

ALCOHOL AND DRUG AWARENESS TOOLKIT

FOR RNLI VOLUNTEERS, STAFF AND MANAGERS

Welcome

This toolkit is created to help you carry out your role for the RNLI safely and support your colleagues to do the same. It gives you key information about the effects that alcohol and drug misuse can have on us all and how this is relevant to the RNLI and your role. It has been designed for all our people, you can use it individually or as part of a group team talk.

The RNLI wants to support people with alcohol and drug problems and takes your wellbeing very seriously. This toolkit outlines how to spot the signs that you or those around you may need help and makes you aware of how to access support both inside and outside the RNLI. Through providing clarity about our policies and what we expect from you it also aims to support you to come to work or volunteer fit and, if you are a manager, it will help you to guide your team to do the same.

It is split into the following sections to help you plan your time and focus on the parts most relevant to you:

Section 1	Why is it important?
Section 2	Drugs: know your whizz from your blow
Section 3	Alcohol: know your limits
Section 4	Concerned about yourself or a colleague
Section 5	Guidelines for managers and supervisors
Section 6	Team talk
Section 7	Quiz

We hope you find this toolkit useful and if you require any further information, support or have any feedback contact people_advisers@rnli.org.uk.

Alcohol and Drug Awareness Toolkit

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736). Registered charity number 20003326 in the Republic of Ireland

Find the toolkit in the HR Policy Zone on Porthole or the Resources section on the Volunteer Zone.

Why is this important?

Alcohol and drug misuse can be a serious problem, not only for the individual but also for their friends and family, the organisation where they work or volunteer, and their colleagues.

At the RNLI, we are committed to developing a culture that takes the safety and wellbeing of our people seriously, so supporting people who may be dependent on or misusing drugs or alcohol is **the right and responsible thing to do**.

We aren't making judgements about people's lifestyle choices, we want to keep our people and the public safe.

RNLI people are involved in a diverse range of activities, many of them safety critical. Every member of the RNLI team must be fit and able to carry out their role when they are on duty. It is everyone's responsibility to keep the public, our colleagues and ourselves safe.

The sustainability of the RNLI depends on our reputation as a safe, caring organisation. We are all ambassadors responsible for creating a positive impression of the RNLI.

Alcohol Concern estimates that employees who misuse alcohol are 2–3 times more likely to be involved in an accident. Alcohol and drug misuse can also have a significant impact on how efficient the RNLI is. It is estimated that the UK economy loses £6.4 billion a year in productivity due to alcohol and that 5% of all absence from work is alcohol related.

The RNLI's policy

For all permanent, temporary, seasonal and casual staff:
[Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy](#)
[Code of Conduct](#).

For all volunteers:
[Volunteer Code of Conduct](#).

These policies outline that no employee or volunteer should report or try to report for duty when unfit to carry out their role due to the influence of alcohol or drugs (whether illegal or not).

The effects

There are significant harmful health effects related to alcohol and drug misuse such as heart disease, cancers of the mouth, throat, larynx, oesophagus and breast, anxiety, depression, liver damage and mental health issues to name just a few. This is why we want to make sure anyone who might be misusing drugs or alcohol gets the support they need. It can also have an impact on a person's personality, their ability to carry out their role and their relationships. Not only that, possession of illegal drugs could result in criminal charges that, among other things, could impact on an individual's future employment opportunities and/or position within the RNLI.

The legal stuff...

The impact of not tackling issues relating to drug and alcohol misuse is more than a wellbeing issue.

The RNLI has a general duty under health and safety legislation to ensure the safety of our people. Employees and volunteers are also required to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by what they do at the RNLI.

The principal legislation for controlling the misuse of drugs is the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971 UK; 1977 and 1984 Republic of Ireland). These Acts make the production, supply and possession of these controlled drugs unlawful except in certain specified circumstances (for example, when they have been prescribed by a doctor). If the RNLI knowingly permits the production or supply of any controlled drugs, the smoking of cannabis or certain other activities to take place on our premises we could be committing an offence.

Our duty of care

The RNLI is committed to ensuring that its varied activities are carried out in a safe way. As part of this commitment, we recognise that alcohol and other substances can affect judgement and performance and must, therefore, be seen as a potential threat to safety.

