



ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

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1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

YMCA Scotland are committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive working environment. This includes ensuring that all staff and volunteers are fit to carry out their duties safely and effectively in an environment which is free from alcohol, drug or substance misuse.

This policy has been written with reference to the UNCRC principles. In particular the guidance contained within this policy reflects YMCA Scotland's intention to protect children and young people from violence, abuse, neglect or drug abuse whilst keeping in mind their best interests as per articles 19, 33 and 3.

Young people find out about alcohol by trying it themselves, observing others and through information from parents, at school and via the media, through advertising, etc. As an employee or volunteer with YMCA Scotland you are a role model for young people. Young people are impressionable and will inevitably be influenced by those adults they respect. Drinking alcohol may not mean adults set a bad example to young people. However, in certain circumstances doing so has the potential to place adults in a compromising position with regard to their responsibilities for child protection and their duty of care.

YMCA Scotland accepts that some participants may have drug, alcohol or substance dependency problems whilst engaged in YMCA activities. YMCA Scotland accepts young people on a case-by-case basis, depending upon their personal circumstances.

YMCA Scotland has a legal responsibility to adhere to laws pertaining to drugs and alcohol.

2 ABOUT THIS POLICY

This policy has been produced to give all YMCA Scotland staff and volunteers the necessary guidance to deal with drug, alcohol and substance related issues.

This policy applies to all YMCA Scotland offices as well as to activities which arise from involvement in all YMCA Scotland programmes and events.

Any contractors or sub-contractors carrying out work on behalf of YMCA Scotland or on YMCA Scotland premises should not be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other substances.

Some participants of YMCA Scotland programmes are involved in drug use or are alcohol or substance dependant, some of which is problematic. YMCA Scotland acknowledges that many clients cannot immediately give up their drug and alcohol use and therefore a harm reduction approach is adopted.

The purpose of the policy is to increase awareness of the effects of alcohol, drug and substance misuse and to ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities regarding alcohol, drug and substance misuse and related problems. Staff who have an alcohol, drug or substance related problem are encouraged to seek help, in confidence, at an early stage. Staff who have an alcohol, drug or substance related problem affecting their work will be dealt with sympathetically, fairly and consistently.

This policy relates to alcohol, illegal and controlled drugs and other substances.

This policy has been written in consultation with staff, participants, the YMCA Scotland Executive Committee, partner organisations and referring organisations.

3 WHAT ARE SUBSTANCES?

As well as alcohol and illegal drugs this includes all controlled substances, glue, lighter fuel, solvents prescribed drugs, over the counter medicines, psychoactive substances and any other substance that may impair reasoning or performance if misused.

4 STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

4.1 Responsibilities

Misuse of alcohol, drugs or other substances can lead to reduced levels of attendance, reduced efficiency and performance, impaired judgement and decision making and increased health and safety risks for you and other people. Irresponsible behaviour or the commission of offences resulting from the misuse of alcohol or drugs may damage our reputation and, as a result, our organisation.

On presenting for work all staff and volunteers must be in a fit and responsible state to carry out and perform their duties safely without any limitations due to the use or after effects of alcohol or drugs (whether prescribed over the counter or illegal) and on no account be under the influence of drugs/alcohol.

Staff are expected to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work, work-related functions and work-related social events and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on our reputation. If staff or volunteers entertain clients or represent YMCA Scotland at external events where alcohol is served, you are considered to be 'at work' regardless of whether you do so outside normal working hours. Consequently, we will expect you to remain professional and fit for work at all times.

It is essential when staff and volunteers are off duty, socialising in a public place and consuming alcohol, that they are not wearing any apparel that identifies them as YMCA Scotland staff or volunteers.

On staff social occasions, staff should conduct themselves in a manner conducive to that expected when representing the organisation. Failure to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner may lead to disciplinary action.

Should any staff member or volunteer be seen to be consuming alcohol to excess steps will be taken to deal with any unacceptable conduct. Any such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.

If you are prescribed medication, you must seek advice from your GP or pharmacist about the possible effect on your ability to carry out your job and whether your duties should be modified or you should be temporarily reassigned to a different role. If so, you must inform your Line Manager immediately.

4.2 Working with young people

YMCA Scotland staff and volunteers shall **at all times** ensure that, while on duty and responsible for young people, they will refrain from consuming any drugs or alcohol.

There are occasional social activities and presentations in the course of YMCA programmes where alcohol is available. Staff and volunteers who are either leading the activities or presentations or are directly responsible for young people must continue to abide by the above statement. Staff and volunteers who are not directly responsible for young people for the remainder of that day yet who remain on duty will be permitted to consume one alcoholic beverage on any such occasion.

When staff and volunteers are off duty yet are participating in a YMCA event, YMCA Scotland expects that they will maintain a professional appearance and conduct themselves in a manner conducive to that expected when representing the organisation. Staff and volunteers should ensure that they do not place themselves in a compromising position with regard to their responsibilities for child protection and their duty of care.

