

ScottishdrugsForum

Annual Report 2006 2007

SCOTTISH Drugs Forum is the national voluntary sector membership-based drugs policy and information agency. We work in partnership to reduce drugs harm in Scotland through:

- Improving awareness and understanding of drugs use issues among all sections of the community
- Developing, promoting and influencing improvements to the range and quality of services to all drug users

SDF networks across a vast spectrum of organisations in Scotland, the UK and Europe in order to learn and assess information on best practice for harm reduction and develop consensus on how best to respond to areas of concern.

This is achieved through:

- membership of organisations such as local Drug and Alcohol Action Teams
- liaison with MSPs, civil servants and political parties
- attendance, participation and organisation of conferences, seminars and working groups
- engaging and empowering drug users and communities affected by drug use
- regular briefings and consultations with our wide membership base

Chair's Report

THERE is a more positive feel to the general direction of drug policy in Scotland, reflecting recent changes in the Scottish political landscape as a result of the Holyrood elections earlier this year.

It is certainly heartening that the new Scottish Government has articulated the links between "drink, drugs and deprivation" and that its stated aim of tackling health inequalities chimes very closely with SDF's agenda over the last few years.

In recognising the impact of poverty and deprivation on the scale of Scotland's drug problem, the new Administration has also pledged the importance of early, sustained intervention and support for vulnerable families.

Tackling the range of social ills in Scotland – not just problem drug use – in this way has to be greatly welcomed, for it is crystal clear that vast swathes of people in crisis are burdened with parallel social and economic difficulties which compound the chaos and complexity of their lives.

On drugs specifically, the Ministerial confirmation that methadone is to remain a major component of the drugs treatment programme in Scotland is also significant. More than ever before, the focus is now to be placed on the delivery of the wraparound services essential for substitute prescribing to play its role to the fullest.

This more holistic view of care for people with drug problems embraces a wide spectrum of disciplines ranging from psycho-social, family, housing to education/training support. It is a tall and expensive order and there will be many challenges ahead to ensure the funding, create the cross-boundary structures and develop the working practices required to make this vital area of work a successful reality.

Signs are also encouraging for Hepatitis C prevention and treatment, with the second phase of the Action Plan due to come on stream in the near future and £45 million pledged for implementation between 2008 and 2011.

Awareness of the role of service users in the development of effective treatment and care grows apace. However, efforts must be made to guard against User

Involvement becoming an empty "tick-box" exercise, rather than genuine consultation leading to service improvement.

Similarly, providing flexible person-centred treatment is proving to be a challenge in some areas which have opted for centralised structures, despite the advent of the Scottish Government's Quality Standards.

My report is being written as the UK and Scottish Governments respectively prepare new drug strategies.

For Scotland, these are opportunities to set out clearly a vision of how to make a sustained impact on the health and wellbeing of our 50,000 problem drug users and stem the flow of new recruits to this population.

New and bold thinking is required more than ever before, with statistics published this year showing the highest ever recorded drug-related deaths in Scotland.

We will be looking increasingly towards our European counterparts to see what lessons can be learned from countries such as Sweden, Germany, Switzerland and Holland which have considerably smaller drug problems.

It would be a mistake, however, to limit our observations to their treatment and care models, helpful though these may be. These countries have disadvantaged communities too, so we also need to understand how these states view, discharge - and even embrace - their responsibilities for assisting and supporting the most vulnerable among the potential casualties of our fast-moving market-driven society.

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to the late Ken Murray, Scottish Drugs Forum's inaugural Chair in 1986, who died in October 2007. His early contribution to SDF helped lay the foundations for the progress SDF has assisted in achieving and we will remember his support and enthusiasm with gratitude.

Anne Thomson

Director's Report

AN IMPORTANT feature of Scottish Drugs Forum's work this year has been to affirm an approach which puts those in need of services at the centre of policy discussions.

We have done this in many ways; through conferences, research, participation in a range of local and national policy meetings and briefings, through extending our user involvement work and by encouraging others to engage more effectively with service users.

