

ScottishdrugsForum

Annual Report 2004 2005

SCOTTISH Drugs Forum is the national voluntary sector membership-based drugs policy and information agency working 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 Action Teams
- liaison with MSPs, civil servants and all 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

STIMULATING debate and influencing policy is at the core of Scottish Drugs Forum's mission of reducing drug-related harm, so it has been rewarding to see tangible evidence of the impact of our many activities in responding to Scotland's drug problem.

Tackling drug-related deaths, developing service quality standards and pushing the employability, user involvement, family support and community development agendas are among the key areas where SDF's knowledge, expertise and skills have been in demand. This work has laid the foundations for strategy and practice now being embraced at national and local level and which will extend well into 2006 and beyond. SDF will continue to play a pivotal role in progressing these issues.

Without doubt, the most important topic of the past year has been to reduce Scotland's appallingly high rate of drug-related deaths. As a member of the short-life working party of the Scottish Advisory Committee on Drug Misuse, SDF played an important role in the development of the working party's often challenging recommendations – including through our ground-breaking research which highlighted the barriers to users calling for 999 help at overdose scenes.

We also undertook the bulk of the organisational work for the Scottish Executive-sponsored national conference on drug-related deaths in August 2005 – this year's seminal event – which attracted more than 300 delegates from across Scotland.

The National Action Plan on Drug-related Deaths arising from the reports of the working party and the separate National Investigation into drug deaths was still to be published at the time of writing this Report.

Nevertheless, it is gratifying to see various organisations beginning to explore various practical and innovative approaches long-cavassed by SDF for reducing the death toll, such as extending the use of the opiate-reversal drug Naloxone in the community and training users and their close associates in first aid to prevent fatal overdoses. The first year training targets for the Executive-funded Critical Incidents Training Officer have already been passed.

The studies into drug deaths also highlighted the need for quality standards for drug services. This topic has long been a concern of SDF and we have worked closely to advise the Executive and other key partners on the preparation of the standards. Once again, SDF will be looking to see how best we can support the field when the standards are implemented.

2006 will see the 20th anniversary of the creation of SDF. Two decades ago we described the need for services to develop more holistic services to ensure that the wider social needs of problem drug users are met - including housing, family support and access to education and training. It is clear that this remains, and will remain, the case unless those with the power to make changes do so.

Finally, my thanks go to the Board for its support over the past year as well as our funders, staff, volunteers, members, partner agencies, supporters and all who have helped us in our work.

Anne Thomson

Director's Report

THE past year has been a particularly intense period for Scottish Drugs Forum in taking forward work on important policy and practice fronts.

Key activities at home have included:

- Seminars and conferences – subjects ranging from drug deaths and latest drug trends to prostitution and drugs, the impact of residential rehabilitation services and drug users who drink to excess
- Training – including overdose prevention for users, families and carers and human rights for drug users
- Involvement and contribution to the work of Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAATs) including the development of a 'tool kit' to assist DAATs with community engagement activity.
- Participation in national and local working groups on various issues – including worker consultation on updating needle exchange guidelines
- Staff-led/managed and peer-led research into service provision and barriers for users at 999 overdose scenes
- Building capacity of voluntary sector drug agencies and community groups
- Consulting with and informing our membership on important drug-related issues, including through our newly re-launched website
- Submitting input and responses to a wide array of consultations – including the Scottish Executive's consultations on the forthcoming Hepatitis C Action Plan and powers for mandatory drug-testing of arrestees
- Giving evidence to the Scottish Parliament Justice 2 Committee and supporting the work of the Cross-Party Group on Alcohol and Drug Misuse.

Core work has involved wide engagement with users, carers - largely through our support of Scottish Families Affected by Drugs (SNAFD) - and the wider community. The input of our user groups in Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Fife and Highland – the latter established earlier this year – has impacted on services and the development of service quality standards in local areas.

We have also provided practical support to many community groups – such as the organisation of awareness-raising events in the Drumchapel and Dumbarton Road Corridor areas of Glasgow - and have undertaken work on developing local drug strategies.

Our first Addiction Worker Training Project saw nine former drug users graduate from our ground-breaking work-based training project which qualified them to take up work in the substance use/care field.

The course – believed to be the first of its kind in Scotland – was set up to help overcome the barriers to employment former users face because of their drug history while preparing them for work in the field.

SDF's standing in the international forum has been reinforced through our continued work in support of ERIT, a European association of umbrella agencies working in the field of problem drug use, our links with the highly-respected Beckley Foundation Drug Policy Programme and membership of Correlation, a network of European agencies aiming to increase access to health services to marginalised and excluded social groups. In July, SDF played host to a visit from representatives of the Afghanistan Government's Drug Demand Reduction Directorate.

Key priorities for SDF over the next three years – in addition to the ones highlighted here by the Director – will include assisting in the development, and delivery as funded, of:

- effective responses to the emerging problems with stimulants, particularly cocaine
- family-family focused services
- closer linkage between treatment and care services and communities
- improved working between criminal justice agencies and treatment and care services
- effective engagement and empowerment of communities include users, families and carers
- strengthening our membership base.

