

Dear Colleagues,

Drug and Alcohol services are commissioned and increasingly provided outside of the NHS so it can be tricky for GPs to find information and keep up to date. Below I hope to signpost you on some topics relevant to primary care.

Drug Related Deaths

A national review and local audit have made recommendations for many agencies including primary care. Even in a ten- minute consultation we can provide our patients opportunities to improve their health. Interventions that are available and effective include: *signposting to local drug services, promoting naloxone, offering smoking cessation and brief advice about alcohol, testing and referring for hepatitis C and awareness of potential problems when prescribing some Prescription Only Medicines*. Follow link for more.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/fixh1yi7porenvb/Top_tips_Harm_Reduction.pdf?dl=0

Hepatitis C

There is a big push to refer patients with active Hepatitis C infection for newly available effective treatment.

You may receive letters from Public Health England & Dr Will Gelson, hepatologist at Addenbrooke's identifying patients on your list with antibodies to Hepatitis C.

The presence of antibodies indicates that a person has acquired the virus in the past. Some people will clear the virus naturally. However in 50–85% the virus persists; they have "active hepatitis C" and are at high risk of developing cirrhosis.

We would be very grateful if you could contact patients on the list to invite them for a Hepatitis C PCR test; if that is positive they should be offered referral for treatment to eliminate the virus.

More information at <https://easternliver.net>

Mutual Aid

"Formal treatment" services do not appeal to all people with alcohol and substance misuse disorders, particularly in milder, non-dependent forms so it is worth knowing about other options.

NICE and Public Health England encourage us to facilitate access to "mutual aid". Alcoholics & Narcotics Anonymous are well established examples, where people come together with their peers to build a network of support. Local meetings can be found through these links.

<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/members/Regional-&-Local-Websites/Eastern-Region/Fenland-Intergroup/Meetings>

<https://ukna.org/meetings/search>

Your views

Finally, if you have not already responded...

The Cambridgeshire Adult Community Drug and Alcohol Treatment service has been provided by Inclusion for the past five years, but will be re-tendered in 2017/18.

As the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Public Health Joint Commissioning Unit commissions the new community service, it seeks your views. How do you see primary care's future role within an integrated model of drug & alcohol treatment services?

I would be very grateful if you could spare five to ten minutes to look at the link below. The consultation will continue until October 2017.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Q899HKS>

(If you are a practice in Greater Peterborough this survey does not apply as the tender is only for the Cambridgeshire County Council area).

Dr Melanie D'Souza GP, Cambridge Access Surgery
GP Advisor at Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Public Health Joint Commissioning
Unit