The RNLI also wants to promote good health among its people and has a duty of care to all those who, directly or indirectly, carry out its work of saving lives at sea.

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Drugs: know your whizz from your blow

Don't know much about drugs, or want to know how to spot the signs of misuse?

Who takes drugs?

All kinds of people are involved in drug misuse – they do not conform to any stereotype and drugs can affect people from all walks of life. More than half of drug users are infrequent users, taking them less than once a month. But drug use isn't necessarily linked to special occasions or big nights out, the majority of people are more likely to take them at home or at a friend's house. Young drug users (aged 16 to 24) are most likely to take them in a social environment amongst friends. However, an individual can still misuse drugs when they aren't taking them regularly; the effects can still be significant.

1 IN 12 (8%) ADULTS AGED 16-59 HAD TAKEN AN ILLEGAL DRUG IN 2015 IN ENGLAND AND WALES. 1 IN 5 (20%) OF THOSE WERE 16-24 YEAR OLDS.

What are the effects of drug use?

Drugs can affect the brain and the body in a number of ways and they all carry risks. They can alter the way a person thinks, perceives and feels, and this can lead to either impaired judgement or concentration. Drug misuse can also bring about the neglect of general health and wellbeing, which may adversely influence performance at work or in the RNLI's case, in their volunteering role too.

The signs and symptoms to look out for

- Sudden mood changes
- unusual irritability or aggression
- tiredness or changes in appetite
- a tendency to become confused
- abnormal fluctuations in concentration and energy
- tremors, slurred speech, or impaired coordination
- bloodshot eyes, pupils larger or smaller than usual
- sudden weight loss or weight gain
- impaired job performance
- poor timekeeping
- increased short-term sickness absence
- deterioration in relationships with colleagues, the public or management
- deterioration of physical appearance, personal grooming habits
- dishonesty, theft or financial troubles (as a result of the need to maintain an expensive habit).

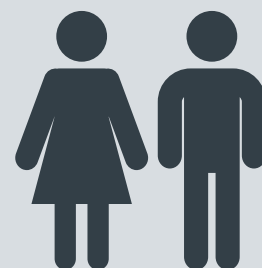
Don't make assumptions...

If you know someone who is exhibiting some of these signs, don't assume they're misusing drugs. Many of these signs are also symptomatic of other issues such as stress, tiredness or maybe problems at home or with a relationship.

If you are a worried about someone you manage, work or volunteer with, talk to them before making any judgements, and regularly take a few minutes to check on their general wellbeing, and that of your whole team. Also, have a look at section 5 in this toolkit - Information for managers and supervisors.

For friendly and confidential advice, and to find out everything you might want to know about drugs, go to talktofrank.com or Drugs.ie

3.3% OF ADULTS AGED 16-59 WERE DEFINED AS FREQUENT DRUG USERS (MORE THAN ONCE A MONTH). 4.7% OF THAT FIGURE COVERS THE 16-24 AGE BRACKET.



