

COVID-19 – a new way of living

***Manage, Maintain, Maximise***

The COVID-19 crisis is a new experience for professionals, people and the society as a whole. We can draw some knowledge from similar situations that we have dealt with in the past or we could look into the characteristics of the new daily norm imposed to us, analyse and try to generate some learning or advice.

What are some of those characteristics?

- 1) Encouragement to stay at home and reduce our social interactions
- 2) Priority to those who are vulnerable
- 3) Reduced or modified access to care

What are the principles we could use to assess those characteristics?

- 1) Manage risks
- 2) Maintain structure
- 3) Maximise the benefits of the new situation

Here I want to focus more on maximising the benefits for people with alcohol misuse.

- Social distancing is a norm for all, it is not a punishment and therefore the question “why me?” does not apply.
- The new rules of everyday life share some similarities with “Dry January”, it is a new reality for society.
- Staying indoors or self-isolating is a common challenge for all members of the household and could provide the opportunity to explore new activities and lifestyle changes that would be necessary anyway to develop and maintain abstinence or modified level of drinking. It is shared and therefore more easily achieved.
- Staying indoors provides the perfect opportunity to “avoid” high risk social situations.
- Staying indoors provides the opportunity to “cope” with “internal high risk situations” such as difficult emotions.

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