4.3 Driving

Staff must comply with drink-driving laws and drug-driving laws at all times. Conviction for drink-driving or drug-driving offences may harm our reputation and, if your job requires you to drive, you may be unable to continue to do your job. Committing a drink-driving or drug-driving offence while working for us [or outside working hours] may lead to disciplinary action under our Disciplinary Procedures and could result in dismissal.

YMCA asserts its expectation that all volunteers will adhere strictly to a policy of total abstinence from drugs/alcohol prior to driving on YMCA programmes.

4.4 Training & Support

Basic drug awareness training will be available for all new staff on types of drugs and their effects.

All new staff will receive this policy as part of their induction.

4.5 Record Keeping

Any drug or alcohol related incidents which occur will be reported to the relevant YMCA Scotland line manager using the form 'Reporting of Drug, Alcohol or Substance Related Incidents (Appendix 3)'. All reports will be kept to monitor trends in incidents. This information will enable this policy to be reviewed effectively.

5 MANAGING SUSPECTED SUBSTANCE MISUSE

YMCA Scotland recognise that some staff may become dependent on alcohol, drugs or other substances. We also recognise that such dependencies can be successfully treated. We wish to promote a culture which understands the problems associated with alcohol, drug and substance misuse in which staff with dependency problems are encouraged to seek help and are supported.

If staff notice a change in a colleague's pattern of behaviour you should encourage them to seek assistance through their line manager. If they will not seek help themselves you should draw the matter to the attention of your line manager. You should not attempt to cover up for a colleague whose work or behaviour is suffering as a result of an alcohol or drug related problem.

Where a line manager considers that a deterioration in work performance and/or changes in patterns of behaviour may be due to alcohol or drug misuse they should seek advice and assistance from the National General Secretary or Chair.

If your line manager has reason to believe that you are suffering the effects of alcohol or drugs misuse, they will invite you to an investigatory interview. The purpose of the interview is to:

- (a) Discuss the reason for the investigation and seek your views on, for example, the deterioration of your work performance and/or behaviour; and
- (b) Where appropriate, offer to refer you to the Occupational Health Department for medical and/or specialist advice.

If you arrive at work and a staff member reasonably believes you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they shall immediately contact National General Secretary/Chair in order that an investigation can be undertaken.

If you agree to be referred to the Occupational Health Department the National General Secretary/Chair will request an urgent appointment and prepare a letter of referral, a copy of which will be provided to you.

The Occupational Health Department may ask for your consent to approach your GP for advice. A report will be sent to the National General Secretary/Chair who will then reassess the reasons for their investigatory meeting with you and decide on the way forward.

If, as the result of the meeting or investigation, the National General Secretary/Chair continues to believe that you are suffering the effects of alcohol or drugs misuse and you refuse an offer of referral to the Occupational Health Department or appropriate treatment providers, the matter may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

6 WHAT IS SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Substance misuse is defined as the 'problematic use of alcohol, drugs and other substances. Problematic use covers three main areas:

- **Inappropriate use** where substances may aggravate an existing condition that they were intended to alleviate
- **Habitual use** where an individual becomes dependent on the effects of a drug (including alcohol) so that the desire for these effects become a central and overriding concern of daily life and has adverse occupational and social consequences
- **Excessive use** which may lead to physical and psychological illness

7 SEARCHES

YMCA Scotland reserves the right to conduct searches for alcohol or drugs on our premises, including but not limited to, searches of lockers, filing cabinets and desks, bags, clothing and packages.

Any alcohol or drugs found as a result of a search will be confiscated and action may be taken under our disciplinary procedures.

8 PROVIDING SUPPORT

Alcohol and drug-related problems may develop for a variety of reasons and over a considerable period of time. We are committed, in so far as possible, to treating these problems in a similar way to other health issues. We will provide support where possible with a view to a return to full duties. This may include:

- (a) Referral to appropriate treatment providers, where necessary in conjunction with your GP.
- (b) Time off work to attend treatment and recognition of any periods of absence for such treatment as periods of sickness absence.
- (c) Adjusting your duties or other support as recommended by the Occupational Health Department or your GP or specialist during treatment and for an agreed period thereafter, subject to operational requirements and feasibility.

If you do not finish a programme of treatment, or your recovery and return to work does not go as planned, your manager will meet with you to decide what further action if any should be taken.

9 CONFIDENTIALITY

We aim to ensure that the confidentiality of any member of staff experiencing alcohol or drug-related problems is maintained appropriately. However, it needs to be recognised that, in supporting staff, some degree of information sharing is likely to be necessary.

If you seek help with an alcohol or drug-related problem directly from the National General Secretary/Chair or Occupational Health and you wish to keep matters confidential from your line manager and colleagues, this will be respected unless there is reason to believe that this could put you, your colleagues or anyone else at risk or carries some other material risk for the business. In those circumstances the National General Secretary/Chair will encourage you to inform your manager and will give you sufficient time to do so before discussing the matter with them.

