

Topic: Alcohol specialist nurses attached to and providing care and treatment in the general practice (GP) setting.

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Searched by: Lorna Thompson

Key concepts: alcohol nurse specialist, primary care

Background

In NHSScotland, alcohol specialist nurses are generally based within community addiction teams rather than attached to general practices. This topic concerns site of care provision, comparing the GP setting with the specialist community addiction team/service and is explored in relation to GP practices in areas where there is high prevalence of alcohol dependency.

Outcomes identified by topic referrer include; patient engagement in care, patient satisfaction and alcohol related morbidity and mortality.

Summary of findings

A 2011 NICE guideline and a 2006 Department of Health report provide information on organisational aspects of service delivery but these appear to focus on tiered interventions and practitioner competencies rather than specifically on site of delivery.

A health technology assessment (HTA) on effective models of mental health service provision (Doughty, 2006) identified and commented on one relevant study as below:

Very few eligible articles looked specifically at patients with at-risk alcohol and drug use or comorbid anxiety. Bartels et al. (2004) reported that older patients with depression, anxiety and/or at risk drinking were more likely to engage in collaborative (integrated) mental health treatment in primary care than when referred to specialty services. In the integrated model of care a much greater proportion of care was provided by non-physician mental health clinicians.

No directly relevant comparative studies were identified. Descriptive papers on specialist alcohol clinics from other areas of the UK were identified.

In NHS Wandsworth (Coetzee, 2011) Fresh Start Clinics in GP surgeries have been developed with specialist nurses supported by GPs.

<https://www.pcc-cic.org.uk/article/refreshing-new-start-primary-care-alcohol-services>

Three reports describing the role of an alcohol specialist nurse in a GP practice in Islington (Fernandez, 2004, 2005, 2007) were identified.

<http://journals.rcni.com/doi/pdfplus/10.7748/phc2007.02.17.1.22.c4383>

Other publications provide information which is tangential to this topic such as the need for GPs to have specialist support (Deehan, 1999, Drummond, 1990) and the role of alcohol counsellors in general practice (Mason, 1997).

Conclusion

It appears that there is very little evidence for SHTG to consider and therefore it may not be possible to proceed with this topic.

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Search checklist: Alcohol specialist nurses attached to and providing care and treatment in the general practice (GP) setting.

Resource	Results
SIGN	The management of harmful drinking and alcohol dependence in primary care – Guideline withdrawn
NICE (guidelines, technology appraisals, diagnostics guidance, interventional procedures, medical technologies)	<p>https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg115</p> <p>Alcohol-use disorders: diagnosis, assessment and management of harmful drinking and alcohol dependence Clinical guideline [CG115] Extant 2015</p> <p>Organisation and delivery of care chapter: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK65495/</p>
Guidelines International Network (GIN)	Not searched
ECRI	Not searched
Dynamed Plus	Not searched
BMJ Best Practice (download PDF)	Not searched
Cochrane library	Doughty C. <i>Effective models of mental health service provision and workforce configuration in the primary care setting</i> . Christchurch: New Zealand Health Technology Assessment (NZHTA), 2006:91 http://nzhta.chmeds.ac.nz/publications/mental_healthpc.pdf
Embase / Medline	<p>GP-led services for alcohol misuse: the Fresh Start Clinic. Coetzee J. London J Prim Care (Abingdon). 2011 Jul;4(1):11-5.</p> <p>Deehan A, Marshall EJ, Taylor C, Strang J. Who in the primary health care team can tackle alcohol misuse?. Journal of Substance Use. 1999 Jan 1;4(1):51-6. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3109/14659899909052896</p>

	<p>Mason R. Alcohol counselors in general practice. Journal of Substance Misuse. 1997 Jan 1;2(2):85-93. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3109/14659899709085005</p> <p>Mason P. Alcohol counselling services in general practice (part II): Who uses them and how?. Journal of Substance Misuse. 1997 Jan 1;2(4):210-6. Specialist versus general practitioner treatment of problem drinkers.</p> <p>Drummond DC, Thom B, Brown C, Edwards G, Mullan MJ. Lancet. 1990 Oct 13;336(8720):915-8.</p>
Alcohol research UK	Nil Relevant
Google	<p>https://www.alcohollearningcentre.org.uk/assets/BACKUP/DH_docs/ALC_Resource_MOCAM.pdf Models of care for alcohol misusers Department of Health 2006</p> <p>Fernandez J. Client engagement with a specialist nurse led alcohol service in primary care: Jeff Fernandez says a brief intervention model delivered by a specialist nurse in a GP surgery can successfully engage clients with alcohol problems. Primary Health Care. 2007 Feb 1;17(1):22-4.</p> <p>Fernandez J (2005) The role of the alcohol specialist nurse in primary care. Primary Healthcare. 15,6,21-23.</p> <p>Fernandez J. Inner city booze—treating alcohol consumption in general practice through a nurse. Drugs and Alcohol Today. 2004 Nov 1;4(3):32-5.</p>