

Drugs & Alcohol in the Workplace

It's Easy To Get It Wrong!

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About me...

- UK expert with international industry knowledge
- 18+ years in Drug & Alcohol (D&A) Policy, Training and Testing Industry (*I am NOT a toxicologist!*)
- Policies, Procedures, Training, Education, Testing
- Active member & event committee member of IFDAT (International Forum for Drugs & Alcohol Testing)
- Active member of EWDTS (European Workplace Drug Testing Society)
 - helped to formulate the EWDTS POCT Guidelines



IFDAT 2021 – Salzburg (Austria)

19th/20th/21st September

(postponed from 2020 due to COVID19)

- Dedicated to the advancement of global employee screening systems & processes
- Platform for Global experts from D&A and related disciplines to meet and discuss various topics regarding current & future developments in international employee screening
- World leading 2 day conference program packed with expert speakers from around the Globe
- Education, networking and social



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A Whistle Stop Tour – What Will We Cover?

- The impact across and organization
- Policy & procedures
- Training & education
- Testing types & equipment
- Support & Return to Work
- Considerations due to COVID19
- How to spot a Methamphetamine Lab in your area



Drugs & Alcohol

- What is a drug?
- “Under the influence” & “Impairment”
- Why is it a risk?
- Testing categories – why/when/what/how to test
- 2 Parts to a drug test – Screening & Confirmation
- Getting it wrong can cost '0000s or even a life



The Impact Across an Organisation

Areas to consider	Implications
HIDDEN DEPENDENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unsafe to commute or be at work (depending on role)• Absenteeism and impact on Human Resources (HR) budgets• Presenteeism and impact on morale/culture• Dismissal and cost to organisation to replace• “Tokenistic” employee assistance programmes (EAPs)
USING AT WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industrial accidents• HR drain in terms of swabbing/testing/retaining• Culture and colluding colleagues• Implementation of robust, legally defensible Policy & Procedures (P&P) and quality testing scheme that is fit for purpose and stands up to tribunal scrutiny if it leads to dismissal• Do you test on a Monday morning? On a night shift?
CULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only part of the workforce is tested (shop floor not office...)• Misunderstanding about typical substance users• Older colleagues setting poor examples for early careers staff• Culture of drinking (lunchtimes, celebrations?)

The Impact Across an Organisation

Areas to consider	Implications
INSURANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are you valid if you don't uphold all parts of your P&P?• Are you aware of the link to your insurer re an incident relating to substances?
SOCIAL USERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Those without an obvious dependency but who are unaware that they may be over the limit• Legalised substances (e.g. Cannabis)
LINK BETWEEN ADDICTION & DEBT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site security and staff open to corruption
LONG TERM HEALTH IMPLICATIONS OF STAFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heavy social drinkers / drug users, long term employees• Prescription addiction ("Pharmageddon")• Raised pension age – older workforce• Increase in life limiting conditions relating to drinking – huge cost to employer re sickness absence
RESPONSIBILITY TO VULNERABLE EMPLOYEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apprentices – first wages, reduced parental supervision and increased freedom• Staff with mental health support needs and the link between substance use and mental health

Policy & Procedures

- Often inadequate – “copy & paste”
- Often lacking detail and “generic”
- Open to interpretation and challenge
- Should ideally be 3 documents and bespoke
- Written by experts – not just “legal dept.”
- Easy to follow – clear, detailed, legally defensible



Training & Education

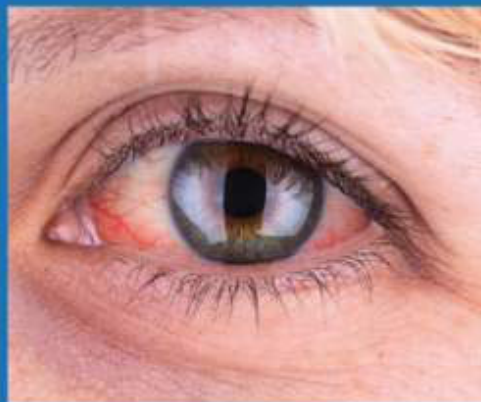
- **Help to meet your obligations under Health & Safety (H&S) legislation and “local law”**
- **Ensure responsible and consistent action**
- **Confidence to follow Policy & Procedures**
- **Signs & Symptoms / Chain of Custody**
- **Qualified trainers. Allow correct time & cost**
- **Employee engagement. Education (NOT propaganda)**



Constricted Pupils

Red Eyes

Dilated Pupils



Heroin
Morphine
Oxycodone
Fentanyl
Methadone
Codeine
Hydrocodone

Marijuana
Cocaine or Crack
Benzodiazepines
(i.e. Xanax)
Depressants
(i.e. Alcohol or Sedatives)

Amphetamines
Methamphetamines
Cocaine or Crack
Hallucinogens
(i.e. LSD or mushrooms)
Opiates
(prescription painkillers)
Heroin
Marijuana
Speed

Signs & Symptoms



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Signs & Symptoms – What to Look Out For

(not an exhaustive list!)

