

Annual Report 2015

A summary of the activities
and progresses of the
Alcohol Forum's work in
tackling Alcohol harms

Welcome To Our Annual Report 2015

To Explore Key Stories Of The Past Year
And Find Out More About What's In Store,
You Can Also Download Our Annual Report.

At Online: www.alcoholforum.org

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Chairman's Statement

Pat Harvey, Chairman

Welcome to the Alcohol Forum Annual Report 2015.

On behalf of the Board and staff I welcome the publication of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill and it was a pleasure to have the Minister for Health Leo Varadkar, outline at our National Conference in April the commitment of the Government to its implementation. This bill is the first time in Ireland that alcohol has been addressed from a public health perspective. It is a great first step and it will have the full support of the Alcohol Forum.

I know that there are many challenges ahead before the Bill is implemented but I also know that it will make a difference in reducing the levels of harm caused by alcohol and save lives.

2015 was a year of some significant advances for the Alcohol Forum. The development of a joint partnership with Action on Addiction UK to bring the Moving Parents and Children Together (P-PACT) programme to Ireland reflects the Forum's commitment to working with families where children are impacted by parental alcohol or other substance misuse.



The commencement of our National Community Action on Alcohol Programme (CAAP) with our partners in the Dept. of Health, HSE and Drug and Alcohol Taskforces, and the very positive external evaluation of the programme was reflective of the work of the staff and in particular Anne Timony Meehan who led this programme for us.

Action on Alcohol week was a tremendous success and served as a great example of how partners working

Chairman's Statement

together can make the greatest impact in raising awareness and addressing alcohol harm. I still believe that Government would see the value of establishing an agency to tackle the harmful alcohol problem in this country in a fashion similar to what the RSA is to road safety.

Two very important and very successful events for us occurred during AAW, our Alcohol-Brain Injury Seminar and our National Alcohol Conference. Both these events were tremendously successful and provided the opportunity to hear some of the best international and national experts in the alcohol field.

The year also highlighted the challenges from an organisation perspective faced by the Alcohol Forum and other charities in the area of governance and accountability. The Alcohol Forum is committed to the maintenance of the highest standards in governance and accountability for the funding we receive to do our work. Our journey on the road to PQASSO certification is progressing well and we continue to review and strengthen our systems and available expertise to ensure that we can meet all the challenges ahead.



Action on Alcohol week was a tremendous success and served as a great example of how partners working together can make the greatest impact in raising awareness and addressing alcohol harm...

The harms caused by alcohol in Ireland have a major impact on the health and well being of the country. The work we do in addressing the issue would not be possible without the support of our partners, funders, volunteers, and staff, and I want to sincerely thank them for their continued support, commitment and hard work. Looking forward to 2016 the Alcohol Forum is well placed to continue to work with individuals, families and communities to reduce and prevent alcohol harm.

Pat Harvey

Chairman.

CEO's Message

Kieran Doherty, *Chief Executive Officer*

Welcome to the Alcohol Forum Annual Report 2015.

The work to address Alcohol Harms continues to gain momentum at a national level and the publication of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill provides a range of measures that address availability, marketing and price. While it does not tackle the issue of sports sponsorship it is never the less a very important first step in addressing alcohol from a public health perspective. We will continue to work with our partners to campaign for the implementation of the Bill and end the sale of cheap alcohol which causes so much harm to individuals, families and communities.

A major focus of our activity this year has been on the development and roll out of a number of the Alcohol Forum programmes. Our Community Action on Alcohol Project (CAAP) commenced in five Regional and Local Drugs and Alcohol taskforces and we commissioned (with the steering group for the project) an evaluation that was very positive. A further five taskforces will be recruited to take part in the programme in 2016.

The National Best Practice Seminar on Alcohol Related Brain Injury, provided a great opportunity to raise awareness of ARBI and also brought together a large

group of health care professionals to hear the evidence about what works best.



A major focus of our activity this year has been on the development and roll out of a number of the Alcohol Forum programmes.....

We know that you don't have to drink alcohol to be affected by it and the development of a partnership with Action on Addiction UK to bring the Moving Parents and Children Together (M-PACT) programme to Ireland is one way of responding to the issue of problematic parental alcohol and other substance misuse. The recruitment of 13 volunteers to undertake an intensive training programme and prepare for the delivery of a programme in 2016 is a statement that we want to build on the work

CEO's Message



of our Families Matter team and deliver whole family approaches that give children a voice and protects and builds their resilience in living with parental alcohol and other substance misuse.

Our National Conference on the “Best Available Evidence” gave an opportunity to practitioners and community groups to hear Dr Thomas Babor and Prof David Jernigan two of the leading International authorities on Alcohol harms. Together with our National speakers they provided a very engaging and informative day.

The Alcohol Forum worked with like-minded partners to make Action on Alcohol week such a great success with numerous events across the country and generating media coverage to a combined circulation and listenership audience of over 2.7 million people. Also, we worked with others to influence policy and key decision makers. Some examples this year included submissions to The Public Health Alcohol Bill, the Local Authority Economic and Community planning process and the National Neuro – Rehabilitation Strategy among others.

