



Community Forestry

Alcohol and Drug Information Kit

Ballarat, Bendigo & Echuca

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Introduction

Welcome to VicForests Community Forestry Alcohol and Drug Information Kit for Ballarat, Bendigo and Echuca. This guide offers information, support resources and service contacts for drugs and alcohol in Ballarat, Bendigo, Echuca and surrounding areas.

It has been designed to give staff and work colleagues a starting point for conversations and/or assistance with alcohol and/or drug addiction or abuse. Along with support resources and service contacts for drugs and alcohol, this guide offers a brief summary of the following drugs and the signs and symptoms of their impact on the body.

- Alcohol
- Amphetamines/Methamphetamines
- Marijuana
- Heroin
- Ecstasy/GHB
- Prescription Medications

Alcohol

Alcohol (ethanol or ethyl alcohol) is the foundation ingredient found in beer, wine and spirits which in excess causes drunkenness. Considered a social drug, alcohol is derived from the reaction of yeast on mature grains and fruit products. Alcohol is classified as a depressant, as it slows down the body's vital functions and can affect people in different ways (Foundation for a Drug Free World, 2015; State Government of Victoria, 2015).

Alcohol and the Body

Alcohol enters the body via the circulation system through little veins in the dividers of the stomach and small intestine. Within minutes of consumption, it travels from the stomach to the brain, where it rapidly slows the functioning activity of nerve cells. Generally 20% of liquor is taken in and absorbed by the stomach, whilst 80% is ingested through the small intestine. (Foundation for a Drug Free World, 2015).

The liver is also significantly affected by alcohol consumption. It assists in the breakdown of alcohol within the body by working to convert it into a nontoxic substance (Foundation for a Drug Free World, 2015).

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Tongala

Friday 8:00pm Discussion Meeting

Tongala AA Group

RSL Hall, 19 Mangan St, TONGALA, VIC 3621

Sunday 10:30am Big Book Study

Campaspe Big Book Study AA Group

RSL Hall, 19 Mangan St, TONGALA, VIC 3621

Kyabram

Monday 8:00pm Steps & Traditions Meeting

Kyabram AA Group

Anglican Church, 33 Church St, KYABRAM VIC 3620

Contact 0409 136 841

Saturday 8:00pm

Kyabram AA Group

Anglican Church, 33 Church St, KYABRAM VIC 3620

Contact 0409 136 841

(Alcoholics Anonymous Victoria. 2016).

Alcohol affects each individual differently, based on:

- Their size, weight and wellbeing.
- Whether the person is used to drinking it.
- Whether other drugs are taken and mixed with the alcohol.
- The amount of alcohol consumed.
- The strength of the drink.

(State Government of Victoria, 2012)

Depending on how much an individual has had to drink, some short term signs and symptoms of alcohol intoxication can include:

- Slow reactions
- Slurred speech
- Drowsiness
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Breathing difficulties
- Distorted vision and hearing
- Impaired judgment
- Decreased perception and coordination
- Unconsciousness

- Anaemia (loss of red blood cells)
- Blackouts (memory lapses, where the drinker cannot remember events that occurred while under the influence)
- Coma or death (in severe cases)

(Foundation for a Drug Free World, 2015; State Government of Victoria, 2012)

Some long term signs and symptoms of continued alcohol use can include:

- Ongoing cognitive impairments such as poor memory and problem solving
- Increased risk of heart disease and stroke
- Increased risk of mouth, throat, oesophageal, bowel, breast, and liver cancer
- Weakening of muscles and bones
- Low libido, impotence and infertility
- Risk of liver disease and damage
- Diseases of the gastrointestinal tract, such as ulcers and pancreatitis
- Nutritional deficiencies and weight gain
- Poor job performance, relationship conflicts and
- Trouble with the law

(State Government of Victoria, 2012)

Meetings:

Echuca

Monday 7:30pm Womens' Meeting

Sisters in Sobriety Echuca / Moama AA Group

Echuca Neighbourhood House (Back Room)

261 High St, ECHUCA, VIC 3564

Contact: Kim 0415 685 063

Wednesday 12:30pm

Echuca Daytime AA Group

Apex Hall, 173 Leichardt Street, ECHUCA, VIC 3564

Thursday 8:00pm

Echuca AA Group

Church of Christ Hall,

Cnr Pakenham & Sturt Streets, ECHUCA, VIC 3564

Rochester

Tuesday 8:00pm

Rochester AA Group

Salvation Army Hall

Cnr Elizabeth & Ramsay Streets, ROCHESTER, VIC 3561

(Methadone Suboxone prescriber available), youth rural outreach support programs, mental health support, community education and information, Drink Driver Program, (Fees apply for this program) Drug Diversion Program, youth alcohol and drug counselling and drug related legal advice and support.