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SECTION 2

Drugs: know your whizz from your blow

The top five recreational drugs in the UK and Ireland

Name and AKA	The effects	The risks
Cannabis Hash, Dope, Grass, Blow, Ganja, Weed, Shit, Puff, Marijuana, Hashish, Pot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling chilled out, relaxed and happy, user might get the giggles or become more talkative. • Hallucinogenic effect and user more aware of their senses. • 'Munchies' (makes users hungry). • Feeling sick or faint. • Feeling anxious, paranoid and panicky. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alters the user's mind and mood. • Disturbs sleep and makes user depressed. • Hours or even days of anxiety, paranoia, delusions and hallucinations that usually only settle down after use is stopped. • Can make asthma worse and lead to cancer. • Increases heart rate and blood pressure. • Affects fertility.
Cocaine Coke, Percy, Charlie, C, White Snow, Toot, Rocks, Wash Stones, Pebbles, Freebase, Crack, Ching, Chang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling on top of the world, confident, alert but also, over-confident, arrogant, aggressive and careless. • Raises the body's temperature, makes the heart beat faster and reduces appetite. • Comedown can cause depression and feeling run down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High doses can lead to heart failure as well as breathing problems and chest pains. • Using cocaine a lot can lead to mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, paranoia and panic attacks. • Injecting the drug and sharing needles can lead to a variety of infections such as HIV and hepatitis.
MDMA/Ecstasy E, Pills, Brownies, Mandy, Mitsubishis, Rolex's, Dolphins, XTC, Crystal, Cowies, Superman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy buzz, feeling alert and experiencing more intense sounds and colours. • Chatty, temporary feelings of love and affection for people. • Anxious or panicky, confused, paranoid or even psychotic. • Dilated pupils, tingling feeling, tightening jaw muscles and fast heartbeat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely pure; mixed with other drugs can be fatal. • Comedown – feeling lethargic and depressed. • Long term can cause memory problems, anxiety, depression, kidney and heart problems. • Impacts user's immune system. • Overheating and dehydration can be fatal.
Amphetamines Speed, Whizz, Uppers, Billy, Sulph, Amp, Base, Phet, and many more...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling awake, energised, alert, excited and chatty. • Energy to do things like dancing for hours. • Overactive, agitated, aggressive or psychotic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comedown can last days, can make user feeling lethargic and down, and have difficulty concentrating. • Can drain the immune system. • If injected can lead to a variety of infections such as HIV and hepatitis. • Leads to anxiety, depression, irritability, aggression and paranoia, as well as mental illness, including acute psychotic episodes. • Can create strain on your heart and cause heart problems.
Heroin Brown, Skag, H, Horse, Gear, Smack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small dose gives the user a feeling of warmth and wellbeing, bigger doses can make user sleepy and very relaxed. • First dose can bring about dizziness and vomiting. • Can last for a number of hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly addictive, user can get hooked quickly. • Very expensive habit. • Overdoses can lead to a coma, even death. • Injecting can lead to infections such as HIV and hepatitis.

A conviction for a drug-related offence could have a serious impact. It can result in a fine, criminal record and even a prison sentence. It can also limit the types of jobs you can apply for and stop you visiting some countries – for example the United States.

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SECTION 2

Drugs: know your whizz from your blow

Drugs and driving

It is against the law to drive under the influence of illegal drugs, or if you have certain drugs above a specified level in your blood. Driving under the influence of drugs is extremely dangerous and can affect driving skills in a number of ways.

As with alcohol, you can also still be under the influence the day after taking drugs.

While any illegal drugs are wearing off the user may feel fatigued, affecting concentration levels. Driving in any of these conditions is a bad idea – not just for the driver but for their passengers and other road users. If caught and convicted, they could face a driving ban, a large fine and a prison sentence.

RNLI Driving Policy

The [RNLI Driving Policy](#) clearly states:

No person will be permitted to drive any vehicle on behalf of the RNLI while under the influence of:

- alcohol
- medicines that impair driving
- prescription drugs that have not been prescribed to them
- recreational drugs.

For the avoidance of doubt, zero alcohol is permitted when driving on behalf of the RNLI and commuting to the place of volunteering activity or usual place of work.

Drivers must not operate a vehicle if medication impairs their driving. Medication must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or medical advice.

What about legal highs?

Legal Highs are now known as NPS which stands for New or Novel Psycho-Active Substances as they should not be referred to as legal anymore, a new act was passed in 2016.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/psychoactive-substances-bill-2015. They are considered illegal to sell, supply or advertise for 'human consumption' under current medicines legislation. Sellers intentionally refer to them as research chemicals, plant food, bath crystals or pond cleaner.

Key facts

- Just because a drug is legal to possess, it doesn't mean it's safe.
- Evidence shows NPS are far from harmless; similar health risks to drugs like cocaine, ecstasy and speed.
- Risks include reduced inhibitions, drowsiness, excited or paranoid states, coma, seizures, and death, which are increased if used with alcohol or other substances.
- It is likely that substances sold as a NPS may actually contain one or more substances that are actually illegal to possess. What you may think is a NPS that you can't get in trouble for having, could be something completely different, and in fact an illegal drug.

For more about NPS, see talktofrank.com or Drugs.ie



**ZERO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS IS
PERMITTED WHEN DRIVING
ON BEHALF OF THE RNLI**

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SECTION 3

Alcohol: know your limits

What are the effects of alcohol misuse?

Although it is legal to drink alcohol, that doesn't mean it's any less powerful than other drugs.

