

# Spotlight Public Health

Evidence and policy briefings

## Drugs and Alcohol

May 2024

# Purpose

Spotlight briefings summarise the key information that decision makers need to keep up to speed on important health issues. Each briefing puts the science, national policy and guidance into a local context to support local decisions.

Briefings are shared with a wide range of partners including South Gloucestershire Health & Wellbeing Board, Elected Members, Council staff, and members of the Locality Partnership. Please share with others who would find it helpful.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list for these briefings please email:  
[publichealthsouthgloucestershire@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:publichealthsouthgloucestershire@southglos.gov.uk)

# Local Authority responsibilities

- Local authorities (upper tier and unitary) are **responsible for commissioning drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services** as part of their public health responsibilities.
- Services are **funded through the Public Health Grant**. There have been additional drug and alcohol treatment funding allocations in 2023/24 and 2024/25 to improve services.
- **It is a condition of the Public Health Grant that local authorities improve the take up of, and outcomes** from, its drug and alcohol misuse treatment services, based on an assessment of local need and a plan which has been developed with local health and criminal justice partners.
- **In South Gloucestershire Council** adult treatment services are commissioned by the Public Health and Wellbeing Division (PHWBD) from DHI. Young People's Drug and Alcohol Services are provided by a team based within the PHWBD.

# The national impact of drugs and alcohol

## Alcohol

- In England, the more money people earn, the more likely they are to drink alcohol, with around 90% of people living in the least deprived areas drinking, and only 71% of those in the most deprived areas doing so<sup>1</sup>. However, **an increased level of health harm is experienced by the most deprived.**
- The total cost of alcohol misuse and harms in England is estimated to cost the NHS £3.6 billion and alcohol related crime is estimated to cost society around £11.4 billion<sup>2</sup>.

