

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S AND THE ROYAL
LONDON SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND
DENTISTRY

A POLICY REGARDING MISUSE OF
ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS BY ALL
STAFF AND STUDENTS

DATE: 2/6/99

The Policy

This policy relates to the School, its staff and students.

The abuse of alcohol and the abuse of drugs is inconsistent with the high standard of personal behaviour that society and the registration bodies (e.g. GMC,GDC) expect from medical and dental practitioners. The School believes that the safety of patients is of paramount importance and has developed this policy to set clear standards of behaviour. The word “students” refers to those studying for an undergraduate course. “Staff” refers to those employed in the School as well as those studying for a postgraduate qualification.

Ownership

This policy was written after widespread discussion and revision within the medical and dental school. It is important that the finally adopted policy is generally agreed as fair, sensible, and owned by the School as a whole.

Standards

1. The consumption of alcohol by staff and students is strongly discouraged during the working day, which is defined as that part of the day which involves teaching, administration, timetabled meetings or learning, research or clinical activities.

It should be noted that the consumption of alcohol during the working day is prohibited in many hospitals and community healthcare settings, including the Trusts associated with the School. Staff and students who work or study on Trust premises are required to comply with all of the provisions of Trust policies.

2. The abuse of drugs is unacceptable to the School at all times and in all places.
3. No one should attend unfit for work or study because of alcohol or drug consumption. This applies especially to activities involving patients and research subjects.
4. In bars which use School property alcoholic drinks will be sold only during normal licensing hours, with the exception of special events which may require a special licence and will require the approval of the Assistant Warden (Student Affairs) and the School Secretary.
5. Staff and students are expected to maintain a satisfactory and acceptable standard of behaviour at all times.
6. The use of any illicit drug is a disciplinary as well as a criminal offence.
7. The School expects the Students Association, its clubs and societies, to discourage activities and circumstances where the abuse of alcohol or of drugs is anticipated.
8. Sufficient non-alcoholic drinks must be available whenever alcohol is provided at a social event within the School.
9. The School does not approve of routine self-prescribing by doctors or dentists.

Education

1. All staff and students of the School will receive a copy of this policy.
2. Students will be taught about medical, psychological, and social consequences of abuse of alcohol and drugs. This will be a priority within the curriculum.

Help

1. The School has a responsibility to be alert to the identification of staff and students who are thought to be at special risk of abuse of alcohol or drugs, and who have developed or are developing dependency. The School will offer help to those affected.
2. Students, staff and tutors will be made aware of the current opportunities for receiving help or advice concerning alcohol misuse and/or other similar problems. These include College facilities such as the confidential student counselling service, which is currently based at the Mile End site and is available to see and help students who refer themselves with alcohol and/or drug problems. The Occupational Health Service is available to students and staff. Both services are also available for advice to students and staff who are concerned about a friend's or colleague's excessive drinking or drug misuse. Hospital and community based confidential services are available for both staff and students (see appendix).

Discipline

1. It will be a policy generally to offer help to an abuser of alcohol or drugs before disciplinary action is taken.
2. All staff and students should be aware that any member of staff or any student who abuses alcohol or drugs and has failed to take advantage of help offered will be subject to disciplinary procedures.
3. If a staff member holding professional registration is found guilty of serious misconduct or investigation reveals a serious health problem related to alcohol or drugs, the School may inform the registration body.
4. If a student studying for a registrable qualification is found guilty of serious misconduct, or investigation reveals a serious health problem related to alcohol or drugs, the matter will be dealt with according to the College's Ordinance D2: Code of Student Discipline and in the light of the GMC document "Student Health and Conduct". The outcome of such a procedure could include a decision that the student is unfit to proceed to qualification and thus to registration.
5. Staff and students are reminded that unacceptable conduct, which may be alcohol or drug related will be subject to normal disciplinary procedures. The influence of alcohol or drugs will not constitute an acceptable excuse.

Help Available for People with Alcohol and/or Drug Misuse

General

Your own General Practitioner

QMW Health Centre (020 7882 3176)

The Occupational Health Service (020 8982 6057, 020 7882 3691)

QMW Student Counselling Service (020 7882 5175) is a confidential self-referral service.

Alcohol

Drinkline (020 7332 0202; 6pm – 11pm everyday) is a national alcohol helpline for confidential help and advice.

Hackney Community Alcohol Team (020 8525 9383) service provides assessment, detoxification and help.

City & Hackney Alcohol Counselling Service (020 7613 1313, 020 8525 1313)

Alcohol East (020 8257 3068) provides advice, assessment, and help for those in Newham or Tower Hamlets.

Newham Alcohol Advice Service (020 8519 3354) is a counselling service.

Greater London Association of Alcohol Services (GLAAS) (020 7253 6221) which provides information about services in London.

Alcoholics Anonymous (020 7352 3001) provides free group support from recovering alcoholics for those who wish to remain teetotal.

Al-Anon Family Groups (020 7403 0888) for families and friends of problem drinkers. **Alcohol Concern** (020 7928 7377) provides advice and information about local help.

OTHER DRUGS

National Drugs Helpline (0800 776600) gives free information and advice.

Narcotics Anonymous (020 7730 0009) provides free group support from recovering addicts for people recovering from narcotics addiction.

City Roads (020 7278 8671) is a 24 hour emergency drugs crisis intervention service.

Release emergency service (020 7603 8654) is a 24 hour telephone line for people with drug problems, particularly giving legal advice.

DOCTORS, DENTISTS, AND THEIR STUDENTS

The Addictive Physicians Programme runs a helpline (01252 345163) for immediate advice and help.

The British Doctors and Dentists group (020 7487 4445) exists to help these professionals (and students) to avoid alcohol and drugs and support those unable to recover by themselves. All group members are recovering from alcohol or drug problems, and the referrals are handled anonymously.

National Counselling Service for Sick Doctors (020 7935 5982) is a confidential independent advisory service provided by senior doctors from all branches of medicine.

British Dental Association Sick Dentists Scheme (020 7935 0873).