

# **Tackling Alcohol Misuse: Implementing a Whole Population Approach: Next Steps for Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs)**

27 June 2011  
BMA, Edinburgh

## **Notes of Presentations and Discussions**

### **Key Points Summary**

ADPs highlighted progress on the implementation of whole population approaches at a local level, particularly in building relationships with and understanding of Licensing Boards, Local Licensing Forums and licensing legislation in general.

ADPs have a valuable contribution to make to the licensing process in particular by collecting and presenting data and evidence to support the public health objective of licensing legislation.

A range of good practice examples in implementing whole population approaches at a local level were discussed and ADPs agreed that further opportunities to share good practice and ideas would be beneficial.

A number of potential supportive actions and tools were identified including; the development of an online 'portal' for the sharing of good practice information among ADPs; further information and evidence to support development and delivery of key messages in support of whole population approaches; and incorporating whole population messages into workforce development training and education.

### **Introductions and aims for the day**

Alison Douglas, Head of Alcohol Delivery Unit, Scottish Government, gave a brief overview of the progress on implementing a whole population approach at a local level and the themes to building on the ADP conference held on 31 March.

### **Presentation - Alcohol Focus Scotland**

Laura McFadzen, Training & Development Manager, Alcohol Focus Scotland delivered a presentation on whole population approach, describing how Alcohol Focus Scotland has incorporated whole population approaches into its work programmes and providing ideas which ADPs may wish to consider when implementing a whole population approach at a local level (presentation with accompanying notes attached).

### **Q&A session – Whole Population Approach in Practice, Aberdeen City ADP**

Fraser Hogan, ADP Development Officer and Alison Douglas held a brief Q&A session on work that Aberdeen City ADP has undertaken in schools.

Fraser outlined the process which comprised survey work with young people to gain a better understanding of drinking 'norms' among young people in the area. The key findings of the survey were:

- Parental/family influence was key to young people's drinking behaviour – more so than that of peer influence
- Smaller than anticipated number of young people were drinking

The findings of the survey work have been presented at a parent's evening and were fed back to 600 school pupils via school assemblies as part of an exercise in creating better understanding of social norms.

Formal evaluation of the impact of the work is still to be implemented but so far the ADP has noted positive anecdotal feedback.

Fraser outlined key lessons learned by the ADP in undertaking this work:

- Getting senior buy-in and support from your education department is critical to the success of this type of work.
- Partnership working with Young Scot or similar organisations with experience of engaging with young people is very helpful
- Reaching parents is a challenge

### **Round Table Discussions**

The delegates were divided into small groups with representation from a range of ADPs on each table along with National Support Coordinators, Alcohol Delivery Unit staff, NHS Health Scotland representatives and Alcohol Focus Scotland representatives. The groups considered three questions and responses to each were then discussed by the full group.

#### **1) How to incorporate a whole population approach (WPA) in local strategies and delivery?**

Examples of progress implementing WPA (full group discussion):

- Work is underway in some areas to build relationships/links between ADP and social work, health, licensing forum and licensing boards locally.
- West Dunbartonshire ADP have developed a good working relationship with their Licensing Board and are now undertaking a Health Impact Assessment of the Licensing Policy at the Board's request. This follows strong partnership working on the overprovision statement where the ADP undertook data collection and analysis on the level of alcohol harm across West Dunbartonshire and an analysis of alcohol purchasing behaviour.
- ADPs in Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS Board area are working together and with licensing boards and supermarket representatives to consider collective approaches to licensing across the area. They have ensured public health representation on the group to maintain focus on the public health objective of licensing legislation. They indicated that they would be happy for other local ADPs to join this group if it was deemed helpful.
- It was highlighted that it would assist ADPs if the Scottish Government could provide information on comparative data from UK or European sources to allow ADPs to demonstrate the comparative level of alcohol related harm in their area. Comparisons within Health Board areas or within Scotland are not always helpful due to the high levels of harm across the country.
- ADPs highlighted the need to be able to use data and evidence to explain the need to tackle the affordability and availability of alcohol.

