

WHO alcohol brief intervention training manual for primary care

Alcohol contributes significantly to the disease and mortality burden in the WHO European Region, and primary health care systems play an important role in reducing the impact of the harmful use of alcohol. Screening and brief interventions (SBIs) for alcohol in primary care are an evidence-based policy option for health improvement when implemented properly.

Alcohol brief interventions

Alcohol brief interventions are a group of short, empathetic and structured conversations that seek in a non-confrontational way to motivate and support individuals to think about and/or plan a change in their drinking behaviour. Brief interventions have historically included the use of a screening questionnaire to assess an individual's consumption level and risk of alcohol problems, as well as provision of personalized feedback to those identified as being in need of support. Evidence supports the use of widespread screening for alcohol problems in primary care to identify people who may benefit from an intervention at the earliest opportunity.

WHO SBI training manual

In order to implement SBIs successfully in primary care settings, sufficient planning must take place to ensure that the initiative is supported at all levels of the health care system.

This manual, produced with funding from the European Commission, aims to provide a comprehensive training aide to equip health professionals with the knowledge and skills to put SBIs into practice.



Target group



The materials are envisioned to be used by trainers working in the primary health care system, including general practitioners, nurse specialists, public health specialists, senior health practitioners within alcohol-related conditions and training leaders. The training manual is designed primarily for doctors and nurses working in front-line general practice/universal health care services.



Training methods

The manual provides information on how to plan for and deliver training for SBI trainers, as well as how to set up training of practitioners. The toolkit uses interactive training methods, including case studies and role play, as key components.

Learning units



The training manual has eight core units, including the context of the course (**Unit 1**), background to alcohol and its harms (**Units 2 and 3**), evidence for brief interventions and how to deliver them (**Units 4, 5, 7 and 8**), and how to screen for harmful use of alcohol (**Unit 6**).

The training manual and related materials are available online at www.euro.who.int/alcohol/SBImanual

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