



Date	16/10/2018
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Update log	

### Working with Dual Diagnosis

David Kingdon spoke at the conference about the management of dual diagnosis. He described that among most offenders, over 55% of service users in prison with mental health needs also had problems with substance abuse. For people with other substance misuses, the percentage that additionally demonstrated mental health needs was even higher at 79%. Joint working in a team with the service user makes every contact count. Training for the clinicians involves effective care coordination and where specific interventions is limited, always consider the family. From the first contact, the service user is told to be abstinent from drugs and/or alcohol before engaging in mental health services. Of course, this can be a daunting prospect. It is suggested that service users do not focus on abstaining permanently from the substance and that this may come in time. However, it is imperative that they are not under the influence of drink or drugs when they come to see the clinician at the mental health service. The idea is that before they realize, some time has gone past and they have not drunk or used drugs.

Co-morbidity covers a broad spectrum of mental health conditions and substance misuse problems. Currently, the nature of the relationship between these two conditions is complex. Possible mechanisms include:

- Primary psychiatric illness participating or leading to substance misuse
- Substance misuse worsening or altering the course of psychiatric illness intoxication
- Substance dependence leading to psychiatric symptoms or illness e.g. acute or residential psychoses after substance misuse

However, substance use does not inevitably lead to the deterioration in mental health problems and may be used to cope with anxiety, hallucinations and sedation from medication with varying effects. Assessment of individual responses, both positive and negative, is necessary for effective engagement and management.

Adapted from 'Management of Dual Diagnosis' presentation given by David Kingdon at the Healthcare Conference on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017 De Vere W1conference centre London