



Northwest Regional
Drug & Alcohol Task Force

Sligo City Alcohol Strategy

To Prevent and Reduce Alcohol Related Harm



The anticipated effect of implementing the five-year strategy is the following:-

- Improved health, wellbeing and quality of life of people living in Sligo City;
- Reduced harmful use of alcohol;
- Reduced alcohol-related harm;
- Reduced incidents of alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Increased access to support services for those affected by another's alcohol consumption;
- Increased access to alcohol treatment services;
- Reduced prevalence of alcohol at community events/activities; and
- Reduced alcohol marketing in local areas.

Stage 2 Public Consultation

- The *Sligo Healthy Ireland project*, in conjunction with the *HSE North Western Region Drug & Alcohol Task Force*, by way of media press release and an online survey monkey offered everyone the opportunity to have their say through a brief online survey located on www.nwdrugtaskforce.ie the Facebook page which was widely circulated via email and press (The Sligo Champion).
- We had a good response via the survey and also with some follow up emails and a calls. We also facilitated a meeting with the Treatment & Rehabilitation Education and Prevention sub groups.

How are you/your agency encountering alcohol related harm in Sligo City?

Negative behaviour (crime, anti-social behaviour, intimidation)	6
Self harm or harm to others (risky behaviour, domestic abuse, neglect of children, trips & falls)	6
On Street Public drinking	1
In a professional capacity	5
Excessive alcohol consumption/ Intoxication	3
Alcohol dependency/ Self harm	1
Used as coping mechanism	0
Other – pre drinking, bed blocking,	

How do you/your agency deal with issues presented?

Support (counselling, advocacy, harm reduction, listen, information, sign posting)	10
Avoidance	1
Refer to services	6
Contact Gardai	1
Link in with programmes	3
Personal responsibility	0
Other: common sense, policies & procedures	

How can we collectively bring about a reduction in alcohol related harm in Sligo City? Consider issues such as supply, access and availability, prevention and treatment.

Education	8
Access & Availability	7
Enforcement / Gardaí presence	1
Cost/ Price and amount purchased	3
On Street drinking	1
Marketing	1
Treatment options	2
Alcohol free activities	0
Drinking culture	4
Pub closing hours	0
Other issues: - pre drinking (Prinks), alcohol related self-harm, lack of responsible serving, parents supplying young people with alcohol, money lending	

Summary of Feedback from Task Force Sub Groups

Treatment, Rehabilitation/Education, Prevention

How are you/your agency encountering alcohol related harm in Sligo City?

- Many presentations to A&E - this impacts on hospital resources i.e time, process of going through casualty, hospital beds/psychiatric units which is putting pressure on psychiatric services.
- Children living with and affected by parental substance misuse (still not fully recognised as Hidden Harm).
- IT College, Rag week, drink promotions (BYOB e.g HMTV Soundgarden). Other issues due to alcohol misuse – sexual assault/rape, sexually transmitted diseases.

How do you/your agency deal with issues presented?

- Engaging and referral – referring on to addiction services is taking 8 weeks;
- There is an issue with high risk clients getting referred in to a service before they are ready & whilst waiting relapse. Those who are not high risk are put back to the end of the queue (seen as not critical);
- Supermarkets, pub owners/off licence owner. The Vintners say that they are serving responsibly and they can't compete with supermarket prices;
- Lack of control on amount of alcohol people can buy;
- Mapping of Sligo/off-licences needed;
- Focus on cost of water versus beer;

Continued

- Alcohol Bill is still in contention but momentum has gone.

Some potential steps to consider:

- % of alcohol contained in product should be related to cost;
- Training and implementation on existing laws on underage drinking/responsible serving - make it part of the licensing process.
- Sligo BIDS reviewed the implementation of underage drinking laws - prosecutions on this needs to be looked at.
- The occurrence of lock ins need to be looked at.
- Qualifications and legislation for employing bar staff – specified qualifications and standards implemented – e.g. USA/UK.
- Good guide to Sligo Bars – **NWRDATF** could promote this on the basis of good practice and link to BIDS.
- Address drinks promotions targeted at 3rd level students.
- More effective community policing, use of Garda reserve?

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- Can we access funding from another agency to provide training;
- Badges for pubs (Safe Drinking Sligo) Categorisation of pubs: Family friendly, Foodie Bars, Sports Bars;
- Develop a pub trail on the model of the current Sligo Food Trail using the Operation Transformation model. (Vintners could possibly carry the cost or could there be a scheme to give them some funding/payment in kind?);
- Develop a Code of Practice for Vintners;
- Delay serving alcohol at specific events; Galway Healthy Cities persuaded supermarkets and pubs to delay serving alcohol at specific events (e.g. St. Patrick's Day) which resulted in reduced drinking/later drinking;
- Implement a free soft drinks initiative for designated drivers;
- Drinking at home drinking – attitudinal change needed;

Stage 3 – Roundtable Discussions with Key Agencies and Groups

How best to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm in Sligo City?

Objectives:

- **To gain insight into effective responses in preventing and reducing alcohol related harm;**
- **To identify actions that will be undertaken by agencies and groups in Sligo City as part of a five year strategy to prevent and reduce alcohol related harm ;**
- **To select priority actions for 2017 / 2018;**
- **To identify how agencies can contribute to this process;**

The process?

- **Stage 1 – Consultation with Key Agencies and Groups**
 - Do we need a strategy to reduce alcohol-related harm?
 - Discussion on the nature and extent of alcohol-related harm in Sligo City
- **Stage 2 – Public Consultation.**
 - Public submissions via online survey, phone, email and group consultations
- **Stage 3 – Roundtable Discussion Key Agencies and Groups**
 - Discussion on how best to address alcohol problems in Sligo City
- **Stage 4 – Draft Strategy**
 - Review draft strategy and develop actions

Useful links

- www.nwdrugtaskforce.ie
- www.emcdda.europa.eu
- www.nacd.ie
- www.hse.ie
- www.askaboutalcohol.ie
- www.hrb.ie/ndc
- www.dap.ie
- www.drugsinfo.ie