Our work on the national Methadone Review, published in July this year and which included focus groups with service users and carers, was important in moving the debate beyond the narrow discussions on the merits of prescription to the wider issues of what people are looking for from a service.

The key themes to emerge of importance to service users were flexibility, choice, respect, relationships, swifter access, range of provision and staff attitudes. Taking account of the experiences of drug users cannot and should not be played down as we are looking to develop more person-centred models of service delivery. It is important, too, to hear and act upon these personal narratives which is why SDF has put so much energy into user involvement, although funding remains an issue.

SDF's User Involvement (UI) activity has now extended to Edinburgh, where its members are already contributing to the development of the city's new drug and alcohol strategy. In Perth and Kinross, the SDF-managed UI team has embarked – in partnership with local agencies - on exciting work looking at unmet needs of drug-using parents not engaged in services.

With SDF UI work already well established in Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Highland – and talks underway on the best way forward for UI in West Lothian – it is clear that many areas are being alerted to this area of significant potential development.

The recent launch of our own user-led Peer Research Study on access to non-medical support for recently drug free or recently stable service users typifies how policy development on important issues such as community/user involvement, employability and delivery of 'wraparound' services for drug substitute programmes can converge with practice on the ground.

This is the first time that SDF UI Projects in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Highland and Perth and Kinross have worked simultaneously on a peer research study. The findings should be of immense help in taking forward various important agendas especially in light of the heightened Scottish Government focus on comprehensive support to enable people find routes out of drug problems.

Another major focus has been our contribution to the work on reducing drug-related deaths, more important than ever in a year which saw the publication of figures showing Scotland's highest-ever tally of fatalities.

The Scottish Government's decision to extend funding of our pioneering overdose prevention and response training post for a further three years is another illustration of how a simple idea has become a successful reality. This money will help increase our ability to "train the trainers" and cascade vital information which will have a direct impact on saving lives.

Meanwhile, our early recognition of the potential for the distribution of Naloxone (emergency opiate-reversal injecting kits) to users, carers and key staff working with them is reaping rewards with the Glasgow and Lanarkshire pilots moving steadily ahead.

Six reported uses in Glasgow alone so far may have saved six individual lives, and we continue to work with local agencies there on tackling the heightened risks of overdose over the festive period with a support campaign which has become an annual fixture on the calendar.

Preventing drug-related deaths through overdose will continue to be a major focus of our attention. Therefore it was with enthusiasm we undertook a study identifying ways of reducing the risk of overdose among drug users which was commissioned by the Scottish Government and conducted in partnership with Figure 8 Consultancy.

Here too, the study has a practical focus and will set out recommendations for practice which could be rolled out as a useful tool to services commissioners, managers and practitioners throughout the UK.

In addition, the impact of the combination of problematic drug use and poor underlying health on long-term survival rates is, at last, gaining increasing attention.

Hence the importance of our ongoing contribution at local and national level to the development and delivery of best practice relating to Hepatitis C and other bloodborne viruses, needle exchange provision, substitute prescribing practice, quality and accessibility of services and targeted prevention including early intervention.

Raising awareness of the inter-relation between prevalence, policy and practice – especially taking into account the barriers of inequality which impact on people's ability to reduce the harms in their lives – will also remain at the heart of our work.

