



# Focusing on treatment

“ People with alcohol dependence who are treated and either achieve abstinence or reduce the amount of alcohol they drink have a higher chance of survival than those who do not. ”  
 Jurgen Rehm  
 Director of the Social and Epidemiological Research (SER) Department at Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)



Awareness Week on Alcohol Related Harm  
 13 – 17 May 2013

**FACTS OF THE DAY**  
 Fewer than one in ten people with alcohol dependence (AD) receive treatment, although 70% of alcohol-attributable net mortality is caused by alcohol dependence. Only one third of EU countries have national guidelines in place for treatment of AD.  
 According to a May 2012 study, expanding treatment coverage to 40% of people with alcohol dependence could save 12,000 lives over 12 months, and reduce the burden of mortality by 13% in men (about 10,000 deaths) and 9% in women (more than 1,700 deaths).

Consequences of alcohol abuse or dependence<sup>1</sup>

SYSTEM/CATEGORY	EARLY CONSEQUENCES	LATE CONSEQUENCES
Liver disease	Elevated liver enzyme levels	Liver cirrhosis, alcoholic hepatitis
Pancreatic disease		Acute pancreatitis, chronic pancreatitis
Cardiovascular disease	Hypertension	Stroke
Gastrointestinal problems	Gastritis, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)	Esophageal varices
Neurologic disorders	Headaches, blackouts	Alcohol withdrawal syndrome, seizures
Reproductive system disorders	Fetal alcohol effects, fetal alcohol syndrome	Sexual dysfunction, early menopause, spontaneous abortion
Cancers		Liver, oesophageal, larynx, pancreatic, breast (women)
Psychiatric comorbidities	Symptoms of depression, anxiety	Mood disorders, anxiety disorders
Legal problems	Traffic violations, driving while intoxicated (DUI)	Motor vehicle accidents
Employment problems	Tardiness, sick days	Job loss, chronic unemployment
Family problems	Family conflict, neglect of responsibilities	Divorce, spouse abuse, child abuse or neglect

Many of these problems may be avoided by early screening and intervention.

Burge and Shneider, Am Fam Physician, 1999, Jan 15; 59 (2): 361-370



## Tackling Alcohol-Related Harm

Given the burden that alcohol use disorders represent in Europe – causing the death of one in seven male deaths and one in 13 female deaths in the age group 15-64 years old - it is crucial to promote effective **treatment** of these disorders.

- National governments need to ensure improved **access to counselling and treatment** services. These should range from brief interventions, primary care, to specialised treatment methods including pharmacotherapy and cognitive behavioural therapy.
- There is also a need to implement a **support system** for people living with AUDs and their families, as well as those who have taken part in treatment, in order to ensure long term recovery and prevent relapse.

## What can you do to support Awarh?

- Come and visit the **AWARH** distribution points in **Place du Luxembourg and Trône (Brussels)** and sign your commitment to address alcohol related harm in Europe
- Tweet** your support for the Awareness Week on Alcohol-Related Harm and tell us why tackling alcohol-related harm is important to you
- Using the hashtag **#AWARH13** and share the message with your friends
- Learn more [here](#) and state your support [here](#)

If you wish to know more about the Awarh, please contact [Georgina.Carr@bm.com](mailto:Georgina.Carr@bm.com). Burson Marsteller provides support for Awarh as consultants to Lundbeck.

MONDAY 13/05	TUESDAY 14/05	WEDNESDAY 15/05	THURSDAY 16/05	FRIDAY 17/05
Message distribution at Place du Luxembourg and Trône (Brussels)	Health attachés debate: “National actions to solve a European problem: addressing alcohol related harm” hosted by the Estonian Permanent Representation to the EU + Message distribution at Place du Luxembourg and Trône (Brussels)	EP policy debate “Time for action: the need for an integrated EU Alcohol Strategy”, hosted by Nessa Childers MEP (A5G305, 12h00-14h00) + Message distribution at Place du Luxembourg and Trône (Brussels)	Message distribution at Place du Luxembourg and Trône (Brussels)	Message distribution at Place du Luxembourg and Trône (Brussels)

**References:**

Rehm, J., Shield, K. et al (2012) Alcohol consumption, alcohol dependence and attributable burden of disease in Europe: potential gains from effective interventions for alcohol dependence. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), available [here](#)

AWARH is an initiative of the **European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL)**, the **European Liver Patients Association (ELPA)**, the **European Mutual-Help Network for Alcohol-related Problems (EMNA)**, the **European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness (EUFAMI)**, **EUROCARE**, **Alcohol Concern** and **Lundbeck**. Lundbeck is contributing to the Awareness Week on Alcohol Related Harm 2013 through in kind support services provided by Burson-Marsteller Brussels.

