building the SPIRIT OF SPORT

Alcohol Guidance for Clubs & Coaches



A guide for sports coaches and clubs on addressing and managing alcohol and its related issues



Building the Spirit of SportAlcohol Guidance for Clubs & Coaches

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Introduction . Introduction

Sport is an important and central aspect of Irish social life. It fosters a sense of community spirit and pride, offers a source of enjoyment (and frustration!) and creates a sense of belonging. For the participant it also teaches valuable life skills as well as improving their physical and mental well-being.

In Ireland the sports club is a key part of the fabric of a community and as such it has a key opportunity to support and inform local attitudes to key issues and in turn change the environment in which it operates.

Whilst many in Ireland enjoy alcohol sensibly, the misuse of alcohol and its related harms are becoming increasing issues for our communities and in turn this impacts on those who both organise or participate in sport.

For the individual, alcohol misuse can devastate wellbeing and safety. In sport, it can damage the performance and integrity of the sport and club. Negative associations arising from a 'drinking culture' can jeopardise fan base, gate receipts and even sponsorships, all of which sustain sport from the community level to the elite performer. Continued alcohol misuse creates negative role models and builds a culture of acceptance of inappropriate behaviour.

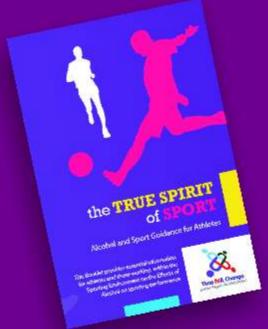
When it comes to managing alcohol in sport, the focus is too often on our elite stars and the big sporting codes. But grassroots sport is the breeding ground for the next generation of stars so it has a critical role to play influencing the lifestyle choices of those involved. For young people, it's where role models are formed and lifelong attitudes cemented. By proactively addressing this issue, we can protect our sports clubs and their members from harm and help them reach their full potential.

For ease of identification in this guide we use the term 'athlete' to describe sports participants, regardless of whether they are part of a team or engaged in a discipline that requires solo performance.

This handbook will provide information on the steps that can be taken by sport clubs and coaches to prevent alcohol becoming a problem and will also give guidance on how to deal with alcohol issues that might arise. It has been developed to complement a separate publication called, 'Alcohol and Sport: Guidance for Participants' (see below) which outlines safe drinking behaviours and the negative effect of alcohol on sporting performance.

This guide will deal with the following areas:

- 1. Why action on alcohol is important
- 2. Impact of Alcohol On Society & Sporting Performance
- 3. How to manage alcohol in your club
- 4. Developing and using a club alcohol policy
- 5. Dealing with alcohol related incidents



The True Spirit of Sport: Alcohol Guidance for Participants.



Why action on alcohol is important •

Thankfully the vast majority of sports clubs do not have to deal with alcohol-related problems on a daily basis. However in most communities there is an interconnection between sport and the social and cultural life of the community.

The Club holds a position of influence and leadership that can educate members, participants and spectators about a balanced role for alcohol.

This leadership can reduce and remove any problems that the club may experience as a result of alcohol misuse and correspondingly lead to a reduction in the experiences of alcohol misuse in the community. Clubs can play an important role in getting messages across regarding possible problems that can arise in relation to alcohol misuse. This can be particularly important in relation to younger club members.

This guide will help your club manage alcohol responsibly and reduce alcohol related problems such as binge and underage drinking. It will confirm the clubs commitment to promoting a responsible attitude towards alcohol and to providing a safe environment for players, members, families and supporters. It will also exhibit your commitment to keeping your athletes engaged; performing for as long and as effectively as possible



Impact of Alcohol on Society & Sporting Performance

Impact of Alcohol on Society

It is clear that alcohol and the pub are a central and enjoyable part of Irish culture. However it is also clear that alcohol misuse and hazardous drinking has become an all too regular feature of Irish life. This is true at both a national and local level. This is having a detrimental impact in many ways, including our health, work lives and family relationships. Steps must be taken to meet these challenges, particularly when we consider the facts below:

