

# What is IBA - and does it really work?



James Morris, Alcohol Academy

# What is IBA?

- IBA = 'Identification and Brief Advice'
- IBA is a 'brief intervention' – a short interaction between a practitioner and a client aimed at motivating them to reduce their drinking to lower risk levels
- Sometimes known as 'Screening and Brief Intervention' (SBI)

# What is IBA?

- **Identification:** using a validated screening tool\* to identify 'risky' drinking

*I usually ask some questions\* about alcohol use here. Are you be OK to go through some now?*

Um...  
OK

great

\*E.g. the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT)

# What is IBA?

- **Brief Advice:** Feedback on the client's score (if at risk), followed by offer of structured brief advice

*“Your answers indicate you are drinking at a level that could be harmful to your health.. How do you feel about that?”*

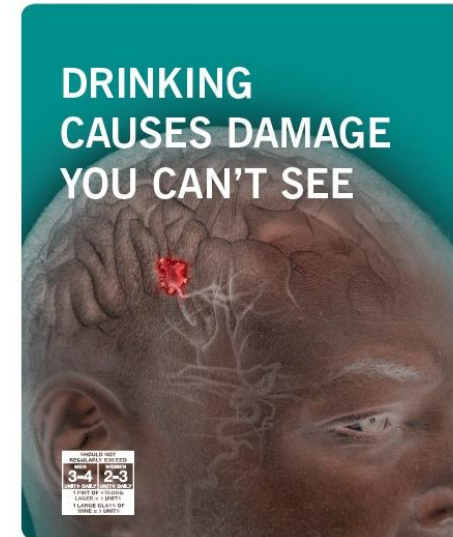
Really...?  
...How do  
you mean?



OK,  
well...

# Brief advice

- Explaining units/guidelines
- Giving feedback (risk level)
- Offering information/advice\*
- Establishing goals or strategies to cut down
- Empathy & encouragement!



\*N.B: Practitioners should in fact be careful when offering advice – people respond best when they are encouraged to come up with their own reasons and ways to cut down

# Who is it for?

## IBA is intended for :

- ‘Increasing’ or ‘higher risk’ drinkers identified by screening tool (i.e. not guessed)

## IBA is **NOT** *intended* for

- Dependent drinkers
  - Should be offered a referral to local alcohol treatment services

# What its NOT

## IBA is NOT:

- Pushing or telling someone
- Really about 'advising' too much – people respond best when they have been able to decide what they want to do themselves



## But IBA IS:

- Offered to someone who is willing to discuss their alcohol use
- Non-judgmental and non-labeling

# Who should deliver IBA?

- Anyone who has a suitable *opportunity*:
  - Ideally a 1-2-1 environment
  - Enough time for a short discussion (5-10 minutes)
  - Can offer ‘brief advice’, referral or appropriate information / materials
- You can help people make a positive change!





That's nice... but does it really work?



# A few of the many studies

- IBA (i.e alcohol brief interventions) has a 30+ year international evidence base
- Brief advice can reduce weekly drinking by between 13% and 34% (Whitlock *et al*, 2004)
- Risky drinkers who receive brief advice are twice as likely to moderate their drinking 6 to 12 months after an intervention (Wilk *et al*, 1997).
- Over 56 RCT studies showing effectiveness, and now SIPS...

