

# Students and Alcohol conference 2018

## Welcome to the first ever Students and Alcohol conference!

We look forward to a day of sharing and expanding expertise on this pressing issue, critical to student wellbeing.

### Who's speaking?

#### Welcome/keynotes

##### **Izzy Lenga, Vice President (Welfare) at NUS**

Izzy works to improve and change students' lives, and to ensure that no welfare issue becomes a barrier to accessing and achieving in education.

##### **Chloë Sparks, Welfare Officer at Leeds University Union**

Chloë campaigns to improve students' happiness, health and wellbeing, and makes sure they have access to any help and support they need whilst at university to help build a positive, inclusive community.

##### **Don Lavoie, Alcohol Programme Manager, Public Health England**

Don Lavoie is an Alcohol Programme Manager within the Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco Division of the Health and Wellbeing Directorate at Public Health England. Prior to this he was part of the Alcohol Policy Team at the Department of Health. He leads on various initiatives to improve the early identification and response to alcohol misuse. Don has worked in the NHS as a commissioner of both alcohol and drug treatment services at a local and regional level.

##### **Olivia Nuttall, Head of Alcohol Policy, Home Office**

Having joined the Home Office in 2006, Olivia began working on alcohol policy in 2016. Prior to joining the Home Office, Olivia worked for a national charity, then at a therapeutic community offering psychodynamic psychotherapy and psychosocial nursing to families with complex needs and child protection issues.

## Workshop sessions

### Workshop 1: The power of storytelling - stories to change hazardous and harmful drinking behaviour in student athletes

Student athletes have been identified as a sub-group of the student population who are particularly at risk for harmful, hazardous and dependent drinking. In order to reach this population of students, there is a need for those who design behaviour change interventions to consider approaches and delivery mechanisms that might particularly appeal to this group.

- Delegates will be presented with new findings on the relevance of social storytelling (narratives) in student alcohol behaviours;
- Practical case studies will be showcased demonstrating how, when and why narratives are used by student athletes and how these narratives create cultural maps that shape students' decisions about drinking;
- There will be the opportunity to learn about how a narrative therapy approach to reducing student drinking could be used in the higher education environment;
- Delegates will work together to discuss their own local situation and begin to develop narrative therapy intervention materials.

#### **Dr Liz Partington, Principal Lecturer in Sport & Exercise Psychology**

Liz is a principal lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology in the Department of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation at Northumbria University. She is also the Faculty Director of Student Satisfaction and Engagement for the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences. Liz's research interests are in the area of athlete psychological wellbeing, with a particular focus on athletic identity and its role in health-compromising behaviours. She has expertise in narrative analysis, and her PhD looked at how athletes 're-write' their story and identity following serious athletic injury.

Liz is a chartered Sport and Exercise Psychologist and is on the Health and Care Professions Council Register. She is a member of the British Psychological Society, including their Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology (DSEP). Liz has previously worked as a sport psychology consultant with a range of clients including England Badminton and the English Institute of Sport. She co-wrote the psychology curriculum for England Badminton's long-term athlete development programme, and used to co-write a regular sport psychology column in Badminton Magazine.

#### **Dr Sarah Partington, Principal Lecturer in Sport & Exercise Psychology**

Sarah is a principal lecturer in Sport and Exercise Psychology in the Department of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation at Northumbria University. She has previously been Head of the Department of Sport and Exercise Science and Director of Academic Programmes. She is currently the Department's Director of Learning and Teaching. Sarah's research interests focus upon the role of narrative identity in subjective wellbeing. Her work focuses on understanding how narrative identity and life stories can shape significant life outcomes associated with psychological wellbeing. Sarah is particularly interested in student athletes and the mental health and wellbeing demands associated with the dual

role of being both an athlete and a scholar. Sarah is a chartered Sport and Exercise Psychologist and is on the Health and Care Professions Council Register. She is a member of the British Psychological Society including their Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology (DSEP) and is also an Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) Level 5 accredited Coach. Sarah has worked as a sport psychology consultant across a range of sports at both National and International level, has contributed to the design of long-term athlete development programmes and has written about sport psychology for national publications.

## **Workshop 2: The 'Have a Word' alcohol intervention - adapted with students, for student**

Durham University and Durham Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service have collaborated to work with students to adapt the 'Have a Word' alcohol intervention for a university environment and peer to peer student use. This new programme has been rolled out to student leaders/mentors across the University. Students such as society leads and sports captains are invited to take part in a training event to increase their alcohol awareness, build confidence in their ability to deliver an alcohol brief intervention by recognising possible teachable moments, and signpost to appropriate support. The Service and University have gone on to develop a twin track programme of 'Have a Word' workshops combined with Alcohol and Drug roadshows. We are evaluating the impact of interventions through focus groups.