Republic of Ireland

- One person dies from an alcohol-related illness every 7 hours in Ireland
- 1.5 million people over 18 drink harmfully
- 250,000 people are estimated to be alcohol dependant
- 1 in 5 children are weekly drinkers
- Over 60,000 alcohol related crimes committed each year
- 1/4 of all admissions to A & E departments are alcohol related
- Over ½ million children experience harm each year as a result of the drinking behaviour of an adult they live with
- Alcohol is causally related to more than 60 medical conditions
- Alcohol misuse costs the Irish exchequer an estimated €3.7 billion each year
- Alcohol is a factor in 41% of episodes of self-harm & half of all suicides.
- 1 in 4 people drinking more than recommended weekly limit.
- 14% of people drink on 5 or more occasions per week.
- 40% of all road traffic accidents were alcohol related.

Northern Ireland



In 2010 there were 284 alcohol related deaths in Northern Ireland. 76% of people are drinking hazardously

Alcohol misuse costs the exchequer in Northern Ireland an estimated £900 million each year

1/4 of all admissions to A&E are alcohol related

Over 44,000 alcohol-related crimes are committed each year

It is estimated that as many as 40,000 children are living in households where someone has an alcohol problem

80% of 15-16 year old have tried alcohol. In addition 11% of individuals admitted to treatment centres were under 18.

Alcohol is a factor in 56% of episodes of self-harm and 60% of suicides

Appendices 1 and 2 give a more extensive list of alcohol impacts in Ireland

Impact of Alcohol on Sporting Performance

As well as the more publicly recognised social problems of alcohol, when it comes to your club and members, it is important to highlight that alcohol consumption provides **no benefit to sporting performance.**

Alcohol consumption impacts on player performance in a host of negative ways including:

- Reduced endurance and increased risk of muscle cramping: This is because alcohol reduces the body's ability to produce blood sugar needed for energy in the liver. This process can last for up to 48 hours.
- **Slower reaction times:** This is because alcohol is a sedative and depressant. It also leads to poorer hand-eye co-ordination and reduced concentration

Impact of Alcohol on Sporting Performance

- **Greater risk of injuries:** Participants who drink are twice as likely to become injured during a competitive season when compared with non-drinkers.
- **Greater risk of complications:** Drinking alcohol results in longer recovery as it increases bleeding and swelling around affected areas, masks pain and causes inferior sleep quality.
- **Dulled performance:** Optimum performance requires at least 72 hours without alcohol consumption.

This means that alcohol misuse can damage your club by hurting your most valuable resource – your participants!

A diagram illustrating how alcohol impacts on body organs is provided in **Appendix 3**

How To Manage Alcohol In Your Club Commitment To Act

Alcohol misuse can adversely affect both the success of your club and your wider community.

On some days in sport, passions can run high and alcohol can help to fuel this, sometimes negatively. It is important that as a club you commit to act in the best interests of your members and visitors by taking steps to tackle these issues. The following points should be considered when doing this:

- Creating a club environment where alcohol misuse is minimised: This can be achieved through simple steps such as ensuring that certain celebrations or medal ceremonies do not take place in pubs, particularly when children will be present.
 - Taking a proactive approach to deal with alcohol issues before they become a problem:
 This can be achieved by delivering alcohol awareness

sessions to club members.

 Having a clear idea of what to do if a club member shows signs of alcohol misuse:

This can be achieved by having clear procedures in place to deal with alcohol-related incidents

Appointing a Lead Person & Sub Group

A good start to dealing with any alcohol issues that may arise is to appoint a 'Club Alcohol Officer.' This should be a responsible person who is well regarded in their club by adults and young people alike, and is interested in tackling alcohol-related issues. They are not expected to be an expert in the area but should be open to learning about the issues involved.