There is increasing hope that momentum is building at a national and community level to protect children, families and communities from alcohol harms and we look forward to playing our part.

We cannot do this without the continued support of our funders, volunteers, board members and staff and I want to sincerely thank them for their dedication and commitment to tackling alcohol harms in Ireland.

Kieran Doherty

Alcohol Forum, CEO.

Families Matter

by Ms Donna Butler,
Regional Programme Manager

Although not often publicly visible alcohol's harm to others within the family can have very serious consequences for the safety and well-being of family members, with children being the most vulnerable.

The Alcohol Forum's Hidden Realities report 2011, highlighted the exposures to risks from parental alcohol misuse in Ireland. The Health Research Board 2013 report on alcohol consumption highlighted that 1.3million people in Ireland drink in a harmful way.

We know that you don't have to drink alcohol to be affected by it and in Ireland today thousands of children are living with the consequences of parental alcohol or other substance misuse. These children are often isolated, confused and conflicted and may experience physical and emotional neglect with some seriously at risk. Families impacted by parental alcohol or other drug use can be characterized by secrecy, shame, denial, delusion and repression.

Work has begun to recognize and respond to this vulnerable cohort of children and families. This year we have seen another significant step in responding to this agenda with the development of the Moving Parents and Children Together Programme. (M-PACT).

We are delighted to partner with Action On Addiction UK to bring this programme to Ireland, and in November this year, 11 volunteer facilitators undertook a four day training course together with two Alcohol Forum staff to deliver the programme in 2016.

The M-PACT Programme supports children and young people aged 8-17 who are experiencing the effects of parental substance misuse within the family. Using a whole family approach the programme will be run by experienced professionals who work with young people and parents to reduce the harmful impact that parental substance misuse and addiction has on family life.

The Alcohol Forum through Families Matter aim to introduce M-PACT as an evidenced based response to parental alcohol and other drug problems in Ireland, and will pilot two programmes in Donegal and Sligo/ Leitrim in 2016.

Strengthening Families Program (SFP)

Our SFP Programme is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program for high-risk and general population families. It is a programme for families with children aged between 6-12 years and /or teenagers aged 12- 16 years. It runs for 2.5 hours one night per week over fourteen weeks.

SFP is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance.

SFP in Donegal it is funded by the North West Regional Drugs Task Force (NWRDATF), HSE Mental Health services and Tusla (the child and family agency), and the Alcohol Forum wishes to acknowledge and thank these agencies for their support in bringing this programme to families.

During 2015, programme 18 was completed and programmes 19, 20 and 21 were delivered, with 25 families being referred to the programme. Twenty two families commenced the programme involving 27 adults and 31 children/teens.

Strengthening Families Programme 2015

	Prog 19	Prog 20	Prog 21	Total
Age Group	6-12 years	12-16 years	12-16 years	
Location	Donegal Town	Letterkenny	Letterkenny	
No. of Referrals	8 Families	8 Families	9 Families	25 Families
Started Programme	7 Families	7 Families	8 Families	22 Families
Completed Programme	6 Families	5 Families	6 Families	17 Families (77.2% retention)
Total Parents/Teens Children completed	16	17	16	

Strengthening Families Program (SFP)

At the end of 2015 a total of 21 programmes had been rolled out in County Donegal. In total 164 families, 213 parents, 141 teens and 89 children completed SFP by December 2015.

Implementing SFP in the North West continues to require the active support of our partner organisation's and during 2015 eleven additional people attended the two

day SFP Group Leader training. Finally, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to all the Families Matters staff, our volunteers, funders and stakeholders. Without their time and effort we would not have been able to deliver such fantastic outcomes.

Jacqueline a Strengthening Families Volunteer

"I was motivated to become a Strengthening Families Group Leader because I enjoy working with individuals and families, helping them make positive changes in their lives. The concept of the programme interested me in the way that it brings both parents and children/teens together and is applicable to families with a wide range of needs. The strengths-based approach looks at positive aspects of family life and has allowed me to learn and use these skills in my own life. Working on the programme as part of a team has been very worthwhile and rewarding as I have gained professional skills and overcome personal challenges. The changes the families undergo as the programme progresses are amazing and it is a privilege to be part of that. This motivates me to continue to be a part of the SFP team."



Community Action on Alcohol

by Anne Timony Meehan

The Alcohol Forum's Community Action on Alcohol Programme (CAAP) is an exciting and positive development in community response and mobilisation on alcohol harm. The initial roll out of the National Programme commenced with the selection and establishment of five pilot programmes in Regional and Local Drug and Alcohol Task Forces areas.

This initiative supported by a partnership with the Department of Health, the HSE and the Regional and local Drug and Alcohol Taskforces gave effect to a key recommendation of the National Substance Misuse strategy to promote the development of a coordinated approach to prevention and education interventions in relation to drugs and alcohol.

The programme provides training and capacity building to enable the Drug and Alcohol taskforces to undertake community mobilisation in line with best practice. A steering group of the partners oversee the project and include; the Drugs policy unit in the Department of Health, Ballymun Local Drug and Alcohol Taskforce, and the HSE Health and Wellbeing division.

