Alcohol and drugs prevention, treatment and recovery: why invest?
Alcohol problems are widespread

- 9 million adults drink at levels that increase the risk of harm to their health
- 1.6 million adults show some signs of alcohol dependence

Alcohol is the third biggest risk factor for illness and death
Drug use is widespread but addiction is concentrated

- 2.7 million adults used an illegal drug in the past year
- 294,000 heroin and crack users in England
- 40% of prisoners have used heroin
- 1,200,000 affected by drug addiction in their families – mostly in poor communities
The impact on health and mortality
Alcohol misuse damages health

- Heart disease or irregular heartbeat
- Stroke
- Depression and anxiety
- Cancer of the mouth, throat, oesophagus or larynx
- Breast cancer in women
- Pancreatitis
- Liver cirrhosis and liver cancer
- Reduced fertility
- Harm to unborn babies
- High blood pressure
- Reduced fertility
- Liver cirrhosis and liver cancer
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Drug misuse damages health

- Poor vein health among injectors
- Lung damage from drugs and tobacco
- Depression, anxiety, psychosis and personality disorder
- Cardiovascular disease
- Overdose and drug poisoning
- Blood-borne viruses among injectors
- Liver damage from undiagnosed or untreated hepatitis C
- Arthritis and immobility among injectors
Alcohol and drug deaths

Alcohol misuse leads to many deaths

21,485 people died from alcohol-related causes in 2012

Deaths from alcohol-related liver disease have doubled since 1980

A quarter of all deaths among 16-24 year old men are attributable to alcohol

Deaths among heroin users are 10 times the death rate in the general population

Deaths involving new drugs and some prescription medicines are rising
The impact on families and communities
Alcohol misuse harms families and communities

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Almost half of violent assaults

Domestic violence and marital breakdown

27% of serious case reviews mention alcohol misuse

Physical, psychological and behavioural problems for children of parents with alcohol problems

13% of road fatalities
Drug misuse harms families and communities

Parental drug use is a risk factor in 29% of all serious case reviews.

Heroin and crack addiction causes crime and disrupts community safety.

A typical heroin user spends around £1,400 per month on drugs (2.5 times the average mortgage).

The public value drug treatment because it makes their communities safer and reduces crime. 82% said treatment’s greatest benefit was improved community safety.
The costs
The annual cost of alcohol-related harm

- Total cost to society: £21bn
- Crime in England: £11bn
- NHS in England: £3.5bn
- Lost productivity in UK: £7bn
Every year it costs society

£15.4bn

- Any heroin or crack user not in treatment commits crime costing an average £26,074 a year
- Every year drug misuse costs the NHS in England £488m
- Annual cost of looking after drug using parents’ children who have been taken into care is £42.5m
The challenge
Alcohol – what needs to be done

1. Improve awareness of alcohol harm among young people and delay the age of first use.
2. For people who drink, make lower risk drinking the norm and an easy choice to make.
3. Target those who are most at risk.
4. Respond to and reduce the harm experienced by those who have already developed problems.
Drugs – what needs to be done

1. Prevention measures to build resilience among young people and to promote drug-free environments

2. Develop effective responses to the harm of new drugs, and help people who are addicted to medicines

3. Respond to the growing number of older drug users, many of whom have serious addiction and health problems

4. A package of support (treatment, housing, employment, positive social networks) to help people recover and rebuild families and communities
The levers and tools
Population-wide prevention

Effective use of local authority licensing powers to reduce alcohol-related harm

Action on local drugs markets and town centre drinking

Joined-up local services to build resilience in communities

Local responsibility deals with employers and industry that include alcohol

Local awareness and behaviour change campaigns on alcohol and drugs
Targeted prevention – alcohol

Hospital alcohol liaison services to reduce the unnecessary burden on the NHS

Brief interventions in primary care and other settings to reduce the impact of alcohol on health

Evidence-based screening in the NHS Health Check to reduce harmful drinking

Prevention programmes to reduce young people’s alcohol consumption
Targeted prevention and harm reduction – drugs

- Advice, testing, vaccination and treatment for blood-borne viruses
- Needle and syringe programmes to prevent infection and spread of blood-borne viruses
- Prevent avoidable overdose deaths
- Work with local health partners to prevent and treat addiction to medicines
- Prevention programmes aimed at young people to reduce drug harms
Specialist treatment (alcohol and drugs)

- Specialist treatment should be accessible, matched to local need and NICE-compliant
- All patients should have a mutually agreed and regularly reviewed care plan, setting out their treatment goals
- All treatment should include support for behaviour change
- It may also include appropriate prescribed medicines
- Residential and community rehabilitation should be available for those who need it
Support for sustained recovery

Everyone should have access to support that promotes and sustains their recovery.

Help people access mutual aid groups (e.g. AA, NA, SMART Recovery) and other positive social networks.

People in recovery need access to stable accommodation.

They should be supported into education, training or employment.

Doing all of this will enable individuals to reach their full potential, will lead to better outcomes and save money.
Partnership: the key to success
The benefits of investment
Intervening early works and saves money

Young people’s drug and alcohol interventions result in £4.3m health savings and £100m crime savings per year.

Drug and alcohol interventions can help young people get into education, employment and training, bringing a total lifetime benefit of up to £159m.

Every £1 spent on young people’s drug and alcohol interventions brings a benefit of £5-£8.
Investing in alcohol interventions saves money

Every 5,000 patients screened in primary care may prevent **67** A&E visits and **61** hospital admissions

Costs **£25,000**
Saves **£90,000**

One alcohol liaison nurse can prevent **97** A&E visits and **57** hospital admissions

Costs **£60,000**
Saves **£90,000**

Every **100** alcohol-dependent people treated can prevent **18** A&E visits and **22** hospital admissions

Costs **£40,000**
Saves **£60,000**
Investing in drug treatment cuts crime and saves money

Every £1 spent on drug treatment saves £2.50 in costs to society

Drug treatment prevents an estimated 4.9m crimes every year

Treatment saves an estimated £960m costs to the public, businesses, criminal justice and the NHS
Drug and alcohol interventions lead to better public health outcomes

**Substance misuse treatment specific**
- Successful completion of drug treatment
- Alcohol-related admissions to hospital
- People entering prison with substance dependence issues who are previously not known to community treatment

**PHOF indicator domains**
- Improving the wider determinants of health
- Health improvement
- Health protection
- Healthcare public health and preventing premature mortality

- 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training
- Re-offending levels
- Statutory homelessness
- People in prison who have a mental illness or a significant mental illness
- Self-reported wellbeing
- People presenting with HIV at a late stage of infection
- Under-75 mortality rate from liver disease
- Mortality rate from causes considered preventable
- Pupil absence
- First time entrants to the youth justice system
- Sickness absence rate
- People entering prison with substance dependence issues who are previously not known to community treatment
Find out more…

- PHE alcohol, drugs and tobacco
- Local PHE centre alcohol and drugs team
- PHE alcohol learning resources
- Recovery resources for drugs