I’ll Drive to That!

Reducing the Burden of Intoxicated Persons on NHS EMS

February 27, 2013
Alcohol: the national picture

- Alcohol consumption increased by 50% since 1970
- £21 billion / yr in alcohol related harm
- £2.7 billion cost to the NHS
- £1 billion spent on ED attendances
- 198,900 hospital admissions
Alcohol: the national picture

- 24% of adults drink a hazardous or harmful amount of alcohol
- 41% of men and 35% of women exceeded the daily recommended limits on at least 1 day in the previous week
- Overall the equivalent of 22 units per week per person aged over 15 years of alcohol is sold in the UK
London, the LAS and Alcohol

- 1.5 million harmful drinkers
- 170,000 dependant drinkers
- 55,463 alcohol related calls in 2012
- 15% of ‘cat A’ calls in age group 21-30 are alcohol related
- Approx 40% ED admissions are alcohol related
- Between midnight and 0500 this rises to 70%
So..........?

Potential benefit in reducing demand on front line vehicles and requirement to transport to ED through:

- Dedicated vehicle
- Dedicated centres
- Health promotion trial
Where do we start?

Barking Dagenham Havering Redbridge & Waltham Forest 18.00 to 05.00 hrs
Westminster & Camden 18.00 to 05.00 hrs
Lambeth & Southwark 18.00 to 05.00 hrs
Croydon Merton & Sutton 18.00 to 05.00 hrs
Harrow

- Mon
- Tue
- Wed
- Thurs
- Fri
- Sat
- Sun
The ‘Alternative Response Vehicle’ (AKA – Booze Bus)

- Dedicated to calls for intoxicated patients
- Up to 3 patients at a time
- Control, Solo responders and MPS can request
- Reduces utilisation for other frontline vehicles
- Reduces load on adjacent EDs
- Close working practice with MPS
Admission criteria

Assessed by a clinician or MPS staff as intoxicated

And:

• Glasgow Coma Score of 14 with eyes open to speech or 15 or proven evidence of just alcohol intoxication.
• Vital signs within normal parameters
• Airway, breathing and circulation stable
• No identifiable life threatening conditions, actual or potential, taking into account the mechanism of injury
The Soho ‘Alcohol Recovery Centre’

- Open Thursday / Friday / Saturday nights 20:00-05:30
- > 18yrs only
- Strict criteria for patient acceptance
- Treatment / Discharge / Onward Referral
- Extra training, including positional / restraint asphyxia and excited delirium
Shift start... (20:00)
...and at 02:00
The results

- A clinically safe environment
- Reduced ED conveyance
- Reduced pressure on LAS and EDs
- Improves ambulance productivity
Health Promotion (SARC)

- Alcohol Intervention worker based at alcohol recovery centre
- All patients offered alcohol intervention
- Onward referral for follow-up if agreed
- Data collection including ‘last drink’ location
Audit-C Tool

- AUDIT-C (Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test - Consumption)
- Detects hazardous and harmful drinking habits
- Patients >18 yrs only
- No restrictions on who is screened - crews clinical decision
- Formed part of routine history taking
## AUDIT-C tool

### LAS AUDIT-C Alcohol Screening Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUDIT-C</th>
<th>Scoring System</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?</td>
<td>Never, Monthly or Less</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many units of alcohol do you drink on a typical day when you are drinking?</td>
<td>1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-9, 10+</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you have 6 or more units if female, or 8 or more if male, on a single occasion in the last year?</td>
<td>Never, Less than monthly, Monthly, Weekly</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total score of 5 or more is positive & suggests possible higher risk drinking.

**Screened negative:** no further action  
**Screened positive:** Alcohol advice leaflet given to patient  
**Patient advised to see GP**

Do you consent to your personal information being used to contact you for evaluation? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐
Health Promotion (pilot)

130 front line staff trained at 3 stations

- Incident at pilot complex with trained clinician
- Patient aged 18+
- Screening using AUDIT-C
- Normal
  No Action
- Positive Screening
  Give Alcohol Information Card
  Advise patient to see GP for further advice
Training

ALCOHOL

How much is too much?

A guide to assessing high risk alcohol use

London Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Alcohol – The Facts

There were 6,000 deaths in England in 2010 directly related to alcohol, an increase of 22% from 2000.

20 million people in England drink above the guidelines.

Up to 1 in 3 adults are at risk of alcohol-related liver disease.

A unit of alcohol is defined as 8g (approximately 10ml) of ethanol. What does this really mean and why does it matter?

- 2 units
- 3 units
- 250ml glass
- 1 bottle

1 double J 1 pint J 250ml glass J 1 bottle

To be able to discuss alcohol consumption meaningfully there has to be a uniform measure. A small glass of wine is very much dependent on the glass and a person’s view of small!

Alcohol drinks come in varying strengths, so a unit is used to measure quantity.

Did you know ‘ABV’ is the abbreviation for ‘alcohol by volume’ and replaced the alcohol proof measurement?

It’s not a fascinating fact but could be useful in a pub quiz!

Once you know the ABV you can calculate the number of units:

\[
\text{Units} = \frac{\text{ABV}}{10} \times \frac{\text{volume (ml) or litres}}{1000} \times \text{units}
\]

Wine 12%: 750mls (1000 ml) = 9 units

Not exactly the quickest way to work out units, so save getting a calculator out use the picture guide in your pocket alcohol aide.

Ok so units sorted but how much is too much?

Alcohol – The Consequences

And all of this without the physical effects of alcohol...

- Depression
- Memory loss
- Suicide attempt
- Strokes
- Carpal tunnel syndrome
- Subdural haemorrhage
- Respiratory depression
- Pericarditis
- Heart failure
- Hypertension

As if all this wasn’t bad enough... now add in some of the social issues that can be related to excessive alcohol use... impaired performance at work, drink driving offences, relationship problems with family and friends and violent crimes such as domestic violence.
Leaflets

- Leaflets given to patients who scored >5 on Audit-C tool
- All crews made clinical decision as to whether to give leaflet or not
Results

• Screening over 8 week period (Nov 2012– Jan 2013)
• 167 patients screened. 88 positive
• 94% given an alcohol information leaflet
• 47% advised GP follow up

Staff feedback: good package, but is it our job?
The Future

• ARC / ARV and Alcohol Health promotion positively received by staff
• Clear benefit to LAS in terms of managing demand and reducing ED admissions
• Plan to continue each of the projects; funding dependant
Thank you

To alcohol! The cause of—and solution to—all of lifes problems.