

Drink Spiking

Tool Kit to reduce the risk of drink spiking

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Chapter 1

Introduction – aims and objectives of the Initiative

Health Challenge Wales

1. The key themes of Health Challenge Wales have been selected because they are considered to be those issues that constitute a significant proportion of the ill health that could be avoided. Reducing alcohol and other substance misuse is one of the key themes. This initiative seeks to prevent the spiking of drinks; that is the introduction of a mind altering substance to another persons drink without that person's knowledge.
2. Drinks may be spiked with additional alcohol or with drugs for a number of reasons, including amusement, sexual assault/rape, theft or robbery or kidnap or extortion. Whilst there is no doubt that drink spiking is a problem reliable statistics as the extent of the problem are hard to find. The Home Office keeps no statistics on drug rape or drink spiking. Drink spiking and the offences that may flow from it are under reported as crimes for a number of reasons. Victims may not remember what happened, or may not remember with sufficient clarity to make a formal complaint about the incident. In many cases the victim will have consumed considerable quantities of alcohol before the incident and may feel that they are in some degree to blame for what happened and therefore not make a complaint. Male victims may be embarrassed by being unable to look after themselves and wish to forget the incident. Research carried out by Essex Police in 2001 across a group of 20-21 year olds, where respondents were 80% female and 20% male, suggested that 9% of respondents had been the victims of drink spiking, but of this group only 13% reported the incident to the police. Reporting to a friend or parent was more likely. It is therefore fair to conclude that a high proportion of drink spiking incidents go unreported.
3. Drink spiking is a crime largely carried out against young people. The most vulnerable age group were the under-25s, accounting for more than 80% of those who said they had had a drink spiked. This information is particularly important, as this age group are most likely to go out in groups socializing and binge drinking. Although the general belief is that drink spiking is a crime carried out against female victims it is believed that 11% of victims are male. The popularity with this group of themed events, such as hen and stag parties which may last over a period of days, and of festivals which may take place over a weekend or Bank Holiday, with revellers being a long distance from home, amongst large numbers of strangers and likely to be relaxed and off guard makes the group particularly vulnerable.
4. Confirming incidents of drink spiking is difficult. Where drinks have been spiked with alcohol the 'extra' is hard to detect when the victim has been self administering alcohol. Commonly used drugs, such as Rohypnol, Ketamine and GHB are expelled from the body within 24 hours making detection difficult, as samples must be collected and retained within that time, when the victim is least able to make conscious and rational decisions in this regard. Further the drugs produce a relaxing and sedative effect, meaning that an aggressive response or resistance by the victim is unlikely and CCTV

footage of the victim and the perpetrator is likely to show the victim engaging willingly with the perpetrator. The perpetrator can point to such evidence, and the evidence of other persons such as bar or door staff who may have seen the victim and perpetrator together as evidence of compliant behaviour on the part of the victim. This makes sustaining a successful prosecution very difficult, and the knowledge that this is the case will reinforce any reluctance on the part of the victim to make a complaint.

5. It is well established that the mental health of victims of crime can be adversely affected by the criminal event. According to the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Alliance, the estimated risks of developing PTSD after the following traumatic events are: rape (49 percent); severe beating or physical assault (31 percent); other sexual assault (23.7 percent); shooting or stabbing (15.4 percent); sudden unexpected death of a family member or loved one (14.3 percent); and witness to a murder or assault (7.3 percent)ⁱ. The symptoms are more likely to be severe when accompanied by a sense of helplessness, such as where the victim feels in part to blame for the criminal event, or has been unable to discuss it with another person or with the authorities for fear of being blamed themselves. Where a person has been a victim of crime as the result of drink spiking their mental health and their feeling of well being are highly likely to be compromised.

6. Reducing alcohol and other substance misuse is a key theme of Health Challenge Wales, as are reducing infection, including Sexual Transmitted Disease, and promoting mental health and well being. This initiative seeks to reduce the likelihood of drink spiking and thereby reduce the risk of crime being perpetrated against the victim. As well as reducing the likelihood of substance misuse it also addresses wellbeing, by reducing fear of spiking for young drinkers, promoting a safer drinking environment and deterring would be spikers, and by reducing the risk of sexual assault of victims may also reduce the risk of transmission of Sexually Transmitted Disease.

ⁱ PTSD Alliance. "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Fact Sheet. Sidran Institute. <http://www.sidran.org/ptsdfacts.html>

Chapter 2

Drink Spiking – Pre-considerations to running an Initiative

1. Initial considerations

Initial considerations for this project have to be addressed, including;

- What is the target group?
- Will the outcome have the desired outcome, i.e. reducing drink spiking incidents to the target group (as well as to others outside this group)?
- How can the target group be reached?
- Who are the key partners in the initiative?
- How will the initiative be evaluated?
- Will the initiative deliver value for money?

