



HORIZON

Alcohol, drugs & sexual health support

DRUG & ALCOHOL AND SEXUAL HEALTH HARM REDUCTION





Alcohol, drugs & sexual health support

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What is harm reduction?

Harm Reduction is concerned with reducing harms to people and can be directed to behaviour such as drug and alcohol use and also sexual health practices.

Harm reduction in terms of alcohol and drug use would include things such as:

- * **Providing clean needles and drug paraphernalia to injecting drug users.**

There are a number of needle exchanges in Blackpool, situated inside community pharmacies. The needle exchanges provide FREE clean needles, syringes, spoons, citric, vit c, filters and different sized bins for disposal of used equipment. There is also a needle exchange at Horizon, 102 Dickson Road, where you can also access harm reduction information and advice, blood borne virus tests, dental packs and condoms all for FREE. The needle exchanges also provide equipment to those people injecting steroids.

- * **Encouraging monitoring alcohol units via a drink diary and staying within safer alcohol unit guidelines.**

By monitoring your alcohol intake you can keep an eye on your alcohol levels and how much you are drinking per day. By reducing this by one or two drinks per day will make a significant difference to your health.

If you would like to access alcohol treatment services or obtain support around drinking levels, contact **Horizon Dickson Road** on **01253 311431**.

- * **Giving information on how to stay safe on a night out, whether drinking alcohol and/or taking drugs including when taking 'legal highs'**

If you are drinking and/or taking drugs on a night out, there are things you can do to keep yourself and your friends safe from harm:

Only take small amounts of the drug to see how pure it is – you can always take a bit more if needed, but you can't undo taking too much.

Stay together in groups and look out for each other.

Take some time to chill out and drink water, stay hydrated, and cool down.

Look for tell tale signs of someone being in trouble and be prepared to get them medical assistance.

Know the side effects and down sides of the drugs you are taking and how they interact with each other, including alcohol.

If your drug or alcohol use is causing you a problem and you would like to access treatment and support around this, contact **Horizon Dickson Road** on **01253 311431**.



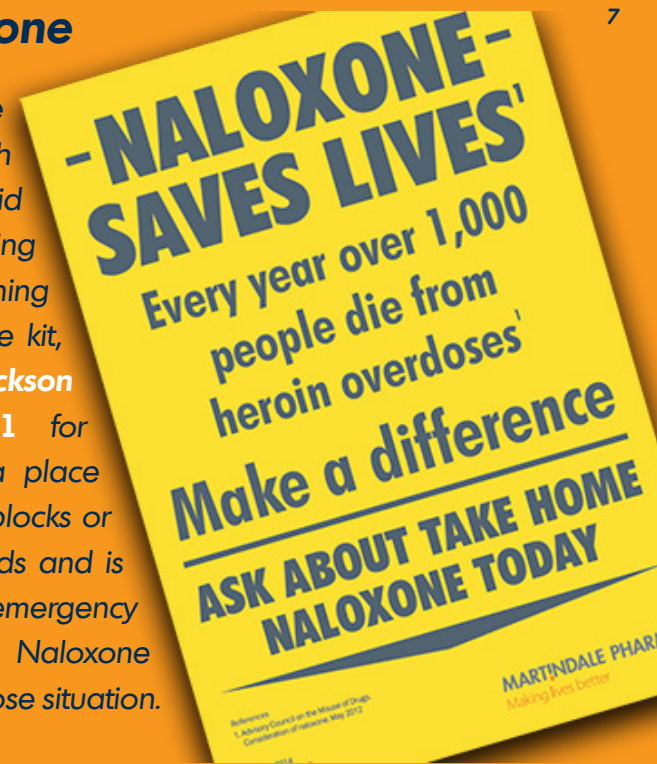
Assertive Outreach Workers

If you are struggling to access treatment services for drug and alcohol use, or to get to your appointments, our Assertive Outreach Workers can support you and accompany you to your appointments, providing transport if required.

