

## GINA monthly e-news July 09

### New GINA National Development Officer



In April it was announced that the Gender Issues Network on Alcohol project had received funding from the Scottish Government to allow the work of the project to be further developed in the coming year. To take the work forward a new Development Officer has been appointed.

Dee Gildea comes to Alcohol Focus Scotland with 11 years experience of working in the third sector on issues relating to poverty, social inclusion, equality and human rights. She has worked in the fields of housing, community regeneration, disability, and most recently managing the Building Bridges Equality Programme at SCVO for 6 years which included a unique positive action Women and Leadership Programme.

Dee has a specific interest in gender and disability issues and is looking forward to working in partnership with the GINA stakeholder group and wider members at this pivotal time for health and alcohol services in Scotland. GINA will continue developing new activities and will continue to share good practice and raise awareness

of the impact of gender on alcohol consumption and service delivery through events, publications and research. A GINA national conference is planned for early 2010. If anyone would like to find out more about GINA's activities or future plans please contact Dee by phoning 0141 572 6597, or by emailing [denise.gildea@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk](mailto:denise.gildea@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk)

### In the news . . .

#### Health warnings to women force down wine drinking for first time in 13 years



Warnings to women about the dangers of binge drinking and hikes in alcohol taxes have brought the first fall in wine consumption in 13 years. Ugly scenes of drunken women appear to have encouraged at least some to change their ways. While above inflation tax rises on drink, coupled with the recession, has also seen a fall in spending on wine. Figures from retail analysts Mintel show a fall of two per cent in the volume of wine sales in 2008, which is the first since 1995, taking the total **down by 24million litres to 1,162m**. And it is predicting further falls of two per cent this year and again in 2010, with only very small increases in subsequent years. The value of wine sales fell by one per cent last year, which is the first time there has been a drop for at least 30 years. Mintel's senior drinks

industry analyst, Jonny Forsyth, said: "Health campaigns and reports about the harm caused by binge drinking in newspapers is having some impact. It seems at the same time there is a move to taking health and nutrition more seriously." However, he said while people are drinking less, the strength of the alcohol has increased in recent years.

Source: Mail Online, 12/06/09

### Growing problem of alcohol abuse among elderly uncovered

Growing numbers of people are drinking more heavily after retirement, reflecting a surge in "late onset" alcohol abuse, research suggests. A survey of more than 800 people over the age of 60 found **13 per cent said they drank more after retirement** - despite the risks to their health. Of these, almost one in five drank alcohol because of depression, while **13 per cent drank to deal with bereavement**. More than one in ten said that they most often drank when they were alone. A separate poll of more than 2,000 adults found that one in ten was concerned about the amount of alcohol drunk by a friend or family member aged 60 or over. The London-based alcohol and drug charity, Foundation66, which commissioned the research, said there was an epidemic of "late onset" alcohol misuse among those aged over 60.

Source: Times online, 14/07/09

### Woman's death sends warning to young female professionals

A leading consultant has spoken out about the dangers of alcohol for young women, after a 33 year old film publicist from Maida Vale died suddenly of liver disease. Professor Robin Touquet said that more and more women are making themselves vulnerable to long-term problems associated with drinking. His comments follow an inquest which found that successful publicist Emma Pycroft died suddenly of alcoholic liver disease in April after regularly boozing with clients and colleagues. Westminster Coroner's Court heard that Ms Pycroft was not a heavy drinker, but Prof Touquet warned that young women are more vulnerable to physical problems caused by alcohol consumption than men. The Drinking in the UK report, published recently,

suggests as many as **3.5million women are putting their health at risk** through their alcohol consumption. The report attributes the rise to greater acceptance of women in pubs and bars and to more wine being bought for consumption at home. Prof Touquet said changes in society were responsible for the increase. "While equal opportunities are to be absolutely applauded, they unfortunately apply to bad habits as well as good," he said.

Source: Hamhigh.co.uk, 19/06/09



## Women's Harm Reduction International Network

The Women's Harm Reduction International Network (WHRIN) is a new global platform to reduce the harms associated with drug use by women and to develop an enabling environment for the implementation and expansion of harm reduction resources for women. A significant percentage of people who inject drugs around the world are women – ranging from a quarter to nearly half, depending on the country and region. Female drug users tend to be even less visible than their male counterparts, and research, services, guidelines, training programmes and data collection in this field are generally mainstreamed into a male context. Many women – especially those who are pregnant or have children – report that they feel left out of existing harm reduction activities, especially in developing and transitional countries where violations of the rights of women who use drugs (and their children) are common occurrences.