David Liddell

Summary of Key Activities 2006-2007

Policy development

- Continued key focus on links between poverty and problem drug use
- Contributed to discussion by Scottish Futures Forum on ideas for tackling problematic alcohol and drug use
- Initiated work on a submission to the revised Scottish Drugs Strategy to be published in 2008
- Carried out a peer review on behalf of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on its draft good practice document (one of a series under development), *'Sustainable Livelihoods for Rehabilitation and Reintegration'*. It examines good practice between treatment and rehabilitation with employment and vocational training
- Participated in a study tour of IrisZorg, an organisation based in Holland offering wide-ranging and holistic drugs treatment and prevention measures
- Joined the newly-established Scottish Government Substance Misuse Education Steering Group
- Contributed to the development of the Scottish Government's Good Practice Guide to Service User Involvement
- Held three conferences exploring major topical issues on the development of 'wraparound' drug services, benzodiazepine prescribing issues, and drug use and Hepatitis C in Scotland. All were oversubscribed and influential in moving forward their agendas
- Forwarded submissions from consultations with users, carers and fieldworkers on the Scottish Executive's Review of the Role of Methadone in treatment, and on the updated "Orange" clinical guidelines on drug dependence
- Undertook active involvement in the Alcohol and Drug Workforce Development Strategy led by NHS Health Scotland; progression of the Hepatitis C Action Plan for Scotland and the Scottish Government's Drug-Related Deaths Working Forum
- Held a cross-party debate with a panel of political representatives on the future of Scotland's drug policy at our 2006 AGM
- Continued dialogue on the EU and Civil Society – how the EU should engage better with non-government agencies and individuals
- Participated in the 'refreshed' Scottish Advisory Committee on Drug Misuse's Psycho-stimulants and Integrated Care working groups
- Provided post-Holyrood 2007 election briefings on drugs issues to MSPs and continued to facilitate work of the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Alcohol and Drug Misuse
- Submitted evidence on drugs treatment funding to Scottish Parliament's Health and Sport Committee

Treatment and Care

- Produced a discussion paper on drug consumption rooms and heroin prescribing through a multi-agency group led by Scottish Drugs Forum
- Identified the nutritional needs of a sample of problem drug and alcohol users within the Drumchapel area of Glasgow, in partnership with West Glasgow User Involvement Team
- Completed peer research on suggested frameworks for needle exchange service delivery on behalf of Perth and Kinross Alcohol and Drugs Action Team
- Completed a service user evaluation of East Dunbartonshire Community Addiction Team
- Assisted in delivery of the Scottish Government's roadshow events on Quality Standards for Substance Misuse services

Preventing overdose and drug-related deaths

- Devised the 2006 Festive overdose awareness campaign to homeless and other service users across Greater Glasgow and Clyde, with funding from Glasgow Addiction Services and

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Preparations were made for the launch of the 2007 event which involves 19,000 mouth guards being distributed for users at resuscitation scenes

- Worked in a multi-agency partnership of the Fife Overdose Intervention Training Group: a successful initiative involving SDF with the Scottish Ambulance Service and Fife Constabulary. It equipped a team of local trainers to deliver overdose awareness and first aid skills to at-risk drug users across a variety of local services
- Played a key role in piloting the Glasgow Take Home Naloxone (THN) emergency opiate-reversal pilot, which included joint delivery of THN training to drug using groups and family/carers/friends; co-authoring a THN instructors training manual and delivering "training the trainers" to 40 workers who now form a core cascading unit of THN trainers within services
- Provided 'training the trainers' and direct training sessions on overdose awareness to drug users and agencies across Scotland including addiction, homelessness, family, supported accommodation and user involvement groups
- Prepared an overdose training resource for publication in 2008, offering a step-by-step guide for delivering an overdose awareness training session to service users in small group settings

Involving Users and Carers

- Set up a new User Involvement Group in Edinburgh, undertaking peer research in the city relating to the development of a new drug and alcohol strategy for the city and other bodies of work
- Successfully recruited members for the Perth and Kinross User Involvement group, who now have representative places on the Multiple and Complex Needs, and Drug and Alcohol, Forums in Perth and Kinross and on the Scottish Social Services User and Carer Forum
- Commenced peer research into routes into engagement with services for drug-using parents not yet involved in them, and focus group work with drug-using parents in services on the benefits of involvement - in partnership with Perth and Kinross Alcohol and Drug Action Team and Perth and Kinross Council Social Work
- Supported two volunteers involved in the peer-led Drumchapel Nutritional Study of problem alcohol and drug users to deliver a short presentation on the study process and its impact to the local Community Planning Partnership, alongside Drumchapel LIFE Healthy Living Initiative who helped to fund the Project
- Assisted Drumchapel Peer Research Team to run Participatory Appraisal focus workshops at the launch of the Nutritional Study findings

