GET HELP FOR
YOUR 44-YEAR-OLD
DRINK & DRUG ISSUE

ANALYSING DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADMISSIONS IN THE NHS
In the past three years more than 500,000 people have been hospitalised because of drug and alcohol abuse. Most of them are middle aged.

Overall, nearly one in ten admissions for emergency care are due to adults with a drug or alcohol problem.

People with a drug or alcohol problem account for 19% of all emergency admissions among 40–44 year olds.

415,131 drug and alcohol-related emergency admissions in 2012/13.

Find more information about drug and alcohol-related admissions at myhospitalguide.com/drugs-alcohol.
Dr Foster’s figures show that substance misuse is a major health challenge. The increase in hospital admissions of middle-aged people dictates the need for changes across the health and care system including how we respond to people in crisis. Over 20% of admissions due to people with a drug or alcohol problem do not have a recorded GP. This is worrying, and requires a far more integrated approach to substance misuse across primary and secondary care. We need to respond earlier to the unique social impact of addiction experienced by this group in order to reduce the likelihood of intergenerational problems escalating. The challenge set to the health service by these figures is to consider the costs associated with substance misuse and how investment across health, social care and public health initiatives can address the barriers currently preventing people getting the support they need.”

See the effects of drug and alcohol-related admissions at myhospitalguide.com/drugs-alcohol
Setting the scene

Public policy on drug and alcohol misuse has emphasized the dangers of binge drinking among the young. It has also warned against the dangers of long-term drinking above recommended levels due to the impact on health. However, serious alcohol and drug dependency among the middle aged has not been given the same attention. It is this, however, which is placing one of the biggest burdens on our health system in terms of use of hospital beds.

There is a link with deprivation

These patients come from every section of society but affects more patients from poorer neighbourhoods.

High impact users

533,302 patients admitted with a known drug or alcohol problem over the past three years

The average age of this group of patients is rising

Ten years ago, the peak age for this type of hospital treatment was younger than it is today.

Long-term drug and alcohol problems

Includes patients who had exactly one emergency admission for acute alcohol intoxication between 2002/3 and 2012/13 and no admission relating to drug or long-term alcohol abuse in that period

Binge drinking

Includes patients in each year from 2002/3 to 2012/13 who had at least one admission relating to drug or long-term alcohol abuse

While binge drinking among the young is reducing, the more serious drug and alcohol problem among the middle aged is not getting any better. Those born in the 1960s and whose young adult life took place in the 1980s are most affected. There is a need for integrated care across hospitals, community care and social services to address the problem.

The problem affects everyone

The effects are greatest in the North.

The proportion of emergency admissions due to people with a drug or alcohol issue is highest in the North, particularly in Greater Manchester and Lancashire.

City Hospitals Sunderland

Turning Point works in partnership with City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust to operate a service designed to identify and help people admitted to hospital with drug and alcohol conditions. Since this began there has been a decline in overall alcohol related admissions.

St George’s Healthcare

St George’s Healthcare NHS Trust has a programme that links with an assertive case management team for repeat attendees at the hospital who live in Wandsworth. It provides social support as well as practical help to get patients to appointments at appropriate services.

Taking a look at the latest proportion of admissions by level of social deprivation

The proportion of emergency admissions due to people with a drug or alcohol issue is highest in the most deprived areas, with 22% of emergency drug and alcohol-related admissions in 2012/13 having no recorded GP contact.

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36% of these people are from the poorest neighbourhoods.

To learn more, visit myhospitalguide.com/drugs-alcohol