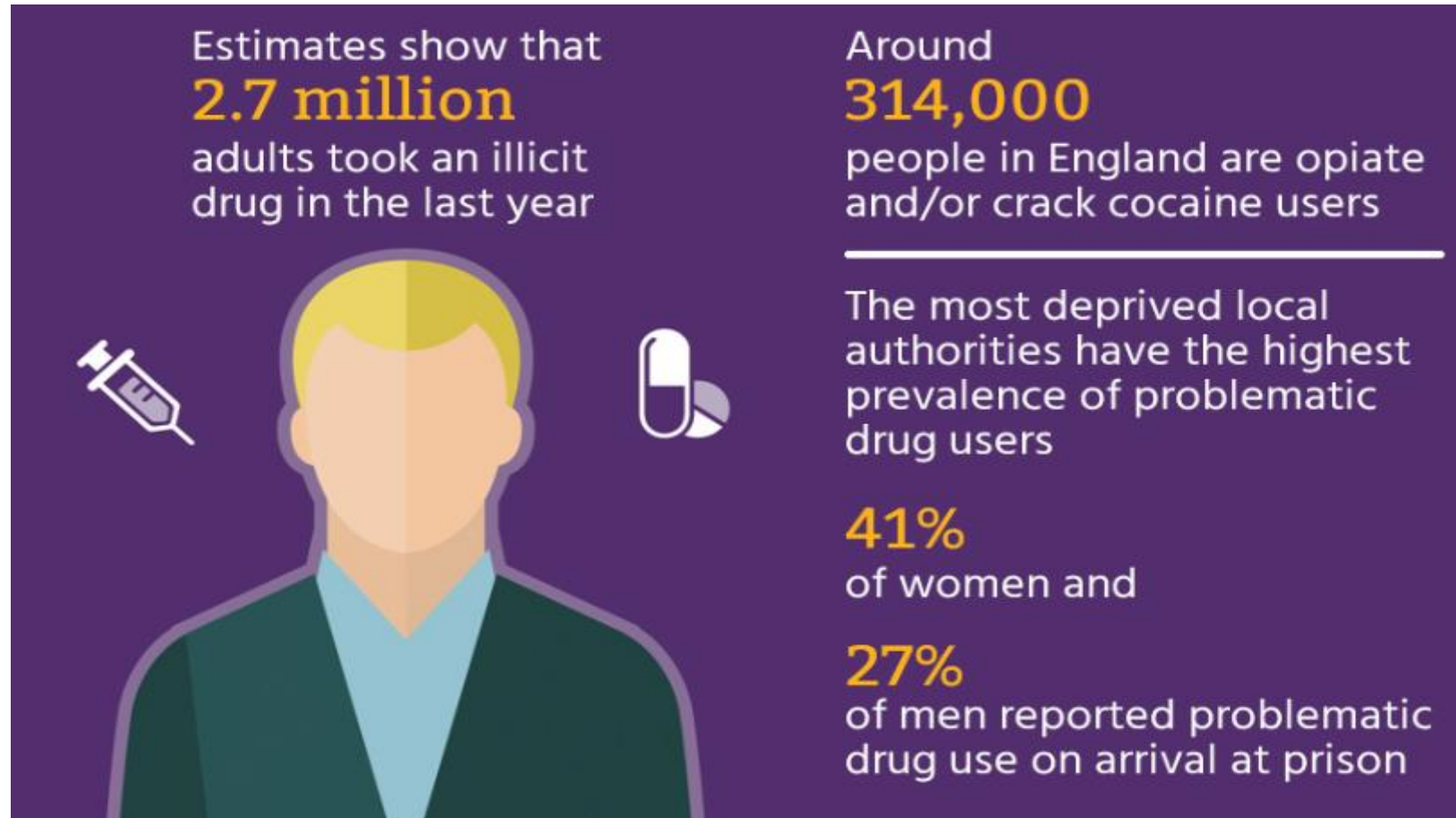
## Drugs

- In the year ending March 2023, an estimated 9.5% of 16 to 59 year olds (approximately 3.1 million people) and 17.6% of 16 to 24 year olds (around one million people) reported any drug use in England in the past 12 months<sup>3</sup>
- The estimated cost of drug misuse is £20 billion a year nationally<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup><https://files.digital.nhs.uk/A3/2F03E4/HSE18-Adult-Health-Related-Behaviours-rep-v2.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [Commission on Alcohol Harm: 'It's Everywhere'—Alcohol's Public Face and Private Harm - House of Lords Library \(parliament.uk\)](#) <sup>3</sup> [Drug misuse in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#) <sup>4</sup> [Review of drugs: summary \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

# Numbers affected by drug and alcohol harm



[Misuse of illicit drugs and medicines: applying All Our Health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/misuse-of-illicit-drugs-and-medicines-applying-all-our-health)

# Drug and alcohol harm for families



[Misuse of illicit drugs and medicines: applying All Our Health - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

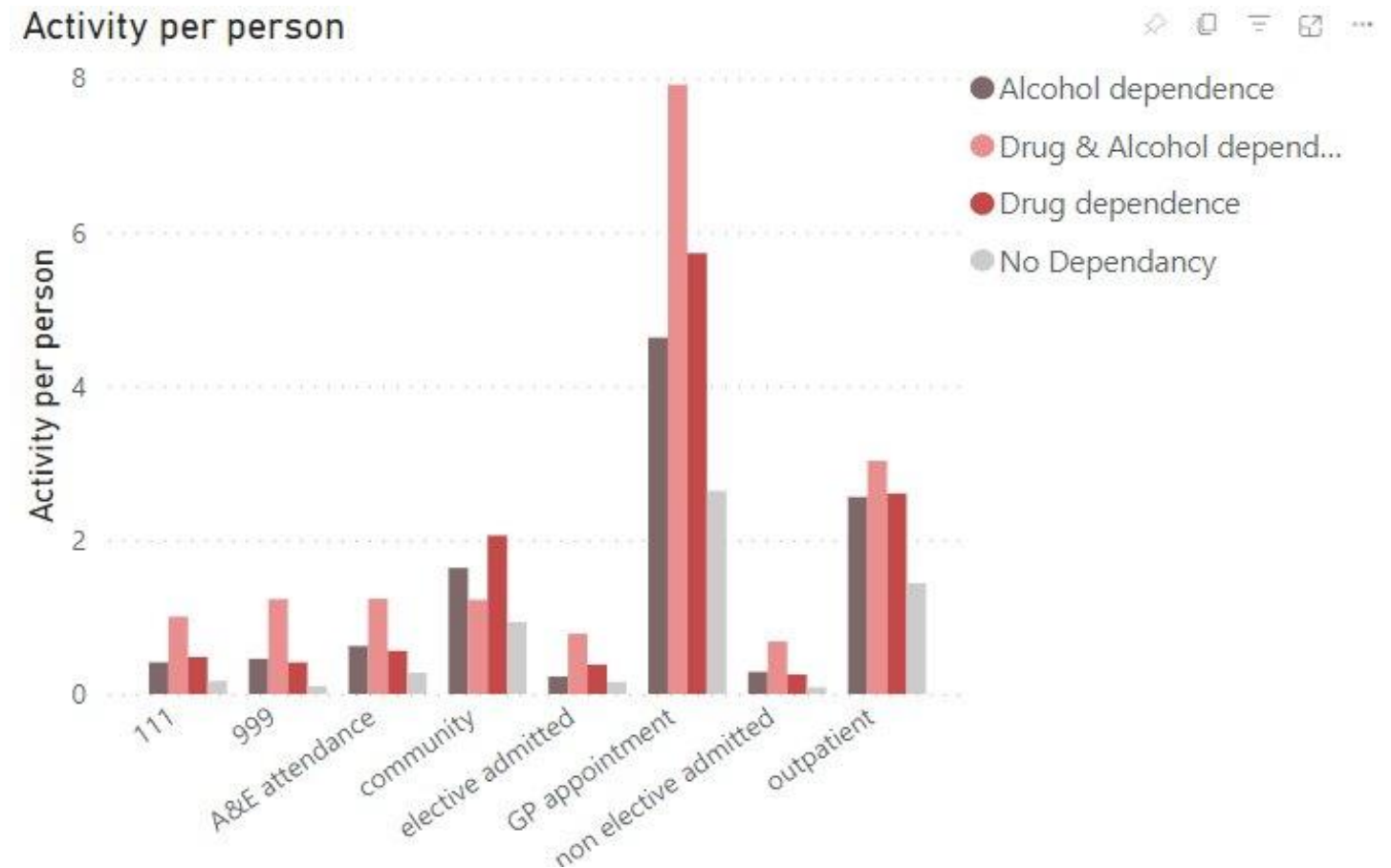
# Substance use in South Gloucestershire

