

Press release: Funding to help improve the lives of those affected by alcohol

A total of £10.5 million of funding is being allocated by Public Health England (PHE), to help improve the lives of adults and children impacted by alcohol, consisting of:

- £4.5 million innovation fund for local projects working with children and families
- £6 million capital fund to improve access to alcohol treatment in the community

A £4.5 million innovation fund, from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), managed by PHE, has today, 4 December 2018, been awarded to 9 projects across the country.

The winning projects have been selected for demonstrating a new and creative approach to reach and support families whose lives have been affected by alcohol.

In addition, PHE is announcing a call for bids for a share of a £6 million capital fund for local authorities, which can be used to improve services and facilities for people with alcohol problems. PHE is encouraging local authorities to submit an application to bid for money by 21 January 2019, with successful projects announced next spring and money being made available from 2019 to 2020.

It is estimated that there are 200,000 children in England living with 120,000 parents who have alcohol problems. PHE's recent [annual treatment statistics](#) show that there were 16,000 adults receiving treatment for alcohol who were living with children and a further 18,000 who are parents but not currently living with their children. The figures show that the vast majority (82%) of children with parents receiving alcohol treatment weren't receiving support from children's social care.

The impact of having a parent with an alcohol problem on the lives of children can be devastating. An analysis of serious case reviews (where a child was seriously hurt or killed) found that 37% recorded alcohol as a contributing factor.

Alcohol is also often a major contributor to parental conflict, which can lead to a range of poor outcomes for children including being detrimental to their education and employment opportunities and harmful on their health. The government is committed to reducing conflict between parents and this funding forms part of a new 'reducing parental conflict programme' which encourages local areas across England to integrate approaches addressing parental conflict into local services for families.

Examples of areas awarded innovation funding are the Greater Manchester

project which offers continued support for parents leaving prison and their children across 5 areas: Rochdale, Bolton, Bury, Salford, and Trafford; and in Portsmouth, where the project will provide a range of tailored services and interventions specific to individual families, including alcohol treatment, family counselling and support to reduce parental conflict.

Commenting on the innovation fund winning projects, Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive at PHE said:

There are about 200,000 children whose lives are often torn apart from living with a parent with alcohol problems, which often haunts them into adulthood and can lead to a lifetime of under-achievement and personal problems.

That is why I'm delighted to be announcing the 9 winners receiving funding, which will provide new and innovative ways of working to identify and reach out to these vulnerable children.

Steve Brine, Public Health Minister said:

Alcohol abuse can tear lives apart, not only for the people trapped in the grip of an addiction but for their children, who are often robbed of the support, comfort and structure they need from their parents. I am committed to finding new ways to help families in the midst of these heart-breaking situations.

Many children in this position suffer in silence – but the funds awarded to these councils today will help them identify those children sooner and offer them a vital lifeline. We are also investing more money to get parents into alcohol services to help free them of addictions once and for all.

Justin Tomlinson, Minister for Family Support, Housing and Child Maintenance at DWP, said:

This new funding will make a real difference to the lives of children of alcohol-dependent parents.

All young people deserve to feel safe and these new services will ensure thousands more get access to the support they need. I look forward to working closely with the Department of Health and Social Care on this fantastic and innovative programme, the first of its kind.

Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Chairman of the Local Government Association's Community Wellbeing Board, said:

This Innovation Fund is a terrific opportunity for councils to maximise their pioneering work to support families whose lives have been affected by alcohol.

The causes and the solutions for tackling alcohol misuse are multi-factorial. It requires close working with partners, imagination and hard work. However, when we get it right it can have a tremendous impact on the lives affected.

To support work between alcohol and drug services and children's social care, PHE has also today (Tuesday 4 December 2018) published new guidance for local authorities on safeguarding children with alcohol and drug dependent parents.

This document updates previous PHE guidance for local authorities on the importance of developing protocols between alcohol and drug treatment and children and family social care services.

The 9 projects of the Children of Alcohol Dependent Parents Innovation Fund are:

- Swindon: running a parenting programme for 840 parents over the course of the project, and providing support for 370 children through early help services, where parental alcohol use is identified
- Haringey: supporting vulnerable children and their alcohol dependent parents, with additional support from a specialist team
- West Sussex: providing pre-birth support to 50 families at high-risk of interventions from Children's Social Care and therapeutic support to children and young people, alongside treatment for parents
- Brighton and Hove: providing family-focused support by bridging the gap between adults and children services to better identify vulnerable and neglected children and their alcohol dependent parents
- Greater Manchester (Rochdale, Bolton, Bury, Salford, and Trafford): offering continued support for alcohol dependant parents leaving prison and their children across the 5 areas
- Portsmouth: delivering a tailored programme to support 160 families a year, including approximately 240 children
- North Tyneside: aiming to double the number of children who are identified as living with alcohol dependent parents and increase the number of these parents receiving treatment by over 50%
- Knowsley: training 1,000 professionals in identifying potentially alcohol dependent parents, and aim to see a 20% increase in the number of alcohol dependent parents accessing treatment over 12 months
- St Helens: working with local agencies to support around 270 families each year on a range of programmes

The £4.5 million innovation fund is part of a £6 million package of measures to support children of alcohol dependent parents which also includes:

- £1 million to fund national capacity building by NGOs to complement local activity, including through awareness raising and training programmes

- £500,000, which was announced at the end of last year, to expand helplines for children

Children of Alcohol Dependent Parents Innovation Fund

PHE received 68 applications from local authorities who were asked in their proposal to set out how through innovative team working, such as placing social workers into alcohol treatment teams or alcohol treatment workers into children's social care, fewer families fall through the cracks and more children and families benefit from integrated care. They were also asked to detail their ambition of how they would reduce parental conflict in the families they are working with through this programme.

The application phase for the innovation fund was open from 22 May to 17 July 2018. The total available fund is £4.5 million over 3 financial years.

Payments to the successful projects are awarded as a grant, under section 31 of the Local Government Act.

Capital fund

For further guidance and information about applying for the Capital Fund contact Tim McGregor Tim.McGregor@phe.gov.uk.

This fund has been running since 2013 to 2014 and has allowed PHE to support 158 projects (at an average of £200 to £250,000 per project) supporting the recovery of people dependent on alcohol and drugs.