Echuca Hospital

17-25 Francis Street, ECHUCA, VIC 3564

Phone :(03) 5485 5000

Echuca Hospital offers 24 hour emergency and medical treatment (Echuca Regional Health, 2016).

Alcoholics Anonymous Victoria – Echuca, Rochester, Tongala and Kyabram

Referral Required: No

Drugs Treated: Alcohol

Cost for treatment: There are no fees for treatment

Ages Treated: All ages treated

Treatment Programs/Support Services: Non-medical assistance and support for Alcohol withdrawal or reduction

Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

While an agreed definition of an alcoholic is lacking, associations such as Alcoholics Anonymous suggest that it is an individual's responsibility to determine if they are in fact an Alcoholic. Despite this however, it is acknowledged that there are some common behaviours that may indicate somebody may be struggling with and/or dependent on alcohol (State Government of Victoria, 2015).

Common warning signs and symptoms of alcohol abuse include:

- **Repeatedly neglecting responsibilities at home, work, or school because of drinking.**
- **Using alcohol in situations where it's unsafe and or physically dangerous,** such as drinking and driving, operating machinery while intoxicated, or mixing alcohol with prescription medication against medical advice.
- **Experiencing repeated legal problems on account of a drinking habit.**
- **Continuing to drink even though alcohol use is causing issues with relationships.** Getting drunk with your friends, for example, even though you know a family member will be very upset, or fighting with your family because they dislike how you act when you drink.

- **Drinking as a way to relax or de-stress.** Many drinking problems start when people use alcohol to self-soothe and relieve stress. Getting highly intoxicated after every stressful day, for example, or reaching for a bottle every time you have an argument with your spouse or boss (State Government of Victoria, 2015; Helpguide.org, 2015)

In addition to the signs and symptoms described above, it is widely agreed that alcoholism or alcohol dependence is considered to be the most severe form of drinking problem.

Alcoholism is often determined when an individual feels they need alcohol in order to perform basic day to day functions. They may also have a strong physical urge to drink (Helpguide.org, 2015).

Common warning signs and symptoms of alcoholism can include:

- **Tolerance** – An individual begins to show a higher tolerance towards alcohol, i.e. they can drink more than others before showing signs of being “Drunk”; or they consume more than they usually do to feel “Buzzed” or relaxed.

Echuca

Echuca Regional Health – Alcohol and Other Drug Services

**Medical Consulting Suites,
17 Francis St, ECHUCA VICTORIA 3564**

Phone: 03 5485 5800 Fax: 03 5485 5885

Operating Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30AM – 5:00PM

Echuca Regional Health offers an extensive range of drug and alcohol treatment and support services for both adults and young people in Echuca and surrounding areas. The service also offers outreach programs and service to Kyabram, Rochester, Tongala, Lockington, Rushworth and surrounding areas within the Shire of Campaspe. People living outside of the Shire may be seen at one of the above locations. Some afterhours appointments may also be available (Echuca Regional Health, 2016).

Referral Required: N/A. Please call **03 5485 5800** to confirm if service referrals are required.

Cost for treatment: There are no fees for treatment with the exception of the Drink Drive Program.