- Carried out peer-led research to evaluate access to testing and treatment for drug users at risk of Hepatitis C infection, in partnership with Hepatitis C Managed Care Networks Glasgow
- Lanarkshire User Involvement Team began a survey of all local drug and alcohol services, in line with National Quality Standards specifications
- Helped to interview 120 service users as part of the Dumfries and Galloway Service User study, looking at the physical health needs of local users

Promoting routes out of drug use

- Supported the third (2007) intake of students for the Addiction Workers' Training Project (AWTP), with 18 to complete by December 2007. Twelve of the 13 who graduated in December 2006 are now in employment in social care and an AWTP 2006 trainee won learndirect Scotland's Learner of the Year 2006
- Embarked on a national survey of service users views on sign-posting and services aimed at supporting non-medical "moving on" services for recently drug free or recently stable service users

Engaging communities affected by drug use

- Re-launched a new-look online Directory of Scottish Drug Services with funding from the Scottish Government
- Developed an eight-step framework to promote group development and community engagement, in partnership with the Scottish Network of Families Affected by Drugs
- Devised Community Engagement strategies for Perth & Kinross and Aberdeenshire Drug and Alcohol Action Teams
- Assisted in the development of Drug and Alcohol Forums in Perth and Kinross and in South and Central Aberdeenshire; continued support for Drumchapel Drug and Alcohol Forum
- Undertook development work on establishing a Family Support Group in Drumchapel

Training and capacity building

- Delivered around 70 training events to around 700 staff and volunteers in a range of groups and community organisations – topics including organisational training, setting up support groups, working with people using drugs, methadone safety, needle exchange and volatile substance use awareness
- Devised, and trained trainers to use, a Needle Exchange Facilitator's Manual to ensure a standardisation of information delivery for all participants attending SDF's innovative Needle Exchange Training within Glasgow. This is a follow-up to SDF's development of a ground-breaking training package on safer injection and needle exchange work for frontline needle exchange staff and pharmacists in the Glasgow area
- Co-ordinated and chaired a voluntary sector drug and alcohol conference for Greater Glasgow and Clyde which agreed to merge alcohol and drug voluntary services from across the full health board area under a single umbrella forum. The event was funded through Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Drug Action and Alcohol Action Teams
- Assisted the consultation exercise for a merger of umbrella groups for voluntary sector alcohol and drugs agencies, to form a re-constituted Coalition of Drugs and Alcohol Agencies in Lothian

Conferences, seminars and briefings

- Held a membership consultation on the Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Bill
- Delivered presentations on links between drugs and poverty to a Drugscope event in England, and on Hepatitis C issues in Scotland to a conference in Bulgaria organised by Correlation, the European network of agencies promoting social inclusion and health

Research

- Undertook a study on to identify ways of reducing the risk of overdose for people who are using drugs, commissioned by the Scottish Government and in partnership with Figure 8 Consultancy
- Published a review of the literature exploring the links between poverty, social exclusion and problematic drug use in conjunction with the Scottish Poverty Information Unit. This project was funded by the Scottish Association of Drug and Alcohol Teams
- Undertook ongoing evaluation of the Take Home Naloxone (THN) opiate reversal pilot in Glasgow
- Conducted a baseline study of quality standards for substance misuse services, commissioned by Ayrshire and Arran's Treatment and Rehabilitation Group

Summary of Accounts

	2006 £	2007 £
Total Income	1,221,586	1,305,982
Total Expenditure	1,156,784	1,107,774
Increase/Decrease in Funds in Year	64,802	198,208
Total funds brought forward from previous year	115,682	180,484
Total Funds as at 31 March	180,484	378,692
Allocated as follows:		
Restricted Funds	88,545	206,584
Unrestricted Funds	91,939	172,108
	180,484	378,692

SDF is a member of:

- Scottish Advisory Committee on Drug Misuse (SACDM)
- National Forum on Drug-related Deaths
- The Hepatitis C Action Plan Co-ordinating Group
- Scottish Government Substance Misuse and Homelessness Working Group
- Scottish Government Substance Misuse Education Steering Group
- Quality Standards Steering Group for Substance Misuse Services in Scotland
- Scottish Government National Communications Group
- Drug Treatment and Testing Order National Steering Group in Scotland
- UK Drugs and Health Alliance Group
- European Federation of Professionals Working in the Field of Drug Abuse (ERIT), which supports the work of the European Union
- Correlation – the European network aiming to increase access to health services to marginalised social groups
- International Drug Policy Consortium
- Greater Glasgow Drug Death Monitoring and Prevention Group
- Greater Glasgow and Clyde Hepatitis C Action Plan Working Group
- Greater Glasgow and Clyde Bloodborne Viruses Sub-Group
- Scottish Social Services Learning Network (West)
- Glasgow City Council Service User and Carer Group
- Glasgow Naloxone Pilot Steering and Evaluation Groups
- Glasgow City Drugs and Alcohol Planning & Implementation Group's Communities sub-group
- 15 Drug and Alcohol Action Teams
- South Lanarkshire Joint Futures Implementation Group
- Lanarkshire Naloxone Pilot Working Group
- Lanarkshire Homelessness Strategy Team Steering Group
- Lanarkshire Voluntary Sector Network
- Fife Overdose Intervention Training Group
- Tayside Overdose Awareness Training Development Group

SDF chairs:

- Policy Development Group of Action on Alcohol and Drugs in Edinburgh
- Greater Glasgow Drug Death Working Group Preventing Overdose Campaign sub-group
- Glasgow Voluntary Sector Drug and Alcohol Agencies (co-Chair)
- Drug and Alcohol Independent Sector Ayrshire

SDF Director David Liddell is Joint Secretary to the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Alcohol and Drug Misuse. He is President of ERIT, an association of umbrella organisations working in the drug field in Europe.

SDF has observer status on the Scottish Association of Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (SADAAT). We also co-ordinate, advise, and facilitate User Involvement representation to, a range of working groups and forums on drug-related issues. These include:

- National Forum on Drug-related Deaths Service User Forum
- Scottish Needle Exchange Workers Forum
- Scottish Network for Families Affected by Drugs
- Scottish Service User and Carer Forum
- Lanarkshire Voluntary Sector Network
- Coalition of Alcohol and Drugs Agencies in Lothian (CDAAL)

Board members 2006-2007

Chair	Anne Thomson
Treasurer	Gordon Armour
	Angela Roberts
	Dana O'Dwyer
	David Johnston
	Ellen Donnelly
	George Allan
	George Wilson
	Liam Wells
	Mark Cresswell
	Mary Hepburn
	Max Cruickshank
	Oliver Aldridge
	Peter Anderson
	Sean McCollum
	Stephen Birrell
	Thomas Munro
	Valerie Corbett

Scottish Drugs Forum staff

April Shaw
Biba Brand
Catriona Gibson
Claire Giblin
David Liddell
Eleanor McDermott
Genevieve Curran
Gordon McInnes
Graeme McArthur
Graham Mackintosh
Irene Hendry
James Egan
Joan Currie
John Campbell
Katharine Ronald
Ken Butler
Lisa McKibben
Megan Ross
Michael Griffin
Nina Semple
Pat Greenhough
Stuart Anderson
Susan Dean
Willma Easton

Scottish Drugs Forum would like to thank the following organisations for their financial support during the year:

Scottish Government

Fife Drug & Alcohol Action Team
Greater Glasgow and Clyde Drug Action Team
Highland Drug & Alcohol Team
Lanarkshire Drug and Alcohol Team
Perth and Kinross Drug and Alcohol Action Team

NHS Fife
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
NHS Highland
NHS Lothian

Glasgow City Council
South Lanarkshire Council

Big Lottery
Robertson Trust
Glasgow Community Planning Partnership
Community Regeneration Fund

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Registered Charity Number: 106295

Scottish Drugs Forum www.sdf.org.uk
Glasgow: 91 Mitchell Street, Glasgow G1 3LN tel 0141 221 1175
Edinburgh: 139 Morrison Street, EH3 8AJ, tel 0131 221 9300