I want to thank the taskforce members from the participating taskforces:

- North West Regional Drug and Alcohol Taskforce.
- Cork local Drug and Alcohol Taskforce.

- Tallaght Local Drug and Alcohol Taskforce.
- Southern Regional Drug & Alcohol Taskforce.
- North Inner City Local Drug & Alcohol Taskforce.
- Dun Laoghaire /Rathdown Local Drug and Alcohol Taskforce.

The representatives from the Taskforces had a very busy schedule over the year including attending briefings, a 5 day training programme, facilitated sessions and the development of an action plan. I want to thank them very much and reflect on the great experience it was to work with such committed people. The external evaluation of the project commissioned by the steering group concluded that the pilot project had been successful in increasing knowledge of alcohol related harm and of the policy context, raising awareness of evidence based approaches and promoting community involvement, and it is hoped that a CAAP conference will be held in early 2016 to disseminate the learning and promote the programme.

National Alcohol Conference

22nd April 2015

“Using the Best Available Evidence – Supporting the implementation of local solutions to reduce Alcohol consumption levels and alcohol harms”

The 3rd Annual National Alcohol Forum Conference ‘Using the Best Available Evidence – Supporting the implementation of local solutions to reduce Alcohol consumption levels and alcohol harms’ took place on the 22nd April in the Croke Park Conference Centre. This was the flagship event of Action on Alcohol Week and the conference theme was developed to support National public health policy priorities and to raise awareness of effective measures to address alcohol harms. The conference was attended by 180 delegates from a wide variety of sectors, including a significant increase in the attendances from the Drug and Alcohol Taskforces.

The opening address was delivered by **Dr. Leo Varadkar TD, Minister for Health** and key note speakers included...

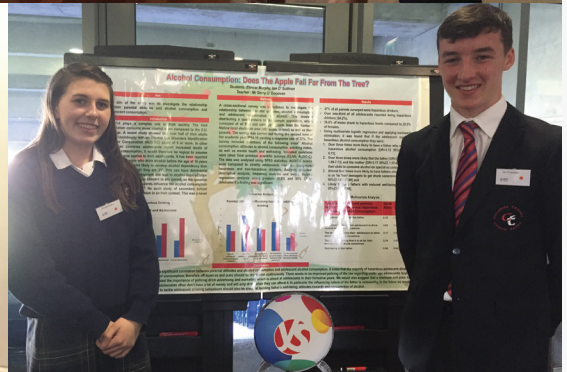
- ✓ **Dr. Thomas Babor** who presented on “Looking Upstream: Evidenced based solutions for Alcohol related problems in the Community”
- ✓ **Prof. David Jernigan** looked at “Alcohol Marketing & Youth: Global Evidence and Community Responses”
- ✓ **Dr. Ann Hope** presented on “Tackling Our Alcohol Problems: What can Communities Do?”



- ✓ **Dr. Stephen Stewart** on “Preventing alcohol-related problems – A Hematologist’s Perspective”
- ✓ **Ms. Evelyn Smith** discussed “How evidenced based practice should underpin all planning and delivery for alcohol and pregnancy within the health sectors”
- ✓ **BT Young Scientists Award Winners: Eimear Murphy & Ian O’Sullivan** reported on “Alcohol Consumption: Does the apple fall far from the tree?” Research: Impact of drinking in the home on Youth Behaviours.

In the afternoon two master classes facilitated by the key international speakers allowed for a more in depth discussion of their presentations.

National Alcohol Conference



National Action on Alcohol Week 2015

The Alcohol Forum continued to chair and provide the secretariat to support the AAW steering group throughout 2015. Action on Alcohol week was the most successful to date with a number of conferences and events happening around the country.

The Alcohol Forum supported these events with the development of a media plan to promote and publicise the National conference and AAW resulting in 19 press publications, 2 online press publications, 18 radio interviews, and one TV slot on the Six one News. The combined circulation and listenership of this media coverage amounted to a total audience of 2,733,924.

The Alcohol Forum staff designed and disseminated Action on Alcohol Week information packs and populated and promoted an online events calendar. We also provided resources and alcohol harm information / liaised with and supported over 20 organisation's to hosts events around the country.

914 people attended our training and education events in 2015 and a further 525 people received information on alcohol related issues at community events.

A Selection Of Photographs



Top Left
North Connaught College Training Sessions

Top Right
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Training Sligo
Education Centre HSE & Tusla Staff from Addiction,
Mental Health & Social Work



Bottom Left
Lagan Community Forum, Drug & Alcohol
Conference, Burt Co. Donegal



Bottom Right
North Connaught College Training Sessions x 3

Alcohol-Related Brain Injury

by Dr. Helen McMonagle



A Snapshot of Statistics



984

The number of contacts with people with ARBI and their supports in 2015.

18,223

The number of online views of ARBI materials developed by the Alcohol Forum.



882,513

The number of people reached about the growing problem of ARBI through media.