Ages Treated: All ages treated

Treatment Programs/Support Services: Alcohol and Other Drug counselling for individuals and/or their families/friends. Individuals, couples and families can request appointments, referral to residential rehabilitation programs, Echuca Primary Care Clinic

Wednesday 12:00pm
**St Andrew's Uniting Church Hall, 24 Myers Street,
BENDIGO VIC 3550**

Friday 8:00pm
**Doxa School (Next to St Kilian s Parish Centre)
118-120 Hargreaves Street, BENDIGO VIC 3550**

Saturday 6:00pm
Eaglehawk Saturday Group
**The Hall, St Peter's Church
63 High Street, Eaglehawk, BENDIGO VIC 3550**

Sunday 8:00pm
Kangaroo Flat AA Group
**RSL Hall, (behind KFC)
Station Street, Kangaroo Flat BENDIGO VIC 3550**
Contact: Roger 5435 3736
(Alcoholics Anonymous Victoria, 2016)

- **Drinking to manage symptoms of Alcohol Withdrawal** An individual begins to drink to avoid or mask the symptoms of alcohol withdrawal. These can include:
 - Anxiety or jumpiness
 - Shakiness or trembling
 - Sweating
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - Insomnia
 - Depression
 - Irritability
 - Fatigue
 - Loss of appetite
 - Headache, and in severe cases
 - Hallucinations, confusion, seizures, fever, and agitation (Helpguide.org, 2015).

Other indicators can also include:

- **Feeling a lack of control over a drinking habit.** The person consumes more than they wanted to, for longer than they intended, despite telling themselves they wouldn't. (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Wanting to quit drinking, but feeling like you can't.** Having a strong desire to cut down or stop alcohol use, but efforts to quit have been unsuccessful (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Giving up other activities because of alcohol.** Spending less time on activities that used to be

important to you (hanging out with family and friends, going to the gym, pursuing your hobbies) because of your alcohol use (Helpguide.org, 2015).

- **Alcohol takes up a great deal of energy and focus.** Spending more time drinking, thinking about it, or recovering from its effects. Along with few if any interests or social involvements that don't revolve around drinking (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Drinking even though you know it's causing problems.** For example, recognizing that alcohol use is damaging a relationship, making your depression worse, or causing health problems, but continuing to drink anyway (Helpguide.org, 2015).

Alcoholics Anonymous Victoria – Bendigo

Referral Required: No

Drugs Treated: Alcohol

Cost for treatment: There are no fees for treatment

Ages Treated: All ages treated

Treatment Programs/Support Services: Non-medical assistance and support for Alcohol withdrawal or reduction

Meetings:

Monday 8:00pm

Bendigo Steps Group (Steps Meeting)

Contact: Simon 0410 424 686

Salvation Army Centre, 61 - 75 Mundy Street, BENDIGO VIC 3550

Tuesday 8:00pm

Bendigo Beginners Group - Beginners meeting

Community Church of Christ Hall

60 Havlin Street West, Quarry Hill, BENDIGO VIC 3550

Tuesday 8:00pm **4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH ONLY**

Chapter Six Motorcycle Group

Contact: Paul 0408 443 191

Salvation Army Centre, 61 - 75 Mundy Street, BENDIGO VIC 3550

Bendigo Hospital Specialist Outpatient Clinics

21 Lucan Street, BENDIGO, VIC 3550

Phone: 03 5454 8896 Fax: 03 5454 8922

Operating Hours: N/A (due to various sites), please call: 03 5454 8896 to confirm operating hours (Bendigo Health, 2013).

Bendigo Hospital's Specialist Outpatient Clinics' offer referrals for public patients seeking **ELECTIVE NON-MEDICAL** treatment, support and advice at Bendigo Health's hospital campus for drug and alcohol related issues (Bendigo Health, 2013).

Referral Required: Yes, from a General Practitioner (GP). All referrals undergo a health priority assessment. For more information on referrals please ask your GP to contact the Clinic Liaison Nurse on **phone: 5454 7571, fax: 5454 8922, mobile: 0447 511 791** (Bendigo Health, 2013).

Cost for treatment: Please call 03 5454 8896 to confirm costs for treatment (Bendigo Health, 2013).

Ages Treated: All ages treated

Treatment Programs/Support Services: N/A please ask your GP to contact the Clinic Liaison Nurse on **phone: 5454 7571, fax: 5454 8922, mobile: 0447 511 791** for more information and advice on which services are best suited to individual needs (Bendigo Health, 2013).

Drugs, Drug Abuse and Addiction

Much like alcohol, there are some common behaviours, which may indicate that somebody may be struggling with and/or becoming dependent on drugs (State Government of Victoria, 2015; Helpguide.org, 2015).

