



The North West Alcohol Forum (NWAFF) is a community initiative which is actively working to reduce harmful drinking in the North West.

It has representatives from organisations and individuals involved in community, education, health and justice, commercial interests and sports and leisure.

The NWAFF since it was established has been involved in a wide range of activities to reduce harmful drinking including:

- Producing a Portrait of our Drinking, a report which showed the harmful effects of drinking in the North West 2004
- Participating in the National Alcohol and Injuries Study in Accident and Emergency Departments.
- Producing “Straight Talk” a guide for parents on teenage drinking
- Establishing the “Teenage Kicks” alcohol awareness project in partnership with Donegal County Council.



- Setting up the Community Detox Service which commenced in October 2005.
- Working with Parenting Programmes including Fás le Chéile and Parent Stop.
- Creating an out of hours parenting service.
- Awareness raising on alcohol and substance abusive and risks to pregnancy
- Being represented on the Regional Drugs Task Force

In May 2005 the Tánaiste and Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, approved the North West as a site for the development of the National Programme of Action on Alcohol.

THE FORUM WILL

- Put in place a Cross Community Project Team to oversee the Alcohol Action Plan.
- Ensure the team includes personnel seconded from community, education health, and justice and staff employed in areas such as administration, research and community support and development.
- Establish an extensive evaluation process.

“We in Ireland have had a long standing love affair with alcohol but that affair has begun to grow sour.”
Denis Bradley, Chairman, NWAFF

ACTIONS 2005- 2010

Deliver sustained Parent and Family programmes through the **Fas Le Cheile** programme which is a network of trained parent facilitators.

Provide additional and focused support to the **Social and Personal Health Education programme** on contemporary alcohol issues.

Work with all youth organisations including **Donegal Youth Council and the cross border Youth Participation Project** to develop an approach, which enables young people to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

Support educational, sporting, employers and relevant organisations to assist them to develop **workplace alcohol policies**.

Support community groups who can implement some of the actions recommended in National strategies on **Alcohol and Suicide / deliberate self harm**.

Encourage local communities to creatively use facilities and resources available to them and successful **models of alcohol free venues** and events will be shared.

Explore funding opportunities to promote **community development**.

Work with the **County Sports Partnerships**, and agree action which is informed by the Declaration on Young People and Alcohol (2001).

Inform and support the development of **effective alcohol interventions** targeting **young people**.

Increase the number of **dedicated Youth Alcohol and Drug workers** in partnership with the Regional Drugs Task Force.

Provide **training and material resources** on best practice in relation to alcohol and youth. These interventions will focus on, schools, parents and the wider community.

Develop partnerships with schools, 3rd level colleges and other education centers to **support students who require treatment for alcohol and /or drugs** related harm.

Deliver **Screening and Brief Intervention and Motivational Practice Training** to Primary Care and A&E staff.

Seek approval from the DoH&C to be a National Pilot site for Alcohol **Screening in A&E Settings**.

Establish an **alcohol & drug reference group in acute Hospitals** to oversee implementation of effective interventions, referral pathways and policy development for alcohol and other substances in the acute hospital setting.

ACTIONS 2005- 2010

Develop an **ante natal alcohol screening** protocol.

Appoint specialist in **community alcohol detoxification** and a rapid response ambulatory detoxification service across the region.

Expand community alcohol **health promotion** and education programmes.

Lobby and support all organisations to **avoid advertising and promoting alcohol at underage events**.

Lobby a ban on all **alcohol advertising** on local radio and television before 9pm.

Lobby and support all organisations to avoid drinks industry sponsorship.

Establish a working group to **review Treatment Services** and responses in the North West.

Provide **training to the travellers’ primary care** team on alcohol and substance related harm.

Explore the potential development of **cross-border initiatives**.

Work with Gardai, local event organisers and local county councils to develop **guidelines for managing safer streets** at night time.

Extend information and support, where appropriate, to the **Gardai and legislature** on development with Liquor Licensing and enforcement.

Carry out a **review of the Court Alcohol Management Programme**, in partnership with the Courts, Probation and Welfare Services and HSE Alcohol & Drug Services.

Develop a process **awareness raising** and provision of information to increase **knowledge of local politicians**, representatives, communities etc by providing briefings on the recommendations of the reports of the Strategic Task Force on Alcohol and of the North West Alcohol Forum and NWAFF A Portrait of our Drinking).

Inform all local representatives of the Alcohol Action Plan developments.

Extend information and support, where appropriate, to the **Gardai and legislature** on development with Liquor Licensing and enforcement.

Facilitate the implementation of the **Responsible Server of Alcohol Programme** in all alcohol outlets.

Establish a mechanism to **gather relevant data on alcohol** to inform the on-going work of the NWAFF and the Alcohol Action Plan.



