

Hartlepool Drug and Alcohol Strategy

2023-2028

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Foreword – Director of Public Health

Substance misuse is one of the most challenging health issues we face in Hartlepool. The personal, social and economic impacts of substance misuse are great and it is a key driver of health inequalities in the borough. The Health Needs Assessment for substance misuse has outlined that Hartlepool is experiencing more significant issues and higher numbers of people using substance than the England average. It also demonstrates the increasing harms caused by substances with high numbers of drug and alcohol related deaths.

Addressing these issues will take a partnership approach. As this strategy outlines, we are committed to tackling the challenges posed by this in partnership with all responsible agencies and partners. This partnership working, will use an asset based approach to develop those programmes of work required to address our key vision of reducing the harms associated with substance use.

We will achieve this through a clear focus on 4 key areas:

- Prevention and early intervention
- Reducing drug and alcohol related harms
- Supporting wider health needs
- Reducing drug and alcohol related crime and disorder

By focusing on a place based approach to delivering interventions to support these key areas we will ensure that Hartlepool residents receive the treatment and recovery support they need to move on from alcohol and substance addiction. We will also ensure that we will reduce the number of people becoming addicted to substances through high quality prevention work. This will then have a clear impact on reducing inequalities in the borough.

A lot of excellent work is currently happening in this space in Hartlepool. This strategy will build on the work of our communities, services and residents to make a real difference to the lives of our population.



Craig Blundred | Director of Public Health
Hartlepool Borough Council



Foreword – Council Leader

I am delighted to introduce the Substance Misuse Strategy for Hartlepool. This Strategy is a five year strategic plan for tackling the harms associated with substance misuse.

Alcohol & Drug misuse is an issue that requires a long term and varied approach. Partnership working is essential if we are to tackle the broad range of issues that affect many aspects of people's lives. If we work together we can protect people from the harms associated with substance misuse and help everyone to improve their health and support them to make healthier choices as well as ensuring that we address the wider determinants of health that strongly influence this agenda.

This strategy will build on and extend current work and outlines ambitious strategic aims including: the importance of prevention and early intervention and supporting those in treatment services with a focus on recovery and supporting people back into society by improving their chances of sustaining positive changes. The strategy also identifies the need to work with partners to increase efforts to reduce or disrupt supply. However the most important aspect of this strategy is to be responsive and reflect the local need and assets of Hartlepool. We should always be ready to help those in need as we often do not know the stories that go behind the decisions that those who become addicted to substances have.

The Strategy will be implemented through the Substance Misuse Strategy Group who will work together on the priorities set out in this strategy to achieve real change for Hartlepool residents. I support the intentions set out in this Strategy so let us all come together as a community to help and support, by getting behind this strategy for the betterment of our town and its people.



Mike Young | Council Leader
Hartlepool Borough Council



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Introduction

National and Regional picture

Across the UK, the misuse of drug and alcohol is one of the highest risk factors for ill-health with an estimate of 1 in 11 adults aged 16-59 to have taken a drug¹ in the last year, with 1.1 million adults to have taken a class A drug. In the same year, it is estimated 358,000 hospital admissions were attributed to alcohol use, 6% higher than the previous year². Drug and alcohol use can lead to a number of physical and psychological conditions, such as liver disease, cardiovascular complications, high blood pressure, depression and anxiety. Drug and alcohol use can also lead to high crime rates and increased rates of domestic violence.

The costs of alcohol and drug misuse to society are significant. Estimates show that the social and economic costs of alcohol-related harm amount to £21.5billion, while harm from illicit drug use costs £10.7billion. However, it is said £4 social return is made for every £1 spent on treatment and support services³.

Dame Carol Black Report: Phase 1 and 2

Dame Carol Black was commissioned by the Home Office and the Department of Health and Social Care to undertake a 2-part independent review of drugs, to inform the government's strategy on tackling the harms associated with drugs and alcohol⁴. Part one was published on 27 February 2020 and provides analysis on the challenges posed by drug supply and demand. Part two was published on the 8 July 2021 and focused on drug treatment, recovery and prevention.

