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Citywide alcohol improvement programme is underway

In April 2009, Birmingham Drug and Alcohol Action Team, part of Safer Birmingham Partnership, underwent a corporate re-brand to take account of its additional responsibility to commission fit for purpose alcohol services across the city of Birmingham.

In conjunction with Birmingham based PCTs and wider partner organisations across the city, BDAAT has now developed and commissioned a diverse range of alcohol treatment provision which is available to all Birmingham residents. The extended provision includes:

Free-phone helpline number

The Single Point of Contact helpline number is now in operation – simply call 0800 073 0817 for information and advice about the drug and alcohol treatment and support services available across Birmingham. Helpline staff can deal with all treatment and support related queries and also refer individuals directly into treatment services.

Tier one provision

- Pharmacy support services. Fifty two branches of Lloyds Pharmacy will now offer brief alcohol interventions to anyone looking for information and advice about reducing their alcohol use.
- Alcohol Concern has been commissioned to deliver training programmes to empower additional tier one agencies and voluntary sector organisations to be able

to deliver brief alcohol interventions themselves and signpost individuals needing a greater level of support into tier two/three treatment services.

- RAPT/NACRO have been commissioned to provide self help sessions to individuals requiring additional support to reduce their alcohol consumption.

Tier two provision

- RAPT/NACRO will be working in conjunction with primary care trusts to deliver brief alcohol intervention sessions. Qualified alcohol workers from RAPT/NACRO will work alongside GPs to offer brief support sessions within GP surgeries.
- Aquarius, SIFA and the Irish Welfare Centre will be delivering community based support sessions for anyone with problematic alcohol use. A specific focus will also be placed on supporting vulnerable youngsters aged 16 – 24 who are more at risk of alcohol related harm (for example, care leavers, young offenders)
- Hospital based support services will be delivered by Aquarius at Good Hope, Heartlands, City Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Working alongside hospital staff, the services are designed to ease the pressure placed on A&E departments to deal with alcohol related hospital admissions. Referral of individuals into community based alcohol support services will also be offered as part of the programme.

Tier three provision

- Aquarius and Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust (BSMHFT) will lead on the tier three alcohol provision across the city, with BSMHFT providing detox services and Aquarius providing psycho-social and family interventions.

Tier four provision

- In September 2009, a new in-patient detoxification and rehabilitation service will open in Birmingham, aimed at clients with no home support or those with mental health issues.

Max Vaughan, BDAAT's Alcohol Co-ordination and Commissioning Manager, said, "I am delighted that through the support of local partner agencies across the city we have been able to establish, what I believe to be, a robust treatment system which will go a long way to helping both individuals and communities receive the support they need to reduce alcohol related harm".

Anyone concerned about their alcohol use is urged to call the freephone helpline number on 0800 073 0817. (Calls from landlines are free, calls from mobiles will be charged).

END

Notes to Editors

Birmingham Drug and Alcohol Action Team (BDAAT) is part of Safer Birmingham Partnership (SBP), a multi-agency partnership made up of Birmingham City Council, West Midlands Police, Birmingham Health Services, Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, West Midlands Fire Service, National Probation Service - West Midlands.

SBP is responsible for co-ordinating and delivering community safety and crime reduction initiatives across the City with the overall aim of making Birmingham even safer.

For further information contact: Max Vaughan, Alcohol Co-ordination and Commissioning Manager, on 0121 465 4960.