- **859 adults accessed treatment & recovery services** in 2022-23, 30-49 year olds were the biggest cohort of new presentations.
- **The main areas of need** remain the fringes of Bristol - Kingswood and Patchway although other areas of need are Yate and Thornbury.
- **55 young people accessed services** in 2022-23, the most prevalent substances were cannabis and alcohol.
- We have a **good shared care network** with 22 GPs signed up to the programme.
- We have a **Needle and Syringe Programme** delivered in 6 pharmacies and 42 pharmacies who provide Opiate Substitution Therapy.
- **Health inequalities evidence:** people who use drug and alcohol services are more likely to smoke tobacco, have poor mental health and not be physically well. We work with a range of services to offer treatment pathways that support our services users to access support from health, housing, and employment.



# Impacts of drug / alcohol use: healthcare burden

- People with drug and/or alcohol dependency living across Bristol North Somerset and South Gloucestershire have a **greater use of all health and care services.**
- The greater number of **GP appointments** and the higher **use of urgent and emergency care** is most significant



Data from BNSSG system-wide dataset dashboard



## Local Headlines – new services for adults

- **Following a competitive procurement process, Developing Health and Independence (DHI) in partnership with Hanham Health & Southern Brooks have been awarded the contract for the provision of drug and alcohol treatment & recovery services in South Gloucestershire.**
- **The new model will offer thriving recovery communities based within 3 hubs across South Gloucestershire offering clinical, psychosocial & recovery-oriented 1:1, group and activity-based interventions. It will include a digital offer, a Peer programme, services across our GP surgeries, access to mutual aid groups, community and inpatient detox and to residential rehab.**



**Developing Health and Independence – 01454868750**

## Local Headlines – adults and young people

- **The Individual Placement Support scheme** (Government grant-funded for two years - launching April '24) will provide people who are accessing drug and alcohol services with support to gain paid employment via an employment specialist based within DHI.
- **The Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service has recently been redesigned** with the aim of increasing its visibility and reaching more young people (especially those who are not in education, employment or training).



Office for Health  
Improvement  
& Disparities



## Local Headlines – partnerships

- **Public Health continue to chair the South Gloucestershire Drug and Alcohol Partnership.** The groups aims to understand the local population need, to deliver locally the ambitions of the national drug strategy, have oversight of government grant funding and bring together partners and those with lived experience to shape local strategy.
- **A Local Drug Information System (LDIS)** has been established which will receive, assess and respond to intelligence concerning substances that may cause harm to residents. The LDIS will ensure the cascading of relevant, proportionate and timely information to a range of stakeholders including health partners, treatment services, youth services, licensing and law enforcement.
- **BNSSG – a number of drug & alcohol targets are captured within the Integrated Care Board’s Joint Forward Plan** setting out the vision for improved services, equitable access, reduced stigma and improved population health.