The key areas include:

- Centralised reform of leadership, funding and commissioning
- Rebuilding services
- Increased focus on primary prevention and early interventions
- Improvements to research and how science informs policy, commissioning and practice

From Harm to Hope: A 10-year drugs plan

Following Dame Carol Black's two tier review of drugs policy and subsequent report published in 2021, the Government have launched their ambitious plan to tackle the misery and harm caused by illegal drugs⁵. From harm to hope was launched in December 2021 and sets out the government's three priorities to:

- Break drug supply chains
- Deliver world-class treatment and recovery services
- Achieve a shift in the demand for recreational drugs

The strategy is underpinned by the investment of over £3 billion in the next three years.

Local Picture

Drug and Alcohol use across Hartlepool

Hartlepool has some of the most deprived areas in England, with more than half of the town (52%) being in the most deprived quintile in England. Several of the areas of high deprivation are areas where the significant proportion of the substance misuse caseload in Hartlepool are located (Victoria and Burn Valley Wards). This is the same for both children and adults.

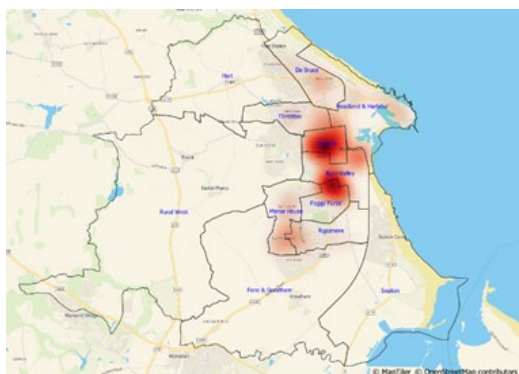


Figure 1: Adult Substance Misuse Referrals

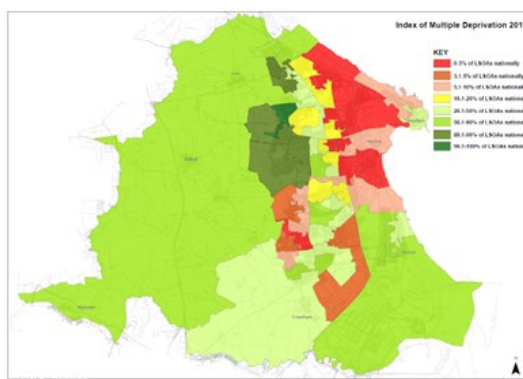


Figure 2: Areas of deprivation across Hartlepool

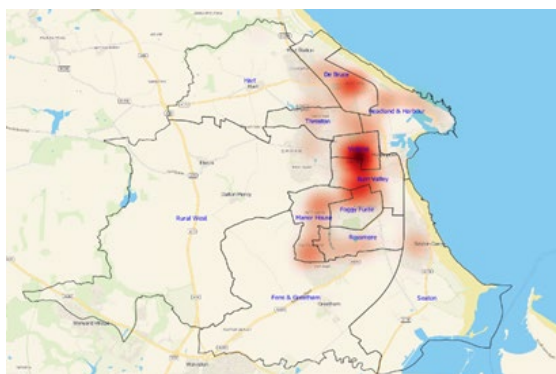


Figure 3: Children and Young People Substance Misuse Referrals

In regard to substance use, alcohol and opiates appear to be the most prevalent substance within the substance misuse treatment population. This is similar to the UK average however, Hartlepool has almost double the amount of opiate use compared to the rest of the UK. For children and young people, cannabis and alcohol appear to be the most commonly used.

It is imperative that the correct treatment and support is available to all individuals using substances. For that reason it is important to understand the unmet need across Hartlepool, which is the individuals who could be in treatment for substance misuse, but are not. Hartlepool's unmet need is smaller than the England average. Despite this, the unmet need for alcohol across Hartlepool is still high. This could mean that many adults across Hartlepool are drinking increased amounts of alcohol which could impact their physical and mental health.

