groundswell
inclusive solutions to homelessness

ACTION UPDATE
Drugs, Alcohol & Wellbeing

Fold 3

2 sides of the same coin?

- **Alcohol and drugs are often dealt with separately from mental wellbeing but they are so closely linked its better to think of it as one issue.**
- **Guidance to the NHS says health services should look at both together.**
- **If you're feeling a bit (or even a lot!) unwell its quite normal to think of using alcohol or drugs to feel better but it's a short term solution and makes things worse in the long run.**

Fold 2

If you've got issues with alcohol, drugs and mental health, its likely that at times life can feel out of control.

If you can **use the time when things are going better to make some plans** it puts you back in control. Its your life so you should be in charge.

This guide is a start. Its got a plan for a crisis which is really important because when you need it most you might not be in a position to explain it.

Its also got a plan for how things can get better following the 5 Ways to Wellbeing.

This is just a start. Do you own research, become an expert in your own health. Talk to others who've been in similar situations.

Take back control.

Fold 1

What do others need to know about me when things are bad?

My triggers to relapse?	What to do in a crisis?	Information others might need.
People.....	What helps.....	Medical conditions .....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
Places.....	What doesn't help.....	GP details .....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
Things.....	Who helps.....	Anything else? .....
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Groundswell Homeless Health Peer Advocacy

Do you need help getting to health appointments in London? Groundswell Peer Advocates supported people to over 2500 health appointments last year. Ask a key worker to refer you or get in touch.

Phone: **03000 039 600**
Email: **HHPA@groundswell.org.uk**
Website: www.groundswell.org.uk

Trust for London
Tackling poverty and inequality

Follow us on Twitter @ItsGroundswell

ACTION UPDATE!
DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND WELLBEING

Bob's Top Tips

Bob's been homeless, he's worked hard to overcome mental health and addiction issues and twice been supported by dual diagnosis services. Now he uses his experience in his work for Groundswell. Here's what worked for him:

It takes two. With a dual diagnosis it will take at least twice the work and effort, you will have to manage both conditions. **There are no short cuts but the rewards are twice as sweet.** Make sure you are getting the help and support for your addiction **and** your mental health condition. Make it clear to anybody involved in your care that both are equally important.

Medication. Taking your prescriptions at the time and frequency they are meant to be taken will play a key role in the treatment for dual diagnosis. They can reduce symptoms and prevent relapses.

If it's not working change it. Sometimes we can get stuck in a bad rut because it's easy or we don't want to upset the apple cart but remember **"if nothing changes everything stays the same"** and it time to put yourself first.

Keep a routine. Making a **simple plan** of what it is you need to do day to day that you can build on. Find an **activity** you enjoy and put it in your diary. This will help to rebuild confidence and lift your self-esteem and give you a purpose.

Put pen to paper. It can be a great help to put things down on paper it will help to **clear your head** of any thoughts or fears you may have. More importantly it will give you a clearer perspective on your thoughts, goals and any hurdles you have to overcome. What is it that makes **you** happy? What do **you** dream of doing? What do **you** want to achieve? What are **your** solutions? What do people need to know about you in a crisis?"

Talk, talk, talk. Get it off your chest! Find a **support group** in your local area sharing what's going on for you and may help others to know they are not alone."

Connect
Have three or more friends you see regularly. If you don't have trusted people in you life think about groups you could attend & activities you could do to-

Be active
Exercise makes you feel good. Go for a walk, run, play a game or do some gardening. If you're using homelessness services they might well want some help to make the space nicer.

Take notice
Savor the moment. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. You can learn a lot from this if you really try if something feels good do it more!

Keep learning
Doing something new builds confidence and it's fun.

Give
Volunteer, maybe join a community group. It feels good, gets you out and shows you what you **can** do.

The 5 Ways to Wellbeing is an evidence based tool developed by the New Economics Foundation: www.fivewaystowellbeing.org/

5 Ways to Wellbeing—Its about doing stuff!!!
Use this space record how your going to do it

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