The effects	The risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a depressant and generally slows down brain activity. Small amounts can reduce feelings of anxiety and reduce inhibitions, which can help drinker feel more sociable. It can exaggerate whatever mood the user's in when they start drinking. Short-term effects of alcohol can last for a day or two. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One drink too many can leave people out of control – slurring words, losing balance, having accidents and vomiting. Drinking regularly, and above the recommended guidelines, can cause or contribute to illnesses such as high blood pressure, liver damage, stomach cancer, breast cancer and stroke. Too much alcohol on a single occasion can lead to alcohol poisoning, which could put you in a coma or even kill you. Short-term risks like injuries and accidents can include head injuries and fractures, and can be fatal. Long-term risks can include illness, such as cancer, stroke, heart disease, liver disease, and damage to your brain and nervous system.

The signs and symptoms of alcohol misuse

- Slurred or incoherent speech
- poor balance and clumsiness
- delayed reflexes
- stomach pains, vomiting or nausea
- blackouts and memory loss
- redness in the face during or after periods of alcohol consumption
- a smell of alcohol on the breath
- unusual irritability or aggression
- tiredness due to insomnia
- impaired role performance.

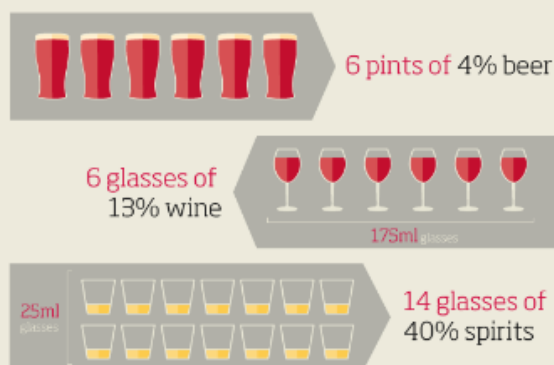
To find out more about the effects of alcohol visit Drinkaware.co.uk and DrinkAware.ie.

Low risk alcohol guidelines*



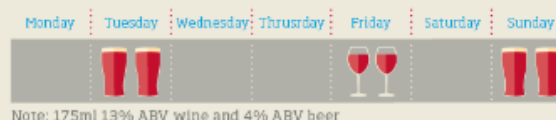
Low risk guidelines are the SAME for men & women. BOTH are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week.

This is what 14 units looks like:



If you regularly drink 14 units per week, it's best to **spread your drinking over 3 or more days.**

If you want to cut down the amount you're drinking, a good way is to have several **drink-free days** each week.



Note: 175ml 13% ABV wine and 4% ABV beer

If you're **pregnant** you **shouldn't** drink alcohol at all



Reduce the risks from single occasion drinking episodes by:

- limiting the total amount of alcohol in one session
- drinking more slowly, with food and alternating with water

The risk of developing a range of health problems increases the more you drink on a regular basis.

*UK Chief Medical Officers' Low risk drinking guidelines, August 2016



Drinkaware.co.uk

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SECTION 3

Alcohol: know your limits

Drinking and driving

The penalty for being under the influence of alcohol when behind the wheel ranges from a fine and penalty points to a driving ban or imprisonment, depending on the seriousness of the offence.

It is not possible to say how much alcohol you can drink and stay below the limit. The way alcohol affects you depends on:

- your weight, age, gender and metabolism
- the type and amount of alcohol you're drinking
- what you've eaten recently
- your stress levels at the time
- how much you've eaten
- the type and strength of alcohol
- whether you are on medication or have taken any illegal drugs.

DON'T FORGET THAT YOU CAN ALSO BE UNFIT TO DRIVE THE DAY AFTER DRINKING. THIS IS WHERE A LARGE PROPORTION OF DRIVERS GET CAUGHT OUT.

Drink drive limits:		
Level of alcohol	England, Wales and Northern Ireland	Scotland and Republic of Ireland
Microgrammes per 100ml of breath	35	22
Milligrammes per 100ml of blood	80	50
Milligrammes per 100ml of urine	107	67

The [RNLI Driving Policy](#) states that no one is permitted to drive any vehicle on behalf of the RNLI while under the influence of alcohol.

For the avoidance of doubt, zero alcohol is permitted when driving on behalf of the RNLI and commuting to the place of volunteering activity or usual place of work.