Our collaboration has produced a positive working partnership which has also enabled expert substance misuse advisors from the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service to deliver easily accessible support from within the University Counselling Service. We are currently developing workshops on energy drinks and drug use. This session will share how we adapted 'Have a Word' with students, for students as well as our other partnership work. It will include delivery of sections from a workshop with use of student-friendly resources that we have developed, data collected about student alcohol use from our workshops, and the impact of such peer interventions at Durham University.

### **Mandy Marlow, Assistant Head of Colleges (Student Experience), Durham University**

Mandy has been Assistant Head of Colleges (Student Experience) since 2012. She joined Durham University as an academic in the Department of Anthropology transferring to the Colleges as Vice Principal of Stephenson College with responsibility for student support, development and discipline. Mandy's current post covers wellbeing across the university and includes regular liaison with external agencies (police and other emergency services, the local authority, Public Health England, and medical practices). Her work on student behaviour and safety has included the development and implementation of a new policy on Alcohol Awareness and Use, cooperation with the County Durham Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service to create an education and intervention programme for students, and the establishment of the North East Universities' Network on Alcohol.

**Jo Boyd, Training and development officer, Durham Drug and Alcohol recovery service**

Since March 2010, Jo has developed and delivered alcohol and drug education to young people in County Durham across a range of schools (including Pupil Referral Units; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities; and Special Educational Needs and Disability). She is on steering groups for many projects such as Stanley Community Alcohol Project and Baroness Newlove – Wear Valley Community Alcohol Project. Jo worked with Durham University to adapt 'Have a Word' to reflect student experience, and she now delivers this alongside other educational programmes. Recently, she has collaborated in the first UK piece of research looking at energy drinks and young people with FUSE (The Centre for Translational Research in Public Health); Jo has implemented the findings and developed information for parents and educational resources. Jo has initiated projects to give underrepresented groups a voice and is currently a Director for the trading arm of the North East Prison After Care Society.

**Workshop 3: Exploring the transition to university and its impact on students' risky drinking practices**

Moving to university represents a major transition in the lives of young people, many of whom will be leaving their family home for their first time and gaining independence in a new city. During this transition several tasks must be navigated, including: separation, social network demands, acquisition of independent living skills, and questions of identity formation. Amid these changes, alcohol consumption has been shown to escalate. Studies have suggested that drinking behaviours developed during the first weeks of university become habitual over students' university careers, making this transitional phase critical for policy intervention.

- Delegates will be presented with findings from a mixed method research programme, where they will find out about students' expectations of drinking before they enter university, as well as students' experiences with alcohol and the factors that determine behavioural changes during the transition from home to university.
- Delegates will have the chance to draw on their own experiences of students' drinking at both a local and national level, and will work together to discuss how this evidence can be used to develop successful alcohol/health prevention strategies across institutions.

**Nikki Gambles, PHD Student, Public Health Institute, Liverpool John Moores University**

Nikki is a third year PhD student studying at the Public Health Institute at Liverpool John Moores University. Her research interests focus on drinking behaviours and the cultural backdrop in which they lie. Her PhD programme of study explores the impact of the transition to university on students' drinking behaviours using a mixed method approach. She is particularly interested in the perceptions that are constructed around students' drinking and how they can influence behaviour. Prior to the PhD, Nikki completed a BSc honors degree in Biology and worked as a researcher at the Neurophysiology department at Manchester Metropolitan University.

## Drop in and discuss: Measuring the success of Alcohol Impact

An opportunity to receive advice and support from NUS on measuring the impact of your action to encourage a responsible drinking culture on campus as part of Alcohol Impact. This session is open to those who take part in the programme already, those who are thinking of doing so, or those with a general interest in the evaluation of the programme.

### **Rachel Drayson NUS Insight Manager**

Rachel joined NUS in 2011 and manages the research and evaluation associated with NUS' Sustainability team's variety of projects and campaigns, including Alcohol Impact. The research uses a range of qualitative and quantitative techniques to capture insight into behaviours, attitudes and experiences linked to alcohol in higher education. Joining NUS continued Rachel's career in sustainability research having previously worked at consultancies Brook Lyndhurst and ERM, as well as for the think-tank Green Alliance.

## **Workshop 4: Innovative and impactful alcohol interventions in residential settings – case study and practical workshop**

Unite Students is the UK's largest manager and developer of purpose-built student accommodation. Using the latest insight, this session will explore issues around alcohol consumption in residential accommodation. Unite Students will share an example of their successful, proactive alcohol safety campaign that resulted in 30% year-on-year decrease in alcohol-related disturbances in their properties. Facilitators will then pose some key questions, before facilitating a discussion allowing delegates to consider their own approach, share best practice, and create new, practical ideas for promoting responsible and inclusive approaches to drinking across student residences.