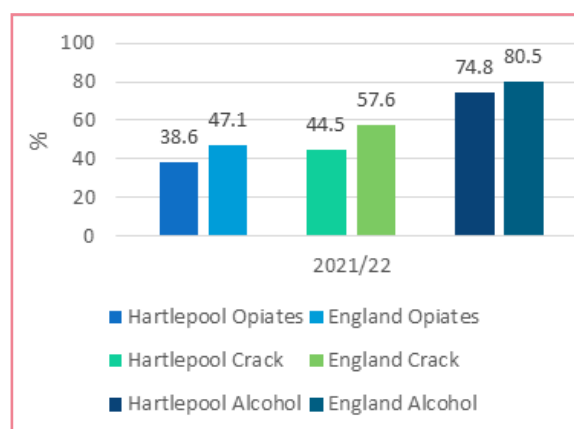


Figure 4: Percentage of Unmet Need within Substance Misusing Population 2021/22. Source: Liverpool John Moores University

Local Picture

Drug and Alcohol related Harm across Hartlepool

Hartlepool has had more than a threefold increase in drug related deaths since 2012/14. Hartlepool's rate is currently the 3rd highest in England.



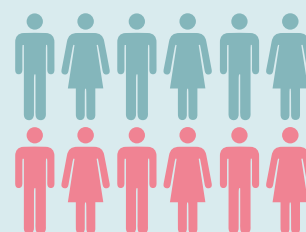
Hartlepool is significantly higher than the North East, and England average for hospital admissions where drug-related mental health and behavioural disorders were a factor



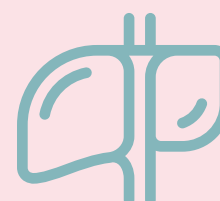
In 2019/20, Hartlepool was in the top 10 highest rates across the country for alcohol related hospital admissions.



More than 50% of Hartlepool's young people's substance misuse caseload (under 18's) are aged 15 or under for each of the last five years.



Hartlepool has the 18th highest alcohol related liver disease mortality rate in England, and has been consistently significantly worse than the England average for the last 6 years.



Our vision

The harm caused by drugs and alcohol in Hartlepool affects all our communities. This strategy sets out our collective approach to addressing this. It uses data and feedback from our Strategic Needs Assessment and wider consultation with partners.

The strategy sets out our vision to “Work together to ensure Hartlepool communities are; safe from drug and alcohol related harms; have access to timely and effective support and treatment including supporting people’s physical and mental health and wellbeing and to support the work to tackle drug and alcohol related crime.

Our four main priorities are set out below



Priority 1: Prevention and Early Intervention

Prevention: Early identification and prevention targeting specific higher risk groups, such as younger people and ex-offenders

We know:

- Individuals who have experienced traumatic/adverse events in childhood are more likely to use substances in later life
- Hartlepool's young people's treatment population is younger than the national average
- Hartlepool's areas of highest deprivation mirror the areas of highest drug and alcohol treatment referrals and areas of high crime rates.
- Recent prison leavers are at higher risk of drug related harms
- Nineteen Percent of new adult referrals into treatment services currently live with children

We will:

- Develop further insight into the changing trends in drug use and the role of recreational drug use in the population of Hartlepool and consider emerging evidence of ways to tackle this.
- Proactively influence the current curriculum in schools in regard to drug and alcohol education.
- Continue to improve collaborative working between treatment services and schools and colleges, and criminal justice services (including Prisons and Probation) in attempt to provide resources, education and harm minimisation advice to high risk individuals.
- Challenge social 'norms' around high levels of alcohol consumption
- Provide interventions to support those with adverse childhood experiences
- Work with START to ensure approaches are targeted towards high risk groups, such as youth services to ensure services are reaching out to those who require support.
- Work with police colleagues in reducing drug related crimes with a focus on rehabilitation
- Collaborative working with Social Care Teams to support those who experience substance misuse, including family support.
- Focus on diversionary activities for high risk groups
- Continue to support the harm minimisation agenda and support a reduction in drug related deaths

Priority 2: Reducing Alcohol and Drug Related Harms

Treatment: Use data, evidence, research and behavioural insight studies to better understand the needs of service users and their families.

