

## Media Release

**Date:** 16 April 2020

### **The Health Improvement Commission provides help and support for Islanders struggling with alcohol issues.**

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The Health Improvement Commission is continuing to offer information, help and support through the drug and alcohol agencies it supports and funds.

In these difficult times and with us spending more time at home, it's not surprising that some people are looking to alcohol to help them cope. Alcohol is a depressant and interferes with the processes in the brain that are important for good mental health. It impairs judgment and can make us irritable and impatient. In addition, drinking more than you usually would may lead to accidents and therefore place an extra burden on health services. So, as lockdown continues it is important to keep our intake in check and find different ways of coping.

The guidelines for low risk drinking are 14 units a week for both men and women spread over 3 days or more with at least 2 or 3 alcohol free days each week. This can look like 6 medium glasses of wine, 6 medium strength beer/lager or 7 double shots of spirits.

Andrea Nightingale, the Substance Use Lead for The Health Improvement Commission provides some tips to keep your alcohol intake in check:

- Buy or order less alcohol. Having less in the house will help reduce the amount you consume
- Use smaller glasses – research shows that we pour ourselves larger drinks at home than we are poured when drinking in pubs and bars, smaller glasses reduce how much we consume.
- When you've poured a drink, put the lid, cork or cap back on the bottle, and put the bottle away, this can help break the temptation to pour another.
- Have 2 or 3 alcohol free days each week.
- Buy or order lower strength lagers/beers or try to lengthen the drinks with lots of tonic/mixer or ice to reduce the strength and make it last longer.
- Drink with meals.

- Experiment with alternatives to using alcohol to relax – See [www.healthimprovement.gg/news/article/blog-alcohol-stress-mental-health](http://www.healthimprovement.gg/news/article/blog-alcohol-stress-mental-health) for ideas.

If anyone is concerned about their or someone else's drinking then advice, information and support is available by phoning or contacting:

Action for Children - Tel 700218 for under 25yrs,

Guernsey Advisory Alcohol Service (adult service) - Tel 723255 or

Independence (adult service) - Tel. 729000

**Ends**