



**Alcohol ▲ Concern**

**ALCOHOL CONCERN** is the national agency on alcohol misuse, working to reduce the level of alcohol misuse and to develop the range and quality of helping services available to problem drinkers and their families. We are England's primary source of information and comment on a wide range of alcohol-related matters.

The Alcohol Concern Consultancy Service provides a range of services to tackle alcohol harms, including:

- Local Needs Assessment
- Strategy Development
- Treatment Capacity and Effectiveness Review
- Cumulative Impact Reviews
- Scrutiny Reviews
- Tier One Training

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# ALCOHOL CONCERN

## Local Area Agreements

### Factsheet Dec 2007

## Summary

- This briefing paper shows how Local Area Agreements (LAAs) present a new opportunity to prioritise action on alcohol at local level.
- It is aimed at local alcohol champions, who are encouraged to ensure alcohol features in their area's LAA, and at LAA teams wanting information on where alcohol fits within other priorities.
- The 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review set out the Public Service Agreements for 2008, including for the first time a PSA on alcohol.
- The most important local delivery mechanism for PSAs is the Local Area Agreement. The LAA describes how local priorities will be met by delivering local solutions
- The LAA is negotiated between the local strategic partnership and the regional Government Office.
- It can and should be argued that reducing alcohol-related harm requires a cross-cutting approach, and that the LAA is the best way to achieve it.

# Addressing alcohol-misuse through Local Area Agreements

*Libby Ranzetta, Alcohol Concern*

## **1. Introduction**

The 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review set the key priority outcomes the Government wants to achieve in the next spending period (2008-2011). The outcomes, expressed as Public Service Agreements (PSAs), include for the first time a PSA on alcohol.

PSA 25<sup>1</sup> aims to reduce the harm caused by alcohol (and drugs) to:

- the community as a result of associated crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour
- the health and well-being of those who (use drugs or) drink harmfully
- the development and well-being of young people and families

The most important local delivery mechanism for PSAs is the Local Area Agreement (LAA). This briefing paper shows how LAAs present a new opportunity to prioritise action on alcohol at local level. It is aimed at local alcohol champions, who are encouraged to ensure alcohol features in their area's LAA, and (from section 7) at LAA teams wanting information on where alcohol fits within other priorities.

## **2. About local area agreements**

A local area agreement is a three-year agreement between a local area and central government. The LAA describes 'the story of place' or how local priorities will be met by delivering local solutions. It also contributes to national priorities set out by the Government, which are no longer mandatory. Only upper-tier authorities are required to have a LAA but district councils must be included in its development.

The LAA is negotiated between the local strategic partnership (LSP) and the regional Government Office (GO). The LSP consists of all the key players in a local area who deliver services. The local authority is the lead partner in the LSP. The local authority negotiates the LAA on behalf of its LSP and is the only body accountable to government. Other key players in a LSP include the police and the primary care trust, the voluntary sector and local business.

## **3. Timings**

All existing local area agreements (LAAs) except for stretch or reward element targets (see below) are being renegotiated and replaced following as a result of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (passed in October 2007), which now makes the LAA a statutory requirement. The new agreements should be signed off by

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/B/1/pbr\\_csr07\\_psa25.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/B/1/pbr_csr07_psa25.pdf)

June 2008, and negotiations to agree priorities and targets will run until March 2008 with regional government offices getting back to ministers between then and June.

#### **4. LAA targets**

From April 2008, a new National Indicator Set of 198 indicators<sup>2</sup>, replaces all existing local authority indicators such as the Best Value Performance and Performance Assessment Framework Indicators. LAAs will include a maximum of 35 improvement targets drawn from this indicator set, in addition to some statutory education and early years targets. Under the Comprehensive Area Assessment (a new, single and coordinated performance framework), local authorities will be required to monitor all 198 indicators, whether or not they are included in the LAA.

#### **5. How LAAs fit with other delivery structures**

Organisations within the Local Strategic Partnership will continue to have their own delivery structures and performance management frameworks, but these will increasingly become aligned with the National Indicator Set so that, for example, Police<sup>3</sup> or NHS<sup>4</sup> targets that require joint action with Local Authorities will use the indicators from the National Indicator Set.

#### **6. LAA funding**

From 2008, LAAs will have a single pot for all funding – the partnership grant - with no conditions on how money is spent. There will no longer be specific funding ringfenced for specific targets. However, some government funding streams may remain ringfenced outside of the LAA – where it can be justified (money for drug treatment is likely to remain ringfenced for 08/09).

Existing LAAs (produced before the renegotiations of winter/spring 07/08), carry two types of funding on top of the LSP's main allocation: pump priming funds to help partnerships meet a limited number of 'stretch targets'<sup>5</sup>; and a performance reward grant that is paid at the end of the three year LAA period according to the extent the stretch targets have been met during the period. Stretch targets within existing LAAs will remain in place until the end of the LAA period, but the fate of all other pre-2008 targets is at the discretion of LSPs.

