



**Councillor Bill McIntosh** Chair of the South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership

For many people the festive season is a time of excitement, joy, and fills them with a warmth that makes it such a great time of year. People tend to socialise more, and lots of people, including those who don't usually consume alcohol, take the opportunity to enjoy a tippie as part of their seasonal celebrations. Taken in moderation, alcohol is fine. It is when people overindulge that the problems start. Alcohol can cause problems and so can drugs which ruin the lives of those taking them, cause misery to their families and lead to all sorts of problems within our communities.

Our Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) involves a wide range of community planning partners who are working together to reduce the impact of alcohol and drugs on our communities. ADP partners offer a range of services to support people who have alcohol or drug problems, when they make the decision to ask for help and get their lives back on track. This edition of Bitesize focuses on some of these services.

**A New Approach In South Ayrshire**

In November, our Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP) launched an ambitious strategy to reduce alcohol and drug misuse in South Ayrshire. It works closely with individuals and communities to address alcohol and drug issues and to support individuals to recover from alcohol or drug misuse and communities to identify and find solutions to alcohol and drug-related issues.

During the next four years, the ADP will support people to make positive changes in their behaviour and lifestyle choices in relation to alcohol and drug use, as well as fully supporting those who are in recovery, or want to take steps to recovery. The strategy will ensure that a series of 'joined up' services are put in place based on the input from individuals, communities, groups and services that are affected by alcohol and drug misuse.

The full strategy and summary can be found on the Community Planning web pages at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/cpp](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/cpp)



Together we are reducing alcohol and drug misuse in South Ayrshire.

# Occupational Therapy Services

Treatment of people with substance misuse issues is more successful when carried out in conjunction with psycho-social interventions. The ADP funds an Occupational Therapy (OT) service, based at Ailsa Hospital which delivers individual interventions and a comprehensive group work timetable to people with substance misuse issues and chaotic lifestyles. Through the use of meaningful activity, focussing on occupations, skills and life roles, the OT process enables people to function more purposefully in their daily lives.

The aim of the programme is to increase the range of treatment interventions and to focus on motivating and supporting clients to move toward recovery by improving health and gradually increasing meaningful daily activities into their lives. Group work sessions encourage people to remain abstinent from alcohol and to develop long term goals and continuing interest in activities.

## Award Winning Positive Attitudes

Who better to respond to young people's alcohol misuse than young people themselves and this is what teams of S6 pupils are being trained to do in five

secondary schools in South Ayrshire. Now in its third year, the Positive Attitudes to Alcohol Peer Education project trains young people in team building, leadership skills, alcohol awareness, confidence, child protection and classroom management. The participants then go on to deliver a four week interactive programme to S1 pupils covering health issues related to alcohol misuse and consideration of factors which may lead to reliance on alcohol such as peer pressure, exam stress and family issues. 150 pupils have now been trained as peer educators and the programme has been delivered to over 1,900 S1 pupils. This innovative approach has resulted in two awards for the project.



## New Service for Alcohol Related Brain Damage

Prolonged and heavy alcohol consumption, in conjunction with a poor diet and lack of proper nutrition, can cause physical injury to the brain, known as Alcohol Related Brain Damage (ARBD). Symptoms of ARBD include short term memory problems, drowsiness, poor balance, numbness or tingling in the limbs, poor vision and mood changes.

A new service was established by Addaction in June 2010, funded by the ADP it offers support to people diagnosed with ARBD.

The service helps people to abstain from alcohol, gives support to prevent relapses, encourages improvements to diet and general health and assists in developing new social networks as well as enhancing relationships with carers, family, friends and colleagues.

For further information about the service contact Dale Sinclair at Addaction on [d.sinclair@addaction.org.uk](mailto:d.sinclair@addaction.org.uk) call **01292 264499** or drop in to their offices on the **second floor at 130 High Street in Ayr** (above Superdrug opposite the Lorne Arcade).

## Top Tips For Tipplers!



During the festive season lots of people, including those who don't usually consume alcohol, take the opportunity to enjoy a tittle or two as part of their seasonal celebrations.