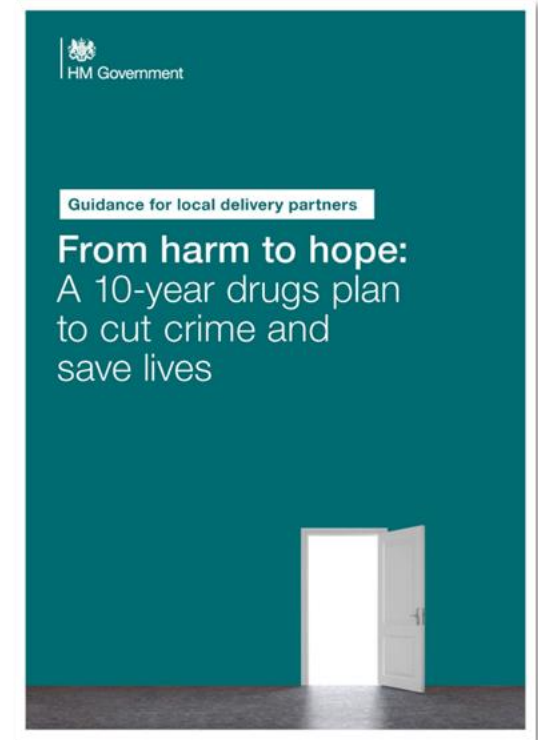
# National policy

- The UK Government released the National Drugs Strategy *From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives*<sup>1</sup> in 2021
- The three main aims of the strategy are to:
  1. break drug supply chains,
  2. deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system
  3. achieve a generational shift in demand for drugs
- Dame Carol Black has provided two reports to guide the Government policy, Part One<sup>2</sup> highlights the problem of drug misuse and Part Two<sup>3</sup> sets out the hope for the way forward for drug treatment and recovery.
- Local authorities in England are receiving a 3-year grant to support the aims and delivery of the national strategy

<sup>1</sup> [From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100222/10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [Review of drugs: phase one report - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100222/review-of-drugs-phase-one-report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [Review of drugs part two: prevention, treatment, and recovery - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100222/review-of-drugs-part-two-prevention-treatment-and-recovery.pdf)



# Evidence of what works

- **Recovery from addiction is more than just access to treatment & recovery centres.** A broader approach needs to include access to housing, employment, health and wellbeing activities, education and harm reduction <sup>1</sup>
- **Access to Opiate Substitute Programmes (OST)** are proven to help reduce the risks of opiate harms.
- **Widening the distribution of Naloxone** (the emergency antidote for opiate overdoses) saves lives <sup>2</sup>
- **A combination of pharmacological and psychosocial interventions** is the most effective way to treat dependence on alcohol, benzodiazepines and opiates
- **Primary prevention, early intervention and relapse prevention** should all be included in the response to alcohol and other drug dependence
- **Interventions that support both substance use and mental health**, where needed, promote recovery and wellbeing outcomes for service users

<sup>1</sup> [Commissioning quality standard: alcohol and drug treatment and recovery guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604214/Commissioning_quality_standard_alcohol_and_drug_treatment_and_recovery_guidance.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [Widening the availability of naloxone - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604214/Widening_the_availability_of_naloxone.pdf)

## Next steps

- Working with our recovery partners to **embed the new treatment & recovery services**
- Working with partners to develop our approach to managing and **responding to the threat of synthetic opioids**
- Continuing to **engage with pharmacies** to support the delivery of services to those who need it
- Working in partnership with DHI and Hanham Health to **enhance the GP offer** via peer learning



## Next steps

- **Launching a Quality Governance Group** to bring together partners to oversee and improve practice across the drug & alcohol treatment & recovery system
- **Continuing to use data to target specific population groups** who are using substances harmfully and who are not engaged in services
- Working in partnership with BNSSG colleagues to **develop a seamless services between acute trusts and community services**



# How you can support our work

- 1. Use Trauma Informed practices** when working with anyone who uses drug and alcohol services:
  - Create physically and emotionally safe spaces for people to talk, working transparently to build trust, offering choices, helping people develop healthy coping strategies and creating a culture of compassion
  - Move from asking 'What's wrong with you?' to 'What happened to you?' in order to understand the impact of trauma.
- 2. If you are aware of any population need in your local community,** please share with the local provider or the commissioning team.
- 3. Lobby for long-term investment and promote the importance of services** to help address problematic drug and alcohol use
- 4. Help to reduce stigma** around accessing services for alcohol and drug use - Encourage anyone who is struggling around issues of substance use to access the service below including family members.



# Thank you

For any feedback or spotlight topic requests please contact:  
[publichealthsouthgloucestershire@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:publichealthsouthgloucestershire@southglos.gov.uk)