

Indications of Alcohol and Drug Related Problems

Appendix B

INDICATIONS OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG RELATED PROBLEMS

There is no single characteristic which identifies a person with an alcohol or drug problem, and indeed alcohol or drugs are only two of many possible reasons for deteriorating job efficiency. However, if the following characteristics occur in combination or as a pattern over a period of time alcohol or drug related problems may be indicated. Referral to occupational Health is advised if an employee routinely demonstrates any of the following behaviours.

1) Absenteeism

- Multiple instances of unauthorised leave
- Excessive sick leave (including frequent self-certified or uncertificated sick leave)
- Frequent Monday and/or Friday absences
- Excessive lateness, e.g. returning late from meal breaks
- Leaving work early
- Increasingly improbable excuses for absence.
- High accident rate at home or at work
- Difficulty in concentrating
- Irregular work patterns
- Alternative periods of high and low productivity
- Increasing general unreliability and unpredictability.

2) Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs

- Attending work in an obviously inebriated condition
- Smelling of alcohol
- Hand tremors
- Increasingly unkempt appearance
- Lack of personal hygiene.

3) Deteriorating job efficiency

- Missed deadlines
- Mistakes
- Making poor decision

4) Deterioration of relationships at work

- Over-reaction to imagined or real criticism
- Irritability
- Complaints from colleagues
- Borrowing money from colleagues
- Avoidance of Line Manager and/or associates.
- Dishonesty and theft

OTHER POINTS TO CONSIDER

What happens when you drink alcohol?

Alcohol is absorbed

The concentration of alcohol in the body depends on many factors, principally how much you have drunk, how long you have been drinking, whether you have eaten, size and weight.

It takes a healthy liver approximately 1 hour to break down 1 unit of alcohol (10ml or 8g of absolute alcohol), e.g. a single measure of spirits or a half a pint of beer (4.5%).