Just because you're below the drink drive limit doesn't mean you're safe!

ON AVERAGE, IT TAKES ABOUT 1 HOUR FOR YOUR BODY TO BREAK DOWN ONE UNIT OF ALCOHOL. HOWEVER, THIS CAN VARY, DEPENDING ON ALL THE FACTORS LISTED PREVIOUSLY.

Adding up your units

Please note, these times can vary depending on the factors to the left.

- If you drink a large (250ml) glass of wine, your body takes about 3 hours to break down the alcohol.
- If you drink one pint of beer, your body takes about 2 hours to break it down. One pint of strong lager is equivalent to three units, so this will take longer.
- If you have a few drinks during a night out, it can take many hours for the alcohol to leave your body. The alcohol could still be in your blood the next day.

There is a handy Unit and Calorie Counter available at drinkaware.co.uk/understand-your-drinking/unit-calculator

SO IF YOU'RE DRIVING AND YOU WANT TO BE SURE YOU ARE BELOW THE LIMIT, IT'S BETTER TO HAVE NONE FOR THE ROAD.

What does 1 unit of alcohol look like?



You shouldn't regularly exceed  **14 UNITS** per week

[Drinkaware.co.uk](https://drinkaware.co.uk)

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Alcohol: know your limits

Research has shown that even very low levels of alcohol in our system can affect our ability to carry out relatively simple tasks. While the examples below are based on the effects of alcohol whilst driving cars, they can be relevant to many of the activities we carry out at the RNLI.

Drink drive limits:		
	England, Wales and Northern Ireland	Scotland and Republic of Ireland
BAC	0.08	0.05

However **being below the limit doesn't mean you are safe**. Our ability to perform seemingly simple tasks is impaired at much lower levels...

- **At just 0.04 BAC** our ability to spot potential hazards is reduced. Our ability to process and make sense of information that's presented to us, whether visually or what we hear and feel, is impaired.
- **At just 0.03 BAC** the level of alertness and watchfulness we are able to give to a task or an object reduces, making us less vigilant.
- **At just 0.03 BAC** our reaction time is reduced, so the time it takes us to assess a situation, make a decision and start to take action is affected.
- **At just 0.01 BAC** you will fall asleep far quicker than if you didn't drink any alcohol. Drowsy driving is a major cause of crashes and alcohol-related crashes often occur at night when drivers are more likely to need sleep.
- **At just 0.005 BAC** our ability to concentrate on two or more tasks at the same time and make decisions about them, is affected.

What is BAC? Blood alcohol content (BAC) levels represent the percentage of your blood that is concentrated with alcohol. 0.1 means that 0.1% of your bloodstream is composed of alcohol.

To be sure you are fit to carry out your role, it is better to have no alcohol. The drink drive limit isn't your guide!

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Concerned about yourself or a colleague?

Where people have a problem or dependency with drugs and/or alcohol, we want to support them by creating an environment where they feel safe and can be honest with us. It is the right and responsible thing to do.

How to help someone you know

Sometimes people who have a problem don't think they have, or refuse to believe that they are addicted or dependent. So if you think a friend, colleague, direct report or family member has a problem and you want to help them, think carefully about how you're going to approach it and what you're going to say. They may not listen to you at first but don't let this put you off. The best thing that you can do is to be there for them, to support and encourage them to change.

1. Choose the right time to talk

Don't try talking to them if they are drunk or high; they could get angry or forget you've even had the conversation.

2. Be sensitive

Don't use words or phrases like 'alcoholic' or 'drug problem' as it could make them defensive.

3. Be patient

It can take several conversations from someone to admit they have a problem and commit to changing. Remember it's their decision to change, not yours.


4. Don't try to act as a counsellor

You can help them to start consider giving up drink and drugs, but the best person for them to talk to is a GP or specialist drug or alcohol services.

With the proper help and support, many people can overcome their problems before any serious harm has been done to them, or their family and friends. Others have to hit rock bottom before they can see the harm and damage they are doing and start addressing their problem.

How to report a safety concern

If you are concerned that the behaviour of someone you work or volunteer with is presenting a safety risk and that it may be due to the misuse of alcohol or drugs, raise your concerns with your manager or supervisor in the first instance. If you are concerned about your manager or supervisor then speak with the next manager in line or the people advisors or volunteer advisors.