The number ARBI specific-training packages developed by the Alcohol Forum in 2015.

2



100%

The percentage of people surveyed who gained increased skills and knowledge in ARBI following an Alcohol Forum Training event.

174

The number of people who were awarded CPD points for attending an Alcohol Forum ARBI event.



4



The number ARBI specific-resources developed by the Alcohol Forum in 2015.

The number ARBI specific-submissions developed by the Alcohol Forum.



6

Submissions

Raising national awareness of Alcohol Related Brain Injury remains an important facet of our work. From time to time the government, HSE, voluntary or statutory agencies review their policies, schemes and areas of work affecting health, social or community services. As part of the consultation process the public and interested agencies are asked to comment.

As part of The Alcohol Forums campaigning work we represent the experience and issues pertinent to our work in reducing Alcohol-Related Harms by providing submissions. Below are a number of submissions we have made to various agencies.

Six submissions were made in 2015.

	<p>The impact of Alcohol on Neuro-rehabilitation Services and the emerging needs of those with Alcohol-Related Brain Injury: A Submission for the National Neuro-rehabilitation Strategy</p>		<p>Supplementary Thiamine: A Crucial Role in the Prevention and Treatment of Alcohol Related Brain Injury – A Briefing Paper</p>
	<p>Alcohol-Related Brain Injury - A Synopsis of Prevalence: Submission for Vision for Change Review</p>		<p>Alcohol-Related Brain Injury - A Briefing Paper for Disability Federation of Ireland</p>
	<p>Reducing Harm from Alcohol – A role for County Councils</p>		<p>Contribution to Alcohol Forum Submission to the Consultation document Quality Integration and Collaboration: A Strategy for Community Nursing</p>

Training

Alcohol-Related Brain Injury

– *Introductory Training for Professionals*

The development of Alcohol-Related Brain Injury – Introductory Training for Professionals was completed in 2015 and was subsequently awarded 3 CEU’s by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland.

This half-day module provides participants with an introduction and overview of the Alcohol-Related Brain Injury and provides some of the fundamental underpinnings which will allow practitioners from a range of backgrounds to begin adapting their practices to meet the needs of those with ARBI.

The training addresses the harm caused to the brain by alcohol, common presentations of ARBI and

the barriers faced by those affected in accessing appropriate supports.

This specialist training was delivered to a wide range of professionals including Occupational therapists, Drug and Alcohol Counsellors as well as Mental Health Nurses in both Donegal and Sligo in 2015 and continued delivery remains a priority for 2016.



100% of people surveyed would recommend this training to a colleague



100% of people surveyed gained increased skills and knowledge in ARBI



100% of people surveyed intended to change their professional practice towards those with ARBI as a result of this training

Training

Alcohol-Related Brain Injury – *Basic Skills Training*

The development of “Alcohol-Related Brain Injury – Basic Skills Training for Professionals” neared completion in 2015.

The half day module facilitates professionals to begin identifying those most at risk of developing this condition and enables the use of key screening assessments for this disorder. The practitioner is encouraged to work towards prevention and identifying the condition at its earliest point.

Working in Partnership

2015 saw the development of partnership between Leonard Cheshire, Northern Ireland and the Alcohol Forum to develop specialist ARBI training as part of future service delivery of Supported Independent Living in Northern Ireland for those with affected by Alcohol- Related Brain Injury.

What People Said

“Excellent delivery, best training I've done in years – everybody needs to do this if they are working in the field of alcohol”

Participant, ARBI Introductory Training, Sligo

“Keep up the excellent work on ARBI, has always been overlooked by so many of us”

Consultant Psychiatrist, Dublin

“The ARBI Seminar event in April of this year has really opened our eye to the problem here at our service and your professional manual is proving an invaluable assistance to us”.

Participant, ARBI Introductory Training, Sligo

“I've worked as a nurse for 20 years and I honestly never knew that alcohol could damage the brain, what an eye opener”

Psychiatric Nurse

“Your thoughts and information are a real encouragement. There does not seem to be anybody where we live that knows anything about this”

Family Member, Bath

“We have struggled to get information on this terrible condition for years and finally I have found something that describes my Mum perfectly. Thank you”

Family Member, Bath

“Much needed service in every county in Ireland”

Social worker, Dublin

ARBI: A Best Practice Seminar

Key note speakers included...

- ✔ **Professor Michael Kopelman**
 Professor of Neuropsychiatry, Kings College of London
'The Alcoholic Korsakoff syndrome: clinical neuropsychological and neuroimaging findings'
- ✔ **Professor Kenneth Wilson**
 Professor of Old Age Psychiatry, Consultant ARBD Team, Cheshire, Wirral and Merseyside NHS
'Alcohol Related Brain Damage: A Service Model'
- ✔ **Mr. Grant Brand**
 Team Leader, ARBD Team, Glasgow
'Lessons learned in the first nine years of the Glasgow ARBD Team'
- ✔ **Dr Helen McMonagle**
 Alcohol-Related Brain Injuries Rehabilitation Coordinator, Donegal
'ARBI in the Irish Context: Individual, Service and Policy Considerations'
- ✔ **Dr Mark Hogan**
 Senior Clinical Neuropsychologist, HSEWest
'Neuropsychological Correlates of ARBI: Implications for Rehabilitation'
- ✔ **Dr Scott Payne**, Consultant in Addiction Psychiatry & **Dr Mark Owens**, ARBD Researcher. WHSCT
'ARBD in a N. Ireland Context: a scoping exercise in the Western Health & Social Care Trust Neuropsychological Correlates of ARBI: Implications for Rehabilitation'