We know that:

- Hartlepool's most common substances within the treatment population are opiates and alcohol
- Individuals who are successfully discharged from our community drug and alcohol support service are low in comparison to the national average
- Dropout rates within our community drug and alcohol support service are high in comparison to the national average
- Hartlepool's unmet need for drugs and alcohol is lower than national average, however still high for alcohol use

We will:

- Reduce the number of deaths caused by alcohol and drugs use
- Advise commissioning and treatment services of potential gaps within service provision, data collection and quality
- Ensure appropriate, effective and timely access to treatment and support
- Continue to monitor performance of our treatment services
- Develop outreach support within our treatment services to ensure we meet the needs of those most vulnerable
- Increase the number of staff within treatment services to reduce caseload sizes in line with Dame Carol Black's recommendations
- Increase In reach support for those in custody, hospital or other care facilities
- Coproduction and service user voice will be integrated into all areas of this strategy
- Build a recovery community across the town to increase 'visible recovery' and make use of peer support
- Address the impact of drug and alcohol use on our most vulnerable people, including those with multiple needs and co-existing drug, alcohol, housing and mental health problems by working collaboratively with additional services to support those in treatment/referrals into treatment, such as Domestic Violence services, Housing support, Probation, Primary and Secondary care, Mental health services, Education, Department of Work and Pensions, adult and children's social care
- Target specific areas of need based on the data for young people, such as De Bruce Ward and Foggy Furze
- Ensure effective evidence based provision of services
- Invest in research and behavioural insights work to ensure we can effectively support people who use drugs and alcohol

Priority 3: Supporting Wider Health Needs

Wider Health Needs: Consider our long term strategic goals to improve drug and alcohol related physical and mental health conditions across all health provisions, not just treatment services.

We know that:

- People with co-occurring substance misuse and mental health problems face additional barriers to access and take up of treatment and support
- Hospital admissions where drug-related mental health and behavioural disorders were a factor for Hartlepool residents are significantly higher than the national average
- Hartlepool is currently in the top 10 across the UK for alcohol related hospital admissions
- Hartlepool is significantly higher than the UK average for alcohol related liver disease mortality, and specific alcohol related mortality.
- Hartlepool is in the top 3 across the UK for drug related deaths
- The proportion of adults using alcohol are the highest proportion of people who live with children at least 60%.

We will:

- Continuously work to improve support and treatment for those with co-occurring mental health and substance misuse problems by working with partners across Tees, Esk and Wear Valley, the voluntary and community sector (VCS), NHS and Community Drug and Alcohol Support services
- Develop the work within the community hubs and with partners to reemphasise 'Making Every Contact Count' so that people with co-existing physical and mental health conditions can access support, advice and information services easily
- Ensure there is closer multidisciplinary working and the further development of case management systems that communicates effectively to reduce barriers to communication further.
- Ensure robust pathways into primary and secondary health care, working closely with local hospitals and primary care networks
- Increase the awareness of the risks associated with drinking alcohol and promote positive behaviour change targeting known at risk groups.
- Ensure an up to date understanding of the needs of children whose health and wellbeing has been impacted by parental substance or alcohol use
- Provide appropriate and robust support to children at risk of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Increase support for those bereaved by drug and/or alcohol related deaths
- Efforts are required to improve responses to persons within this cohort who are higher risk due to homelessness, lack of access to health care and abuse.