The team work closely with peer mentors and will visit you in the community or at home. To access Assertive Outreach Support, please contact **Horizon Dickson Road** on **01253 311431**.

Take Home Naloxone

We offer a Take Home Naloxone programme with overdose awareness first aid training to people injecting opiates. To receive the training and a Take Home Naloxone kit, please contact **Horizon Dickson Road** on **01253 311431** for further details and book a place on the training. Naloxone blocks or reverses the effects of opioids and is used to treat people in an emergency overdose situation. Using Naloxone could save a life in an overdose situation.



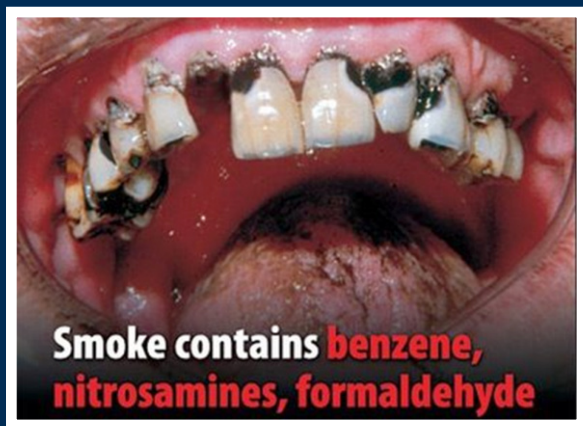
Drug & Alcohol Use and Oral Health

Oral health problems are very common amongst people who have used drugs and alcohol to excess. Some drugs, plus the sugar found in alcohol, are known to cause serious problems to teeth and gums.

Coupled with not maintaining an adequate level of oral hygiene, this can cause tooth decay, cracked teeth and gum disease.

For people who vomit when they are intoxicated or under the influence, they expose their teeth to corrosive stomach acid, and this can increase decay and enamel wear.

Dry mouth is a common side effect with tablets, such as antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications, and as a result, the soft tissue of the mouth can become inflamed, painful and prone to infection. This commonly leads to tooth decay.



Smoking can also affect oral health, leading to tooth staining, gum disease, tooth loss and in more severe cases mouth cancer.

How to keep teeth and gums healthy:

- * **Brush your teeth last thing at night and at least one other time during the day, with a fluoride toothpaste.**
- * **Clean in between the teeth with 'interdental' brushes or floss at least once a day.**
- * **Restrict the amount of sugary food and drinks consumed.**
- * **Have regular dental check-ups. Your dental team can remove any build-up on your teeth and treat any gum disease that is there already.**



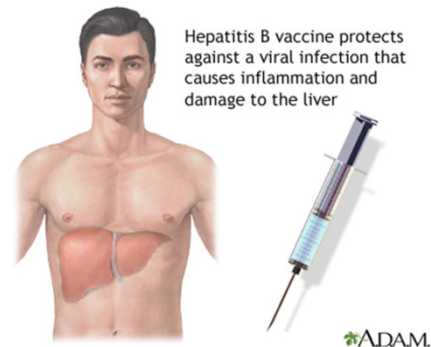
Sexual Health

In terms of Sexual Health Harm Reduction, consideration would be given to:

Screening and Vaccinating against Blood Borne Viruses (Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV)

Testing for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV is available, together with Hepatitis B Vaccination, FREE from Horizon for those in drug and alcohol treatment and those people not in treatment but who may have put themselves at risk of contracting a BBV.

The test is a quick 10 minute test, where blood is drawn from a prick of the finger, results come back within 2 weeks and if a result is positive, you will be referred to appropriate treatment and support services.



You may be at risk of having a BBV if you have:

- * Had unprotected sexual intercourse
- * Shared injecting equipment
- * Been tattooed or pierced with contaminated equipment
- * Have shared a razor or toothbrush with someone who has a BBV

Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is a virus that can affect the liver and if left untreated, it can sometimes cause serious and potentially life-threatening damage to the liver over many years. Hep C often doesn't have any noticeable symptoms until the liver has been significantly damaged, so it is important to be tested before the damage can occur. There is no vaccination for Hep C.

