



Headway North West London Alcohol and Drugs Policy [Employees/ Volunteers and Service Users]

1. Policy Statement

Headway North West London (HNWL) endeavours to ensure that the use of either alcohol or drugs by employees, volunteers or service users does not impair the safe and efficient running of the organisation or the health and well-being of other employees, volunteers and service users.

2. Related Headway policies and guidelines:

Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Health and Safety Policy and Procedure
Behaviour Code of Conduct – Service Users

3. Staff Responsibilities

3.1 Co-ordinator / senior person assuming everyday responsibility

To ensure that all staff, volunteers and service users have access to and are aware of this policy

To ensure that safeguards are in place to protect the interests of the service user.

3.2 All staff / volunteers

To adhere to this policy and seek the guidance/ advice from the line manager.

4. Audit Plan

The Co-ordinator/ senior person will monitor adherence of the policy and report findings to the Trustees.

5. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, or Trustees.

6. Headway Staff / volunteer training

All staff and volunteers to be made aware of and read this policy

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7. References

Staff Handbook
Behaviour Code of Conduct

8. Procedure

Establishing the problem

The Co-ordinator should be aware that the misuse of drugs or alcohol by employees, volunteers and service users may come to light in various ways. The following characteristics, especially when arising in combinations, may indicate the presence of an alcohol or drug-related problem.

Absenteeism:

a] Employees - There may be instances of unauthorised leave, frequent Friday and/or Monday absences, leaving work early, lateness (especially on returning from lunch), excessive level of sickness absence, strange and increasingly suspicious reasons for absence, unusually high level of sickness for colds, flu, stomach upsets or unscheduled short-term absences, with or without explanation.

b] Service Users – As for 'a' but rather than 'unauthorised leave' there may be instances of unexpected non-attendance at Headway, excessive level of sickness absence, strange and increasingly suspicious reasons for absence, unusually high level of sickness for colds, flu, stomach upsets or unscheduled short-term absences, with or without explanation.

High accident level:

This may be at Headway or elsewhere, e.g. driving, at home.

Work performance:

a] Employees/ Volunteers - This includes difficulty in concentration, work requires increased effort, individual tasks take more time, problems with remembering instructions or recognising own mistakes.

b] Service Users – may have increased difficulty in concentration, requiring more effort as well as increased problems with remembering instructions or recognising own mistakes.

Mood swings:

This may include signs of irritability, depression or general confusion.

Misconduct:

An employee's/ volunteer's alcohol or drug problem may become known as a mitigating factor in a disciplinary interview. It should be treated as a mitigating factor for certain 'less serious' disciplinary offences, such as poor timekeeping or lateness, provided the person is prepared to undergo treatment.

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a] Self-referral:

In some instances, employees may seek help and advice themselves.

b] Intervention

If the Co-ordinator is concerned an employee's unsatisfactory performance may be drug- or alcohol-related should initiate the disciplinary and dismissal procedure set out in the Staff Handbook/ HNWL Disciplinary Procedure.

c] Treatment

Where employees acknowledge that they have a problem and are given help and treatment, this will be on the understanding that:

- whilst they are undergoing treatment, they will be on sick leave [and will be entitled to the usual company and statutory sick pay benefits];
- every effort should be made to ensure that on completion of the recovery programme employees are able to return to the same or equivalent work.

However, where such a return would jeopardise either a satisfactory level of job performance or the employee's recovery, the decision made following the disciplinary and dismissal procedure may be to offer suitable alternative employment, retirement on the grounds of ill health or dismissal.

d] Relapse

Where an employee, having received treatment, suffers a relapse, we will again follow our disciplinary and dismissal procedure. We may seek medical advice to ascertain how much more treatment/rehabilitation time is likely to be required for a full recovery. At our discretion, we may give more treatment or rehabilitation time in order to help the employee to recover fully.

e] Recovery unlikely

If, after following the disciplinary and dismissal procedure, it is decided that recovery seems unlikely and we are unable to wait for the employee any longer dismissal may result.

Serious misconduct caused by alcohol or drugs – Employees/ volunteers

Intoxicated employees/ volunteers:

If an employee/ volunteer is known to be, or strongly suspected of being, intoxicated by alcohol or drugs during working hours, we will arrange for the employee to be escorted from our premises immediately. We will commence the disciplinary and dismissal procedure.

Consumption of alcohol on the premises:

Employees/ volunteers are expressly forbidden to consume alcohol when at work or to bring it onto company premises under any circumstances. Any breach of this rule is likely to result in summary dismissal.

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Drug abuse on the premises:

Employees/ volunteers who take drugs which have not been prescribed on medical grounds will, in the absence of mitigating circumstances, be deemed to be committing an act of gross misconduct and will thus render themselves likely to be summarily dismissed as will any employee believed to be buying or selling drugs, or in possession of unlawful (i.e. un-prescribed) drugs.

Unacceptable Behaviour caused by alcohol or drugs – Service Users

No illegal substances are allowed within the Headway Hub; they should not be taken prior to attending HNWL, or be taken on any premises used by HNWL on route to, or at alternative sites used by HNWL as part of an activity or visit (See Behaviour Code of Conduct - Serious Misconduct).

A Service User may not drink alcohol prior to or whilst at any HNWL activity, or on any premises used by HNWL for activities or as part of a visit arranged on behalf of its Members or on route to, or at alternative sites used by HNWL as part of an activity or visit. (See Behaviour Code of Conduct - Serious Misconduct).

Under no circumstances will Headway or any of its employees or volunteers provide alcohol to service users. Any employee or volunteer found to be supplying service users with alcohol or drugs will be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure.

Any Service User thought to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs will not be allowed to stay at the HNWL activity or premises or at any alternative sites used by HNWL as part of an activity or visit.

All Service Users are required to sign and agree to the Behaviour Code of Conduct, prior to acceptance as an attendee at HNWL.[]

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