

Older People and ▶ Alcohol Toolkit

Alcohol Alliance Barnsley



What do we know about older people's drinking?

- ▶ Evidence that older people are drinking more. In the UK, people aged over 55 are more likely to exceed the recommended weekly guidelines than any other age group.
- ▶ Retirement
- ▶ Bereavement
- ▶ COVID-19 - between a fifth and a third of people are drinking more during lockdown
 - ▶ Lack of social interaction
 - ▶ Loneliness
 - ▶ Social isolation

Researchers have identified 3 types of older drinkers

- 1 Early-onset drinkers (Survivors):** those who have a continuing problem with alcohol which developed in earlier life probably owing to cultural norms and experiences.
- 2 Late-onset drinkers (Reactors):** they begin problematic drinking later in life, often in response to traumatic life experiences such as the death of a loved one, loneliness, pain, insomnia or in response to significant changes in lifestyle, such as retirement.
- 3 Intermittent (Binge drinkers):** they use alcohol occasionally and sometimes drink to excess which may cause them problems.

Hospital admissions are increasing...

- ▶ Cardiovascular disease
- ▶ Cancer
- ▶ Cognitive impairment
- ▶ Liver disease
- ▶ Slips, trips and falls
- ▶ Disproportionate impact



How to start conversations about alcohol harm

- > Finding more information on how much alcohol is safe for them to drink.
- > Suggest lower alcohol unit drinks or non-alcoholic alternatives.
- > Looking at their medicines' labels to see what they say about alcohol.
- > Checking if their health conditions could make drinking a problem.
- > Doing things to help them reduce loneliness, worry or boredom (e.g. taking them to see friends).
- > Going with them on visits to a doctor, pharmacist or other health professional for further information.

DrinkCoach

The DrinkCoach Alcohol Test

This is a free, quick and confidential way for residents to assess how risky their drinking is, and receive personalised advice and information. about local support options in Barnsley. The test only takes 2 minutes, why not take the [DrinkCoach Alcohol Test](https://drinkcoach.org.uk/alcohol-test-intro) today?

<https://drinkcoach.org.uk/alcohol-test-intro>

You will be asked 10 questions related to your drinking.
Your overall score and risk level is based on all your answers

DrinkCoach App

The DrinkCoach app is free to download and use and is available across iOS and Android platforms, and has a range of features, including a daily tacker for units, calories and cost, goal setting and an event diary to record incidents.

DrinkCoach Online Coaching Service

Barnsley residents are eligible for up to 6 free online coaching sessions with an alcohol specialist. Sessions are available 7 days a week with daytime, evening and weekend appointments available to allow residents to select their preferred timeslot, with no waiting lists or travel required, as this service is offered via video call. Taking the [Alcohol Test](#) will indicate if individuals would benefit from cutting down with DrinkCoach.



Older People and Alcohol Toolkit



South Area Council is asked to:

- Start the conversation
- Promote DrinkCoach
- Consider how the toolkit could be used