10 PERFORMANCE AND DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

If you agree to undertake appropriate treatment and/or rehabilitation for an acknowledged alcohol or drug-related problem, we may decide to suspend any ongoing disciplinary action against you for related misconduct or poor performance, pending the outcome of the treatment.

Our intention is to support all staff with alcohol or drug-related problems to regain good health. Depending on the progress made on the course of treatment, any disciplinary action may be suspended for a specified period, discontinued or restarted at any time as we see fit.

11 PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURES

When a problem is highlighted at a referral process by the designated staff member from a referring organisation:

- The staff member should ascertain background information on the potential participant to assess whether the young person is able to participate
- The checklist included in the appendix should be used to help the staff member to make a decision
- The staff member may also discuss the participation of the young person with their line manager if necessary

Where a problem is not highlighted but becomes clear during interview this must be established with the participant and the questionnaire shown in the appendix completed.

Drug Dealing

YMCA Scotland seeks to combat all forms of addiction. As such YMCA will act to avoid any form of encouragement or pressure on any children/young people to participate in drug-taking, under age consumption of alcohol or excessive consumption of alcohol by over 18's or other potentially addictive behaviours.

Dealing in drugs will not be permitted on YMCA Scotland activities and programmes and will result in a referral to both the police and where appropriate to a drug support agency.

12 INFORMATION, SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

General drugs information will be available from YMCA Scotland, as well as help line numbers to be displayed along with the key points of the policy.

Staff members may refer participants to a local agency for support and if it is appropriate for that person any agency deemed to be a potential resource for the support of YMCA clients should be formally agreed with the National General Secretary. Referrals should only be made to an agency which has been previously agreed.

YMCA Scotland premises have a strict **no smoking** policy, including the use of electronic cigarettes

13 **LIAISONS WITH OTHER PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

13.1 **Working with other agencies**

Information about a young person being placed in the care of another organisation should respect the confidentiality of the YMCA/client relationship.

13.2 **Relationships with the Police**

YMCA Scotland staff will work in partnership with the police by handing in any drugs found or confiscated during YMCA activities.

Staff members should call the police for assistance in removing people from a building who have refused to leave or have been threatening towards other participants or staff.

Where a situation arises that cannot be resolved by staff safely, an emergency call will go to the police for assistance. Once the police arrive, they will take responsibility and staff and volunteers will follow their direction.

In the event of the police being called in to deal with an incident related to a young person under the age of 18, the parents of the young person will be contacted and informed of the situation.

14 **SUPPLY & STORAGE OF CONTROLLED DRUGS**

Staff may take possession of prescribed drugs/medication on behalf of a young person in their care. Prior to any group residential staff should ascertain any prescribed (or otherwise) drugs affecting the group members involved. The pro forma attached to this policy must be completed for each individual concerned and verification of the prescription and the dosage should be ensured **before** proceeding on the activity/programme.

Young people refusing to divulge information relating to the source and verification of drugs shall not be permitted to attend YMCA residential/ overnight activities.

Drugs held by YMCA Scotland staff must be kept at all times in a secure location restricting access to named staff alone. Prior to embarking on a residential staff should confirm the availability of such a secure holding place with the residential establishment.

Staff may not permit clients to exceed agreed dosage while in their care. Concerns about situations such as these should result in immediate contact with local health services and in extreme cases through the emergency services.

Responsibility for Policy –

Operational Practice: National General Secretary

Executive Responsibility: YMCA Scotland Executive Committee

ACCEPTED AS DRUGS & ALCOHOL POLICY BY YMCA SCOTLAND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2023

SIGNED _____ National Council Chairman

SIGNED _____ National General Secretary

This policy will be reviewed at 18-month intervals.

Appendix 1

Interview Checklist

- What drugs and or substances are you taking?
- How often are you taking it/what is the dosage?
- How does it affect you over a 48-hour period?
- How long does it last?
- How do you get hold of the substance?
- What would happen if you couldn't access the substance on which you are dependent?
- Do you think you are under control why/how?
- Other comments/involvement with support agencies?

Appendix 2

Prescribed Medication

Name YMCA Programme

What is the prescribed medication?

Confirmation by G.P. YES/NO

How much has been handed over?

What is the dosage?

How often should it be taken?

What is the reduction programme?

Staff/Volunteer Member

I confirm that I have taken responsibility for the prescribed medication of the above

Name Signature Date

Witness

I confirm that I have witnessed taking responsibility for medication of the above

Name Signature Date

Appendix 3

Reporting of Drug, Alcohol or Substance related incidents

Location

Date of incident

Identify those involved in the incident, i.e. names, ages, status:

Briefly describe the incident:

How was the situation resolved? (Outline any action taken):

Outline any injuries sustained*, medical treatment, involvement of police etc and any significant decisions taken by YMCA staff/volunteers

*please submit separate accident report

Signed (staff member/volunteer)

Signed (young person)

Please send to the YMCA Scotland Line Manager