners and will be delivered within existing resources.

Next steps

The report has been presented to Cabinet and the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing board and partners will be responding to the recommendations by developing an action plan co-ordinated through the Substance Misuse Strategy Group. The actions required will also be reflected in the local Integrated Care System Partnership plan.