



## The Alcohol Brief Intervention (BI) Initiative

### Aim

The Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) has created the Alcohol Brief Intervention Initiative to gather information from GPs on effectively supporting patients to reduce harm from alcohol consumption. Deidentified information, ideas, and resources generated by GPs will be collated in a report and distributed within the group, and to following participants.

### Outcomes

- Understanding how GPs can routinely address alcohol related harms given the competing priorities in consultations
- Understanding how GPs assess the effectiveness of alcohol screening and BI from the patient perspective
- Understanding how GPs assess the effectiveness of alcohol screening and BI from the GP perspective
- Raising GP awareness of alcohol related harm
- Increasing the number of GPs routinely doing alcohol screening and interventions

### Background

Alcohol consumption is the second leading cause of preventable mortality and morbidity in Australia after smoking. One person dies every 90 minutes on average, and someone is hospitalised every 3.5 minutes from alcohol related causes. Drinking in pregnancy is the only cause of FASD, and FASD is the leading preventable cause of learning disability.

Systematic review of clinical preventative health strategies in the USA ranks screening and brief intervention (counselling) for problem drinking to be equivalent on health impact and cost effectiveness as colorectal cancer screening, and higher than that for cervical cancer and breast cancer screening.

An alcohol brief intervention (BI) is a treatment strategy of short duration designed to facilitate behaviour change to reduce alcohol use to safe levels. In a practical sense, it means raising the subject, giving feedback on harms, and providing effective support to patients.

### In our region

- Over 80,000 people reported alcohol misuse disorders in the past 12 months
- The average time lapse between onset of alcohol misuse disorder and a request for help is 18 years
- We have the highest rates of alcohol related hospital admissions for women in NSW
- We have the lowest self-reported drinking rates in NSW
- A recent pilot conducted by the Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) showed that BI in General Practice could reduce the Audit-C score by 40% at 2 months for those drinking outside the guidelines.



### GP Activities

- Expression of Interest (EOI) returned
- Pre-activity Reading
- Familiarise yourself with the GP and patient resources provided
- Pre-activity Survey
- Screening and brief interventions on a minimum of 15 patients
- Reflection Survey – used to gather ideas and information
- Reflect on the collated report from participating GPs

### What is not required

- No identifiable patient data will be collected
- No patient follow-up is required.
- There is no specified screening tool for assessing alcohol consumption

### CPD Points

The Initiative is a CPD Accredited Activity and attracts 40 CPD points.

### Remuneration

GPs will be remunerated \$600 for completing all GP activities over 3 months.

### Invoicing Sydney North Health Network

Send your Tax Invoice to [psimmonds@snhn.org.au](mailto:psimmonds@snhn.org.au).

### More Information

For more information or assistance contact Pat Simmonds at Sydney North Health Network.

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