Increased numbers of alcohol-related brain injuries /2015



ARBI: A Best Practice Seminar

20th April 2015

The Alcohol Forum were privileged to hold the first national event addressing the problem of Alcohol-Related Brain Injury in Ireland at the Royal College of Physicians in Dublin this year.

Addressing a full capacity audience, a host of eminent international speakers highlighted models of best practice globally and considered how these can be implemented within the Irish context.

The event coincided with Action on Alcohol Week 2015 and outlined the growing proportions of people developing Alcohol-Related Brain Injury both

nationally and internationally and the difficulties faced by people with ARBI.

Despite this, each speaker made it clear that much could be done to both prevent and provide rehabilitation for this condition and improve the over-all care and quality of life for each Irish person affected by ARBI.



Addressing a full capacity audience, a host of eminent international speakers highlighted models of best practice globally...

Resource Development

We believe that professionals and families who are provided with up-to-date and evidence based information provide better support for people affected by ARBI. 2015 saw the development of four new resources developed and disseminated for supporting more consistent and informed responses to Alcohol-Related Brain Injury in Ireland.

Aligned with international best practice recommendations, these resources facilitate a whole-system approach allowing a wide range of professionals, families and service users access practical information for reducing/assessing risk and dealing with day to day challenges that emerge as a result of ARBI.



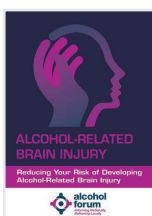
Alcohol-Related Brain Injury: A Guide for Professionals

This guide provides a comprehensive overview of the crucial roles that various professional this condition and promotes a cross tier, whole system and multidisciplinary approach to assessment and rehabilitation.



Alcohol-Related Brain Injury: A Guide for Families

This guide was developed specifically for family members affected by ARBI. It provides loved one's with all the essential information that they will need to support a family member with ARBI and allows them to overcome many of the challenges that might arise as rehabilitation progresses.



Reducing Your Risk of Developing ARBI: A Brief Intervention for Harmful Alcohol Users

This resource has been developed to initiate and facilitate a dialogue between professionals and service users about Alcohol-Related Brain Injury. It allows a collaborative approach to examining individual risk factors, early symptoms and indicators and allows a provisional plan to be developed which can be integrated into current support & recovery care plans.



This resource has been developed for all alcohol users and provides them with practical harm minimisation strategies to allow them reduce their risk of developing Alcohol-Related Brain Injury. It provides brief advice on help-seeking for alcohol use and withdrawal as well as nutritional guidance.

Care-Pathway Development

Local research conducted in Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim and WHSCT conducted in 2011 indicated that there are no defined care pathways within the HSE West or WHSCT areas for people affected by ARBI. This leads to delayed discharges, bed blockages or insufficient discharge planning to meet complex needs. This difficulty is further highlighted by a report from the Royal College of Psychiatrists (UK) who recommended that 'patients are discharged to appropriate settings as soon as physicians and surgical teams have stabilised or managed physical care'. Equally, the report highlights the importance of the development of a simple screening instruments to allow medical staff to identify high-risk patients in the context of acute and rapid treatment.