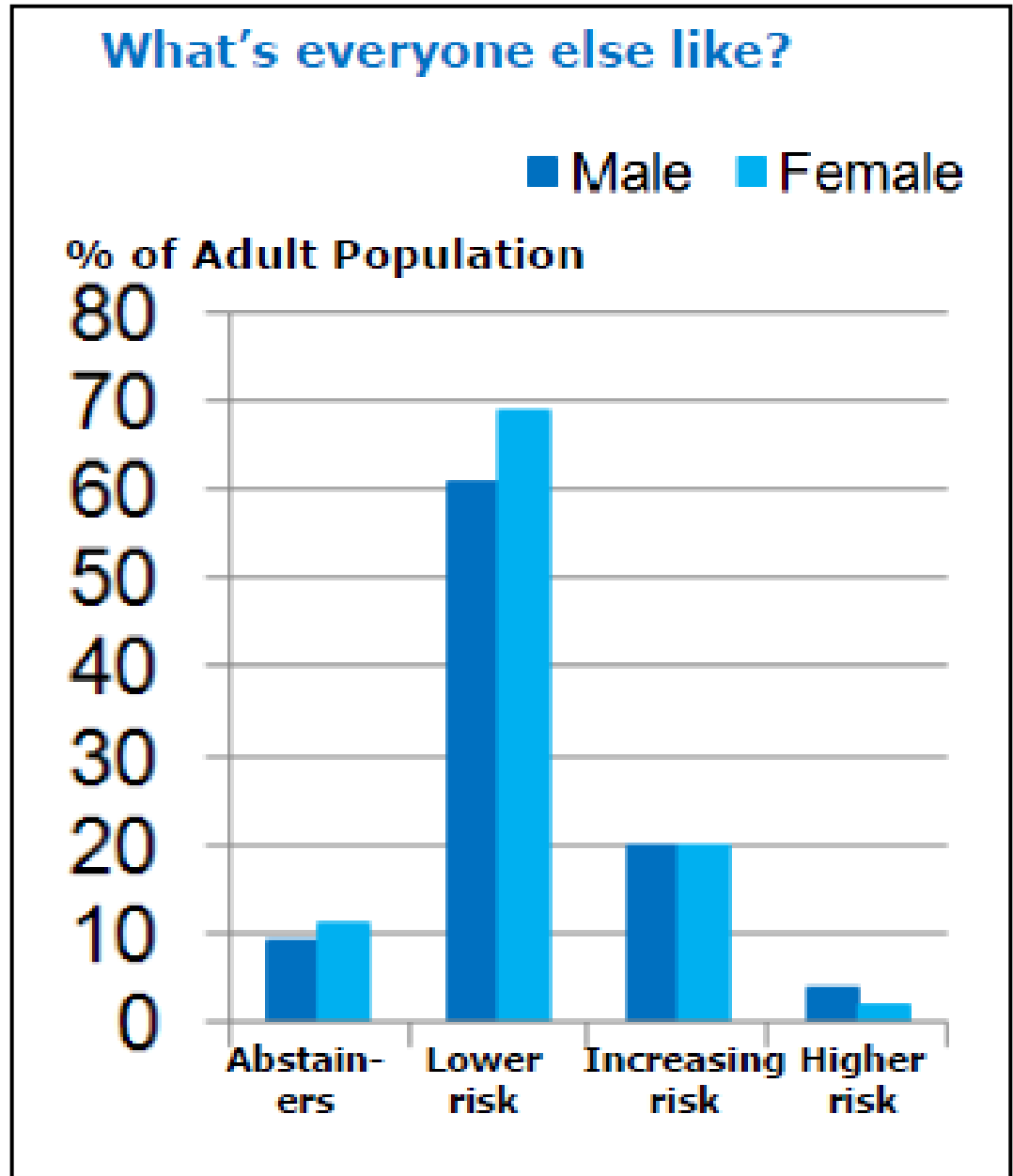


- £4 million DH funded study into brief interventions across Primary Care, A&E, Probation
- Tested different levels of 'brief intervention':
  - Identification + feedback & leaflet
  - Identification + feedback & leaflet + Brief Advice (i.e IBA)
  - Identification + feedback & leaflet + BA & 20 mins counselling
- All brief intervention approaches worked, but often not a significant difference in cost-benefit
- However some settings for different risk levels may be worth extra/lifestyle approaches
- **BUT Identification and feedback + leaflet is key**
- Findings summaries at [www.sips.iop.kcl.ac.uk](http://www.sips.iop.kcl.ac.uk)