Common warning signs and symptoms of drug abuse include:

Physical

- Bloodshot eyes, pupil dilation (pupils larger or smaller than normal)
- Changes in eating or sleep habits
- Sudden weight fluctuation (i.e. weight gain/loss)
- Deterioration of physical appearance, poor personal hygiene and care.
- Unusual odors on breath, body, or clothing
- Tremors, slurred speech, or impaired coordination (Helpguide.org, 2015).

Behavioural

- Drop in attendance and/or performance at work or school
- Unexplained need for money or having financial problems; borrowing or stealing funds
- Engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviour
- Sudden change in friends, favourite hangouts, and hobbies

- Frequently getting into trouble (fights, accidents, unlawful activities) (Helpguide.org, 2015).

Psychological

- A sudden unexplained change in personality or attitude (E.g. Mood swings, irritability, or angry outbursts)
- Periods of unusual hyperactivity, agitation, or giddiness
- Lacks motivation; appears lethargic or “Spaced Out”
- Seems fearful, anxious, or paranoid, for no apparent reason.

Other indicators can also include:

- **Repeatedly neglecting responsibilities at home, work, or school because of drug use** (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Using drugs under dangerous conditions or taking risks while “High”**, such as driving, using dirty needles, or participating in risky sexual behaviour (Helpguide.org, 2015).

Cost for treatment: N/A. Please call **03 5448 1600** to confirm costs for treatment

Ages Treated: All ages treated

Treatment Programs/Support Services: Alcohol and Drug Counselling - Adults, Youth, Groups and Families, Alcohol & Other Drug Outreach Programs, Alcohol & Other Drug Support and Education Programs.

Please call the Bendigo central site on **03 5448 1600** for more information and advice on which services are best suited to individual needs (Bendigo Community Health, 2015).

Bendigo Hospital

21 Lucan Street, BENDIGO, VIC 3550

Phone: (03) 5454 6000

Offers emergency, hospital, and diagnostic treatment services (Department of Health Victoria, 2016).

Operating Hours: N/A (due to various sites), please call **(03) 5454 6000** to confirm operating hours (Bendigo Health, 2013).

Bendigo

Bendigo Community Health Service

Bendigo Central, **171 Hargreaves St, BENDIGO VIC 3550**

T: 03 5448 1600 F: 03 5448 1699

Kangaroo Flat, **13 Helm St, KANGAROO FLAT VIC 3555**

T: 03 5430 0500 F: 03 5430 0544

Eaglehawk, **3 Seymoure St, EAGLEHAWK, VIC 3556**

T: 03 5434 4300 F: 03 5434 4355

Elmore, **46 Jeffrey St, ELMORE VIC 3558**

T: 03 5432 6001 F: 03 5432 610

Operating Hours: N/A (due to various sites), please call to confirm operating hours (Bendigo Community Health, 2015).

Bendigo Community Health Service offers **NON URGENT MEDICAL /CRISIS** community based health support services for Drugs and/or Alcohol for both adults and young people in Bendigo and surrounding areas.

Referral Required: N/A. Please call **03 5448 1600** to confirm if service referrals are required.

- **Experiencing repeated legal problems on account of a drug habit**, such as arrests for disorderly conduct, driving under the influence, or stealing to support an addiction (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Your drug use is causing problems in your relationships**, such as fights with your partner or family members, an unhappy boss, or the loss of friends (Helpguide.org, 2015).

Similarly to alcohol, common warning signs and symptoms of drug addiction can include:

- **Tolerance** – the need to use more of the drug to experience the same effects that use to be achieved with smaller amounts (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Using to manage symptoms of Drug Withdrawal** - An individual begins to use the drug to avoid or mask the symptoms of drug withdrawal.
- **Feeling a lack of control over a drug habit.** The person consumes more than they wanted to, for longer than they intended, despite telling themselves they wouldn't. (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Wanting to quit drugs, but feeling like it's impossible.** Having a strong desire to cut down or stop drug use, but efforts to quit have been unsuccessful (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Day to day life revolves around drug use.** The person spends a lot of time using and thinking

about drugs, figuring out how to get them, and recovering from the drug's effects (Helpguide.org, 2015).

- **Abandonment of activities that were previously enjoyed**, such as hobbies, sports, and socializing, because of drug use (Helpguide.org, 2015).
- **Continuing to use drugs, despite knowing that they are harming physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.** Drug use is causing major health problems—blackouts, infections, mood swings, depression, paranoia—but the user continues to use anyway (Helpguide.org, 2015).

