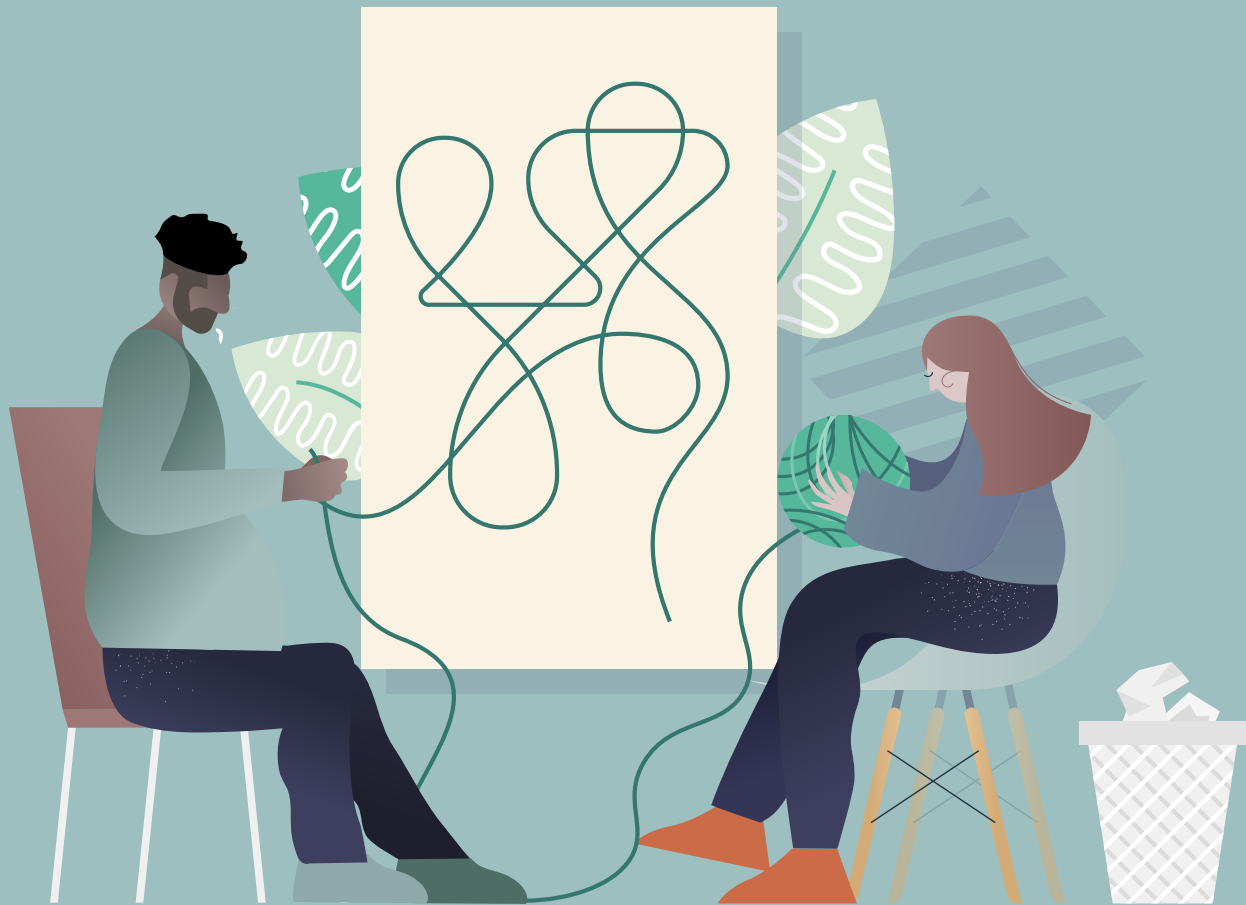


Alcohol consumption

Identifying problematic drinking and
understanding the harmful effects



Rightsteps

What you need to know (if you don't already)

It is really common for people to see units of alcohol on packaging but not know what units are or what they mean. A unit is one way of us measuring how much alcohol we drink. Units also help us to understand how strong our drinks are. If you drink wine or spirits at home, you probably don't use a standard glass.

This may lead to us drinking more units than we might have intended to, while this is not considered problematic drinking, it's always a good idea to keep an eye on daily or weekly alcohol consumption.

The recommended weekly intake for an adult in the UK is 14 units. Here's a breakdown of what that might look like in terms of drinks;

Pint of beer - 2.8 units

175ml glass of wine - 2.3 units

125ml glass of prosecco - 1.5 units

25ml measure of spirit - 1 unit

There are many benefits to reducing how much you drink. Here you can find out how problematic drinking can affect different people;

Poor long-term
health

Lack of
concentration

Weight gain

Lack of money

Poor sleep

Low mood

If you are experiencing any difficulties, or you notice a sudden change in your drinking habits, please seek support from a professional such as your GP.

How to spot signs of problematic alcohol consumption

» **£7bn**

lost productivity due to alcohol use costs the UK economy more than £7 billion each year. (Alcohol Change, 2023).

Organisations have a legal duty to protect employees' wellbeing. Over 25 million people in the UK consume alcohol regularly, so statistically employees are more likely to be drinkers than not.

Workplaces don't just suffer from the effects of alcohol – they can exacerbate the problem. 27% of people say that workplace stress makes them drink more.

Therefore, understanding the signs of alcohol misuse will help you to manage health and safety risk in your workplace, plus it gives a good opportunity to put in place measures to help the person effected.

If you are experiencing any difficulties, or you notice a sudden change in your drinking habits, please seek support from a professional such as your GP.

Consider these warning signs, which could indicate alcohol misuse:

- Unexplained or frequent absences
- A change in behaviour
- Unexplained dips in productivity
- More accidents or near-misses
- Performance or conduct issues

It's important to note that some of these symptoms can also be signs of other things, like stress or illness.

It may be very difficult for people to admit to themselves or others that their drinking is out of control. They need to know that you will treat their drinking problem as a health problem rather than an immediate cause for dismissal or disciplinary action. Therefore having robust systems and plans in place to help employees with any problems they be facing is so important and being able to signpost them to help.



How to put support in place

01

Understand how drinking alcohol affects people and your legal responsibilities as an employer.



02

Find out if there is a problem by monitoring KPIs such as absence and lack of productivity.

03

Put measures in place to help manage employee alcohol consumption. You can involve managers or supervisors at this stage.

04

Provide the tools and information to employees to help them identify any issues they may be facing.

05

Provide support in the workplace so employees can reach out to assistance if they require it.



What support is available and how to access it?

Online Support

Rightsteps Wellbeing Platform

Register for a module to help you understand more about your drinking.

Drinkaware

This website provides lots of useful information about alcohol, including advice on how to cut down. Find out more [here](#).

NHS

The NHS provide drink and alcohol information on their website. [Here you can find out more](#) about the health risks of drinking, and stories from people who have cut down.

In Person Support

GP

If you are worried about your drinking then a good place to start is with your GP. They will be able to give advice, offer support or signpost you to local services.

Turning Point

Face-to-face services for people wanting to stop or reduce their drinking. [Click here](#) to find a service near you.

Alcoholics Anonymous

AA is a fellowship of people who identify as alcoholics, members support each other to become sober. AA is both free and anonymous, [click here](#) to find out more.





Get in touch

If you'd like to know more about Rightsteps and how we can support your organisation, get in touch now – call **0161 238 5264** or email **info@rightsteps.co.uk** to speak to our friendly team now.

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