

Where to Get Help: UK Support Directory

A practical directory of trusted UK services, helplines and next steps.

This Support Hub guide is designed to give clear, non-judgemental information you can return to at your own pace. It focuses on understanding the person as well as the substance, recognising risk and knowing where to find appropriate help.

GP and local drug/alcohol services

Asking for help does not require somebody to have reached a crisis point. A GP or local drug and alcohol service can discuss options, and national charities can provide confidential information, peer support and family guidance. In emergencies involving collapse, seizure, severe breathing difficulty or suspected overdose, call 999.

FRANK and NHS information

Asking for help does not require somebody to have reached a crisis point. A GP or local drug and alcohol service can discuss options, and national charities can provide confidential information, peer support and family guidance. In emergencies involving collapse, seizure, severe breathing difficulty or suspected overdose, call 999.

Family support services

Choose calmer moments for important conversations and use specific observations rather than accusations. Support can include listening, helping someone contact a service or attending an appointment. Boundaries protect safety and wellbeing; they are different from trying to control another adult's recovery.

SMART Recovery and mutual aid

Recovery can include medical care, psychological therapy, specialist drug and alcohol services, mutual aid, peer support, practical changes and rebuilding daily life. A lapse is information about triggers and support needs, not proof that all previous progress has disappeared.

Emergency and urgent help

Asking for help does not require somebody to have reached a crisis point. A GP or local drug and alcohol service can discuss options, and national charities can provide confidential information, peer support and family guidance. In emergencies involving collapse, seizure, severe breathing difficulty or suspected overdose, call 999.

Reflection

What am I noticing? What need might the substance be meeting? What is becoming harder because of the pattern? What is one safer or more supportive next step?

Books I recommend exploring

Different books speak to different people. These are starting points rather than a reading list you have to complete.

Changing for Good

James O. Prochaska, John C. Norcross & Carlo C. DiClemente

Explains stages of change and why motivation often develops gradually rather than appearing all at once.

Beyond Addiction

Jeffrey Foote, Carrie Wilkens, Nicole Kosanke & Stephanie Higgs

Especially useful for family members. It focuses on evidence-informed communication, reinforcement and encouraging change without confrontation.

In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts

Gabor Maté

A compassionate exploration of addiction, suffering and human connection. Best read as one perspective alongside mainstream clinical guidance.

Places to find help and support

NHS / GP	A GP can discuss alcohol or drug use, treatment options and local services. NHS information also explains that family members should seek support for themselves.
FRANK	Confidential drug information, advice and local-service finder. Helpline: 0300 123 6600. In an emergency after drugs or alcohol, call 999.
Adfam	UK charity focused on families affected by another person's drinking, drug use or gambling. Family members can seek help in their own right.
Addiction Family Support	Telephone and email support for people affected by somebody else's drug or alcohol misuse. Helpline: 0300 888 3853.
Families Anonymous	UK-wide peer fellowship for relatives and friends affected by drug or drug-related behavioural problems. Helpline: 020 7498 4680.
SMART Recovery / Family & Friends	Practical recovery tools and meetings. The Family & Friends programme focuses on wellbeing, communication, boundaries and reducing unhelpful enabling.
WithYou	Free confidential support for people experiencing drug or alcohol difficulties and for families, including webchat and face-to-face services in relevant areas.
Release	Confidential advice about drugs and drug law for people who use drugs and their families. Helpline: 020 7324 2989.
Alcohol support	For alcohol-related concerns, NHS-listed support includes Alcoholics Anonymous and SMART Recovery; family support includes Al-Anon, SMART Family & Friends and Adfam.
Gambling-related harm	Where addiction also involves gambling, NHS specialist gambling treatment and GamCare support are available. GamCare's National Gambling Helpline is 0808 8020 133, 24/7.

Safety note

If someone is unconscious, has abnormal or very slow breathing, blue or grey lips, a seizure, severe chest pain, has collapsed or you suspect an overdose, call 999. If physical dependence may be present, seek professional advice before abruptly stopping alcohol, benzodiazepines or other substances that can produce significant

withdrawal.

Educational resource - not a substitute for individual medical, psychological, safeguarding or emergency care.