

**AVON PARTNERSHIP NHS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
UNANNOUNCED ALCOHOL TESTING PROGRAMME PROTOCOL**

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Document History					
Date of Review	Version no.	Date Approved	Next Review Date	Lead Responsible for Change	Nature of Change
11/01/17	2		11/01/19	██████████	Revision of information available to managers
15/11/17	3		15/11/19	██████████	Amended Test Form to include signature for voluntary consent
29/10/20	4	30/10/2020	28/10/22	██████████	Minor textual changes

ISO Controlled Document

AVON PARTNERSHIP NHS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

UNANNOUNCED ALCOHOL TESTING PROGRAMME

Introduction

The alcohol testing programme is a voluntary programme designed to assist the rehabilitation of employees who have had difficulties with alcohol. The aim of the programme is to support employees to maintain their recovery and to enable them to demonstrate to their employer that their work is not affected by alcohol. In most cases the employee will be encouraged and supported to maintain abstinence from alcohol; in some cases controlled drinking within recommended health limits may be the aim.

Employees may at the same time be receiving support and guidance from their GP or other organisations that support those with alcohol problems. This programme is not a substitute for that support but aims to assist the employee to remain in stable employment.

The programme is only offered to employees who have accepted that they have difficulties due to alcohol. It is not a testing programme for all employees. The employee must give their consent to enter the programme and can withdraw from the programme at any time.

Where a manager is concerned that an employee, who is accepted on this programme, may be under the influence of alcohol while at work, they should take appropriate immediate action in line with the policies of their organisation.

Entry to the Programme

Employees who are seen in the Occupational Health Service and recognise that they have an alcohol problem, or are recovering from an alcohol problem, can be offered the programme. The programme is relevant for employees who have been dependent on alcohol or drinking in a harmful way, especially if this has affected their work.

Programme Content

This is a programme of unannounced breath testing for alcohol and blood markers of high alcohol intake. The employee will be asked to come to the Occupational Health Service for breath alcohol tests. In addition they may also be asked to have other blood tests that give an indication of alcohol use. These tests may include the following:

- Blood alcohol test
- Liver function tests
- Gamma GT test
- Full blood count
- Carbohydrate deficient transferrin test

These tests are not likely to be required on each occasion the employee attends for a breath alcohol test. The occupational physician will advise when these additional blood tests are required.

Procedure

- The purpose and conditions of the alcohol programme are explained to the employee by an occupational physician.
- The employee must nominate a responsible manager who will act as the responsible point of contact for the employee for the purposes of the programme. The responsible manager will normally be the employee's line-manager or immediate superior. The responsible manager must agree to act in this capacity. The responsible manager and the occupational physician must agree that the programme should be offered to the employee.
- The employee is given written details of the programme conditions and asked to sign the consent form (appendix 1).
- Clinical staff members are informed that the finding of any alcohol in the breath in an unannounced test will constitute a positive result and be taken as indicating unfitness to work.
- Non-clinical staff-members will agree with their responsible manager at the start of the programme the level of breath alcohol above which the employee will be considered unfit for work. For example, the level chosen might be the same as indicates unfitness to drive. This level is greater than 35 micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath (equal to a blood alcohol level in excess of 80mg per 100 millilitres of blood). Other levels may be agreed, but cannot be changed after the commencement of the programme. Non-clinical staff-members are informed that any finding of alcohol in the breath at a level exceeding the agreed limit will constitute a positive result and be taken as indicating unfitness to work.
- The employee is called for an alcohol breath test at unannounced times whilst at work. He/she should attend for the test within 3 hours of being contacted. The employee will only be called to attend whilst at work. Employees will not be expected to attend while on leave.
- A breath alcohol test is carried out by an occupational health nurse or physician. If the result is positive (i.e. any alcohol detected in the breath) the test is repeated 20 minutes later and the lower of the two readings is recorded on the record sheet, which is signed by the employee and the occupational health nurse or physician and retained in the employee's occupational health record. Additional blood tests may be requested at some appointments by the responsible occupational physician.
- If the alcohol test yields a positive result, as defined above, the responsible manager is informed that the employee has given a positive test and is unfit for work. The alcohol level itself will not be revealed to the manager without the consent of the employee.
- If the employee does not attend for the test when requested, the responsible manager is informed. The responsible manager should then consider the circumstances that have led to non-attendance and decide if the employee should be stopped from working.

- If the test is negative no action is taken.
- The employee may withdraw from the programme at any time by notifying Occupational Health in writing. The responsible manager will be informed if this occurs.
- If the employee withdraws from the programme immediately after a positive breath test, the responsible manager will be informed that the employee has given a positive test result, has withdrawn from the programme and has been advised not to work. The alcohol level itself will not be revealed to the responsible manager without the consent of the employee.
- If a breath alcohol test result is greater than 35ug/100ml of breath, or a blood alcohol level in excess of 80mg per 100 millilitres of blood, the employee will be advised that the test result indicates that he/she is likely to be over the drink-driving limit and he/she should not drive home. If he/she is seen driving shortly after leaving Occupational Health, the police will be informed.
- The employee will have periodic appointments with an occupational physician to review the results and check that he/she is receiving any additional support that is required. The occupational physician will also, with the consent of the employee, provide reports on fitness to work to the manager/employer.