2. Target Group

As noted in chapter 1 the group most likely to be victim of drink spiking are the under-25s, and although males are targeted females are the more likely to be victims. Where resources are limited it is important that interventions are targeted at the most vulnerable groups as the impact of the intervention is likely to be greatest if this course is followed. This initiative therefore targets young female drinkers of 18-25 years.

3. Achieving the desired outcome

The factors leading drink spiking of the target group include

- Lack of awareness of the risk of drink spiking
- Assumption of 'safety in numbers'
- Drinks being left unattended when visiting toilets or dancing/socialising
- Drinking to excess and losing control
- Sharing open drinks e.g. 'a jug of cocktail between 4' etc.
- Failing to plan for safety
- Accepting open drinks from strangers
- All of the above in combination.

This list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive.

As many as possible of the factors needed to be addressed to ensure that the desired aim of the intervention is met.

4. Reaching the Target Group

Whilst direct contact with the target group is desirable this initiative works by ensuring that other groups which interface with the target group are also involved in the initiative and use their influence to protect the members of the target group.

The target group are most at risk when drinking in places to which the general public have open access, i.e. pubs and clubs. In such premises the perpetrators of drink spiking have access to members of the target group, when the target group are relaxed and open to approaches from other persons. The initiative engages with the target group in this environment by raising their awareness of the risks of drink spiking and

providing them with a mechanism for protecting their drink from contaminants, but also engages with other parties who have a legitimate function in such environments, such as bar staff and door staff. In this way the target group are not only protected by raising their own awareness levels, but are also protected by the vigilance of other parties.

Most local authorities will have local knowledge as to which licensed premises in their administrative areas are frequented by a clientele likely to be made up of the target group. This will include pubs and clubs popular with and catering for hen and stag parties. Such premises will include pubs and clubs as well as students' union bars and similar. These premises should be identified as the first to be targeted in this initiative.

5. Who are the key partners in the initiative?

Key partners in this initiative are the local authority environmental health department (licensing and health promotion/health and safety teams), and Community Safety Officer and the Police Community Safety Officer at the inception of the initiative. This group is responsible for designing the initiative with respect to their local area and determining which premises should be involved, over what time period the initiative should run and what other health or personal safety messages, if any, should be simultaneously promoted.

Prior to the initiative being commenced further key partners are local licencees, their bar staff and door staff. Initially this group will be provided with information and/or training in drink spiking awareness and in the aims and objectives of the initiative, but on the initiative becoming live the group will have an enhanced 'eyes and ears' role in the subject premises. It may be considered appropriate to use members of trade groups such as the British Institute of Innkeepers as partners or to use links with a particular local brewery. These will be local decision to meet local needs.

Other partners may include the local authority Public Relations Department and local media, for promulgation of messages regarding the initiative and awareness raising, and local students unions or youth groups who may wish to be engaged by promoting the messages of the initiative within their own community.

6. How will the initiative be evaluated?

As noted previously it is extremely difficult to obtain good baseline figures for drink spiking incidents and for the crime that flows from them. There is generally a low level of awareness of risk from drink spiking and further considerable under reporting of both the drink spiking and any subsequent crime.

It should first be noted that raising levels of awareness may result in increased reporting of suspected drink spiking as victims recognise what has happened to them and report it as a crime. Such an increase in reporting does not represent a failure of the initiative. It suggests that victims are recognising what has happened to them and are taking control of the situation. Whilst reporting the crime does not in any way guarantee that sufficient evidence will be available to allow legal proceedings will be instigated and that a conviction of the perpetrator will be successfully achieved, it does allow the victim to regain a measure of control over their own life that has been taken from them by the incident, and is in itself beneficial to their mental health and well being.

The ultimate aim of this initiative would be for would be drink spikers to be sufficiently unnerved by the fact that levels of awareness had risen, potential victims were vigilant for their own safety and a potential network of licenses, bar and door staff were alert and watching for individuals acting suspiciously, for them to leave the area. Such success is however impossible to measure, since it shows itself as a 'no response' measurement. Whilst this may seem encouraging partners should not lose sight of the fact that on the face of in 'no response' and 'failure to report' incidents have the same profile whilst being diametrically opposed results.

