Manager’s Guidance Notes on
Drugs and Alcohol Policy & Procedures

The following guidance notes are designed to support managers and should be read in conjunction with the policy and procedures.

1. Guidelines for conducting an interview with an employee who appears to have an alcohol or drug related problem (paragraph 2 in the procedures)

**DO**
1. Prepare for the discussion – allow plenty of time.
2. Explain the reason for interview.
3. Focus on work performance/attendance/relationship with colleagues
4. Be objective and factual
5. Be concrete and specific
6. Be non-judgmental. Use non-emotive language
7. Acknowledge the employee’s positive contributions, past or present
8. Show concern for the employee. Listen to what they say about their personal problems
9. Explain exactly what the employee must do to improve performance/attendance
10. Be firm and consistent with the employee
11. Offer the opportunity of professional help and advice – if you feel there is a need
12. Adopt the same general stance and follow the same procedure in every case
13. Arrange a review meeting and stick to it.

**DO NOT**
1. Comment on the employee’s private life
2. Rely on subjective impressions or rumour for which documented evidence is lacking
3. Make vague accusations
4. Convey verbally or by your manner that you are judging the employee’s morals
5. Ignore past or present achievements. Doing so might invite an accusation of unfairness
6. Argue with the employee about their problems, or attempt to give advice
7. Leave any room for uncertainty about the employee’s situation and what needs to be done to rectify it
8. Waiver between the heavy-handed exercise of authority and holding out the hand of friendship
9. Treat members of your staff inconsistently and make exceptions

2. Signs of Drug and Alcohol Abuse

The list below is not intended to be exhaustive but is aimed at helping managers to identify some of the behaviours associated with the abuse of drugs, alcohol or other chemical substances.

Evidence of Inadequate or Deteriorating Work Performance:
a) Frequent lateness, repeated brief periods of absence for trivial or inadequate reasons;
b) Impaired concentration and memory;
c) Absenteeism, particularly related to weekends and high absenteeism rates for colds, 'flu, gastro-enteritis, depression etc.
d) Accident proneness, minor accidents at work and accidents off duty;
e) Mistakes, errors of judgement;
f) Improbable excuses for poor job performance;
g) Increasing general unreliability and unpredictability.

Observations of Behaviour and Appearance:
  a) Smelling of alcohol;
  b) Mood changes, irritability, lethargy;
  c) Deterioration in working relationships;
  d) Borrowing money;
  e) A combination of hand tremor, slurred speech, facial flushing,
  f) Bleary eyes, poor personal hygiene, unkempt appearance.

Relationships with Colleagues:
  a) Over reaction to real or imagined criticism;
  b) Unreasonable resentment;
  c) Irritability;
  d) Complaints from colleagues
  e) Avoidance of managers or associates;
  f) Borrowing from colleagues.

3. Advisory Services that can help with Alcohol or Drugs Dependency

This list is not intended to be exhaustive

Support for alcohol problems:

Alcoholics Anonymous – 0845 769 7555 www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
Offers confidential advice either by phone or e-mail. Calls are redirected automatically to an AA member in the caller’s region. Information can be provided about future meetings that are to be conducted in the local area.

Al-Anon Family Groups – 020 7403 0888 www.al-anonuk.org.uk
Offers help and support for people whose lives are affected by someone else's drinking

Drinkline – 0800 917 8282
Provides free information, self-help materials and advises callers of where to go for help. Also offers help for families and friends of people who are drinking.

Drug help lines and services:

Talk to Frank – 0800 776600 www.talktofrank.com
Offers free and confidential advice about drugs and can refer people to local drug advice services. The website provides extensive drug information.
ADFAM – 020 7928 8898 www.adfam.org.uk
Provides information for families and friends of drug users.

Narcotics Anonymous – 0845 373 3366 www.ukna.org
Help line offers confidential support and advice for drug addicts. Website provides a message board chat-room to discuss problems and contact information for local support groups across the UK.

Offers free, confidential and non-judgemental advice on drug use and legal issues.

Others:

Health & Safety Executive – Don’t Mix It: A Guide for Employers on Alcohol at Work (include telephone number to request copy or website address)

Department of Health -
www.dh.gov.uk/policyandguidance/healthandsocialcaretopics/alcoholmisuse