Alcohol
Case selection

- Alcohol withdrawal
- Advanced complications of alcohol dependence
- Comorbid conditions:
  - nicotine dependence
  - +/- depression or anxiety
‘Case selection’

- History
- Examination: Physical and mental health
- Investigations: e.g. LFTs, ultrasound, viral serology
- FORMULATE DIAGNOSES
  - Medical, substance use related, psychiatric
History presentation

- Patterns of substance use etc
- Presence of dependence
  - If present, severity of any withdrawals
- Complications/comorbidity
- Risk factors etc
- Past exposure to and success with different treatments etc
Case presentation

- Use technical language appropriately
- Explore biological, psychological and social factors
  - Risk factors
  - (Precipitating)
  - Perpetuating
  - Coexisting conditions
Learning outcomes will include...

- Making a diagnosis (ICD 10) for each substance used:
  - Hazardous
  - Harmful (≈ DSM IV abuse)
  - Dependent

- Mutually exclusive diagnoses
Dependence

• Three or more of the following criteria:
  – Compulsion to drink
  – Loss of control
  – Tolerance
  – Alcohol takes priority over all other activities
  – Withdrawal symptoms
  – Persistent drinking despite harm

[ICD 10]
Topic presentations

- Epidemiology
- Prevention/early intervention
- Treatment
  - non dependent and dependent drinkers
  - withdrawal
  - complications
- Relapse prevention
- Harm reduction
Topics: treatment of withdrawal

- Who is suitable for outpatient detox?
- Overview of diazepam regimes for outpatient or inpatient detox
- Preventing and recognising Wernicke's
Potential ebm presentations

• Role of blood tests in diagnosis and assessment:
  – What proportion of persons drinking 6 standard drinks per day or more in GP setting has an elevated GGT?

• Evidence base for pharmacotherapies

• Role of disadvantage in predisposing to alcohol dependence
Management plan

• Who benefits from relapse prevention medications?
• Pros and cons of acamprosate, naltrexone and disulfiram
• Non pharmacological measures
• Management of comorbidity (eg depression)