Thursday 7:00pm
Beginners Meeting Ballarat Group
Ballarat Trades Hall, 24 Camp Street, BALLARAT VIC, 3305

Friday 12:30pm
Mini Gallery Group
St Andrew's Uniting Church, Cnr. Sturt & Dawson Streets, BALLARAT VIC, 3305

Friday 7:00pm
Big Book Study
Eastwood Leisure Complex, 20 Eastwood Street, BALLARAT VIC, 3305

Saturday 1:00pm
Ballarat City Saturday Group
Ballarat Christian Fellowship Church, (Cnr Dawson St) 503 Mair St BALLARAT VIC, 3305

Sunday 8:00am
As Bill Sees It (Book Discussion)
The Church of Christ, 410 York Street, BALLARAT, VIC 3305
(Alcoholics Anonymous Victoria, 2016)

Meetings:

Monday 12:30pm

Mini Gallery Group

St Andrew's Uniting Church, Cnr. Sturt & Dawson Streets, BALLARAT VIC, 3305

Monday 7:00pm

Ballarat Living Sober - Living Sober Book Discussion

Ballarat Trades Hall, 24 Camp Street, BALLARAT VIC, 3305

Tuesday 7:00pm

Ballarat Tuesday Topic Group (Topic meetings)

The Church of Christ, 410 York Street, BALLARAT, VIC 3305

Tuesday 7:00pm Men's meeting

Men in Sobriety Ballarat

Eastwood Leisure Complex, 20 Eastwood Street, BALLARAT VIC, 3305

Wednesday 12:30pm 1 hour meeting

Ballarat Recovery Group

Eastwood Leisure Complex, 20 Eastwood Street, BALLARAT VIC, 3305

Contact: **0401 550 613**

Wednesday 7:30pm

Brown Hill Uniting Church Hall, Cnr. Humffrey Nth & Thompson Streets BALLARAT VIC 3305

Amphetamines/Methamphetamines

Commonly classified as “Speed Drugs” Amphetamines/ Methamphetamines are stimulant drugs that increase and speed up activity within the Central Nervous System. Common street terms for these drugs are “Crystal”, “Ice”, “Glass” and “Crank”.

More often than not “Crystal” arrives in a powder form that can be inhaled, injected, or consumed while “Crank” arrives in a tablet or capsule form. Methamphetamines known as “Ice” and “Glass” are also smoke-able (Jeng, Wong, Ting-A-Kee and Wells, 2005) as cited in (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Made up of various chemicals these drugs impact the body in various ways, however common warning signs and symptoms of Amphetamine or Methamphetamine use can include:

- Feeling highly energetic
- Extremely talkative and restless
- Elevated heart rate and blood pressure
- Dilated pupils

Dependant on the quantity taken, high dosages can also lead too:

- Aggressive, hostile and/or violent behaviour
- Paranoia
- Fevers

- Sweating
- Headaches
- Blurred Vision
- Dizziness
- Chest Pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting and
- Diarrhoea

(Jeng, Wong, Ting-A-Kee and Wells, 2005) as cited in (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Amphetamines and methamphetamines are highly addictive, and research indicates that users rapidly develop a strong tolerance to them. Users, who unexpectedly stop taking these substances, may also experience extreme fatigue, hunger, irritability and depression throughout the withdrawal process (Jeng, Wong, Ting-A-Kee and Wells, 2005) as cited in (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Referral Required: Yes, All referrals undergo priority assessment. Clients can self-refer via fax or phone. Referral enquires: **03 5320 6690**.

Cost for treatment: This is a free service for eligible people. Eligibility is determined prior to admission to the program.

Ages Treated: 18+ with the exception of the paediatric asthma program.

Treatment Programs/Support Services: Assistance with depression, anxiety, drug and/or alcohol problems, homelessness (or at risk of homelessness or living in insecure housing), social isolation, community/family breakdown, financial insecurity, self-harming behaviours, mental or physical disability, experiencing domestic/family violence or have a mental health issue but are not eligible for specialist mental health service.