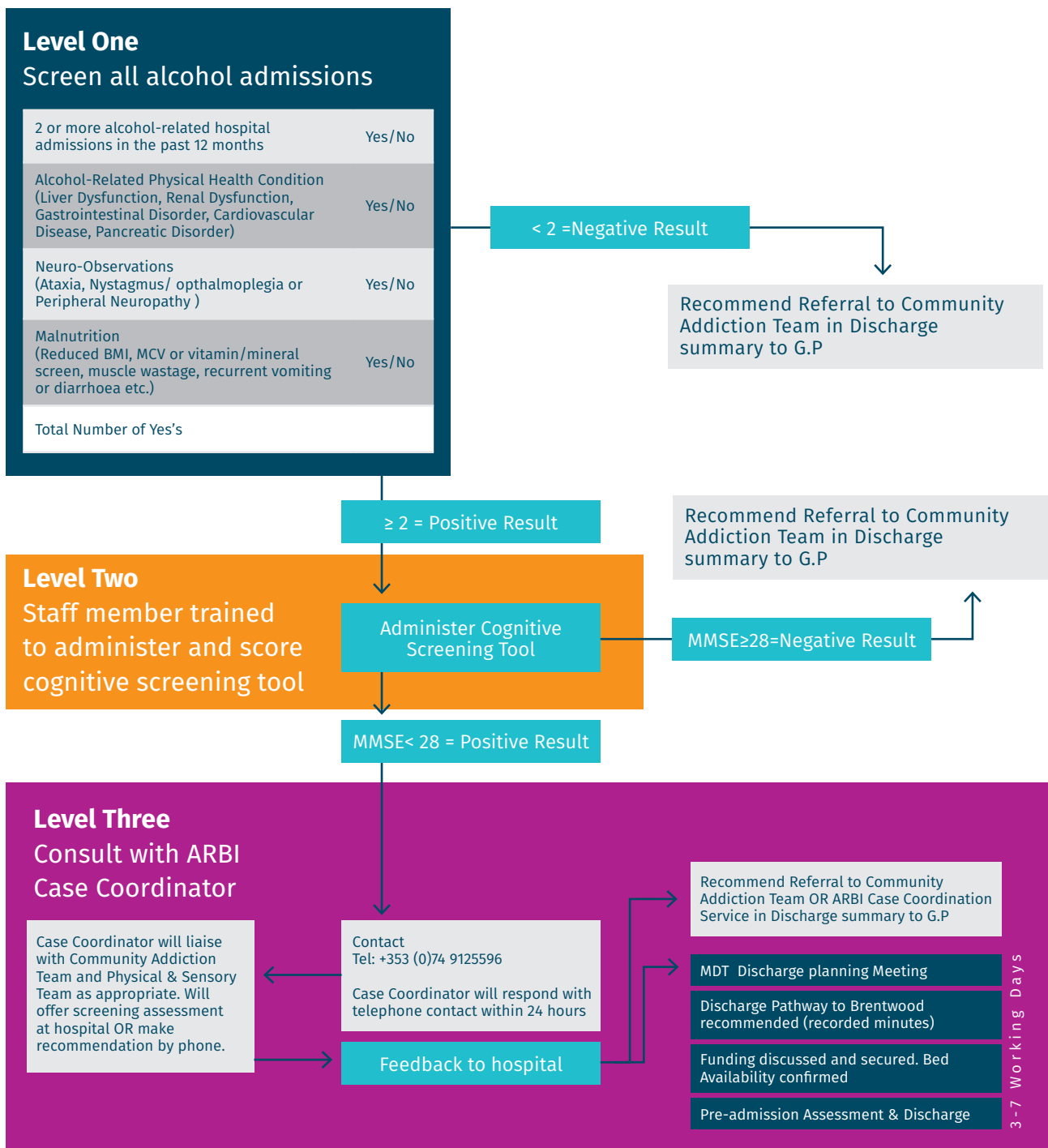
In response to this, 2015 saw the development of a new flow chart for staff of Letterkenny University Hospital to meet the recommendations of international best practice in relation to ARBI. This simple tool allows professionals working at an acute level to quickly decipher at-risk cases and outlines the recommended actions to take in such instances. It encourages fluid communication between the acute hospital and relevant community based services (HSE Mental Health and Addiction Team, Physical and Sensory Disability Team) for discharge planning, provision of a fully supported step-down facility and home-follow up.



..In response to this, 2015 saw the development of a new flow chart for staff of Letterkenny General Hospital to meet the recommendations of international best practice in relation to ARBI...

This is currently in the earlier stages of implementation but early feedback suggests that the "flowchart is excellent it is clear and easy to follow" and is currently being used by a number of ward staff whom frequently have contact with cases of repeated admissions attributable to alcohol use (Social Work, Occupational Therapy). Further contact with LUH to raise awareness among medical consultants and A&E departments of ARBI and discharge procedures remains a priority for 2016.

Identification and Discharge Flowchart Letterkenny University Hospital



ARBI Case Co-ordination:

A Case Study – *David*

David is a 59 year old gentleman from Donegal who, for much of his life, was an integral part of his local sporting community and reported to have been a very talented footballer in his youth.



After giving up football in his mid 30's and being made redundant from long-term employment, David began socialising at pubs more often. After a period of years this behavior became part of his daily routine and he was spending increasingly large amounts of time away from home. With a growing dependency to alcohol, David found it increasingly difficult to maintain employment, and financial difficulties began to threaten his marital relationship.

Attempts at sobriety were often short-lived and David states eventually 'giving up trying' and 'being a failure'. His marriage broke down after 16 years and his daughter cut off all contact with him.

Following his separation and divorce, David's drinking spiraled even further. He became a well-known character at most of the local pubs. In late 2015, bartenders became concerned for David. His walking was 'different' and he was often very slow to respond to questions or conversations which represented a significant change from his usual behaviour. One of the bartenders rang David's family to say that they were worried about him after he refused to take a taxi home despite having difficulties with walking. A family member found David collapsed at home and rang for emergency services.

David spent three weeks at Letterkenny University Hospital. Despite receiving treatment for an array of physical health issues and receiving an extended detox he remained acutely confused, a high risk for falls and requiring assistance with all self-care tasks.

ARBI Case Co-ordination:

A working diagnosis of Alcohol-Related Brain Injury was agreed on the basis of multi-disciplinary and medical assessments as well as screening with the ARBI Case Coordinator and consultation with the Clinical Neuropsychologist. A discharge planning meeting recommended that David continue to avail of support, supervision and assessment as part of the ARBI-discharge pathway to a fully supported residential setting.