**THE IMPORTANT
THING IS TO
HAVE THE
CONVERSATION, AS
DIFFICULT AS THIS MAY BE.**

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SECTION 4

Concerned about yourself or a colleague?

How to help yourself

Firstly, remember you're not alone. There is a lot of support available. At the RNLI there are a number of routes to support, and externally there are numerous support services available to people experiencing problems with alcohol and drugs.

Support at the RNLI

Anyone who seeks the assistance of the organisation in finding treatment for a drug or alcohol problem may be assured of complete confidentiality, subject to the law and safety requirements of the RNLI.

Support channels and resources for staff and volunteers include:

- **Your line manager**, who will be able to guide you through the RNLI's support systems.
- **People advisers** (for staff) can provide the same support. Contact them on 01202 336417 or people_advisers@rnli.org.uk.
- **Volunteer advisers** can provide the same support. Contact them on 01202 662212 or volunteering@rnli.org.uk.
- **Occupational Health** – with your permission your manager can refer you to Occupational Health, or you can make a self-referral by completing the management referral form indicating that it is a self-referral. Contact the team on 01202 663567 or OHServices@rnli.org.uk.

Support 24/7 provide independent and confidential advice and practical information on a wide range of work and personal issues.

Their contact details are:

- UK volunteers: 0800 116 4362
- RoI volunteers: 1800 303 407
- UK employees: 0800 042 0138
- RoI employees: 1800 303 398
- Email: assistance@workplaceoptions.com
- Website: workplaceoptions.com
- Volunteer website log in details:
Username – RNLI
Password – volunteer
- Employee website log in details: Username – RNLI
Password – employee

Alcohol and drug support guidance

A list of alcohol support and counselling services in the UK can be found at dontbottleitup.org.uk/links.

Drug and alcohol support and counselling guidance in the Republic of Ireland can be found at services.drugs.ie.

A list of drug support and counselling guidance in the UK can be found at talktofrank.com/need-support.



IT IS OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:

- **TO ENSURE THAT WE UNDERSTAND THE POLICIES THAT APPLY TO US; AND**
- **ARE AWARE OF THE RULES AND CONSEQUENCES REGARDING THE MISUSE OF ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND OTHER INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES.**

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Guidelines for managers and supervisors

These key points are relevant to supporting all our people, whether staff or volunteers

Managers and supervisors are required to:

- be aware of the signs of alcohol, drug and substance misuse and the effects on performance, attendance and health of our people
- ensure the health, safety and welfare of our people and others with whom they come into contact
- ensure that our people understand the policy and are aware of the rules and consequences regarding the use of alcohol, drugs and other intoxicating substances
- ensure their teams are aware of the support available to them if they have a problems, see section (4)
- monitor the performance, behaviour and attendance of direct reports as part of the normal supervisory relationship
- intervene at an early stage where changes in performance, behaviour, sickness levels or attendance patterns are identified to establish whether alcohol, drug or substance misuse is an underlying cause
- provide support and assistance, where appropriate and for a reasonable period, to individuals who are dependent upon intoxicating substances, to help their recovery.

Supporting your team

You are responsible for creating an environment where your team feel safe and can be honest with you.

If a member of your team has told you that they have a drug or alcohol problem you should treat this confidentially, discuss it with them, make them aware of the support available to them, encourage them to contact their GP and seek their permission to make a management referral to Occupational Health.

A change in behaviour over time may be a sign of having an alcohol or drugs problem. It is important not to make assumptions as there are many factors that can impact on someone's behaviour.

This toolkit should be read in conjunction with the Disciplinary Policy, procedure and manager's guidelines for staff. For volunteers, please refer to the volunteers code of conduct.

