

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

# Comprehensive Substance Use Policy for Indian Workplaces

A Psychologically Informed, Legally Sound Approach

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

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## Programme Overview

This programme addresses the pervasive impact of alcohol and tobacco in Indian workplaces, moving beyond outdated punitive measures. We will equip your organisation with a modern, health-focused framework to foster a safer and more productive environment for all employees.

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the prevalence and impact of substance use within the Indian workplace context, recognising its effects on productivity and employee well-being.
- ✓ Develop a robust policy framework that prioritises employee health and support over punitive actions, ensuring legal compliance and ethical practice.
- ✓ Empower managers with the skills to identify potential substance use issues and respond with empathy and appropriate support strategies.
- ✓ Establish clear and accessible referral pathways to internal and external resources, including Employee Assistance Programmes and specialised treatment facilities.
- ✓ Integrate existing government initiatives like the Vimukti programme to provide comprehensive support for employees facing substance use challenges.
- ✓ Implement effective return-to-work strategies that support employee reintegration and prevent relapse, ensuring sustained recovery and workplace safety.

#### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for HR Directors, Legal Counsel, Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs), and Health & Safety professionals seeking to enhance their organisation's approach to substance use.

## Programme Content

### 1. Substance Use in Indian Workplaces: Data and Context

This section will delve into the current landscape of substance use in Indian workplaces, presenting relevant data and contextualising the challenges faced by organisations. We will explore the economic and human costs associated with alcohol and tobacco, highlighting why outdated, punitive approaches are ineffective. Understanding these realities is the first step towards implementing a more humane and effective strategy that benefits both employees and the organisation.

 **Activity: Group discussion on observed prevalence and impact within participants' organisations.**

### 2. Policy Framework: From Punitive to Health-Led

We will guide you in transitioning from a traditional, punitive policy to a progressive, health-led approach. This involves crafting policies that emphasise support, early intervention, and rehabilitation, aligning with ethical best practices and Indian legal statutes. A health-led policy not only protects the organisation but also fosters a culture of care and trust, encouraging employees to seek help without fear of reprisal.

 **Activity: Comparative analysis of existing policies and identification of areas for health-led transformation.**

### 3. Manager Training: Recognition and Compassionate Response

Managers play a crucial role in identifying and supporting employees. This section focuses on equipping them with the skills to recognise potential signs of substance use and to respond with empathy and professionalism. We will cover communication strategies, setting boundaries, and understanding when and how to escalate concerns appropriately, ensuring a supportive rather than accusatory environment.

 **Activity: Role-playing scenarios for managers on how to approach an employee with suspected substance use concerns.**

#### 4. Referral Pathways: EAP, Treatment, and Vimukti Integration

Establishing clear referral pathways is vital for providing timely and effective support. We will explore how to integrate existing Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), connect employees with appropriate treatment facilities, and leverage government initiatives like the Vimukti programme. This integrated approach ensures that employees have access to a comprehensive network of care when they need it most.

 **Activity: Mapping existing organisational support resources and identifying gaps for referral pathway enhancement.**

#### 5. Return to Work After Substance Treatment

Supporting employees as they return to work after undergoing substance treatment is critical for their sustained recovery and workplace integration. This section will outline strategies for phased returns, ongoing support mechanisms, and creating a non-stigmatising environment. A well-managed return-to-work process demonstrates the organisation's commitment to employee well-being and fosters loyalty.

 **Activity: Developing a template for a confidential return-to-work support plan.**

#### 6. The Indian Legal Framework and Compliance

Navigating the legal aspects of substance use policies is paramount. This section will provide an overview of relevant Indian laws and regulations pertaining to workplace substance use, employee rights, and employer responsibilities. Ensuring compliance protects the organisation from legal challenges and reinforces a commitment to fair and ethical employment practices.

 **Activity: Q&A session with legal experts on specific compliance queries.**



## Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Review and update existing substance use policy to incorporate health-led principles and legal compliance.	HR/Legal Department	Month 1	Ensure policy clearly defines support mechanisms alongside disciplinary procedures.
Develop and pilot a comprehensive manager training module on substance use recognition and response.	HR/Training Department	Month 2	Incorporate role-playing exercises and resource information for managers.
Map and document all available internal and external referral pathways, including EAP and government programs.	HR/Wellness Committee	Month 1	Create a centralised, easily accessible resource guide for employees and managers.
Communicate the updated policy and available support resources to all employees through multiple channels.	Communications Department	Month 2	Utilise intranet, emails, and town hall meetings for broad dissemination.
Establish a confidential process for employees seeking support or disclosing substance use issues.	HR Department	Month 3	Ensure clear protocols for privacy and non-retaliation are established and communicated.
Implement a structured return-to-work programme for employees who have undergone treatment.	HR/Line Management	Quarter 1	Focus on phased integration, ongoing check-ins, and support without stigma.

## About Manas



### Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

### Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

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