

**THE INVOLVEMENT OF NURSES AND MIDWIVES IN  
SCREENING AND BRIEF INTERVENTIONS FOR HAZARDOUS AND  
HARMFUL USE OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER PSYCHOACTIVE  
SUBSTANCES**

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## FOREWORD

Psychoactive substance use continues to be a major public health and social concern, and individuals, families and communities have become more vulnerable to it. It is estimated that around 200 million people globally use illicit substances. Hazardous or harmful alcohol use accounts for 4.5% of the global burden of disease (WHO 2009) and is responsible for 3.8% of all deaths worldwide (WHO 2007). WHO has, for many years, been advocating screening and brief interventions for hazardous and harmful drinking using the 'Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test' (AUDIT) instrument. More recently, the tool 'Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test' (ASSIST) for use in primary health care settings to detect hazardous and harmful use of all psychoactive substances, including tobacco, cannabis, alcohol and stimulants is being promoted.

Nurses and midwives are the largest group of health professionals in most countries and are in the best position to contribute to the interventions related to psychoactive substance use. In recognition of this fact, a literature review to explore where to strengthen this contribution was initiated as a collaborative effort between the Management of Substance Abuse (MSB) and Health Professions Networks, Nursing and Midwifery (HPN).

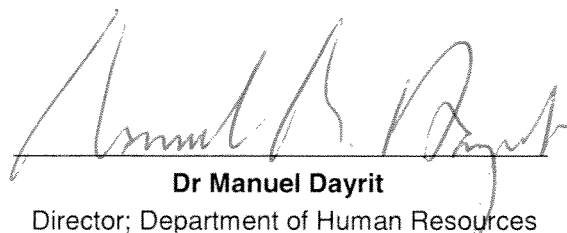
This research work was able to generate recommendations in the areas of policy, education, practice and research so that contribution of nurses and midwives can be strengthened. This work is important in contributing to WHO mental health GAP Action Programme (mhGAP) to scale up care for mental health and neurological and substance use disorders in primary health care settings.



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# **THE INVOLVEMENT OF NURSES AND MIDWIVES IN SCREENING AND BRIEF INTERVENTIONS FOR HAZARDOUS AND HARMFUL USE OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES**

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