The effectiveness of the initiative, it is suggested will have to be qualitatively measured by assessing perceived changes in behaviour in the target group, such as use of 'bottle tops' to prevent tampering and drink spiking and safer practices such as retaining control over drinks and not sharing drinks. It will be impossible to measure the deterrent effect such changes in practices will have on potential drink spikers, but it would be fair to assume that they are unlikely to remain in premises where they are unlikely to be successful and are more likely to be detected.

7. Will the initiative deliver value for money?

The costs to the police of investigating crimes that flow from drink spiking are considerable, Home Office figures for 2003/4 showing that the average cost of investigating a sexual offence is £31,438, of investigating a serious wounding incident is £21,422 and the cost of investigating an allegation of theft from a person is £844ⁱⁱ.

The personal cost to the victims of the attacks are also considerable. As noted there are serious impacts on the mental health of victims of crime, their personal life and their ability to live a full life can be compromised. There may also be personal expenditure on therapy to help them overcome the incident, and additional may be medical costs if the incident has involved assault the transmission of a sexually transmitted disease.

The suggested initiative is inexpensive to run. The pilot project cost £2,000. This purchased 9,000 recyclable bottle tops to be handed out free of charge in the pubs and clubs used by the target group. There were no marketing costs, as licensees had been persuaded of the value of the initiative prior to its commencement and door staff had been advised of the initiative as well as having Drink Spiking Awareness included in their training programme. Bottle tops were delivered to pubs and clubs by licensing staff in the course of their routine visits, negating additional costs in that regard. Clearly, development of marketing material and other incidental costs may increase the cost of the initiative, and longer and more sophisticated campaigns promoting more than one message will incur additional costs.

It is however clear that this initiative does deliver value for money in financial and in well being terms.

ⁱⁱ The economic and social costs of crime against individuals and households 2003/4. The Home Office <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/statistics39.htm>

Chapter 3

Preventing Drink Spiking – Running an Initiative

The campaign

Free 'bottle tops' are provided to the target group being young drinkers drinking in public places to prevent their drinks being spiked without their knowledge.

Preliminary steps

1. There is a considerable amount of preparation work to this initiative, which should be undertaken well before it goes live. An initial planning process will necessary to determine
 - The target group – in the pilot project females aged 16-22 were selected
 - The premises at which the initiative is to be run
 - The health message/s to be put promoted
 - The amount of preparation work to be done with licensees and staff and the method to be used
 - The commencement date and the period over which the initiative is to be run
2. The target group is likely to be self selecting, in some areas students will be the target group, in others there may be issues relating to summer visitors or themed visits such as stag and hen parties. The local Police may be able to provide information about reported crime which may be drink spiking related which will assist in the selection of the target group. Selection of the premises at which the initiative will be run will be determined by selection of the target group. It is likely that the local authority Licensing Section will have this information available to them.
3. Although the initiative is about preventing the spiking of drinks, other linked health messages can be run as part of it. It is suggested that suitable messages may relate to safe drinking behaviour, safe personal practices such as using a licensed taxi when going home, or safe sex messages, since all are issues related to social drinking. Care must however be taken not to attempt to achieve too much and to crowd out the awareness of drink spiking message.
4. A certain amount of work may need to be undertaken with licensees and their staff in readiness for the commencement of the initiative. It will be necessary to advise them of what is intended and to encourage them to buy into the project. Their assistance will also be required in handing out the bottle tops and the information leaflets to drinkers, and in encouraging drinkers to use the bottle tops. It will also be necessary to seek the views of licensees on the best time to run the project, avoiding the busiest times for them, such as Christmas, Easter and Bank Holidays, but having the scheme in place so that drinkers are used to and using the bottle tops before a busy period as this is the time of maximum drinker distraction when the risk of spiking is at its highest.

5. Information to licensees may be sent in written form or may be passed at a seminar or as part of licensee training, should the local authority offer the same. Essential information is

- That drink spiking is often the precursor to a serious crime being committed against the victim,
- That they have a valuable role to play, as they have a direct interface with potential victims, and are not seen as an 'authority' figure,
- That they have a vital role to play in assisting in protecting their customers from this crime,
- They can also play a valuable role in deterring would be drink spikers,
- They, or a member of their staff, may be the person to whom a person who feels that their drink has been tampered with turns for help,
- That their prompt and correct action could preserve evidence that could be vital to a court case.

This list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive and local authorities may wish to add further information, e.g. regarding Community Safety and Crime and Disorder Partnerships etc.

The piloting local authority, Pembrokeshire CC carry out training for door personnel, in order that they obtain the Door Supervisors National Certificate Qualification. Attached as [Appendix 1](#) is a PowerPoint presentation used by that authority in the course of this training and as [Appendix 2](#) is a questionnaire used for ensuring learning outcomes have been achieved.