The Club Alcohol Officer is expected to:

- Co-ordinate the development of a Club Alcohol Policy. (For sample policy please see Appendix 4)
- Be the main contact person for anyone in the club experiencing alcohol-related problems or concerned about alcohol-related problems
- Link in with alcohol and health promotion agencies as required (a list of useful agencies is contained in Appendix 5 as well as useful websites in Appendix 6)

The Club Alcohol Officer is NOT expected to:

- Police how people drink
- Become the Club social worker/counsellor etc.
- Be teetotal

It is important to remember that tackling alcohol issues and the development of the Club policy is not the sole responsibility of the Club Alcohol Officer. Instead the Club Alcohol Officer should act as a champion and point of contact in the development of a Club policy and in the Club's response to alcohol incidents.

To support the Appointed Officer, a sub-group should be established to work on the development of a club policy (see below) and consider future actions. This sub group should consist of club officials as well as other interested parties within the community and should be a mix

Developing a club alcohol policy



A Club Alcohol Policy is a written statement of what the Club intends to do about alcohol-related issues. This policy then acts as the basis for all further Club activities regarding alcohol.

The policy does not have to be very long or complicated. A sample policy has been provided in Appendix 6. In the interests of good practice, the following steps can be followed:

- Consider the alcohol problems in the local area and discuss what problems are most likely to come up in the Club
- Prepare a draft policy for the Club and invite feedback from others
- Finalise and launch the policy so that everyone knows what the Club is doing
- Review the policy at least once a year and after every time it is used.

By developing and implementing a Club Alcohol Policy, you are demonstrating to your members that a healthy lifestyle is central to what you do. It will help you prevent problems before they occur and equip you with the skills and knowledge to deal with problems if they do arise.

Dealing with An Alcohol Incident



Alcohol incidents should be dealt with in line with the Club Alcohol Policy. Players or staff involved should be dealt with in an understanding, non-confrontational manner. Incidents should be dealt with in a fair but firm manner with due regard for the safety and welfare of individuals involved, other members of the club as well as the wider community.

Key Officer Training

Another issue to consider is the provision of key officer training. In order to ensure the successful implementation of the Club Alcohol Policy, it may be appropriate to offer club coaches and management (including the Club Alcohol Officer) additional training on alcohol and drugs awareness. This training should be focused on increasing the knowledge and skills of these individuals in this area so that they are able to indentify problem issues earlier and deal with these accordingly. There are number local agencies that can provide this training. (These are listed in **Appendix 7**)

Communication Plan

Once the Club alcohol policy has been finalised, it is important to generate publicity around it so that club officials and members are aware of what steps are being taken. In order to do this, the following steps should be considered:

- An event launching the alcohol policy should be delivered.
- The policy should be presented at relevant meetings including committee meetings and AGMs
- The policy should be available on request

APPENDIX 1 Alcohol Related Harm to the Drinker in Ireland (summary)

Alcohol harm indicator	Summary of Findings	
1. Injuries	Over one in four (28%) of all injury attendances in the accident and emergency department in acute hospitals were alcohol related.	
2. Hospital admissions	 In 2008, 18,400 hospital discharges were recorded as being wholly due to alcohol consumption. This compares with 9,254 discharges in 1995, a 99% increase in 13 years In a large acute hospital, 30% of male in-patients and 8% of female in-patients were diagnosed with alcohol abuse or dependency. 	
3. Alcohol treatment	The total number treated for problem alcohol use in Ireland increased from 7,312 in 2007 to 7,940 in 2008 (HRB) In 2008, the median age at which cases both new and previously treated began drinking was 16 years. In 2010 Waterford, Leitrim, Donegal and Sligo ranked 1*, 2**, 3** & 4** respectively for numbers of the population entering alcohol treatment.	
4. Cancers	Projected number of new cases in alcohol related cancers is estimated to more than double for women and increase by 81% for men up to 2020.	
5. Unsafe sex	College students who were regular heavy drinkers were two to three times more likely to engage in unintended sex and in unprotected sex than other drinkers. Between 1995 and 2004, STIs increased by 217%.	
6. Alcohol related mortality	Alcohol was responsible for at least 88 deaths each month in 2008 – a total of 1056 deaths	
7. Alcohol related driving	Alcohol was a contributory factor in 46.3% of all road accidents between 2003-5. In 2007 19,864 drink driving offences were recorded.	
8. Drunkenness and public disorder	 Alcohol has been identified as a contributory factor in 97% of public order offences. Between 2003 and 2007 the number of drunkenness, public order and assault offences increased by 30% from 50,948 to 66,406. 	
9. Interpersonal Problems	More young men (18-29 years) reported alcohol related harms in terms of regrets, work and fights than other group in the population.	

