

Models and frameworks that assist in assessing alcohol and other drug use

(2012) Provided by Drug & Alcohol Services South Australia

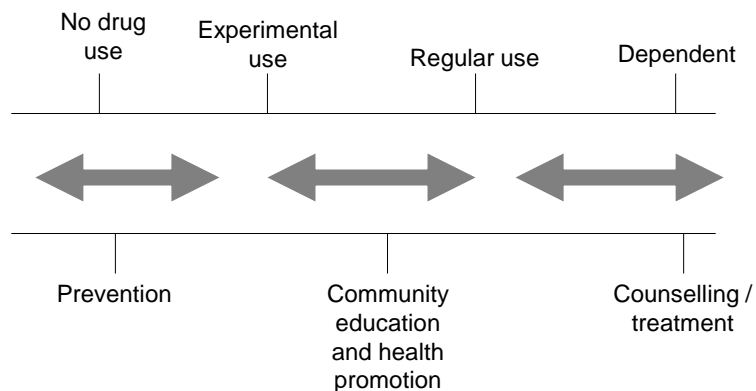
Harm Minimisation: examples

- Seatbelts
- Bike helmets
- Traffic lights
- Condoms
- Standard drinks/ responsible service of alcohol
- Random breath testing
- Clean Needle Program

Harm minimisation: Alcohol and Other Drugs

- Supported by the National Drug Strategy (1985 onwards)
- An approach that aims to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of alcohol and other drug use
- Distinguished from other approaches by emphasis on decreasing *problems* rather than decreasing *consumption* itself
- Comprises three interrelated strategies:
 - Supply reduction
 - Demand reduction
 - Harm reduction
- Harm Reduction
 - Is value neutral: neither encourages nor condones drug use
 - The goal is the reduction of drug related *harm* rather than drug *use per se*
 - Strategies acknowledge continuum of drug use as well as abstinence

Continuum of drug use



Thorley's model (1982)

- Problems arise from the way the substance is used. A common misconception is that if someone has a drug issue they must be dependent. The person may have only been experimenting with the drug for a short time but may have experienced an issue related to their use such as a health consequence, legal issue or been exposed to Hepatitis C
- Thorley's model explains that problems may arise from intoxication, excessive regular use and dependency. The person may be using a range of different substances and have different patterns of use for each e.g. dependent on tobacco, regularly drinking alcohol and occasionally using cannabis.
- The model helps to identify the pattern of use and apply an appropriate intervention to be matched to the issues occurring for the person.

Intoxication and regular use

Intoxication

- Can be a one off event, experimentation or more frequent
- Occurs when people use more of the substance than the body can tolerate.
- Can affect behaviour, thinking and judgement.
- Effects of intoxication are unpredictable and can vary depending on the level of experience the person has with the substance.
- Intoxicated people may be agitated, excitable, relaxed through to unconscious. Reaction time, judgement and coordination can be affected.

Excessive regular use

- Using several times a week and perhaps in larger amounts as tolerance increases
- As drug use becomes more frequent, the risks and associated problems increase leading to health, relationship, legal, financial and social issues

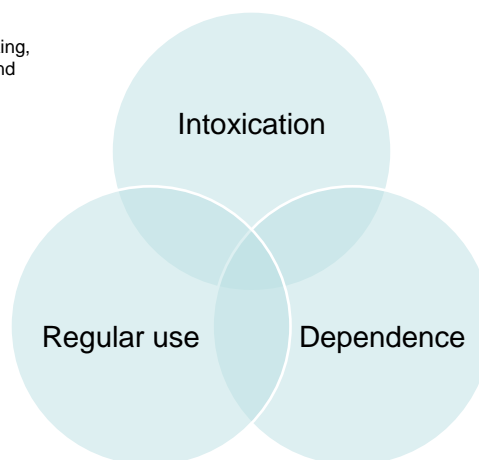
Dependence

Dependence

- Occurs when substances are used in large amounts over an extended period of time.
- As tolerance increases the person needs more of the substance to get the same effect.
- The degree of dependence relates to the priority that is given to obtaining and using the substance and how this behaviour is impacting on the person's life.

Thorley's model (1982)

Issues can include risk taking, absenteeism, unwanted and unprotected sex, violence, accidents and injury.



Use is starting to impact on health, relationships, affecting ability to meet obligations, financial, legal and social issues

Examples are: significant health issues, loss of relationships, not meeting obligations, financial, legal and social issues

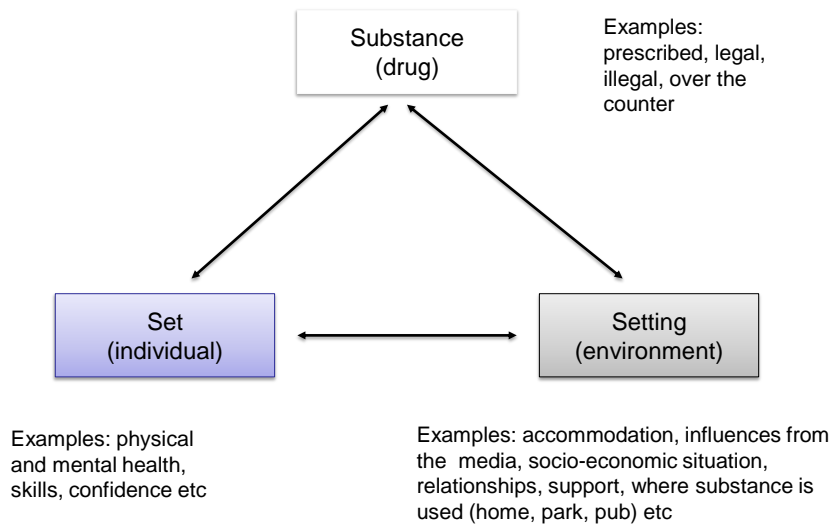
Zinberg (1984)

- Zinberg's model provides a comprehensive approach to viewing all the factors that need to be considered when addressing drug-use issues.
- Zinberg emphasised the importance of viewing drug use in a context of three variables:
 - the *substance*: the drug and its pharmaceutical properties
 - the *set*: the individual characteristics of the user
 - the *setting*: the influence of the physical and social environment in which drug use takes place

Zinberg (1984)

- This has become known as the *Interaction model* and recognises that no person's drug use is totally 'good' or 'bad'.
- A major consideration is the *balance of costs and benefits*.
- The model suggests that drug use in one setting may be relatively problem free, while in another setting it may be problematic.
- For example, a few drinks with friends at a barbecue at home may be low risk and create few problems; however, should someone in this group decide to drive home or go to work, the level of risk and potential harm to self and others will increase significantly.

Zinberg (1984)



Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS)

1300 13 13 40

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Needle Clean Up Hotline

**For the nearest CNP phone
ADIS**