



An online learning resource for healthcare and social care professionals working to reduce alcohol-related harm



This document provides a brief summary of the Alcohol Identification and Brief Advice (Alcohol IBA) project, developed by DH e-Learning for Healthcare (e-LfH) in association with the Department of Health in England.

According to national studies, 1 in 3 men and 1 in 6 women are drinking at levels which pose risks to their health. Women who regularly drink over 6 units a day and men who regularly drink over 8 units a day are at the highest risk of such alcohol-related harm. For instance, for these drinkers the risk of hypertension increases fourfold for men and doubles for women. The risk of stroke is doubled for the men and increased fourfold for women.

Analysis of 56 controlled trials over a 30-year period shows that, if given by a health-care or social-care practitioner, 5 minutes of early, brief advice can be effective in helping one in eight of 'increasing risk' or 'higher risk' drinkers to reduce their consumption to 'lower risk'.

These short interventions provide information to patients and use motivational techniques to help patients to make positive healthy choices about their alcohol use. The evidence also shows that this brief advice is as effective with non-dependent drinkers as longer or multi-session interventions.

The overall goal of Alcohol IBA is to enable the learner to 'employ techniques to help individuals adopt sensible drinking behaviour' as set out in competence AH10 of the Drugs and Alcohol National Occupational Standards (DANOS).

The e-learning provides education on the number of units in alcoholic drinks, reflecting

the imagery and wording of public media campaigns. It also shows how to use the various identification tools derived from the World Health Organisation validated Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) to identify patients' levels of risk.

The six e-learning sessions cover:

- Alcohol Facts
- Looking at Brief Advice
- Tools for identifying alcohol misuse
- Clinical approach - Case Studies with videos of standard IBA
- Practising brief advice
- Assessment and record of achievement

The programme's focus is neither on the dependent drinker, nor on trying to make people stop drinking completely, but on targeting the people who regularly drink at levels which incur health risks, possibly without realising it.



The learning is grouped into three pathways - primary care, pharmacy and hospital. It is available to all healthcare professionals

via the e-LfH platform, the National Learning Management System and the website www.alcohollearningcentre.org.uk



To access Alcohol IBA, go to:
www.e-lfh.org.uk/projects/alcohol/access-the-e-learning/



For more information, go to:
www.e-lfh.org.uk/projects/alcohol/