Attendance at Work

- Multiple instances of unauthorised leave
- Excessive sick leave
- Excessive late arrival for duty (mornings and after lunch)
- Excessive Monday or Friday absences
- Improbable excuses for absence
- Excessive single days sick leave
- High sick leave for colds, migraine, gastric causes etc.
- Missing from the place of work
- Leaving work early

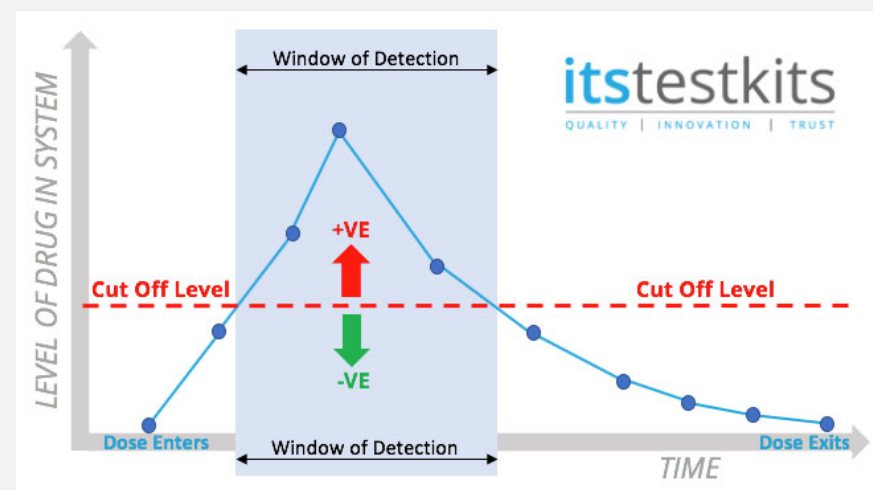
Performance in Work

- Late for work
- Taking too long to complete a task than would otherwise be expected
- High number of errors and poor performance in role
- Unreliable and unpredictable
- Greater effort required than would normally be expected
- Covering up of own mistakes and difficulty in recalling same
- Difficult to recall instructions and handle complex duties
- Detrimental effects on relationships with work colleagues
- Deterioration in personal appearance and dress
- Smell of alcohol or other substance
- Drowsiness, lethargic
- Shaking hands
- Financial difficulties, problems with relationships with own family

ENSURE THAT ALL MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS RECEIVE THE APPROPRIATE TRAINING TO CARRY OUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE POLICY!

Testing Types – What to Consider

- Breath, Blood, Oral Fluid, Urine, Hair, Sweat etc
- Windows of detection
- On site (“Point of Care”)/Lab SCREENING
- Industry / Customer requirements
- Self collect? 3rd party collection?
- Facilities available



Testing Equipment – Fit for Purpose?

- Made for UK (Europe) or USA [“split-key cup”]
- Drug panel. Cut-off Levels
- Accuracy. Sensitivity. Specificity
- Does quality matter? Cost?
- Breathalyser – e.g. U.K. Home Office / U.S. Dept Of Transport approved?
- Environmental impacts. Innovations



Drug Class / Metabolite	UK/EWDTS Screening Cut-Off Guideline [Urine]	Generic (often USA) Point Of Care Screening Cut-Off [Urine]
Amphetamines (AMP)	500 ng/mL	1000 ng/mL
Benzodiazepines (BZO)	200 ng/ml	300 ng/ml
Buprenorphine (BUP)	5 ng/ml	10 ng/ml
Barbiturates (BAR)	200 ng/ml	300 ng/mL
Cocaine (COC)	150 ng/mL	300 ng/mL
Ecstasy (MDMA)	500 ng/ml	1000 ng/mL
Ketamine (KET)	1000 ng/ml*	1000 ng/mL
Marijuana / Cannabis (THC)	50 ng/mL	50 ng/mL
Methamphetamines (MET)	500 ng/mL	1000 ng/mL
Methadone (MTD)	300 ng/ml	300 ng/ml
Opiates (OPI)	300 ng/mL	2000 ng/mL
Phencyclidine (PCP)	25 ng/ml	25 ng/mL
Propoxyphene (PPX)	300 ng/ml	300 ng/ml

*No current UK/EWDTS screening cut-off guideline available/under investigation or discussion

Support & Return to Work

- Needs a consistent approach – Policy
- When is support available
- When is support suitable vs disciplinary action
- Confidentiality
- Occupational Health. Signposting. 3rd party resources
- Compliance & return to work (Testing? Relapse?)



COVID19 Considerations

Medical journal 'The Lancet' (April 2020) presented research linking the COVID-19 pandemic (and in particular the distancing and isolation control measures) to a significant public health crisis, leading to a “spike in alcohol misuse, relapse and potentially, development of alcohol disorders in at-risk individuals, therefore placing further strain on addiction and drug and alcohol services, and the health service in general, during and after the pandemic”

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(20\)30088-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(20)30088-8/fulltext)

- Isolation
- Loneliness
- Boredom
- Poor mental health
- Bereavement
- Financial worries / debt / redundancy

COVID19 Considerations

- **Change the way you test?**
- **Return to work (RTW) testing?**
- **Increase random testing?**
- **Appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for collection agents & increased hygiene standards**
- **Refresher training & education – highlight risks & Policy**
- **Include questions about D&A in RTW questionnaire**



How to Spot a Meth Lab in Your Area



Questions?

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“ITS...Exceeding standards, not just meeting them!”