APPENDIX 2 Alcohol Related Harm to Others in Ireland (summary)

Alcohol harm indicator	Summary of Findings		
Alcohol related street violence	 The national household survey on crime and victimisation reported that the rate of physical assaults (excluding domestic violence or sexual assault) increased by 71% between 1998 and 2003. In 2006, the CSO estimated that 37,100 adults experienced a physical assault, of which 15,600 were injured. Of those injuried 40% required medical attention but not a hospital stay and a further 14.5% required a hospital stay. Young men (18-24) were the group most at risk. Between 1995 and 2005, there were 116,876 recorded assault offences among adults where proceedings were taken. Number of adult assaults increased by 93% between 1995 and 2002. In 2003 assaults offences decreased by 22% and a more modest decline continued to 2005. Between 1995 and 2005, there were 13,411 recorded assault offences among juveniles (a 1:10 ratio for juvenile to adults). Juvenile assault offences peaked in 2004 and declined in 2005. 		
Homicide	 A detailed examination of crime files showed that almost half (46%) of the perpetrators of homicide were intoxicated. During the twenty five year period (1982-2006) homicide mortality rates generally increased over the period and peaked in 1998 followed by a decline for three years, but a steep increase was observed in 2006. 		
Domestic violence	A national study on domestic violence reported that 11% of the population experienced severe abuse. Two main triggers were identified, minor incidents/no specific trigger in 36% of cases and alcohol in 34% of cases. In one-quarter of severe abuse cases, alcohol was always involved.		
Alcohol related road injuries	Between 1990 and 2006, 40,851 people were injured during the time (9pm-4am) most associated with alcohol related accidents. 1997 recorded the highest number of alcohol related injuries followed by a decline to a low in 2003 but a rise again in subsequent years.		

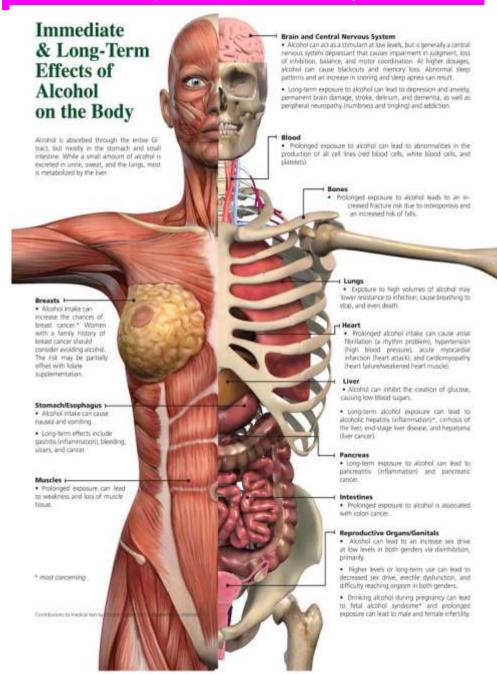
APPENDIX 2 Alcohol Related Harm to Others in Ireland (summary)

Alcohol harm indicator	Summary of Findings	
Harm to others – interpersonal	 In a national survey, almost half (44%) of all respondents had experienced harm by their own or someone else's use of alcohol. Almost two-thirds of male college students and over half (55%) of females students reported that they had experienced at least one harm as a consequences of someone else's alcohol use during the last year. The Family Support Agency, identify the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs as a cross-cutting theme in a number of research reports on the family. 	
Harm to children	 The Coombe Women's Hospital study found that 63% of women reported alcohol use during pregnancy, of which 7% drank 6 or more drinks per week. A 2011 report estimates that 271,000 children under 15 are exposed to risk from parental drinking. 	
Alcohol and the workplace	A survey by IBEC reported that alcohol and alcohol related illness was cited by 12% companies as a cause of short- term absence from work for males and 4% for females.	