Alcohol Action Plan 2005 -2010



We know from the evidence what to do, how to do it, when, where, and to whom - we need community action to achieve it



Community mobilisation is a comprehensive response involving a wide range of individuals, agencies and organisations which come together when an issue is too big for one sector to tackle alone.

THERE WILL BE ACTIONS ACROSS 4 DIFFERENT AREAS WHICH ARE:

Community - families, community development groups, religious representatives, local government, youth groups, drink and hospitality industry, tourism and business interests and the voluntary sector such as support, treatment and social services.

Education - pre school, primary, second and third level, community and out of school education providers.

Health - General Hospitals, G.P.'s, Practice Nurses, Public Health Nurses, Health Promotion, Mental Health and Treatment Services.

Justice - Gardai, Probation and Welfare Services and Courts.

This plan presents a vital opportunity for all of us here in the North West to change the impact of harmful drinking by **AWARENESS RAISING / INTERVENTION / EVALUATION**

PRIORITY ACTIONS

include:

- Deliver sustained parent and family programmes through the Fás le Chéile parenting programme
- Provide focused additional support to the Social and Personal Health Education Programme (SPHE) on current alcohol issues
- Work with the Gardai and the Community to reduce the incidence of drink driving
- Establish an alcohol and drug action group in Letterkenny and Sligo General Hospitals
- Facilitate the implementation of the Responsible Server of Alcohol Programme in all alcohol outlets.
- Be a national pilot site for alcohol screening and specialist harm reduction treatments in Letterkenny and Sligo General hospitals
- Work with Youth Organisations including Donegal Youth Council and the Cross Border Youth Participation Project to enable young people to be involved in creative solutions
- Support community groups to implement actions on alcohol, suicide and self-harm
- Deliver alcohol screening and specialist training to G.P.'s, Practice Nurses, Public Health Nurses and staff working in Accident and Emergency
- Develop an effective internal and external communications strategy
- Establish a "Friends of the Forum" group to allow this work to happen more quickly than would be possible through public funds alone

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH - it is time to do something about reducing harmful drinking and together we in our community in the North West are going to do it

WHAT WE WANT

is to reduce:

- Harmful drinking
- Accidental injury
- Road Traffic Accidents
- Hospital admissions
- Public Order and Domestic Violence
- Alcohol related crime
- Crisis pregnancy
- Family problems
- Mental Health Issues

THE KEY TO THIS IS THE ALCOHOL ACTION PLAN 2005 - 2010

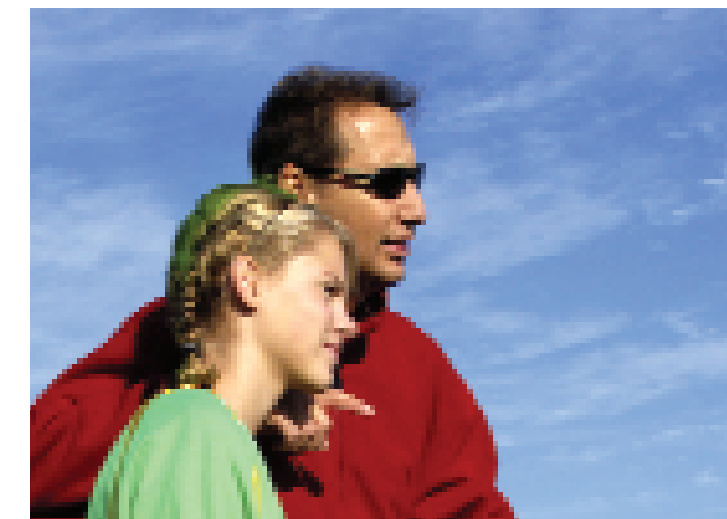
This plan will work actively to reduce harmful drinking in the North West through community mobilisation



WHAT WE HAVE

Ireland has the heaviest drinkers in Europe who are drinking 40% more than they did 10 years ago.

- Letterkenny and Sligo Garda Stations arrest more than 1000 people with alcohol related offences every year. (A Portrait of our Drinking - NWAf)
- 1 in 4 injuries at Accident & Emergency Departments in Sligo and Letterkenny General Hospitals are alcohol related.
- There was a 15% increase in drink driving in Letterkenny between 2002 - 2003.
- Nearly all public order offences have alcohol noted on the custody record.
- In 2002 alcohol was the 2nd most common reason for admission to Psychiatric Hospital Services in the North West.
- 1 in 4 patients on a medical or surgical ward in Sligo General Hospital met the criteria for high risk drinking.
- Over 3 years, alcohol related conditions accounted for over 9,000 bed days in the Health Services in the North West.



FOR COPIES OF THE ALCOHOL ACTION PLAN CONTACT:

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Our children deserve a better future and it is our responsibility to provide it

"We are in for the long haul. This is not an overnight battle".

MARY HARNEY, TÁNAISTE AND MINISTER FOR HEALTH & CHILDREN
AT THE LAUNCH OF THE ALCOHOL ACTION PLAN, 2005