Resource implications and funding

6. The main costs of this initiative are in the purchasing of the bottle tops, see [Appendix 3](#) for further details of suppliers. Local Authorities may however also wish to produce posters and handbills around the topic of drink spiking, including any other related health messages they wish to promulgate. [Appendix 4](#) is a suggested handbill, Preventing Your Drink Being Spiked, which can be handed to drinkers in pubs and clubs.

7. Suggestions as to funding sources for this initiative are:

- From Community Crime and Disorder Partnerships, as it is crime prevention initiative ,
- From the Local Health Alliance, as it promotes safe drinking behaviour and also, more tangentially, promotes health and well being,
- Sponsorship may also be sought from local breweries, or taxi companies or public houses who may wish to be associated with the safe life style message that is promoted by the initiative.

Running the Event

8. There is much to be gained from pre-publicity of this initiative. It is suggested that the involvement of the local media, carrying pre-commencement information about drink spiking, promoting the use of the bottle tops and advising where they can be found may raise interest and awareness in the target group. In turn this will take some of the burden off licensees, who will not be required to explain the campaign

to all customers, as some will have prior knowledge. This may also lead to members of the target group seeking out the bottle tops, and visiting those premises providing them to obtain them, which has obvious benefits to participating premises. [Appendix 5](#) is text for a press release that could be used for pre-publicity purposes.

9. Participating premises should be supplied with bottle tops and other material, such as handbills and posters in advance of the commencement day, to ensure a smooth start to the campaign. Close contact should be kept with participating premises to ensure that sufficient supplies are available, as target group interest and engagement will drop very quickly if there are no bottle tops available.

10. The local authority and its partners may decide to have a final date for the initiative, or may let it continue until suppliers of bottle tops and advisory material are exhausted. Whilst this is a matter for the partners in each project it is essential to have a time period after which some sort of qualitative evaluation is carried out, to attempt to measure the effectiveness of the initiative.

Following up the event

11. As noted in Chapter 2, evaluation of this initiative is difficult. It is however suggested that unannounced visits should be made by staff to premises where the initiative was run to identify whether the target group are using the bottle tops as a matter of routine, where the local authority has chosen to use recyclable bottle tops. Take up of bottle tops is also a useful measure – questions as to where they went most quickly and how many were used can be used to identify success as can the use of the recyclable bottle tops in premises which were not part of the initiative.

Appendix 1

PowerPoint Presentation – Training for Door Personnel

See file – [“09 b Drink Spiking Appendix 1 Doorperson.ppt”](#)

Appendix 2

DOORPERSON QUESTIONNAIRE - DAY 1

1. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A DOORPERSON ?
 - (a) To eject rowdy customers
 - (b) To clear the premises in an emergency
 - (c) To keep good order at all times
2. WHAT SHOULD A DOORMAN WEAR ?
3. WHO RUNS THE REGISTERED DOORPERSON SCHEME ?
4. DEFINE REASONABLE FORCE
5. WHAT AGE ARE PERSONS ALLOWED IN THE BAR?
6. HOW LONG DO PERSONS HAVE TO DRINK UP AFTER STOP TAP?
 - in a nightclub
 - in a pub
7. GIVE THREE EXAMPLES OF THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL
e.g. Makes you happy
8. IF A PATRON COLLAPSES IN YOUR PREMISES, WHAT IS THE FIRST THING THAT YOU SHOULD DO ?
9. LIST THE THREE ESSENTIAL ITEMS THAT YOU SHOULD CARRY WHILST ON DUTY

10. WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOU NOT COMPLYING WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE ?

DOORPERSON QUESTIONNAIRE - DAY 2

1. WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE ?

2. HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST HIV WHEN DEALING WITH VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE ?

3. WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR THE LICENSEE OR DOORMAN WHO AID AND ABET HIM TO ALLOW FIRE DOOR TO REMAIN LOCKED DURING PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT ?

4. LIST 3 ITEMS YOU SHOULD CHECK AT CLOSING TIME

5. BEFORE YOU OPEN YOUR DOORS TO THE PUBLIC, WHAT NUMBER SHOULD YOU DEDUCT FROM THE NUMBER OF PATRONS ALLOWED ON YOUR PREMISES ?

6. SHOULD YOU KNOW WHERE THE CONDITIONS OF THE PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENCE ARE KEPT ?

7. DO YOU HAVE THE POWER TO ARREST A PERSON WHO YOU SUSPECT OF POSSESSING DRUGS ?
8. IF YOU FIND DRUGS ON THE PREMISES, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ?

9. DO YOU HAVE THE POWER TO SEARCH PATRONS ?

10. IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCE WOULD YOU HAVE A CODE WORD WITH THE DISC JOCKEY ?

11. WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECTED IF SOMEONE HAD BEEN SPIKED?
12. WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECTED THAT SOMEONE WAS SPIKING IN YOUR VENUE?
13. WHAT WOULD YOU LOOK FOR WHEN YOU WERE SEARCHING THAT WOULD SUGGEST SPIKING MAY BE HAPPENING AT YOUR VENUE?

Appendix 3

Resources

Bottle Tops

Recyclable Overbottle tops
([see photograph](#))

Mr K Francis, The Moathouse, Commons Road,
Pembroke SA71BEA Telephone 01646 684557

Slip over ring tops (reusable)

www.kandu-solutions.co.uk

Not described

www.drink-guard.co.uk

Useful websites

www.roofie.com – agency dealing with drug rape, sex abuse, drink spiking and date rape.

www.essex.police.uk/pages/contact/m-drugs - useful information on drink spiking

Appendix 4

Drinkers Handbill

Avoid being Spiked

Follow these tips to help you avoid being spiked

- Let someone know where you're going and what time you expect to get home
- Avoid going out for the evening alone
- Remember that alcohol affects your reactions; you'll be less alert
- Never accept a drink from some-one you don't know
- Don't drink something you, or someone that you trust didn't open, didn't see opened or poured
- Never leave your drink unattended
- Think very carefully before going off with someone you've just met
- Plan your night out if you can
- Appoint someone to watch your drink if you go to the toilet or for a dance. Many clubs will now let you take your drink with you onto the dance floor to look after it
- Don't think that only alcoholic drinks are spiked – soft drinks are spiked as well!
- Spiking doesn't just happen to girls. 11% of victims are male.
- If you feel dizzy or sick , ask someone you trust to take you to a safe place. If you are alone or can't find your friends tell some one behind the bar
- If your drink has been moved, looks topped up or tastes funny..... don't trust it. Get another one!
- Keep an eye on your friends. If some one collapses or is unconscious, call an ambulance immediately – don't leave them on their own

Appendix 5

Draft Press release anti spiking

Spiking of persons drinks is a very common offence. Although people are aware of *spiking* it is not just in nightclub venues where this can occur, it can happen at home, at friends, in pubs and restaurants. It is important for people to be aware of *spiking* and taking the necessary precautions whether they are male or female.

Avoid being spiked:

1. Let someone know where you are going and what time you will be expected home
2. Avoid going out for the evening alone
3. Remember alcohol affects your reactions, you will be less alert
4. Never accept a drink from someone that you do not know
5. Never leave your drink unattended
6. Think very carefully before going of with someone that you have just met
7. Plan your night out if you can
8. Appoint a drink watcher if you go to the toilet or off for a dance.
9. Don't think that soft drinks are not spiked they are
10. Statistics show that approximately 10% of victims are male
11. If your drink has been moved, looks topped up or tastes funny, don't trust it, get another one.
12. Use an anti spiking top when drinking from bottles

If you feel unwell after consuming a drink in licensed premises ask the bar staff to keep you drink, if you are going outside for fresh air, take with you a close friend, do not go alone and advise the door staff. Do not go out with acquaintances.

Drugs that are used in *spiking*

There are many drugs that are used in *spiking*, alcohol itself is probably the most common drug used as well as other drugs such as rohypnol, GHB (Gammahydroxybutyrate) and Ketamine. The symptoms that people will experience will depend on the drug that has been used as well as the amount of alcohol or recreational drug that may have been taken by the individual.

Effects of *spiking*

Feeling of euphoria, relaxation, floating sensation, feeling more confident, loss of balance, numbness, loss of time, loss of control or disconnection from the body, possible hallucination, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, muscle spasms, loss of consciousness or

coma.

How quickly will the effects of the drug begin? - between 20 minutes to 3 hours depending on the drug and the individual.

The drugs will either be in odourless, clear liquid with no taste or slightly salty taste or white powder or tablets.

Venues that are operating search procedures will be looking out for suspicious containers.

If you think that you have been subjected to *spiking* contact the police, if you go to hospital feeling unwell tell them that you think you may be a victim of a *spiking* so that they can take samples. If in the club or pub ask the bar staff to keep your drink as you would like to report your suspicion of *spiking* to the police.

(Insert name of partnership) are issuing venues from the (insert commencement date) with anti *spiking* bottle tops, ask the bar staff for one when you are out this Christmas time.

For additional information on drugs www.talktofrank.com or www.drugson-line.info