### **Ela Walford, Student Services Manager, Unite Students**

Ela is responsible for the design and delivery of an annual programme of student-facing opportunities, campaigns and content aiming to enhance student experience, helping them to develop life skills and improve their resilience. Ela has previously worked as a senior manager in further education, and has a wealth of experience managing all aspects of student services work (advice and guidance, international recruitment, and hardship funds). She was responsible for management of over 80 commercial courses and training solutions for both employers and individuals seeking professional development and training. In her spare time, Ela volunteers with IntoUniversity, mentoring a Year 13 student and providing vital pastoral support during the difficult transition from the final year of school to university.

## **Workshop 5: The Students' Union at UWE (University of the West of England)'s experience with Alcohol Impact**

New partnership to the Alcohol Impact cohort? Keen to learn from the journey of another students' union? Through exploring the journey of The Students' Union at UWE, this session will examine how to develop an active partnership with your institution; the importance of authentic partnership working; and the challenges of the journey towards creating transformative whole-institution change. The session will give examples of a

range of behaviour change interventions. There will be a space to explore elements of the audit you would like to understand in more-depth from a first-hand perspective.

### **Rachel Colley, Community Manager, The Students' Union at UWE**

Rachel's responsibilities include facilitating and supporting the strategic development of: community building through cross-campus engagement; volunteering and fundraising provision; and student engagement in the sustainability agenda. Rachel is The Students' Union Project Manager for Alcohol Impact, resulting in UWE receiving accreditation in December 2017. She is a keen volunteer within the Bristol community. Rachel is passionate about inspiring student leaders who will create inclusive communities.

### **Workshop 6: Drinking alcohol is a huge part of university socialising. What are the alternatives?**

Recently, there has been an emerging interest in alcohol-free music and dancing events within the UK, for example Morning Gloryville, which began in London in 2013 and claims to be the first to bring 'conscious clubbing' to the masses. In 2016, they received an award from Alcohol Concern at the ZERO Alcohol Awards for 'Best Zero Alcohol Initiative'.

Based on research highlighting the normative nature of (problematic) alcohol consumption in university students, despite awareness of their increased potential for harm (e.g. Hebden et al. 2015), our project aims are to examine whether promotion of alcohol-free events may serve as a better harm reduction strategy than attempting to persuade students to reduce their consumption.

During this session we will present findings from completed and ongoing studies into the social determinants of excessive alcohol consumption in students, and we will raise the question for discussion: 'What are the alternatives?'

- Findings from three studies will be briefly discussed:
  - **Study 1:** 'There's never a good time to give up alcohol because there are so many social implications.' A social practice approach to understanding student drinking.
  - **Study 2:** Alcohol health promotion does not occur in a vacuum: how students construct and manage risk when confronted with anti-alcohol messages.
  - **Study 3:** What's the alternative? Introducing the sober-rave project and initial findings.

Delegates will then be invited to share good practice at their own institutions regarding other alcohol-free socialising experiences that students could be offered during freshers' weeks.

### **Kyle Brown Senior Lecturer in Applied Psychology**

Kyle is an experimental psychologist with a research focus on alcohol-related cognitions and biases surrounding alcohol consumption. This began as part of a research post where he examined the role of alcohol-related cues (i.e. brand labelling and alcohol-related



contexts) and value on both the choice and consumption of alcohol. Following this, Kyle worked on research assessing the role of alcohol marketing and sponsorship on implicit cognitions and consumption. Kyle is currently conducting research on the impact of alcohol warning messages on students' risk perceptions and alcohol-related discourses. He is also part of a collaboration examining the feasibility of alternatives to alcohol-related activities, with a view to reducing students' alcohol consumption.

### **Emma L Davies Senior Lecturer in Psychology**

Emma is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Oxford Brookes University. Her research expertise is in the field of health psychology, with a particular focus on behaviour change theories and developing interventions to improve young people's health and wellbeing. Recent key projects have explored the potential of using digital tools to reduce alcohol misuse in adolescents and students. Emma is also interested in exploring the meanings attached to drinking (and non-drinking) practices and experiences within different groups.

### **Drop in session: Find out more about Alcohol Impact**

A chance to ask any questions you have about the Alcohol Impact programme. Open to those who take part in the programme already, those who are thinking of doing so, or those with a general interest in Alcohol Impact.

