



COUNTY DURHAM
A local voice for local people

County Durham LINK Meeting/Event

Date: 21st October 2011

Event: Alcohol – New Times, New Challenges

Number/range of attendees:

Purpose of meeting/event:

Record completed by: Robin Millerchip

This was an event largely aimed at people who actually design, commission, and carry out alcohol intervention programmes in the region and as a consequence some was rather technical and some made little sense to an outsider. That does not mean it was a wasted attendance, far from it. Whilst statistics make most people glaze over, some of these were ones you do not want to be involved with – the various illnesses, mental problems, crime and disorder problems, career problems, etc, etc, caused by the subject matter.

What stood out?

- Cost to NHS per year of alcohol related treatment at A&E works out at £6million per 100,000 people
- Diago (and others) selling alcohol to youngsters via Facebook
- The number of unwanted pregnancies in under 16 girls directly due to alcohol intoxication is rising, more in the north east than anywhere else
- Banning of adverts made by Balance in National Drink Awareness week thanks to the financial pressure of the drinks industry

There were more but these make sober enough reading.

Presentations were made by:

Colin Shevills, Balance

Jenny Hope, National Institute of Clinical Excellence

Dr Dorothy Newbury-Birch, Newcastle University (Research)

Dr Nick Heather, Professor of Alcohol Studies Northumbria Univ.

(As is often the way the most eminent was the poorest speaker!)

We have been promised summaries in writing of all the presentations.

A lot of good understanding as to how policy is implemented by governmental bodies was my outcome of this particular meeting, and it was a surprise to find that some of the cheapest options are just as effective as the most expensive – but both are needed in the real world.



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Actions required