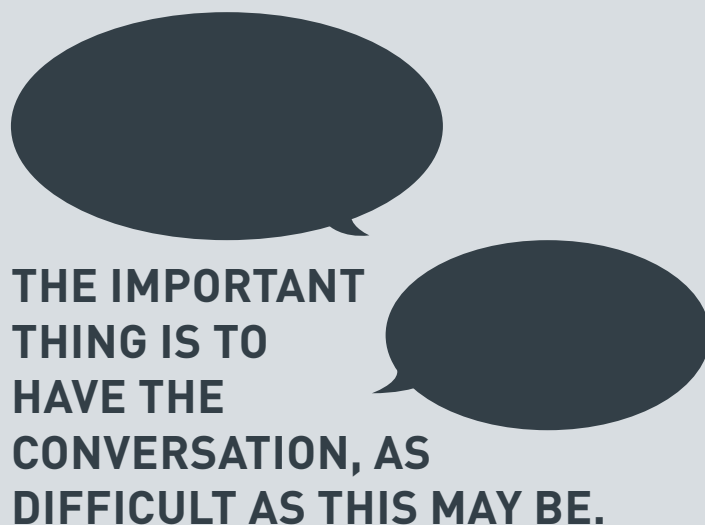
[Disciplinary policy](#)

[Disciplinary procedure](#)

[Disciplinary manager guidelines](#)

[Volunteer problem solving policy](#)

Please liaise with your people adviser or volunteer adviser for further advice.



SECTION 5

Guidelines for managers and supervisors

Here are some examples of situations you may need to deal with and how you should go about it

What has happened?

- A member of the team has turned up for their role and you suspect they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs due to their unusual behaviour or other indicators for example smell of alcohol, dilated pupils, slurring their speech.
- There has been a noticeable dip in performance – for instance critical tasks not being completed, declining to drive when requested - and you suspect that this may be due to them having a problem, with alcohol or drugs.
- They are turning up late or missing shifts, you have a suspicion that this may be due to them being unable to attend due to alcohol and drug misuse.
- A near miss has occurred and you have reason to believe that the individual involved is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- A member of the team informs you that they believe their colleague is currently under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs or has a problem with misuse.
- You are informed by a member of the public or a third party that they believe a member of the team is currently under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs or that their behaviour has been unacceptable.

What should I do?

Run through the questions below to help you decide how to deal with the situation. It may be necessary to talk to the individual or others to establish all the information you need to make a decision:

- Based on their duties for the day do you judge them to be fit and safe to carry out those duties?
- Do you have concerns about the safety of their colleagues or the public if they were to continue today?
- Is this an isolated incident or has this or something similar happened before?
- Have you previously raised concerns with the individual in relation to a similar situation?
- If you have received information from a third party, have you been able to corroborate the information and confirm alcohol and drug misuse is a possibility?
- Can you be sure that all the information you have been provided with has been given in good faith and you will be treating the individual fairly?

Regardless of how you decide to proceed you must have a discussion with the individual on the day it occurs, agree what, (if any), action needs to be taken and make a record of the conversation.

In circumstances where you have been provided with confidential information that hasn't been corroborated and there will be no benefit in discussing it with the individual, you may choose not to have the discussion. You should still keep an appropriate record of the information.

Treat any information that has been brought to your attention by others confidentially, if appropriate.

SECTION 5

Guidelines for managers and supervisors

What are your options?		
	Situation	Action
Act immediately if ...	the individual is unfit to carry out their duties and/or is putting themselves or others at risk. a serious incident or accident has taken place causing serious damage or physical harm to the individual or as a result of the individual's actions.	Take the team member away from their duties to a safe and private area. Establish some initial facts and talk to a people or volunteer adviser and your line manager. Staff should be suspended and volunteers temporarily stood down until further notice. You can also consider adjusting the individual's duties or location temporarily to remove the risk.
Start formal action if ...	you have reasonable belief that an individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. other aspects of the incident contravene other RNLI policies.	Establish some initial facts and talk to a people or volunteer adviser and your line manager. Start an investigation.
Keep it informal if ...	you cannot establish reasonable belief that an individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. other aspects of the incident do not contravene other RNLI policies.	Establish some initial facts and talk to a people or volunteer adviser and your line manager if required. Discuss the incident with the individual, take notes of the conversation and agree next steps including any temporary adjustments to duties/ location or support required.

Be supportive this can be an extremely difficult time for everyone involved and people need to have access to the support they need. Be available, maintain confidentiality, make people aware of the support available.

Please note: if you consider any individual to be significantly impaired by either alcohol or drugs, you have a responsibility to help them get home safely. For instance don't let them drive, but encourage them to contact someone to accompany them home. It would not be appropriate to start an investigation meeting with someone who is significantly impaired – schedule it for the next day.