AGREEMENT FOR UNANNOUNCED BREATH AND BLOOD TESTING PROGRAMME

Name: _____ Date of birth: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Contact telephone number _____

- have read and agree to the conditions of the alcohol testing programme.
- I agree to notify the occupational health department of days I am on leave and not available for testing at least 7 days in advance.
- I agree that when I am at work, I will attend the occupational health department within 3 hours of being contacted for a breath alcohol test.
- I agree to have the following blood tests if requested by the occupational physician.
 - Blood alcohol
 - Liver function test
 - Gamma GT test
 - Full blood count
 - Carbohydrate deficient transferrin test
- I agree to my responsible manager being informed if I take a test which yields a positive result, as defined by the values below. I understand that the alcohol level itself will not be released to my responsible manager without my consent.
- I understand that failure to attend will be reported to my responsible manager.
- Level of breath alcohol agreed with my responsible manager as constituting a positive result:

Clinical Staff-member > ZERO ug/100ml breath

Non-Clinical Staff-member ug/100ml breath

Signed _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Name of Responsible Manager : _____

Signature of Responsible Manager: _____

Copy given to employee?

YES		NO	
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AVON PARTNERSHIP NHS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

UNANNOUNCED BREATH ALCOHOL TEST RESULT FORM

Name of employee being tested:

Date of birth:

Address:
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Date of test:

Name of person performing the test:

Name of breathalyser meter used:

TEST RESULTS

Test result ug/100ml of breath

Repeat test result after 20 min (if first test positive) ug/100ml of breath

Accepted test result (lower of above two tests) ug/100ml of breath

Clinical Practitioner

Name of person performing the test:

Signature of person performing the test:

Employee

I accept that the result recorded above is the result recorded by the breath alcohol meter.

Signature of employee being tested:

Date:

AVON PARTNERSHIP NHS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

UNANNOUNCED ALCOHOL TESTING PROGRAMME

CONDITIONS OF THE PROGRAMME

INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES ENTERING THE PROGRAMME

The purpose of the programme

The alcohol testing programme is a voluntary programme designed to assist the rehabilitation of employees who have had difficulties with alcohol. The aim of the programme is to support you to maintain your recovery and to enable you to demonstrate to your employer that your work is not affected by alcohol.

Your employer wants to support you to overcome any difficulties with alcohol, and encourages you to seek help and support from your GP and other organisations as required. For many employees this programme will take place alongside other support you are already receiving.

This is not a testing programme that is required of all employees and is only offered to employees who recognise that they have had difficulties due to alcohol. You must give your consent to enter the programme and can withdraw from the programme at any time.

What the programme involves

This is a programme of unannounced breath testing for alcohol and blood markers of high alcohol intake. You will be asked to come to the occupational health service for breath alcohol tests. In addition to breath alcohol testing you may also be asked to have other blood tests that give an indication of alcohol use. These may include the following:

- Blood alcohol test
- Liver function test
- Gamma GT test
- Full blood count
- Carbohydrate deficient transferrin test

Conditions of the programme

Any employee starting the programme must accept the following conditions:

- You must give your written consent to agree to these conditions.
- Your manager must agree that you can enter the programme
- You agree to attend the Occupational Health Service within 3 hours of being contacted for an unannounced test. You will only be expected to attend during times you are working. You are not expected to attend when you are off duty or on annual leave.

- You agree to notify the occupational health service of periods you will not be available for testing due to annual leave.
- You agree that your responsible manager can be informed if you have a positive breath alcohol test, or if you fail to attend for a test as requested. If you are unable to attend for a test you should tell your manager the reason why. Your manager will only be informed that a test is positive, in other words that alcohol has been detected or is above an agreed fitness for work limit. Your further consent would be required for details of the level of alcohol detected to be given to your manager.
- If you are a clinical staff member (i.e. you perform clinical work directly with patients) you agree that you will be deemed unfit for work and your responsible manager will be informed if any alcohol is found in your breath in an unannounced test taken while you are at work.
- If you are a non-clinical staff member (i.e. you do not perform clinical work with patients) you undertake in advance of the start of the programme to agree with your responsible manager a level of breath alcohol which will constitute a positive test result. You agree that you will be deemed unfit for work and your responsible manager will be informed if an unannounced breath alcohol test detects alcohol in your breath at or in excess of the agreed level
- You agree that your manager will be informed of a positive breath test result straight away. You understand that the alcohol level itself will not be revealed to the manager without your consent.
- You understand that your employer wants to support you to overcome any difficulties with alcohol and this programme is designed to help you. However, if you breach your employer's policies on alcohol this could affect your continued employment or result in disciplinary action.
- You understand that you can withdraw from the programme at any time. If you have just given a positive breath test and decide to withdraw from the programme you will be advised by the occupational health doctor or nurse that you are not fit for work. If you insist on returning to work your manager will be informed you have withdrawn from the programme and been advised not to work.