Priority 4: Reducing Drug and Alcohol Related Crime and Disorder

Enforcement, Crime and Disorder: To work collaboratively with Tees Combatting Drugs Partnerships to reduce drug related crime

We know:

- Drug and alcohol use can often be linked to increased crime rates
- Cocaine is the most common positive substance when drug tested on arrest
- In the last six months, there was a rise of 12% of people arrested for possession of drugs compared with the same period in previous year.
- Cleveland Police and Crime plan aims to combat issues caused by drugs from 2021-2024

We will:

- Review the current criminal justice pathways into substance misuse service with partners to ensure efficacy of treatment and support.
- Work collaboratively with criminal justice services regarding rehabilitation for those involved in drug related crimes, including probation, police and courts.
- Ensure treatment and criminal justice support services are based on an up to date and robust understanding of the links between drug and alcohol related harms and crime rates
- Report into the joint tees combatting drugs partnership regarding updates on current priorities and ongoing work in Hartlepool
- Strengthen the role of Public Health as a Responsible Authority through the alcohol licensing Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and ensure the following are considered:
 - submit a representation against an application for a new or existing premises
 - negotiate conditions with an applicant
 - support or apply a review of a premises licence or club premises certificate where there are problems with one or more of the licensing objectives

Delivering the Strategy and Monitoring Impact

Local: The drug and alcohol strategy will inform an action plan which will involve partners and stakeholders. This will be monitored within the Substance Misuse Partnership which will meet quarterly, led by the Hartlepool Borough Council Public Health Team (HBC-PH). HBC-PH will also report to the Health and Wellbeing Board annually to update on progress to ensure accountability of the strategy and action plan. Public Health, Commissioning and Treatment Providers work closely together to ensure improvements within our treatment population by meeting quarterly.

As Dame Carol Black's Independent Review of Drugs led to an increase of government funding for substance misuse services, HBC-PH plan to evaluate the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant fund (SSMTRG). This is to understand the impact the increased funding has had in reducing drug and alcohol related harms across Hartlepool and wider services. From this, we hope to gain an understanding of what has worked well, and what can be improved.

A Local outcomes frame work will be used to monitor impact and change.

Regional/National: Hartlepool is currently part of the Tees Joint Combatting Drugs Partnership, which will report into the Government's Joint Combatting Drugs Unit (JDCU). This combines multiple Government departments to help tackle drug misuse across society, including the Department of Health and Social Care, Home Office, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Education and Ministry of Justice. Similarly to local monitoring, the JCDU will have a National Combatting Drugs Outcome Framework to monitor impact and change.

Partnership Working

As the impact of drug and alcohol use can effect a number of different health and social determinants, Hartlepool Borough Council aims to work with a number of partnering organisations to ensure that the drug and alcohol strategy action plan and outcomes are attained. All partners will be accountable to ensure that actions in line with this strategy are followed to ensure progressive outcomes for Hartlepool. Partners involved in the development of the drug and alcohol strategy and action planning include:

Office of Health inequalities and Disparities (OHID)

Adults and Children's social care teams

Adults and Children's safeguarding

Cleveland Police

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland

Neighbourhood Safety Team

Tees Esk and Wear Valley Mental Health Services

Supporting Treatment and Recovery Together (START) – Community drug and alcohol provider