Please note: don't make assumptions that alcohol and/or drugs are the cause. There are many factors that can have an impact on someone's behaviour.

So far in 2017 the people adviser and volunteer adviser teams have been asked to support with thirteen cases related to drugs and alcohol. These are just the cases we know about – there are likely to be more people affected by alcohol or drug misuse than this. It's important they all get the support they need, before this endangers the safety of them or others and has an impact on the work of the RNLI in saving lives.

Alcohol and Drug Awareness Toolkit

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603) and Scotland (SC037736). Registered charity number 20003326 in the Republic of Ireland

Find the toolkit in the HR Policy Zone on Porthole or the Resources section on the Volunteer Zone.

Team talk

What

Alcohol and Drug Awareness.

Why

To discuss the policy with all staff and volunteers, what it might mean for them and the support that's available.

How

Follow this suggested format and use the quiz attached, but feel free to use any other tools or techniques that will work for your team.

Aim

To ensure all staff are aware of the Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy and Code of Conduct, and all volunteers are aware of the Volunteer Code of Conduct and what their responsibilities are.

Raise awareness of the effects of drug and alcohol, the impact these could have on them or their colleagues, as well as the support mechanisms available inside and outside the RNLI.

Team talk content

- Welcome everyone to the session.
- Explain what this session is about, and why it's important.
- Depending on who is in your team, explain that there is an Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy and Code of Conduct for staff, or a Volunteer Code of Conduct, and what the purposes of these are.
- Talk through the contents of this toolkit, highlighting the elements that are most relevant to your team. Ask questions about the content to find out how much people already know about the effects and risks of drugs and alcohol.
- Support – Explain the support available through the RNLI and external sources, and the role of managers in supporting people with alcohol or drug issues.
- Based on the work your team carries out, facilitate a discussion about where the main risks in relation to being under the influence of drugs and alcohol lie and what the consequences could be. For instance these could be when operating machinery or driving boats or RNLI vehicles, making a rescue or talking to the public.
- Based on the risks and consequences they identify discuss what should be put in place within the team to reduce these. This can include different operating procedures, processes or changes in behaviour.
- Questions and answers. If your team has questions you are unable to answer, contact people advisers and volunteer advisers.
- Use the quiz to help clarify your team's understanding of the policy, the effects of drug and alcohol misuse and the support available.

Feedback

Is there anything else we could be doing to provide you with the support you need in relation to this area? Please provide feedback to people_advisers@rnli.org.uk.

SECTION 7

Alcohol and drug awareness QUIZ

1. Name 5 signs of alcohol or drug misuse.
2. What would happen if the RNLI knowingly allowed a staff member under the influence of drugs or alcohol to continue working, and his or her behaviour put someone at risk?
3. What are the five most used drugs in the UK and Ireland?
4. Who should you talk to at the RNLI if you have a problem with drugs or alcohol?
5. Adults are recommended to drink no more than 14 units of alcohol per week. How many pints of beer is this?
 - a. 10 pints
 - b. 4 pints
 - c. 6 pints
6. The way alcohol affects you can depend on a number of different factors. Name three of them.
7. Sleep helps your body break down alcohol quicker – true or false?
8. How long does it take your body to break down one unit of alcohol?
 - a. approximately 1 hour
 - b. roughly 30 minutes
 - c. about the time it takes you to drink a beer
9. Alcohol is responsible for someone dying in the UK every ...
 - a. day
 - b. hour
 - c. 5 minutes
10. How many employers in the UK are estimated to have employees working for them who have alcohol and drug problems?
 - a. 31% with alcohol problems and 63% with drug problems
 - b. 84% with alcohol problems and 9% with drug problems
 - c. 60% with alcohol problems and 27% with drug problems
11. How many alcohol or drug related incidents have occurred so far in 2017 involving staff and volunteers at the RNLI?
 - a. 3
 - b. 25
 - c. 13

Other useful guidance for use during Team talks

Fifty Years Of Anti-Drink Driving Ads
youtu.be/fW2dWqTkDBM

Test your reactions
dontriskit.info/drink-driving/test-your-reactions

Mythbuster
dontriskit.info/drink-driving/mythbuster

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