Alcohol affects everyone differently and some people may end up having one too many and that extra drink or drinks could turn what should be an enjoyable evening with friends, colleagues or family into an event that you would much rather forget.

Here are a few tips to follow to ensure that you don't end up being the talk of the office, the embarrassing parent or child or the one to ruin a fun get together:

- *Keep an eye on how much you are drinking, you'll be surprised how quickly they add up.*
- *If you're drinking at home, make sure you measure your spirits so that one drink is just that.*
- *Make sure you have something to eat before and while you are drinking.*
- *Alternate alcoholic drinks with water or soft drinks.*
- *Opt out of a drink kitty or rounds as these often mean you'll drink more than you intended.*
- *Don't drink and drive under any circumstances*
- *Remember you may still be over the legal alcohol drink-drive limit the morning after a night out or a party.*
- *If you're out and about make sure you have a mobile phone and either arrange for someone you know to take you home – appoint a designated driver – or have cash set aside for a taxi.*
- *Look out for each other, make sure you, your family and friends are all safe, and if someone does have more tipples than is good for them stay with them to make sure they don't come to any harm and ensure that they get home safely.*
- *For more tips or advice, including the recommended guidelines for alcohol consumption, log on to: [www.drinksmarter.org.uk](http://www.drinksmarter.org.uk)*

# Road To Recovery

People can and do recover from drug and alcohol misuse, here are three inspiring stories the names of the people have been changed:

'Alison' went through a phase of abusing solvents in her early teens which then turned to alcohol and she used to sit alone at home swigging cider and super lager. She fell in with the wrong crowd at college and after a particularly horrific day of drinking she blacked out fell and broke her nose. She also habitually became violent. One day the shame and desire to escape this downward spiral spurred her into contacting Alcoholics Anonymous where she finally admitted she was an alcoholic and sought the help and support she needed to address her drinking problem. She also eventually engaged with Ayrshire Council on Alcohol where she was swiftly put at ease and found the personalised and client-centred delivery of the service refreshing. Alison now has a good holistic support network in place in case she ever suffers from further alcohol difficulties and is studying to become a mental health nurse.

'Sarah' is a former drug user and dealer and has been on a stable methadone programme for around a year. She came along to the Care & Share project at Riverside Church in Ayr every so often for a meal but didn't engage with services. Sarah started to attend Care & Share more regularly as her confidence and relationships improved and started to engage with arts activities and services. After meeting Duncan of Call West, Sarah enrolled on a 13 hour a week taster course at Ayr College and is now thinking about what subjects to progress with. Her daughter's attendance at school has improved from 65% to 100% as Sarah's increased self-confidence has helped her become more assertive in making decisions for herself and her daughter.

'Alan' had a history of substance abuse but is now stable on Methadone. He had spent some time in prison for various offences, including theft and drug offences and is currently on a probation order. He had previously worked in the construction

industry but needed to gain CSCS accreditation, which is now necessary for this line of work, so started attending weekly training sessions. His IT Skills were also initially very poor but he received one to one support and now wants to progress to the ECDL.

'Alan' passed his CSCS in June this year to his great delight and began a 16 week "Step into Learning" course at Ayr College in August of this year. We wish him well on his recovery journey.



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NHS Addiction Services provides a variety of specialist treatment and recovery support services in South Ayrshire. Anyone can refer themselves contact **01292 473 250** for more information. Further information on other local adult and children and family support services can be found at [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/health](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/health)

Alcoholics Anonymous helps people to recover from alcoholism the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. Log on to [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

## DON'T HIDE FROM YOUR DEBT

Contact a  
Trading  
Standards  
Debt Advisor  
Today



**01292 61 60 60**

5/7 River Terrace, Ayr

Free Help for South Ayrshire Residents. **South Ayrshire**

Worrying about how you are going to pay your debts after the festive season? Get free help and advice from South Ayrshire Council Debt Helpline on **01292 616060** or log on to: [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards/debt](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards/debt)

**COMMUNITY PLANNING**

Telephone : 01292 612134 [www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/cpp](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/cpp)