...In late 2015, bartenders became concerned for David. His walking was 'different' and he was often very slow to respond to questions or conversations which represented a significant change from his usual behaviour...

David spent a period of three months in this setting. Earlier reviews with Nursing staff and family suggested little change in David's presentation. He remained unaware of his surroundings and continued to require assistance and shadowing for almost all tasks. After a period of 5 weeks, however, David's mobility began to improve. He gradually became more orientated and aware of his surroundings.

He received ongoing input from nursing staff, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. During this time, David's daughter came to visit her father and over the remaining months she re-developed a relationship with him. Extended family were invited to participate in periodic reviews with staff and the ARBI-Coordinator. Despite an initial reluctance to re-engage with their brother after many difficult years, seeing David sober for the first time in decades provided them with the hope that things could be different.

David continued to improve rapidly and he was deemed fit for discharge and returned home following a review of multidisciplinary assessments. Continued support from ARBI-Case Coordinator, family and the local Addiction Service was agreed and David returned to living successfully at home.

ARBI Case Co-ordination:**Recovery from ARBI - David's Journey**

Domain	At Assessment	At Discharge
Alcohol Use	Daily Consumption of 10 pints	Abstinent 9 months
Cognition	MMSE: 13/30 Evidence of severe cognitive impairment & disorientation impacting on all aspects of functional abilities and posing safety concerns requiring one-to-one supervision on ward	MMSE: 30/30 Significant improvement – orientated, no requirement for cognitive support
Mobility	Hand held assistance of two to transfer, mobilise and attend to self-care – high risk of falls	Independently mobile, no falls risk, no issues with gait
Functional Abilities	Functionally impaired in all ADL's	Independent with all elements of washing, dressing, shaving and kitchen based activities
Engagement with Services	None	Engaged with Services – ARBI Coordinator, Addiction Service
Family Support	Disengaged	Regular, commitment to continued support provision

Local Hidden Harm Agenda

by Ciara Wray (Doyle), Youth Drug and Alcohol Worker

The Alcohol Forum continues to support the HSE / TUSLA in the development of the Regional Hidden Harm agenda.

There is increasing awareness regionally and nationally that Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, although not a common known condition is regarded as the leading cause of non-genetic intellectual disability in the western world. It is a completely preventable disorder with the elimination of alcohol during pregnancy.

As a result of the Alcohol Forum inputting into the National Maternity Strategy consultation a number of actions pertaining to maternal alcohol use have been included in the **National Maternity Strategy 2016 -2026 - Creating a Better Future Together.**

3.14 Actions

16. Maternity hospitals/units will strengthen their methods of detecting alcohol abuse and supporting women to reduce their intake. p.64.
17. The National Women & Infants Health Programme will develop a consistent approach to informing women about the risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy.
18. The need to provide drug liaison midwives and specialist medical social workers in all maternity networks is examined

“...maternity hospitals/units should facilitate increased awareness of FASD amongst healthcare professionals and strengthen their methods of detecting alcohol abuse and supporting women to reduce their intake.”

Local Hidden Harm Agenda

Consequently the importance of early identification is essential as ongoing excessive alcohol consumption during pregnancy may have implications for the safety and welfare of the baby. The Alcohol Forum have continued to lead out regionally on the Prescription for a Healthy Pregnancy Practice Change Initiative (PHP). The Prescription for a Healthy Pregnancy Practice Change Initiative is a multi-disciplinary multi-agency response to maternal alcohol consumption. It aims to provide pregnant women with information on the risks associated with alcohol use.

The pilot Practice Change Initiative recommends that health professionals provide screening for alcohol use in pregnancy, as well as the opportunity to offer appropriate advice to encourage pregnant women to stop alcohol use in pregnancy and where necessary onward referral to more specialist alcohol services. 2015 saw the positive evaluation of the PHP.

Key findings:

- Stage One of initiative now completed i.e. roll out in one booking clinic in Letterkenny University Hospital. (LUH)
- High rate of return on self-reporting questionnaire
- 28 week feedback questionnaire had a low response rate. Of the responses received feedback was overwhelming positive about the inclusion of information on maternal alcohol consumption within the maternity setting
- Verbal feedback from midwives also over whelming positive – Midwives reported the consumer feedback on the leaflet was extremely positive and pregnant woman stated after reading the leaflet that they “did not realise the dangers to the baby from drinking”.
- The “Stages of Critical development Chart” was highlighted as a very useful tool when discussing the impact of alcohol in pregnancy”. Midwives request that this tool be used as a poster within the maternity setting
- Consumer feedback showed that pregnant women like the Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS) Leaflet
- Midwives feedback that the AFS leaflet was accessible and non-judgmental and that they had a preference to continue to use this leaflet or a similar leaflet over the CAWT leaflet
- Midwives also requested that poster reflective of the leaflet be available for use within the clinics.
- Consumer feedback on the Prescription held within the toolkit was not positive. Consumers stated that they “didn’t like it”. Midwives found it “gimmicky”.
- Scoring of the AUDIT C was confusing for midwives and needs amended based on feedback before roll out at a hospital wide level
- Further training has been requested by midwives in the area of maternal alcohol consumption (inclusive of FASD and other substance use.)

