

Welfare Awareness Topic: Addiction Support

Overview – Addiction is [defined by the NHS](#) as not having control over doing, taking or using something to the point where it could be harmful to you. This could be anything, from working, the internet or shopping, though it is most associated with gambling, drugs, alcohol and smoking.

There are a multitude of reasons why an addiction might begin. With substances like drugs, alcohol and nicotine, they affect the way you feel, both physically and mentally, creating enjoyable feelings and therefore creating an urge to use the substances again. Similarly, Gambling may result in a 'high' after a win, followed by a strong urge to try again and recreate that feeling.

Part of being addicted to something means that the absence of having it might cause unpleasant withdrawal symptoms, and often, an addiction can get out of control because you need more and more to satisfy a craving and achieve the 'high'. Having an addiction can damage relationships and the functioning of your daily life, and can have serious psychological and physical effects.

If a friend or relative of yours is living with addiction, here are some of the strategies that might help support them:

- Focus on building trust so they are more likely to listen, don't threaten or give ultimatums as this may lead them to hide their behaviour
- Be honest and let them know how the addiction is affecting your life and relationship with them, don't criticize as this can contribute to shame and lessen their belief in their ability to quit
- Respect their privacy while being supportive- you can't force them into quitting, but you can be a source of support. Recovery takes time and setbacks are bound to happen.

Remember, you are not alone, and it is okay to have lots of different feelings, if you are worried about yourself or someone you know, talk to someone you trust, and don't be afraid to reach out for help.

Addiction is a treatable condition, and there are lots of ways to seek help. **If you, a friend or family member is struggling with addiction, check out the support section at the bottom of this page for more info.**

Support / Find out more

- The NHS has the following online directories to find addiction treatment services in your area: [Alcohol addiction services](#); [Drug addiction services](#); [Stop smoking services](#)
- The following links have more information about the treatment, support and advice available for dealing with: [drug addiction](#); [alcohol addiction](#); [smoking](#); [gambling](#)
- [Mind has a page](#) with more information and support resources if you or someone you know is struggling with addiction and dependency.
- **To speak to someone anonymously about any type of addiction, you can call the [Samaritans](#) free on 116 123.**

Support

If you would like to talk to the safeguarding team about anything you have just read, we will listen without judgement and signpost you to support. If you would like to talk to a member of the Safeguarding Team then please get in touch: safeguarding@bpp.com