For some years, members of the international harm reduction community have acknowledged these shortcomings. To

try and tackle this issue, a meeting was held at 'Harm Reduction 2009: IHRA's 20th International Conference', and group of women formed an interim international advisory committee to oversee the coordination and involvement of women across the globe in the development and implementation of the WHRIN. This new network will aim to:

- Provide a forum to discuss the needs of , and challenges faced by, women who use drugs
- Advocate for national, regional and international bodies to adopt and implement policies and programmes which promote and support harm reduction interventions for women and girls
- Provide access to high quality resources (including educational materials) which assist women who use drugs – and/or the people who work with them – to improve access to gender sensitive harm reduction services.

To register for WHRIN via the new international 'e-list', please visit [www.talkingdrugs.org/user/register](http://www.talkingdrugs.org/user/register)

## Alcohol intoxication and mental health among adolescents

A new Norwegian study has been published, exploring alcohol intoxication and mental health in teenagers. The aims of this study were to describe alcohol use among Norwegian teenagers and investigate the associations between mental health problems and alcohol intoxications with focus on age and gender. The study found that:

80% of the respondents reported that they had tried drinking alcohol, and 57% had been intoxicated at least once

The proportion of the students, which had

tried alcohol, was equal in both genders and increased with age

Attention problems and conduct problems were strongly associated with frequent alcohol intoxications in both genders

Anxiety and depressive symptoms among girls were also related to high numbers of intoxications.

The study can be downloaded online on the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health website - [www.capmh.com](http://www.capmh.com)

## Events

**9 September 2009, Eurocare alcohol and pregnancy conference, Brussels**



Eurocare is co-organising a conference with the Swedish Presidency of the European Union to mark International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Day. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy is the leading known cause of birth defects and developmental disorders in the EU. This meeting will be a unique opportunity for Public authorities and experts to learn more about this condition, share experiences and good practices, and discuss the different policy options to curb its incidence. For more information please visit [www.eurocare.org](http://www.eurocare.org)

## Training

**September 2009, University Certification in Drug and Alcohol, University of Stirling (online)**

The Certificate in Drug & Alcohol Studies begins in September each year. The Course makes use of internet technologies (including: e-mail, on-line discussion groups etc.). Students will therefore undertake the Course from their own home or workplace. The total commitment is equivalent to 52

study days. Details of current fees, pre-course workshops and availability are available via the course website:

[www.dass.stir.ac.uk](http://www.dass.stir.ac.uk)

## Resources

### **A Nice Girl Like Me**

A Nice Girl Like Me (ISBN: 1847394701), by Rosie Boycott, has recently been republished by Pocket Books, having been first published in the 1980s. The book is an honest and personal account that deals with Rosie's battle with alcohol addiction.

### **Alcohol and pregnancy resource**

The Telethon Institute for Child Health Research is one of the largest medical research institutes in Australia. They have recently updated their *Alcohol and Pregnancy and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: a Resource for Health Professionals* booklet. The newly revised booklet was developed to support health professionals to address the issue of alcohol use in pregnancy with women. The booklet can be downloaded at

[www.ichr.uwa.edu.au/alcoholandpregnancy](http://www.ichr.uwa.edu.au/alcoholandpregnancy)

## Funding

### **Alcohol Education and Research Council funding**

The Alcohol Education and Research Council aims to fund projects that increase the capacity of organisations to deal with alcohol-related problems and to develop the evidence base. The Fund can only be used to pay for project activities that are outside the responsibilities of central or local agencies and services. A main objective of the Developing People and Organisations grant is to obtain evidence of "what works" which will help others to replicate. The funding available through the grant is between £5,000 and £50,000. The deadline for applications is 5 September 2009. Visit [www.aerc.org.uk](http://www.aerc.org.uk) for more information.

## Do you have any information you would like to share with the GINA network?

We would love to hear from you if you have examples of best practice, studies of interest, information on services or upcoming events etc. If so please get in touch.

The next GINA newsletter will be distributed in August 2009.

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