Notes from round table discussions:

- Some ADPs highlighted restricted budgets and concern about the cost required to fully implement whole population approaches. They are keen to define what can be done within existing budgets.
- Questions were raised about the efficacy of public awareness campaigns and whether this was the most appropriate use of limited resources.
- There was discussion about the importance of workforce development activity in promoting whole population approaches, particularly considering the involvement of the generic workforce in local workforce development strategies.
- ADPs highlighted the need for key information/evidence to support whole population approaches, particularly information on the arguments for minimum pricing and reduction in availability.
- East Renfrewshire ADP is working to build links with their Local Licensing Forum and Licensing Board and is trying to ensure involvement from partners in social work and health. They are seeking membership of the LLF/LB and are focusing on strengthening communication flow.
- West Dunbartonshire ADP advised that their particularly strong relationship between with the LLF had been achieved over a number of years with the ADP Coordinator sitting on the LLF as a member. Additionally, the ADP undertook data collection on behalf of LLF and the evidence they were able to present had been used in licensing decisions.
- Aberdeenshire ADP highlighted the need to present information, evidence and data to their Licensing Board in a way that is relevant to the role and remit of the Board.
- West Lothian ADP advised that they are developing a data template in partnership with Alcohol Focus Scotland to demonstrate the range of primary and secondary data that can be used to influence licensing decisions. The template will be available to other ADPs on completion. They also highlighted the need to think more widely than licensing in order to influence overprovision. Other departments such as planning could be included too.
- Borders ADP highlighted that a WPA links well with the inequalities agenda, they have been examining the deprivation index to inform some of the measures they have implemented.

## **2) What whole population interventions are available to ADPs and how can these best contribute to delivery of local and national outcomes?**

Examples (full group discussion):

- Forth Valley and West Lothian ADPs reported on social norms projects in schools and in communities. Results are due to be reported in May 2012.
- Angus ADP highlighted a strong communication strategy with the community and media across Tayside.
- West Lothian ADP highlighted the delivery of Alcohol Brief Interventions (ABIs) out with HEAT target settings.
- Edinburgh ADP highlighted the forthcoming 'Big Drink Debate' public awareness campaign which will seek to engage the local community in exploring potential solutions including whole population approaches.

Notes from round table discussions:

- There was a suggestion to gather information to highlight the economic harm caused by alcohol to provide a fuller picture of the impact of alcohol on the economy.
- There was discussion about incorporating media literacy work into education programmes for young people with the aim of equipping them to think critically about media influences.
- Dundee ADP highlighted the role that ADPs could have in coordinating existing public messages and social marketing approaches and ensuring that the media and press receive key messages.
- Angus ADP highlighted that prominent coverage in the press is a specific aim of their Focus on Alcohol project.
- There was agreement among ADPs that there must be a focus on assisting the general public to understand whole population approaches in order for them to be a success.
- West Lothian ADP added that public awareness raising must incorporate promotion of minimum pricing as a key approach to tackling alcohol related harm.
- Perth and Kinross ADP provided information on their focus on older people's drinking and workplace policies as part of their whole population approach. They are also targeting the general public over the summer using social marketing and social media such as Facebook and Voxbox and having a presence at T in the Park. They are also targeting the travelling people community.

### **3) What kinds of support/tools would ADPs find helpful? What good practice and partnership working can we draw upon and share?**

Suggestions for support/tools (full group discussion):

- UK or European comparative data on alcohol related harm to allow ADPs to place local data in a wider context.
- Support to hold a national conversation between ADPs and law enforcement structures, particularly around test purchasing legislation and powers.
- Assistance needed to better engage with Chief Executives of Local Authorities and NHS Boards on the wider impact of alcohol.
- Assistance needed to better engage with the Royal Colleges to strengthen medical perspective.
- Improved communication from Scottish Government on national work taking place or impacting at a local level to ensure ADPs are fully briefed and involved.
- Assistance needed to better engage with General Practitioners.
- Development of an online 'good practice portal' where ADPs could access information on initiatives/actions being undertaken in other parts of the country.
- Access to up to date research and key messages to aid delivery and development of key messages.
- A range of definitions of whole population approach tailored to different settings/context.
- Pull together existing research and data on parental influence on young people's drinking.

Examples/ideas of good practice:

- West Lothian ADP advised that it had created a list for Police partners on the most effective and evidence-based interventions and the least effective. This is

to ensure that ADP partners are complementing the strategy and activities with their own interventions.

- It was suggested that whole population approach training or education for frontline services and partners should incorporate evidence and examples of effective interventions and approaches.

### **Next Steps**

Following the round table discussions, Alison Douglas thanked everyone for their participation and advised that a note of the morning's discussions would be circulated once the information was collated. This information will be used to inform the development of support to ADPs, in taking forward further implementation of a whole population approach.

Alcohol Focus Scotland will use the information gathered to draft a whole population briefing paper for ADPs.