

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS POLICY



All reference to personnel includes both paid employees and volunteers.

General Statement

Anglia Care Trust expects all personnel to adhere to high standards of behaviour in relation to misusing alcohol, illegal drugs or legal highs. Our ability to provide services to our Services Users, raise funds and develop and improve services depends on our ability to maintain effective working relationships with funding bodies and referral agencies and safeguarding our reputation as a professional organisation. If you misuse drugs or alcohol, whether in work or your private life, this can impact on both our direct work with Service Users and on our professional standing as a reputable charity.

The purpose of this policy and procedure is:

- To encourage an open and supportive environment whereby you can seek support where necessary
- To ensure that you are clear about the support you can expect from Anglia Care Trust should you make a disclosure, and the consequences should you not seek support and your performance or conduct be affected.
- To provide a consistent framework for managers that provides a fair balance between your needs and those of the organisation
- To acknowledge that you and Anglia Care Trust have an important part to play in optimising your health and well being and to set out how both can contribute to this.

Our aim is to support you and provide an environment that enables you to disclose where you are using illicit drugs, misusing prescribed drugs or consuming excessive alcohol by:

- Engaging in regular dialogue with you e.g. through supervision
- Monitoring attendance and identifying any jobs or teams where absence is high with a view to understanding and tackling any underlying reasons
- Monitoring behaviour, especially changes in behaviour with a view to understanding and tackling any underlying reasons
- Creating an inclusive environment where you are valued and respected
- Providing support and encouragement to an employee who recognises and seeks treatment to deal with substance misuse
- Providing an approved, independent occupational health service that you may be referred to.

Should you make a disclosure that you are using illegal drugs, legal highs or misusing alcohol or prescription drugs, Anglia Care Trust will seek to support you. The detail of this support will be determined by your use of substances (what and

how often), the impact this is having on your work performance and your job. The exception is where there are misconduct or health and safety issues in which case such behaviour will be managed through the Disciplinary/Performance Improvement Policy.

Consumption of Alcohol on the Premises

Unless authorised by management, personnel are expressly forbidden to consume alcohol when at work. Any breach of this rule will be treated as gross misconduct and is likely to result in summary dismissal.

Drug or Misuse or Abuse on the Premises

Personnel, who take, sell or buy illegal drugs or those classified as “legal highs” during working hours or on Anglia Care Trust premises will be committing an act of gross misconduct and are likely to be summarily dismissed.

Intoxication at Work

You must not consume alcohol before coming to work, during work, or at lunch-time. Nor must you consume alcohol during the evening to the degree that the alcohol consumed would result in a positive reading from a breath test when you attend work, or affects your ability to carry out your job to the required standard of performance or puts another person, whether a client or work colleague, at risk the next time they are due to work. A member of personnel who is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or legal highs during working hours or on Anglia Care Trust premises will be escorted from the premises immediately. Anglia Care Trust will take disciplinary action when the individual has had time to sober up or recover from the effects of substances. Intoxication at work will normally be treated as gross misconduct and result in summary dismissal.

Children and Young People

When working with children and young people, personnel need to be aware of the Confiscation of Alcohol (Young Persons) Act 1997 and Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991.

The purpose of the Acts is to empower police officers to confiscate alcohol (from the possession of any minors under the age of 18) or tobacco (from the possession of any minors under the age of 16).

Previously only the purchase of alcohol or tobacco was illegal by minors, and officers could take no action against a minor in possession of alcohol or tobacco unless they were committing another offence. The Acts were introduced to close this loophole and allow officers to seize alcohol or tobacco in a minor's possession and create an offence for any person who fails to comply with a request to confiscate. The Act can also be applied to a person over 18 if the officer believes that the person intends to supply a minor with alcohol in their possession.

If personnel have any concerns regarding children and young people around alcohol, tobacco or drugs, they should immediately speak to their line manager and follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures if relevant.

The Legislative Framework

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Anglia Care Trust has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of those we engage. We must ensure that individuals do not injure themselves or endanger the public or colleagues. Similarly you are required to take reasonable care of yourself and others who could be affected by your actions at work.

The Road Traffic Act 1998 makes it illegal for any person to drive or attempt to drive a motor vehicle while unfit to drive through the use of a substance. This includes prescribed and over-the-counter medication, as well as illegal drugs or alcohol.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Managers' Responsibilities

You are expected to be watchful for signs of problems that could be caused by drug or alcohol dependency and to be proactive in such situations in notifying senior management.

Signs may include the following:

- Increased absenteeism
- High accident levels (at work or social/pleasure) and other breaches of health and safety requirements
- Behaviour that damages Anglia Care Trust's reputation
- Employee theft
- Deterioration in performance
- Mood swings
- Lower staff morale
- Workplace bullying
- Increased stress levels

You must be alert to alcohol and drug misuse symptoms with those within your team. You should offer support and advice if you suspect that there is a problem.

It is a misapprehension that turning a blind eye will protect the individual. Your silence may cause the individual more harm and bring Anglia Care Trust into disrepute. If you knowingly fail to deal with a situation where an individual is misusing alcohol or drugs you will leave yourself open to disciplinary action.

Individual Responsibilities

Anglia Care Trust expects you not to use illegal drugs or legal highs at any time, either in or outside work. You are reminded that possession of illegal drugs is a

criminal offence that could bring Anglia Care Trust into disrepute with its Service Users, statutory agencies and funders.

You must be alert to alcohol and drug misuse symptoms that a colleague may display. You should offer support and advice to a colleague if you suspect that they have a problem. You must notify your line manager and/or colleagues line manager if for any reason you believe a colleague is misusing alcohol or drugs or is taking medication for withdrawal from drugs.

Individuals on prescribed medication

Prescribed drugs include tranquillisers and anti-depressants, some of which are controlled drugs. If you use prescribed medication in accordance with the advice given by your medical advisor you will have no problem under this policy.

You should notify your manager if you are prescribed medication that could affect your work performance, especially if it might have health and safety implications. If the effects of the medication may be noticeable to Service Users or renders you unfit to perform your duties, your manager may ask you to visit your own GP. Additionally, you may be referred to an independent occupational health provider.

You should seek advice from your GP or hospital consultant, as appropriate, about the possible side effects of any prescribed drugs e.g. drowsiness, impaired reflexes.

If you have been prescribed medication and then stop taking it, for whatever reason, you should notify your manager, especially if it might have health and safety implications, including the risk of violence. If the effects of stopping the medication is noticeable to Service Users or renders you unfit to perform your duties, your line manager may send you to see your GP. Additionally, you may be referred to an independent occupational health provider.

If you do not declare either the extent of the prescribed medication or the stopping of the medication and you are deemed unfit for your duties, there is a health and safety incident or you carry out an act of misconduct then a Disciplinary investigation may be initiated.

Date of next review – October 2019