The Government is committed to another round of performance reward grant for the new LAAs, but has not yet announced how it will be awarded.

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<sup>2</sup> Available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/505713>

<sup>3</sup> The Assessment of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) will be the police performance management framework from April 2008

<sup>4</sup> The performance management framework for the NHS, the Health and Social Care Outcomes and Accountability Framework, is due to be published in December 2007

<sup>5</sup> Targets that are literally stretching – difficult to achieve

## 7. LAAs and alcohol

The National Indicator (NI) Set includes three specific indicators for alcohol-related harm:

- Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates (NI 39)
- Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem (NI 41)
- Substance misuse by young people (NI 115)

The GOs will work with local authority LAA teams to review progress on the LAA targets and ensure delivery.

## 8. Meeting LAA alcohol targets

Full definitions of the targets and how they will be measured are due to be published in February 2008, following consultation.

Indicator	Measured by	Likely good performance standard	How this might be achieved
Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates	Year on year change in rate of alcohol-related admissions (using Hospital Episode Statistics)	A decreasing rate	a. Prevention, eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information campaigns</li><li>• Early identification and brief advice</li></ul> b. Better liaison between hospital and community services to reduce repeat admissions
Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem	The new Place Survey of residents	A decreasing percentage of residents reporting it as a problem	a. Better management of the night time economy b. Multi agency responses to street drinking c. Communications strategy to reassure residents
Substance misuse by young people	Change in number of 10 to 15 year olds reporting frequent substance use (including alcohol) (using Ofsted's Tellus survey)	A decrease in numbers	a. Education and prevention b. Targeted support for at risk groups c. Provision of alternative activities for young people

## 9. How action on alcohol contributes to other targets

Alcohol misuse plays a part in many of the 198 indicators, not just the three that specifically address it – see appendix 1. To help meet targets in these areas, the

alcohol component should be addressed. So for example to meet a target based on the indicator 'assault with injury crime rate' (NI 20), there would almost certainly need to be activity to reduce alcohol-related violence (through enforcement, better management of the night time economy etc).

Similarly alcohol use has links to teenage pregnancy, and activity to reduce the under 18 conception rate (NI112) should include alcohol prevention work and targeted interventions.

### **10. Using the LAA to drive action on alcohol**

Ideally all LAAs will include at least one of the three alcohol-specific targets, because this would ensure that work on alcohol gets direct attention from the LSP and its relevant performance management structures. It can and should be argued that reducing alcohol-related harm requires a cross-cutting approach, and that the LAA is the best way to achieve it.

However, with many competing priorities at local level it may not be possible to secure an alcohol target, in which case the alcohol component of the targets that are agreed should be highlighted. Wherever possible, work on alcohol related harm should be included in the action plan for achieving those targets.

### **11. Further information**

*An introduction to the local performance framework – delivering better outcomes for local people*, Department for Communities and Local Government (2007)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/552605>

Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA) LAA web pages

<http://www.idea.gov.uk/>

*Alcohol Strategy Local Implementation Toolkit*, Home Office (2007)

[www.alcoholconcern.org.uk](http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk)

## **Appendix 1: Indicators in the National Indicator Set that link to alcohol misuse**

### **Safer communities**

- NI 15 Serious violent crime rate
- NI 17 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
- NI 18 Adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision
- NI 19 Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders
- NI 20 Assault with injury crime rate
- NI 32 Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- NI 38 Drug-related (Class A) offending rate
- NI 39 Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates**
- NI 40 Drug users in effective treatment
- NI 41 Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem**
- NI 47 People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents

### **Children and young people**

- NI 50 Emotional health of children
- NI 58 Emotional and behavioural health of children in care
- NI 65 Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time
- NI 70 Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people
- NI 72 Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy
- NI 87 Secondary school persistent absence rate
- NI 110 Young people's participation in positive activities
- NI 111 First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17
- NI 112 Under-18 conception rate
- NI 113 Prevalence of Chlamydia in under 20 year olds
- NI 114 Rate of permanent exclusions from school
- NI 115 Substance misuse by young people**

### **Adult health and wellbeing**

- NI 119 Self-reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing
- NI 120 All-age all cause mortality rate
- NI 121 Mortality rate from all circulatory diseases at ages under 75
- NI 122 Mortality from all cancers at ages under 75
- NI 134 The number of emergency bed days per head of weighted population
- NI 136 People supported to live independently through social services (all ages)
- NI 137 Healthy life expectancy at age 65
- NI 138 Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood

### **Tackling exclusion and promoting equality**

- NI 141 Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living
- NI 142 Number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living
- NI 143 Offenders under probation supervision living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence
- NI 144 Offenders under probation supervision in employment at the end of their order or licence
- NI 149 Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation
- NI 150 Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in employment

### **Local Economy**

- NI 152 Working age people on out of work benefits
- NI 153 Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods
- NI 156 Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation
- NI 173 People falling out of work and on to incapacity benefits

### **Environmental sustainability**

- NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting)