



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

The Future of Good Thinking: Linking with Alcohol Use and Smoking

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Why link to alcohol use and smoking?

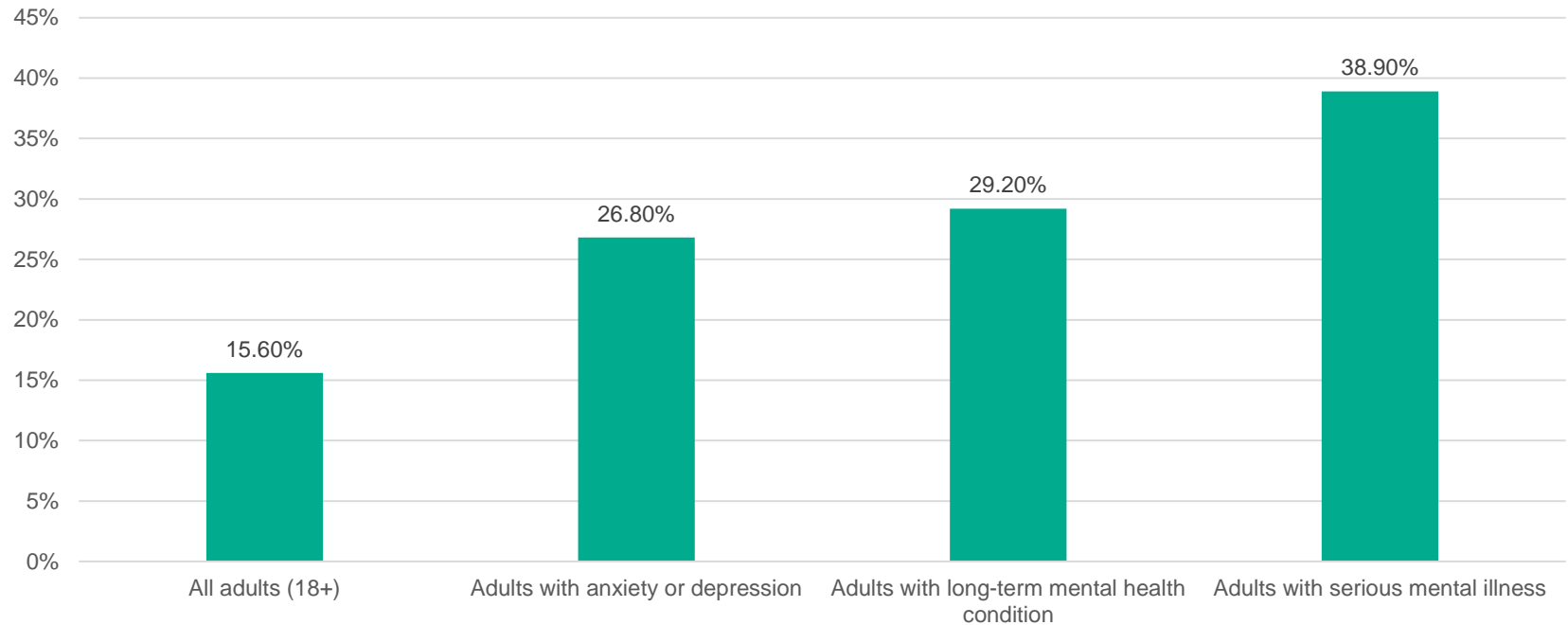
- Associations between:
 - alcohol use,
 - smoking,
 - mental health and wellbeing
- Raise awareness of these links
- Support services are available across London – additional route to link people to these services

Alcohol misuse is associated with mental health problems

- Co-morbidity in those attending mental health services and both drug and alcohol treatment services
- An estimated 44% of community mental health patients report problem drug use or harmful alcohol use in the previous year
- There is a strong association between alcohol misuse and suicide

Health Matters, 2016

Smoking rates are higher in people with mental health issues (GP Patient Survey)



Smoking and Wellbeing

- Most smokers want to quit...however most try to do so unaided...which is the least effective method
- Smokers who get the right support are three times as likely to quit
- People with mental health conditions want to quit smoking as much as other smokers
- Some professionals mistakenly believe that stopping smoking could negatively affect their patients' mental health - the opposite is true
- Smoking is a treatable dependency; a long-term, intermittent and relapsing condition that often begins in childhood

Health Matters, 2018; Tobacco Control Plan for England; London Clinical Senate

Smoking and Wellbeing (continued)

- Stopping smoking can help to improve symptoms of mental health problems
- Quitting is associated with improvements in mental health, including depression, anxiety and stress
- Applies to the general population as well those with mental health problems
- The majority of mental health provision takes place in the community – to reduce inequalities action is needed in these settings
- Primary care and community care providers are fundamental in delivering an integrated pathway, including identification, provision of advice, and access to effective support to quit

Health Matters, 2015; Tobacco Control Plan for England

Linking alcohol use to Good Thinking

- Raises the issue of alcohol use – has it become a routine?
- Provides information on low risk drinking based on the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines
- States the possible consequences of drinking too much and too often for health, happiness and wellbeing
- Outlines the benefits of reducing alcohol consumption to general health, appearance, how you feel, relationships, and work
- Gives links to tools to reduce alcohol use and sources of support

What MECC Link does and how it helps

MECC Link is:

- a resource to support the competence and confidence of users to deliver healthy lifestyle messages
- a source of information on services in each borough
- a place to find ways to encourage people to change their behaviour

...and it does this **all in one place.**

MECC Link - Simple Signposting to Better Health and Wellbeing

[Home](#) » London

Location view

Wellbeing view

[Smoking](#)

[Alcohol & Drugs](#)

[Mental Wellbeing](#)

[Healthy Diet and Healthy Weight](#)

[Physical Activity](#)

Why are we launching MECC Link in London?

- Range of professionals need to signpost or refer across London and beyond
- Gives accurate information - key links to self-care resources including telephone numbers, websites and apps
- Motivates the person to engage
- Supports self referrals

We have 33 London boroughs and 29 acute hospitals...where is the central service directory?

Want to know more?

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<https://www.mecclink.co.uk/>

(London pages launch in October 2019)