A FREE dry blood spot test is available from Horizon to test for Hep C.



Hepatitis C Support

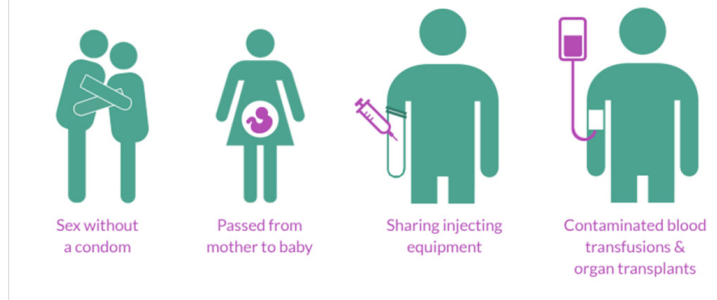
At **Horizon, 102 Dickson Road, Blackpool** we offer a range of Hepatitis C support:

- * **One to One Support** – A Horizon worker can offer one to one support and also accompany you to your appointments with the Hep C Specialist.
- * **Hep C Buddy** – A Hep C Buddy can be a listening ear and answer any questions you might have about a Hep C diagnosis, they can also share their experience of Hep C and treatment with you.
- * **Hep C Support Group** – Please contact **Horizon** on **01253 311431** for details of the next Hep C Support Group. Come for a chat, and meet other people with a Hep C diagnosis to get information and advice.

HIV

HIV is a virus that attacks the immune system, and weakens your ability to fight infections and disease. It is most commonly caught by having sex without a condom, however it can also be passed on by sharing infected needles and other injecting equipment, and from an HIV positive mother to her child during pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding.

YOU CAN GET HIV VIA...



There is no cure for HIV, but there are treatments to enable most people with the virus to live a long and healthy life. AIDS is the final stage of the HIV infection, when your body can no longer fight life-threatening infections. With early diagnosis and effective treatment, most people with HIV will not go on to develop AIDS, therefore it is important to be tested for HIV so treatment can commence as soon as possible.

HIV testing takes place for FREE at **Horizon, 102 Dickson Road, Blackpool** either via a dry blood spot test which is a quick 10 minute test, where blood is drawn from a prick of the finger and results come back within 2 weeks, or you may be eligible for a Rapid 60 Second test where the blood is drawn from a prick of the finger, however the results will be available to see within 60 seconds.

Risky Sexual Behaviour and HIV

- * In terms of HIV and sexual behaviour, the risk is higher for contracting HIV if you do not use a condom and:
- * Have multiple partners
- * Pay for sex
- * Are a man who has sex with men
- * Your judgement is impaired by drugs and/or alcohol (especially if you inject drugs and are sharing needles with your partner)
- * You do not know the HIV status of your sexual partner

It is important to be tested for HIV and to ask the status of your sexual partner

HIV Support

- * One to One Support – A Horizon worker can offer practical and emotional one to one support and also accompany you to your appointments with the GP or hospital.
- * Complementary Therapy including massage and Reflexology.
- * Group Sessions – There are groups available for people living with and affected by HIV that offer a welcoming social environment; these include coffee mornings and men's only group.
- * Counselling.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Transmission of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

STIs are passed from one person to another through unprotected sex or genital contact.

You can be tested and treated for STIs at a sexual health clinic, GUM clinic or GP surgery.

Transmission of STIs can be prevented by wearing a condom during penetrative sex.

During oral sex, a dental dam can be used to cover the anus or female genitals. A dental dam is a very thin latex or soft plastic square that acts as a barrier.

Another way to prevent the spread of STIs is to be screened and know your STI status and be treated if necessary.



Contact Details

**Horizon Drugs and Alcohol Adult Harm Reduction,
Assertive Outreach together with Non Clinical Harm
Reduction Services**

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Facebook.com/HorizonBlackpool

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