



Alcohol and drug misuse

1 What this policy covers

This policy aims to ensure the safety of all staff, patients, students, volunteers and visitors by having clear rules about the use and possession of alcohol and/or drugs.

It will explain the responsibilities of those who believe they have a problem, as well as other staff and managers, and tell you what help and support is available.

For the purposes of this policy:

- “Alcohol misuse” is drinking alcohol so that it adversely affects your work performance, conduct, attendance or normal behaviour at work.
- “Substance misuse” is the deliberate use of illegal or prescribed drugs or psychoactive substances for intoxication or any reason other than as prescribed medication.

2 Principles

- The rules on alcohol and drugs will be strictly enforced.
- Those who admit to having a problem with alcohol and/or drugs but engage positively in treatment for their recovery will be offered reasonable support by GHC.

3 Responsibilities

- GHC is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for staff, patients and visitors and will ensure that all employees are treated consistently and fairly in line with this policy.
- If you have an alcohol or drugs-related problem, you are encouraged to disclose this at the earliest opportunity, to ensure support and help with

treatment. You can speak to your manager, Working Well, HR or your trade union representative.

- You should not possess or supply alcohol, psychoactive substances or illegal drugs in the workplace.
- You should not consume alcohol, psychoactive substances or illegal drugs or abuse any substance at work.
- You should not work while under the influence of drugs, psychoactive substances and/or alcohol, because the effects may last several hours.
- You should be aware of the possible side effects of any prescription drugs you are taking and tell your manager immediately if they could affect your work performance.
- Managers must ensure that alcohol or substance misuse issues are dealt with in the strictest confidence and should seek advice from HR.
- You have a duty to raise any concerns you have about a colleague you suspect of alcohol or substance misuse, anonymously, if you wish.

4 Policy in practice

If an alcohol and/or substance misuse problem has been identified, your manager will determine whether it will be treated as a health or conduct issue. Conduct issues will be managed in line with the principles outlined in the GHC Disciplinary Policy.

4.1 Health issue

If you acknowledge that you have an alcohol and/or substance misuse problem, it may be dealt with as a health issue if the circumstances allow and if you agree to accept the help and support you are offered.



Below is an outline of how the process is usually managed, although this can change depending upon individual circumstances. This policy may work in conjunction with GHC's Supporting Attendance Policy and Improving Performance Policy.

4.2 Outline process

- 1 Having acknowledged you have a problem, your manager will refer you to Working Well, which will advise you on potential appropriate treatment, intervention or referrals to other agencies. A plan will be discussed and agreed by you and your manager.
- 2 Depending on the severity, you may be advised to go on sick leave while you are rehabilitating, which means you will need to obtain the appropriate medical certificates to cover your absence.
- 3 While you remain on sick leave your absence will be managed in line with GHC's Supporting Attendance Policy. If you return to work your manager will agree with you a documented return to work programme, including the expectations regarding your performance, standards required and behaviour, with timescales.
- 4 If you remain at work while receiving treatment, your manager will discuss and agree with you the expectations regarding your performance, standards required and behaviour during this time. Some alternative duties or additional support will need to be put in place.
- 5 During your rehabilitation period you may be expected to attend regular appointments with Working Well, where you will be expected to update them on your progress and to enable them to advise your line manager. If you fail to attend appointments without good reason with Working Well or other specialist agency providing you with treatment or support, it will be considered as rejection of support and assistance. Unless there is clear evidence of progress, it may be treated as either an ill health or conduct issue (in which case your future employment may be at risk).
- 6 Where possible, you must make every effort to attend appointments outside of your normal working hours, if you have remained at work.
- 7 You must not undertake any alternative employment, whether paid or unpaid, while on sickness absence, without the written consent of GHC and support of Working Well.
- 8 If it is decided that you should remain at work, your manager will monitor your behaviour and performance over a six-month period and formal reviews will be recorded at least once a month.
- 8 If your behaviour/performance meets the standard required continuously for six months, your manager will usually agree with you, HR and/or Working Well that the formal review period is over. This will be confirmed in writing to you, with details of any future support mechanisms.
- 9 If your behaviour/performance has not met the standard required continuously for six months, your manager will write to you to give notification that the formal review period will be extended. Unless there is clear evidence of progress, your future employment may be at risk.

4.3 Conduct issue

If GHC believes that you are at work under the influence of alcohol and/or misusing substances, or it believes that you have an underlying alcohol or substance misuse problem, and you refuse the support you are offered, GHC will deal with its concerns in accordance with its Disciplinary Policy. Misuse of alcohol or substance abuse is regarded as gross misconduct and it may result in your dismissal.

4.4 Alcohol at work and events

If you drive as part of your duties you must not consume alcohol before duty or while on duty. If you attend events representing GHC where alcohol is available, you may consume alcohol if this has been authorised in advance by a senior manager, unless you are returning to work afterwards.

4.5 Staff on call

If you are on call and may be required to drive or deal with work-related issues, you are covered by this policy in the same way as though you were at work.

4.6 Criminal convictions or cautions

You are required to tell your manager as soon as reasonably practicable of any circumstances or convictions relating to illegal substances and/or alcohol that have occurred whilst you are working for GHC. This includes any interviews with the police you are required to attend concerning allegations made against you, any criminal proceedings against you and any pending or actual criminal convictions including cautions. Failure to notify your manager may be managed in accordance with the GHC Disciplinary Policy.