Alcoholics Anonymous Victoria – Ballarat

Referral Required: No

Drugs Treated: Alcohol

Cost for treatment: There are no fees for treatment

Ages Treated: All ages treated

Treatment Programs/Support Services: Non-medical assistance and support for Alcohol withdrawal or reduction.

Ballarat Base Hospital

1 Drummond Street North, BALLARAT, VIC 3350

Hospital Switchboard - 03 5320 4000

Part of Ballarat Health Services, the Ballarat Base Hospital offers a diverse range of specialist and medical health care services for both youths and adults. These services include emergency medical and hospital care, community care, psychiatric, mental health, and rehabilitation support (Department of Health Victoria, 2016).

Ballarat Base Hospital Admissions Risk Program (HARP)

Queen Elizabeth Centre, 102 Ascot Street, SOUTH BALLARAT VIC 3350

Phone: 03 5320 4707 Fax: 03 5320 4770

Email: HARP@bhs.org.au

Ballarat Base Hospital also offers a Hospital Admissions Risk Program (HARP) which offers drug, alcohol and mental health services and support (Ballarat Health Services, 2016)

Area Serviced: Ballarat and Greater Ballarat Region

Prolonged use of amphetamines and methamphetamines can also lead to severe physical and mental health problems, the most common being **Amphetamine Psychosis**. While the warning signs and/or symptoms of Amphetamine Psychosis generally subside once an individual stops using these substances, symptoms typically include:

- Hallucinations,
 - Paranoia, and
 - Bizarre and/or violent behaviour.
- (Jeng, Wong, Ting-A-Kee and Wells, 2005) as cited in (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Cannabis (Marijuana, Hashish, Hashish oil)

Cannabis is the umbrella term given to any of the drug substances derived from the Indian Hemp Plant. Part of the “Cannabis” drug family, marijuana is the term given to the dried flowers, seeds and leaves of the Indian Hemp Plant. Delta-9-Tetrahydro-Cannabinol or THC is the main component found in this plant (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

A psychoactive drug, marijuana is generally smoked via rolled cigarette (commonly known as a joint) or via pipes called bong or hookahs. It can also be consumed when in a Hashish form (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Common warning signs and symptoms of Cannabis use can include:

- Feeling more relaxed
- Decreased inhibitions
- Decreased motivation
- Becoming more talkative/ outgoing
- Impaired concentration/ balance/ coordination
- Elevated heart rate
- Bloodshot eyes
- Increased appetite (“Having the munchies”)
- Dry Mouth / throat

Youth Services and Support:

For enquiries or to make a referral for youth outreach or home based withdrawal please call Ballarat Community Health on **03 5338 4500** or email youthAODintake@bchc.org.au.

Referral Required: No

Drugs Treated: Alcohol, Cigarettes, Amphetamines/Methamphetamines, Marijuana, Heroin, Ecstasy/GHB and Prescription Medications.

Cost for treatment: There are no fees for treatment

Ages Treated: All ages treated

Treatment Programs/Support Services: Assistance with Alcohol/Drug withdrawal or reduction, Alcohol and Drug Counselling - Adults, Youth and Families, Alcohol & Other Drug Youth Outreach Workers, Consultancy and Ongoing Care, Case Management, Clean Needle Exchange Program, Alcohol and Drugs Nurse Practitioner service (in 2018), Home-based Withdrawal Support Service, Making a Change (MAC) Program, Drink & Drug Driver Education Programs, Naloxone opioid drug withdrawal treatment program (Ballarat Community Health, 2016).

Support Service Contacts and Information Resources

For URGENT EMERGENCY Medical Care and Assistance please call 000 in the first instance.

Ballarat

Ballarat Community Health Service

12 Lilburne Street, LUCAS VIC 3350

Tel: (03) 5338 4500 Fax: (03) 5338 0520

Operating Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30AM – 5:00PM

With assistance from the Australian Community Support Organisation (ACSO) Intake and Referral Service, the Ballarat Community Health Service offers an extensive range confidential of **NON URGENT MEDICAL /CRISIS** community based health support services for Drugs and/or Alcohol in Ballarat and surrounding areas.

