



SIX MHA

NURSES' PERSPECTIVE ON ALCOHOL ADDICTION



ALCOHOL ADDICTION: A GROWING CONCERN

Alcohol addiction, or alcohol use disorder (AUD), is a significant public health issue that affects millions worldwide. AUD has far-reaching physical, psychological, and social impacts, it requires compassionate, early, and co-ordinated intervention. Nurses, as frontline healthcare professionals, play a critical role in addressing this problem. Nurses also play a role in signposting individuals to appropriate support services such as addiction recovery teams, and mental and physical health services, as these can some time co-occur alongside each other. Their perspectives shed light on the challenges faced by patients and help guide effective prevention and treatment strategies.

“According to the World Health Organisation, harmful use of alcohol results in 3 million deaths globally each year.”

NURSES' KEY INSIGHTS ON ALCOHOL ADDICTION



1. Early Detection is Crucial

Our nurses emphasise the importance of identifying signs of alcohol addiction early. Many patients may not recognise the severity of their habits, and timely intervention can make a substantial difference in recovery outcomes.

2. The Stigma Must Be Addressed

A common observation among nurses is that stigma often prevents individuals from seeking help. Together through education and awareness we can create a compassionate and non-judgmental environment, encouraging those struggling with addiction to come forward.

3. Holistic Care is Essential

Our nurses advocate for a holistic approach to treatment that not only addresses the physical effects of alcohol addiction but also prioritises mental health, emotional well-being, and social support systems.

4. Education and Awareness

Our nurses believe that public education on the risks of excessive drinking and the signs of addiction is vital. Awareness campaigns can empower individuals to make informed decisions and seek help when needed.

Many individuals may lack insight or awareness into the severity of their alcohol use, which can often delay seeking help, or early intervention.

TRAUMA

Many nurses recognise that alcohol dependency is rarely a standalone issue. It can often develop as a coping mechanism in response to underlying childhood experiences, such as childhood adverse experiences, unresolved trauma, mental health or physical difficulties, and social factors such as financial or housing instability, or isolation. These complex factors mean that treatment requires a trauma-informed compassionate and non-judgemental approach, that recognises the persons whole story and provides psychological safety.

“In the UK, alcohol is the leading risk factor for death, ill health and disability among 15–49-year-olds.” (Public Health England, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Our nurses bring unique insights and compassion to the fight against alcohol addiction. By incorporating their perspectives, our team can effectively address this pressing issue and help individuals take the first step toward recovery. Together, we can create a supportive environment where everyone feels empowered to seek help.

24/7 Confidential Helpline
07441935913
helpline@sixmha.org



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