Public Protection and Licencing

Housing Support Teams

Domestic Violence Service

Commissioning Support

NHS including Alcohol Care Teams, North East Ambulance and local Hospitals

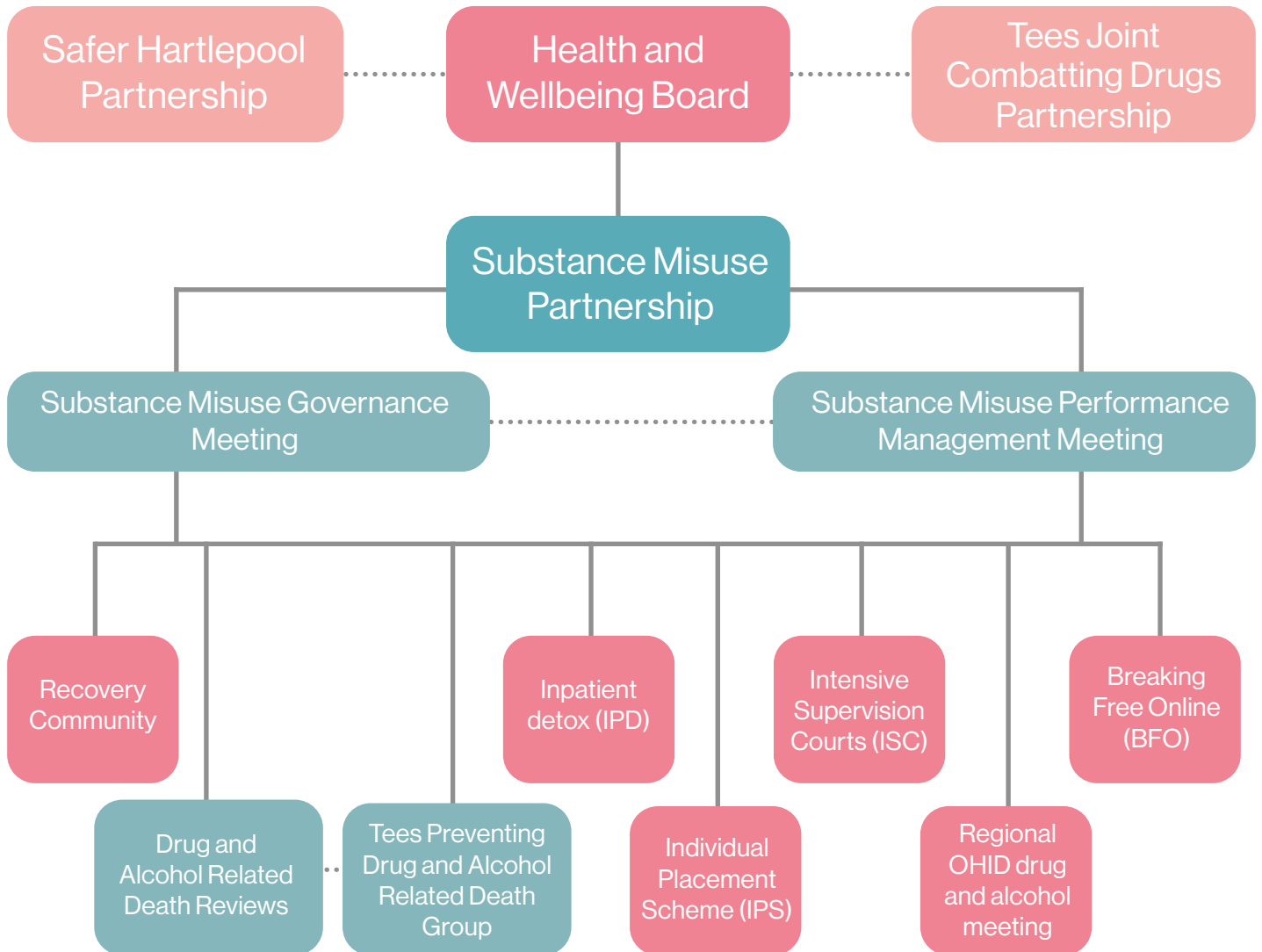
Lived Experience Recovery Groups

National Probation Service

Public Health

North Tees Foundation Trust

Substance Misuse Governance Structure



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³ Alcohol and drug prevention, treatment and recovery: why invest? - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁴ Independent review of drugs, part 1: terms of reference - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁵ From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁶ Drug misuse | Topic | NICE

⁷ Overview | Alcohol-use disorders: diagnosis, assessment and management of harmful drinking (high-risk drinking) and alcohol dependence | Guidance | NICE

⁸ Substance Misuse Needs Assessment (JSNA) | Hartlepool Borough Council