**Adult Services and Support: ACSO Connect
1300 022 760**

- Lethargy (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Dependant on the quantity taken, high dosages can also lead too:

- Paranoia
- Feeling highly afraid
- Panic/ Anxiety
- Vivid and alarming hallucinations
- Severe impairment to spatial and time awareness (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Heroin

A highly addictive drug, heroin is part of a group of strong pain killing drugs known as Opioids. Described on the street as garbage, H, smack, or horse, heroin can come in a variety of different substance forms and colours (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015). Depending on the drug's level of purity and how it is produced, heroin can appear as a fine white powder or it can be an earthy tar like substance (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Often taken intravenously, heroin users typically inject the drug into their bodies, as this can offer an increased drug rush sensation and a more immediate effect. Heroin can also be inhaled, smoked, or consumed. Individuals who inject the drug can expose themselves to the high risk overdose due to drug's depressant qualities. They can also expose themselves to AIDS, Hepatitis C and other infectious diseases (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

The drug rush sensation produced by heroin can take effect within a few seconds and last for several minutes. Once this subsides, users often experience feelings of serenity which may last for an hour or so. The influences of heroin can last between 6-12 hours, before a user needs to use again to prevent the symptoms of drug withdrawal (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

At times misusing some prescription drugs can lead to other significant drug addictions, particularly if the medicines involved include narcotic painkillers, sedatives, tranquilizers, and or other stimulants (US National Library of Medicine, 2015). All medicines have risks and side effects, medical practitioners take these risks into account when providing medications to their patients.

Prescription drug abusers may be unaware of or unable to comprehend these risks and the medicines prescribed may be unsuitable for them, particularly when taken in high quantities, or when mixed with other substances (US National Library of Medicine, 2015).

Prescription Medications

Prescription drug abuse involves taking medicines in a different way that varies or goes against the advice given by a medical practitioner. This form of drug abuse can include:

- Taking a medicine that has been prescribed for another person.
- Not adhering to the recommended dosage instructions (e.g. taking too much or too little)
- Taking the medicine in a different way to what was intended (e.g. crushing tablets and snorting or injecting them)
- Using the medicine for another purpose (e.g. to get high)

(US National Library of Medicine, 2015)

Common warning signs and symptoms of Heroin use can include:

- Nausea and vomiting (for first time users)
- Decreased breathing
- Pinpoint pupils
- Itchiness and
- Sweating

(Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015)

Prolonged heroin use can also cause:

- Constipation
 - Decreased sex drive and
 - Irregularity or cessation of a female's menstrual cycle
- (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Common signs of withdrawal symptoms from Heroin can include:

- Intense vomiting/diarrhoea/restlessness
- Runny nose and sneezing
- Insomnia
- Anxiety and
- Cravings

Ecstasy/GHB

Ecstasy

Ecstasy is predominately available in tablet, powder or capsule form. Typical street terms for ecstasy include “X-TC”, “Adam”, “Clarity” and “Lover’s Speed”. MDMA impacts on and alters the brain’s serotonin levels. This brain chemical plays a significant role in controlling mood, aggression, sexual activity, sleep, and sensitivity to pain. A typical dose of MDMA ranges from approximately 100-125 milligrams and its effects usually begin to take hold approximately 20-40 minutes after a tablet has been taken (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Common warning signs and symptoms of Ecstasy use can include:

- Intense changes in mood/ mood swings - experiencing feelings of exhilaration, empathy, emotional warmth, self-acceptance, confusion and depression.
- Drug cravings
- Anxiety
- Paranoia
- Insomnia
- Exhaustion/ Dehydration
- Kidney failure
- Heart Attack
- Muscle tension,
- Blurred vision,

- Involuntary teeth clenching,
- Rapid eye movement,
- Chills and sweating
- Appetite and thirst suppression (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

Regular and long term use can also lead to permanent damage to areas of the brain that control for thought, memory and pleasure (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

GHB

Gamma hydroxybutyrate or GHB is found naturally in the body in small quantities. When consumed in high doses or mixed with other drug substances it can have significantly negative impacts on the body. GHB is considered a depressant as it assists in decreasing heart rate, respiration rate and body temperature (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015).

When consumed in large amounts, GHB can render a user or victim unconscious, cause significant brain damage or lead to death GHB is a clear and odourless substance and it is well known for its sedative effects. Thus, it is often used as a date rape drug. As yet the long-term impacts of prolonged use are unknown (Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, 2015). Common warning signs and symptoms of GHB use can include:

- Excessive feelings of euphoria and sedation