

Alcohol and domestic violence project

Nuneaton, Bedworth and North Warwickshire

Information leaflet



The link between alcohol and DV

Successive British Crime Surveys, as well as other research, have highlighted the link between alcohol use and domestic violence (DV). 39% of incidents of intimate partner violence were committed when the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol. It is also common for victims of domestic violence to have alcohol problems, although victim-only drinking is rare (1). Evidence shows that heavy drinkers are at increased risk of intimate partner violence (2) and many women develop alcohol problems following victimisation (3).

The gap in service provision

Although there is a clear link between DV and alcohol use, alcohol does not and cannot make one person abuse another. A growing body of research points to serious gaps in interventions for victims of domestic violence who have alcohol misuse problems, and for perpetrators of domestic violence with alcohol misuse problems (4).

Swanswell's successful alcohol and DV project

Swanswell's alcohol and domestic violence project, piloted in Warwickshire, fills the gap in services and provides a holistic intervention for the two positively correlated problems. Swanswell has a 40 year track record of successfully providing services related to alcohol use. As part of our portfolio we develop and deliver accredited offender programmes. Our interventions are cost-effective and proven to bring about measurable change in offending and drinking behaviour.

What success looks like

Perpetrators who attended Swanswell's recent alcohol and DV pilot project achieved an initial **100% zero-reoffending** rate during the programme, settling longitudinally at a 71% reduction (5). This far outweighed the expectations of all stakeholders.

Brief and structured intervention

As part of the project, we work with both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence who have alcohol related problems. The programme comprises a structured brief intervention, delivered over 6 one-to-one sessions by an experienced Swanswell worker. Our intervention demonstrates that multiple behavioural issues can be addressed briefly. This is done simultaneously and systemically and has resulted in a reduction in alcohol related violence. We provide support and safety planning for the vulnerable partner. Risk management is a key focus throughout the programme.

Making a referral

For further information or to make a referral, please contact Joanne Woods (Alcohol and Domestic Abuse Worker) at Swanswell's Nuneaton office on 02476 385688. People are able to refer themselves, or you can refer them. A referral form will be attached to the newsletter which can be sent via fax on 02476 353493 or posted to: Riversley Resource Centre, Clinic Drive (off Coton Road), Nuneaton, CV11 5TY.

(1) Martin and Bachman 1997 The relationship of alcohol to injury in assault cases in M. Galanter (ed) Recent Developments in Alcoholism. *Volume 13: Alcohol and Violence: 41-56*. New York: Plenum Press.

(2) Mirrlees-Black, C. (1999) *Domestic violence: findings from a new British Crime Survey self-completion questionnaire*. Home Office Research Study No. 191. London: Home Office.

(3) Roberts, G.L., Lawrence, J.M., O'Toole, B.I. and Raphael, B. (1997). Domestic violence in the emergency department: I - two case-controlled studies of victims. *General Hospital Psychiatry, 19(1): 5-11*.

(4) Collins, Kroutil & Moore-Gurrera 1997 Issues in the linkage of alcohol and domestic violence services. *Recent Developments in Alcoholism, 13, 387-405*.

(5) Figures supplied by Warwickshire Police.