Alcohol related harm in Northern Ireland

Alcohol harm indicator	Summary of Findings
Hospital Admissions	• In 2006/7 there were 8,223 alcohol related admissions. This compares with 6,004 admissions in 1996/7 – an increase of 73% in ten years.
Alcohol Treatment	• In March 2010 approximately 4559 people were attending treatment for alcohol or alcohol/drug related conditions. Overall there has been a 5% in the numbers since 2007.
Alcohol related driving	• In 2009/2010 there were 369 injuries following road collisions in which drink or alcohol was a factor – these included 23 deaths
Harm to Children	• It is estimated that as many as 40,000 children are living in a family were an alcohol problem is present. It has been calculated that this costs social services £82 million per year.

APPENDIX 3 Impact of Alcohol on the body



INTRODUCTION

(Name of Sports Club) are committed to discouraging the misuse of alcohol on the basis that it is incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity

(Name of Sports Club) believe it is important to create a safe and healthy Club environment where members can develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to cope with alcohol related issues.

All Club members, officials, coaches and volunteers shall follow the law when it comes to alcohol, especially in relation to underage drinking. They display leadership and good example. This policy applies to all users of Club buildings, transport and grounds.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all Club members are kept safe from alcohol related harm when involved in Club activities.

The objectives are

- To develop a consistent approach to alcohol-related issues
- To develop ways to address alcohol-related issues in the Club
- To establish clear procedures for managing alcohol related issues

ACTIONS

(material can be added or removed from this list as appropriate)

(Name of Sports Club) will take the following actions:

As far as possible celebratory events will not be centred on the consumption of alcohol. Club Management and officials shall take steps to organise appropriate alternative activities

- Trophies will not be filled with alcohol during celebrations.
- Coaches and club officials will not drink alcohol while representing the Club at matches / events or training sessions.
- Medal ceremonies shall not be held in venues serving alcohol particularly for participants under 21 years old.
- Alcohol shall not be served at functions for players/participants aged under 18 years of age.
- Alcohol advertisements will be phased out on Club jerseys.
- Under 18's shall not be brought to pubs on the way home from matches, outings or training sessions
- Club members shall be prohibited from taking part in matches/events (delete as appropriate) or training sessions if they are suspected of being under the influence of alcohol
- Where a club has a bar on it's premises, it will remain closed before and during matches and will remain open 30-60 minutes after matches/events conclude
- Alcohol purchased in the Club house will be consumed there and will not be brought to other areas of the club premises or outside areas
 Alcohol, closed or open containers, will not be carried in buses or other vehicles carrying either athletes or spectators to or from matches/events

Admission to Club premises

The Club will not permit where possible, alcohol to be admitted through the gate by spectators at matches/events.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

(Name of Club) shall arrange for an alcohol education programme for club members, players, parents etc. at least once a year. This education programme may include the promotion of Club policy, provision of literature, workshop or information sessions provided by personnel from local drug, alcohol or health promotion services.

CLUB MEMBERS

Club members will familiarise themselves with and adhere to (Name of Club) alcohol policy

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Parents and Guardians will support (Name of Club) in the development and implementation of this policy

COACHES

Coaches will be aware of the possibility of alcohol misuse among players and will work with staff, officials and other parties with the aim of preventing harm.

CLUB ALCOHOL OFFICER

The Club Alcohol Officer is responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and evaluation of this policy. The Club Alcohol Officer shall have a good knowledge of the local alcohol, drug and health promotion services in order to assist the Club in organising prevention, education and response activities as such needs arises.

The Club Alcohol Officer is (Name of appointed officer) Phone No

CLUB CHAIRPERSON (or Nominee)

All relevant information regarding suspected or confirmed incidents in breach of this policy shall be forwarded to the Club chairperson who will consult with interested parties (including the Club Alcohol Officer) before taking relevant action based on this policy. In the event of the Chairperson not being available these duties will fall to the Vice Chairperson or other nominated person.

REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

Alleged or confirmed incidents in breach of this policy shall be referred to the Club Alcohol Officer and Club Chairperson

RECORDING OF INFORMATION

Information regarding alleged or confirmed incidents of this policy shall be recorded in writing. The recording of factual information is preferable and opinions shall be treated as such. Responses to cases shall also be recorded in this way. Only in confirmed cases shall names of individuals be recorded.

OUTLINE OF RESTRICTIONS

Breaches of this policy are punishable by warnings, suspensions and expulsions as deemed necessary.

CONFIDENTIALITY

While it is not possible to guarantee, every effort shall be made to respect confidentiality

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy is in force at all times and during all Club activities. This policy shall be reviewed annually and after every alcohol-related incident by the Club Alcohol Officer and Club Chairperson.

The policy shall come into effect (insert agreed date)

APPENDIX 5 Alcohol & Health Promotion Agencies (North West)

NORTH WEST

Time IVA Change Project 074 912 5596

HSE Health Promotion 074 912 2322

HSE Drug & Alcohol Services – Letterkenny 074 912 8769

White Oaks Rehabilitation Centre 074 938 4400

DASH (Drug & Alcohol Helpline) 10-5 Tues & Thurs 071 914 7653 / 085 132 4187

Youth Drug & Alcohol Education and Prevention – Donegal 086 048 1977

HSE Drug & Alcohol Services (Sligo/Leitrim) 071 9143316

Youth Drug & Alcohol Education & Prevention Programme (Sligo) 071 9120768

Youth Drug & Alcohol Education & Prevention Programme (Leitrim) 086 1702340

North West Regional Drugs Task Force (NWRDTF) 071 8852000

APPENDIX 5

Alcohol & Health Promotion Agencies (Northern Ireland/National)

NORTHERN IRELAND

DIVERT

028 7126 9327

DAISY

028 9043 5815

Northlands Treatment Centre

028 7131 3232

Health Improvement - Western Health & Social Care Trust

028 7186 5127

Health Promotion Agency

028 9031 1611

SELF HELP GROUPS (from Northern Ireland)

Alcoholic Anonymous

028 9043 4848

AI-ANON

028 9024 3489

SELF-HELP GROUPS (NATIONAL)

Alcoholic Anonymous (AA)

01 842 0700 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) / 01 852 7000 (After Hours)

AL - ANON - Ireland

01 873 2699 (Mon-Fri 10.30am - 2.30pm) / 01 873 2699 (Weekend Helpline)

ALATEEN

01 873 2699 (Mon-Fri 10.30am - 2.30pm) / 01 873 2699 (Weekend Helpline)

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

01 672 8000

APPENDIX 6 Alcohol & Drugs Information (Websites)

The below websites contain useful information relating to alcohol and drug awareness and education. Several contain resources which can be downloaded and distributed as necessary.

www.drinkaware.ie

www.drugs.ie

www.spunout.ie

http://www.healthpromotion.ie/health/alcohol

http://www.healthpromotion.ie/health/drugs

http://alcoholireland.ie/

http://www.nwdrugtaskforce.ie/



APPENDIX 7 Agencies Providing Alcohol & Drugs Awareness & Skills Training.

Agency	Contact No	Training Provided
Alcohol Forum	074 912 5596	Substance Awareness Level 1 – ½ day Level 2 – 1 day Level 3 – 2 days
Foroige Donegal Youth Drug & Alcohol Education and Prevention Project	074 913 2822	Substance Awareness 6-8 week programme aimed at 10-17 year olds
Donegal Youth Service (Youth Information Service)	074 912 29640	Substance Awareness be programme which can be tailored to the needs of the club
North West Regional Drugs Task Force (NWRDTF)	071 914 3027	Contact NWRDTF directly
HSE Health Promotion	074 912 2322	Substance Awareness programme which can be tailored to the needs of the club

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