

## Drinking from Home is on the Rise: Here's how to Support your Staff

The school holidays can be a joyful time — but also a stressful one. By the end of a long summer with routines out the window, childcare pressures high, and the constant juggle of keeping kids entertained, many parents who reached for a drink to “take the edge off” a long day may now find it a daily habit.

Culture changes post-Covid lockdown, have compounded the issue. Those months locked up in doors shifted many of us into new habits both good and bad; and made drinking at home the norm.<sup>1</sup> Recent data from Drinkaware shows that 45% of adults who drink are now spending more on alcohol for home consumption than in pubs and restaurants.<sup>2</sup>

With drinking at home on the rise and the kids finally back to school it's worth pausing and asking: is this really helping — or just adding to the pressure?

Here's how you can support your staff with a compassionate, structured and respectful approach.

### Craft a clear and supportive alcohol policy

Outlining company expectations around alcohol use, especially around work-related events, is the first step. Look at your policy with fresh eyes and make sure it answers any questions or queries. Make sure it also includes procedures for what happens if a staff member is struggling. Double check your tone of voice in the document: policies can often feel intimidating. A comprehensive yet supportive policy will reassure staff of your approach. And most importantly but often forgotten, make sure it's shared with staff regularly and easily accessible.

### Recognise the signs and approach with empathy

Clear signs that alcohol is starting to be a problem for an employee are becoming harder to spot — particularly as we're all working from home more nowadays.

From a visual perspective, look for bloodshot eyes and tremors on a call for example. From a behavioural perspective look for decreased productivity, frequent absenteeism or lateness, as well as irritability and mood swings. However, always avoid assumptions or accusations and approach with care.

---

<sup>1</sup> [New Study Reveals Why Alcohol Use Increased During the Pandemic - Public Health Institute](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Research shows majority of weekly drinkers now spend more on alcohol at home than in pubs and restaurants - Drinkaware](#)



It's easy to make assumptions when it comes to alcohol consumption and there are many well-known stereotypes to help us do just that.

## Share the guidelines

NHS guidelines advise us to consume no more than 14 units of alcohol per week.

To give an illustration based upon the quantity that you may buy in a supermarket for home consumption, here are some examples:

Beer (440ml can)	ABV (%)	Units per pint
Amstel	4.1	1.9
Budweiser	5.0	2.3
Carlsberg	3.4	1.5
Coors Light	4.2	1.9
Corona Extra	4.6	2.1
Guinness	4.2	1.9
Hawksmoor premium	4.8	2.2
Peroni	5.1	2.3
Moretti	4.6	2.1
Neck Oil	4.3	2.0

Cider (300ml can)	ABV	Units
Strongbow	4.5	2.0
Old Mout Cider	4.0	4.0
Cornish Orchards	4.5	5.0

Wine (750ml bottle)	ABV	Units
Cabernet Sauvignon	12.5	9.4
Pinot Noir	13.0	9.8
Pinot Grigio	9.0	6.8
Chardonnay	13.0	9.8

You can see how 14 units over the course of a week can be very easily done if someone is drinking 2/3 times a week or having 'just one glass' of an evening.

## Provide access to support

As well as Alcoholics Anonymous programmes which are available for people to go to generally, there are also other private programmes such as Allen Carr – How to Stop Drinking (and smoking). We can help you make this available to your employees pre-paid by the company.

250 Fowler Avenue  
Farnborough Business Park  
Farnborough GU14 7JP

Marlborough House  
Victoria Road South  
Chelmsford CM1 1LN

T: 01252 894883  
E: [enquiries@cartwright.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cartwright.co.uk)  
W: [employeeewards.cartwright.co.uk](http://employeeewards.cartwright.co.uk)

Cartwright Employee Rewards is a trading style of Cartwright Benefit Consultants Limited. Registered in England & Wales. Registration No: 08283366

Registered Office: 250 Fowler Avenue, Farnborough Business Park, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7JP

Investment Services are provided by Cartwright Financial Solutions Limited and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority: Registration No. 607200



Alternatively, if you have a flexible benefits platform, you can add this programme as an option for employee to finance themselves.

There is also a wide range on offer to help support your employees with their mental health. Alcohol dependence and mental health struggles are often closely linked.

If drinking is affecting your employee's ability to work and their mental health, it is worth them contacting your employee assistance programme (EAP). EAP's are often included in your Group Life and Group Income Protection insurance so check if it is included under your policy. There is a lot of self-help information on many insurer websites through your respective policy with mini courses and information that your employees can access if they do not wish to speak directly with someone.

### Offer flexibility where appropriate

For staff in need of it, time off for medical or counselling appointments can be a huge benefit in itself. Whilst adjusting workloads or schedules during recovery is also a great support. This is where appropriately training managers is vital. Ensure they have the right support and resources to deal with any changes in a sensitive and confidential way.

Though there are signs that there is a change in drinking culture amongst younger generations, alcohol consumption is still an important issue in staff wellbeing. Managers and HR teams need to have appropriate support in place, ideally through their employee benefits, to help get employees that are struggling back on the right track.

To learn more please contact John Mullally, Group Risk and Healthcare Consultant at [john.mullally@cartwright.co.uk](mailto:john.mullally@cartwright.co.uk)

September 2025

250 Fowler Avenue  
Farnborough Business Park  
Farnborough GU14 7JP

Marlborough House  
Victoria Road South  
Chelmsford CM1 1LN

T: 01252 894883  
E: [enquiries@cartwright.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cartwright.co.uk)  
W: [employeeewards.cartwright.co.uk](http://employeeewards.cartwright.co.uk)