# Not everyone drinks the same?

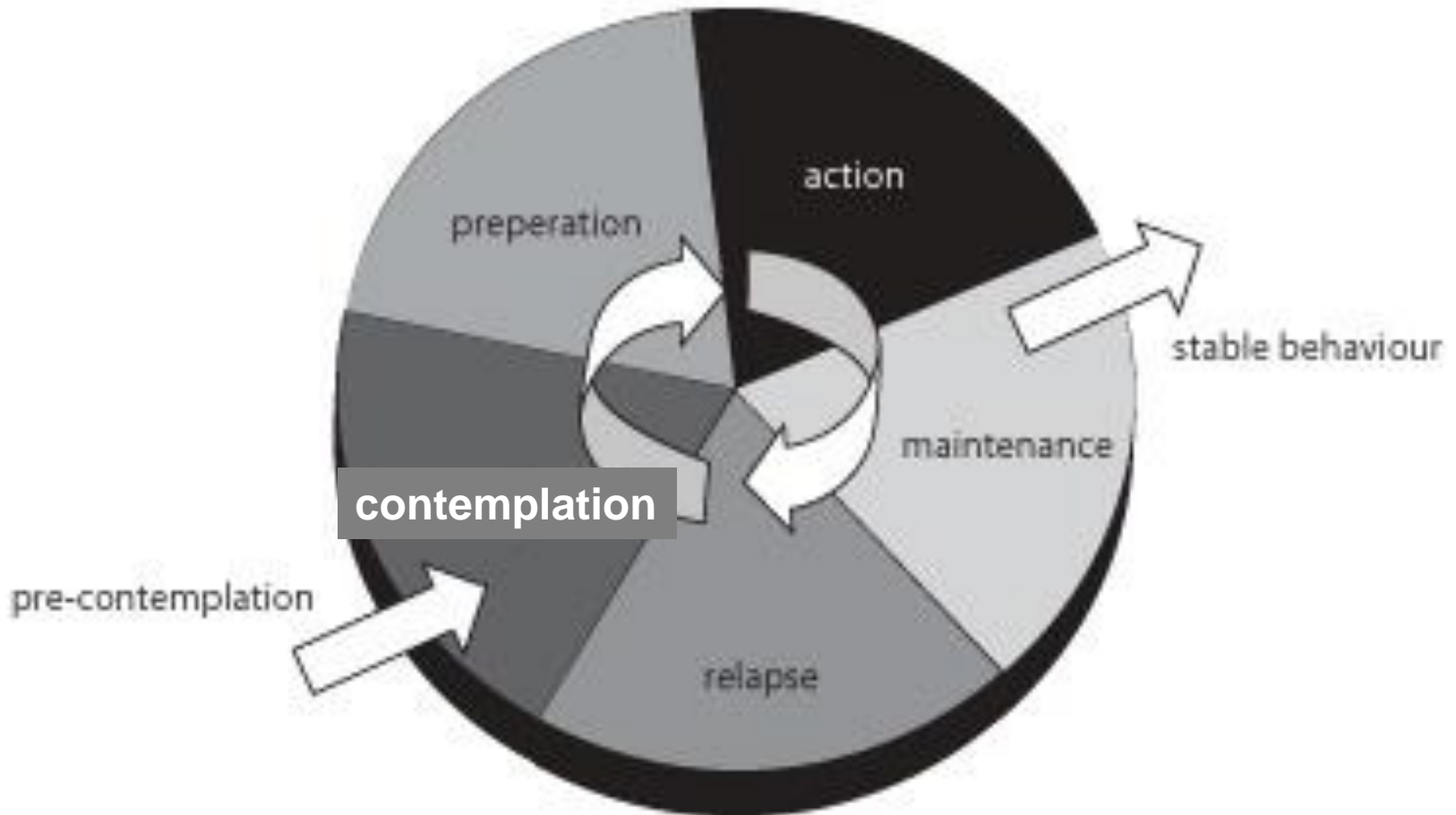
## Feedback:

Many at-risk drinkers believe most people drink the same as them, as many of their friends will be likely to drink the same



# Stages of Change model

(Adopted from Prochaska and DiClemente)



Stages of change model

# But it won't work for everyone

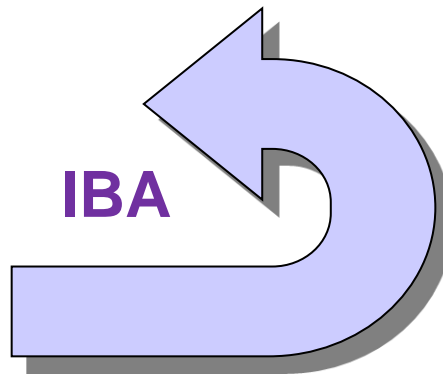
- Some researchers cite the Number Needed to Treat (NNT) is 1 in 8
- That means 1 in 8 risky drinkers who receive IBA will reduce to lower risk levels
- However, some others may reduce their use, just not to a lower risk level or not straight away
- 1 in 8 may be a underestimate, as may 'sow the seed' for later change\*
- Even so, 1 in 8 is cost-effective and compares favorably with smoking interventions (1 in 20)

# IBA is needed!

- 'Prevention is better than cure'
- IBA is a real chance to prevent serious alcohol problems developing



Increasing risk...



# Thank you!

[www.alcoholpolicy.net](http://www.alcoholpolicy.net) - news and analysis

[www.alcoholiba.com](http://www.alcoholiba.com) - IBA news and links

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