

QC55 Rob's abbreviated formulation – example response

Rob is a 35-year-old married man who recently became a father (son aged four months), presenting with daily alcohol use (up to 17 standard drinks) over the past six months which, until recently, was concealed from his partner. Last alcohol use was approximately one week ago, with the decision to cease prompted by a near miss motor vehicle accident while driving under the influence of alcohol. Physical health has declined in recent months with Rob experiencing concentration difficulties, fatigue, reduced appetite and sleep maintenance issues. Alcohol withdrawal and health checks are currently under the management of Rob's GP, to good effect.

Factors which have contributed to vulnerability for alcohol use include a family history of heavy paternal alcohol use, the death of Rob's brother by stillbirth (Rob aged five years), and early adulthood development of positive expectations of alcohol in relieving negative emotional states. The distal precipitant for Rob's recent escalation in alcohol use was his intensifying stress regarding possible birth complications, and the ongoing welfare of his son. Since this time, Rob's drinking is triggered whenever he returns to the family environment (especially in the car when returning home from work). The key maintaining factors for Rob's drinking are the emotionally calming effect he experiences when drinking, and avoidance of alcohol withdrawal symptoms. Rob's stress in relation to his son's health is the cause of his need for distress reduction. Due to tolerance and avoidance of any physical withdrawal state, the amount Rob drinks has increased to achieve a calming effect, resulting in physical health issues and further decline of overall coping. Rob's positive expectancies surrounding alcohol have resulted in impaired development of adaptive coping responses.

Protective factors for Rob include achievement of a one week early remission with GP support, motivation to engage with treatment, active support from his wife, and ongoing stability in the domains of employment, housing and finances.