

## Alcohol dependence

### Red flags questions:

- Do you get withdrawal symptoms if you don't have a drink for a day?
- Do you find you have to drink more alcohol to experience the effects of it?
- Have you experienced any harm as a result of your drinking? What have you thought about this?
- Do you feel able to control the amount you are drinking?
- Do you get any stomach pain or vomiting?
- Have you noticed any black tarry stools?
- Do you drive? What is your work?

### Provide:

It sounds like you are dependent on alcohol. There are options for managing your drinking. However, it isn't safe to stop drinking suddenly. The best way for us to help you to reduce your drinking, is for you to see the specialist alcohol services. Are you motivated to reduce your drinking, or even to abstain completely?

The specialist service can help you to reduce your drinking in a supported way. This might include using medication, (such as baclofen).

There are also services that occasionally provide residential input to help you to achieve abstinence, as well as community based services who can support you such as the AA. Would you like some information about these?

### Safety Net:

I would suggest that initially you don't stop drinking suddenly, but in fact continue to drink. Although you can try to reduce the amount you drink daily. If you do stop suddenly, you may get withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, a tremor, sweating, and you may even have a fit. If this is the case, I need you to get in touch urgently. If you start getting any vomiting with blood in it or your stools turn black or tarry, speak to me as soon as you can. Also if you get any episodes of severe stomach pain, it would be best to get this checked out.