### **Lucy Henry NUS Alcohol Impact Programme Manager**

Lucy is the Alcohol Impact programme manager and has been working at NUS since April 2014. Prior to NUS, Lucy delivered group work and 1-1 cognitive behavioural interventions to clients with anxiety and depression at Camden psychological therapies service. Lucy also has a wealth of experience working with young people in youth centres, youth offending teams and through outreach and detached work within the public sector. In her spare time, she is a professional mentor at City, University of London and in the past worked as an Aim Higher mentor.

### **Workshop 7: Behaviour change by design: Changing environmental cues to reduce alcohol consumption**

The session will review the evidence for three sets of interventions to reduce alcohol consumption:

- (a) Size and shape of glassware and serving sizes
- (b) Availability of alcoholic vs non-alcoholic drinks
- (c) Labelling of alcoholic drinks

Attendees will then work in groups to design studies to generate evidence on a broad range of these three types of intervention.

There will be opportunities for collaboration in studies over the coming year.

### **Professor Dame Theresa Marteau, Director of Behaviour and Health Research Unit, University of Cambridge**

Professor Theresa Marteau is Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit in the Clinical School at the University of Cambridge, and Director of Studies in Psychological

and Behavioural Sciences at Christ's College, Cambridge. She studied psychology at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and the University of Oxford.

Her research interests include:

- i.* development and evaluation of interventions to change behaviour (principally diet, physical activity, tobacco and alcohol consumption) to improve population health and reduce health inequalities, with a particular focus on targeting non-conscious processes;
- ii.* risk perception and communication particular of biomarker-derived risks, and their weak links with behaviour change;
- iii.* acceptability to publics and policy makers of government intervention to change behaviour.

She is a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences and the Academy of Social Sciences. In 2017, she was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of her contribution to Public Health.

### **Workshop 8: Building successful interventions and initiatives with Alcohol Impact**

Both partnerships at Leeds and Keele have achieved the Alcohol Impact Accreditation. Each university and students' union has been successfully audited and are now recognised as being committed to changing attitudes towards alcohol and building healthier, safer and more productive student communities. Representatives from Leeds University Union and Keele University will share their experiences of the Alcohol Impact project.

Delegates will be presented with:

- The approach each university took including successful interventions and initiatives
- The impact of the accreditation and what it meant for the university
- Going forward with Alcohol Impact and next steps
- Learning taken from the project and advice

All delegates will be given the chance to think about how they can take any learning and ideas back to their own campuses in a group workshop session.

#### **Diane Pedder, Head of Engagement and Support**

Diane is the Head of Engagement and Support at Leeds University Union (LUU). Diane leads the Student Led Change, Community, Academic Representation and Help Support Teams. She was also the lead on the Alcohol Impact project in the students' union as LUU saw the accreditation primarily as a wellbeing issue.

#### **Kara Holloway, PhD Student / Alcohol Impact Officer**

Kara is currently in the third year of her PhD looking at student alcohol interventions to reduce harmful consumption. She is also the Keele University Alcohol Impact Officer based in the Student Services Department where her main duties were to ensure the smooth running of the project, implement interventions and initiatives, and compiling evidence for the accreditation.



## Workshop 9: How might 'dry days' be used to promote moderate drinking?

A growing body of research has appeared concerning non-drinking among young adults and young people. This has generated interest in non-drinking as something difficult to do in a heavy drinking social occasions, yet which may also hold distinctive benefits but also important drawbacks. This session is designed to explore these issues, providing delegates with:

- A summary of recent non-drinking research including reference to mixed method research concerning benefits and drawbacks of non-drinking identified among British undergraduates.
- A workshop session in which delegates would be invited to discuss the proposition that non-drinking while socialising could be presented to young adults as one route to regular moderate alcohol consumption.
- Networking opportunities to help develop a research hub for promoting the strategic development of non-drinking research aligned with current policy and practice concerns.
- Post-conference, a summary of workshop discussion points.
- A summary sheet of the full list of benefits/drawbacks from a recently published paper to inform local Alcohol Impact activities.

### **Dominic Conroy, Lecturer in psychology at University of East London**

Dominic is a health psychology researcher with expertise in qualitative and mixed methods research. Dominic completed his PhD research on experiences of university student non-drinkers and attitudes towards non-drinking. This research has been reported in six peer reviewed journal articles and at national and international conferences. Dominic's interest in non-drinking has led to collaborations with community organisations including Haringey Action on Alcohol (HAGA) to explore young adults' views and experiences on non-drinking during social occasions where friends/peers are drinking alcohol. Dominic recently completed an NIHR-funded programme of qualitative research at Birkbeck University concerning young offenders' experiences of working with family therapists. Dominic now teaches psychology at University of East London.