Local Hidden Harm Agenda

Over all the initiative was deemed by LUH Maternity setting to be a great success in imparting key messages to mums on having a healthy pregnancy with respect to maternal alcohol consumption. Consumer and midwives and consultant feedback confirmed that this is a worthwhile initiative and consequently will be rolled out at a systems wide level within maternity settings.



As problematic alcohol use continues to be one of the most significant challenges facing the Republic of Ireland and considering that 1.34 million people have a harmful drinking pattern, this has serious implications

for children from conception right throughout their life span. *There is a need to reduce alcohol consumption in Ireland in order to ensure children are safe, nurtured and healthy and their families are supported and protected.*

Children should have the opportunity to reach their full potential and grow to become active responsible citizens in line with the WHO European Charter on Alcohol and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Protecting children is not just a public health issue but a human rights one.

In 2015 the Alcohol Forum made a submission to the Health and Children Committee on the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015. We welcomed the measures announced to deal with our harmful drinking encompassed in the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015. For the first time alcohol misuse is being addressed as a public health issue and the Alcohol Forum is encouraged by the measures contained within it, which are in line with The Steering Group Report on a National Substance Misuse Strategy February 2012.

However the Bill as it currently stands does not go far enough. Young people should not be exploited by promotion of alcohol by the drinks industry. The Alcohol Forums recommends the introduction of; a social responsibility levy; the phasing out of alcohol sports

Local Hidden Harm Agenda

sponsorship; the inclusion of measures to address alcohol advertising via digital and social media.



These measures will strengthen the protection afforded to our children with regard exposure to the negative consequences of alcohol consumption and the promotion of alcoholic beverages.

In 2015 we continued to highlight the work being carried out regionally and nationally relating to the Hidden harm agenda.

The Lagan Community Health Conference on Hidden Harm.

Lagan conference was one such event where the Alcohol Forum presented their continual role in highlighting the

need to respond to children impacted by parental problem alcohol and other drug use. This event was attended by up to 200 participants. The Family Resource Centre's in Donegal also attended a separate briefing session.

As part of our continual role in supporting training and education in the area of evidence based responses training was provided to social workers and mental health professionals in the region on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.

Our Youth, Alcohol and Drug Worker also continues to review clients as part of the HSE Youth Drug and Alcohol Service in Donegal and leads on the development of a practice Handbook for Tulsa and the HSE on a cross border basis under the auspices of the North South Ministerial Council, (The North South Alcohol Policy Advisory Group), to develop awareness of Hidden Harm through a variety of measures inclusive of :

- Hidden Harm Leaflet
- The national roll out of the Listserv on an all-island basis.
- The development of a conjoint Strategic Statement on Hidden Harm between Tusla - Child and Family Agency and the HSE Drug and Alcohol Services
- The development of a Practice Handbook on Hidden Harm for Professional working in the HSE and Tusla and funded agencies.

2015 Financial Report

North West Alcohol Forum

Activities for:	Alcohol Forum	Jigsaw Donegal*	Total
Funding	€511,222.00	€241,867.00	€753,089.00
Project & operating costs			
Charitable Activities	€613,273.00	€256,192.00	€869,465.00
Fundraising Costs	€16,061.00	€0.00	€16,061.00
Governance Costs	€9,388.00	€999.00	€10,387.00
Total:	€638,722.00	€257,191.00	€895,913.00
	(-€127,500.00)	(-€15,324.00)	(-€142,824.00)



Our full audited accounts for 2015 are available on www.alcoholforum.org * All Jigsaw Donegal funding is restricted

Organisational Structure

Alcohol Forum

Board of Directors

Mr Pat Harvey, Chairman
Mr Sean Sheridan, Secretary
Dr Paul Stewart, Treasurer
Ms Janet Gaynor
Ms Mary Hough
Ms Shauna Mc Clenaghan
Dr David Gunne

CEO

Mr Kieran Doherty

Office

Unit B9, Enterprise Fund Business Centre,
Ballyraine, Letterkenny, Co.Donegal.

Committees

Audit and Risk Committee
Ethics Committee

Auditors

John Burke & Company
Curraghmore,
Ballybofey,
Co. Donegal.

Solicitors

Mc Mullin and Son.
Donegal St.
Ballybofey,
Co. Donegal.

Our Mission



To prevent and reduce harm caused by alcohol.

Our Vision



A safe and informed society in which everyone acts
to protect all generations from alcohol harm.

Our Approach



We are independent and evidence informed, working
with individuals, families and communities.

Our Objectives

- Reduce alcohol consumption levels and harms through evidence informed work, research & practice.
- Promote the value of Community Action on Alcohol as a means of better outcomes for the safety and well-being of our children, families and society.

The Alcohol Forum acts as fiscal agent for Jigsaw Donegal and employs 5 staff who work in Jigsaw on behalf of the HSE and Headstrong.



Address

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