David Liddell

Summary of Key Activities 2004-2005

Involving users and carers

- established new User Involvement (UI) Group in Highlands
- completed first user-led survey of Fife treatment services
- designed and developed a 24-page detoxification options leaflet for service users in Lanarkshire in association with NHS Lanarkshire Health Promotion, due to be launched by the end of 2005
- piloted volunteer participation in providing Critical Incidents Training to users, families and friends
- undertook two baseline surveys on service provision in Fife and Lanarkshire, incorporating the views of 293 service users. The Lanarkshire findings will help evaluate the service redesign launched in April 2005
- user groups participated in focus groups on overdose issues and domestic abuse

Research

- drug patterns and trends – surveyed service providers on changes in drug use within the previous six months among service users and at street level
- witness experiences of users at overdose scenes – organised focus groups across Scotland on the issue and findings were presented to the national conference on drug-related deaths in August 2005
- supported – through training, data analysis and report writing – service user and community surveys
- assisted in the fieldwork for a study undertaken by Paisley University on the Social Impact of Public Injecting
- undertook – in collaboration with the Scottish Executive and the DAAT Association – research to assist SDF's production of a Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Guide to Engaging with Communities
- carried out a survey of Glasgow's drug and alcohol forums – in collaboration with local statutory agencies – to provide guidance for the direction of the future work of the local Communities Sub-Group
- designed, and provided research support and analysis for, a Community Needs Assessment in the Dumbarton Road Corridor area of Glasgow – part of the review of the local Substance Misuse Strategy

Engaging communities affected by drug use

- continued advice and support for the Scottish Network Affected by Drugs (SNFAD), including the development of a business plan and provision of website and budgeting IT assistance
- compiled a "toolkit" guide – to be published at the end of 2005 - to assist Drug Action Teams with community engagement activity
- published "Making Connections" to help develop mechanisms to secure community representation on drug and alcohol forums in Glasgow
- worked on re-establishing a local User Involvement (UI) Team in Drumchapel, Glasgow
- created a database of community services in Dumbarton Road Corridor (DRC), Glasgow
- organised and co-ordinated addiction awareness events in Drumchapel and DRC, Glasgow
- established a Cannabis Support Group in Glasgow in partnership with local statutory and voluntary sector agencies
- assisted in preparatory work for the launch of an Arrest Referral scheme in Drumchapel/Maryhill areas of Glasgow

Training and capacity building

- phase one of roll-out of pioneering Critical Incidents (overdose) Training across Scotland – 51 sessions delivered, in excess of the first year target. Four ex user volunteers are now trained and providing training sessions to service users
- delivered well over 50 capacity building events across Scotland
- developed a half-day training event for Glasgow Housing Association – the largest registered social landlord in Britain – to enable the provision of more structured support to tenants affected by problem substance use
- supported work on training issues for the substance use field in Glasgow alongside the Scottish Social Services Fund, Care Commission and education providers
- developed a Capacity Building Framework for work with projects and organisations in Glasgow
- provided IT capacity building support to assist voluntary drug agencies in Glasgow with efficient production of Waiting Times information
- assisted the development of databases to facilitate new contract monitoring requirements for voluntary sector drugs projects in Glasgow
- cascaded information on the Scottish Executive's E-Care vision to voluntary sector drug agencies in Glasgow and Glasgow Addiction Services to aid future planning regarding information sharing
- developed a training plan for non-drugs agency workers who come into contact with substance using client groups, including housing providers.

Conferences, seminars, briefings and information

- co-organised, with the Scottish Executive, the year's keynote event: Taking Action to Reduce Scotland's Drug-related Deaths, August 2005. It attracted more than 300 delegates and a range of influential speakers
- organised national conferences on drugs trends; residential services; drug services and prostitution; drug-related deaths; drugs counselling and early intervention
- co-organised a national event on tobacco and cannabis
- planned and co-ordinated a conference with Drug and Alcohol Action Teams to examine their Community Engagement activities and functions
- organised training events on human rights for drug users and needle exchange workers
- worked in partnership on training events on users who drink to excess and cocaine, crack cocaine and heroin use
- re-launched SDF website with enhanced database and membership features
- handled over 3000 requests for information from users, carers, practitioners, the wider community and the media from as far afield as Australia
- published a handbook on guidelines for SDF's user involvement volunteers

Policy development

- compiled and presented a Ministerial briefing on cocaine
- submitted a discussion paper on employability services to the Scottish Advisory Committee on Drugs Misuse
- provided a presentation on drugs and homelessness at the Scottish Council for Single Homeless national conference
- organised briefings for MSPs on residential rehabilitation and early intervention issues
- presented a submission to a European Parliament Hearing on the European Union's Drugs Action Plan 2005-2008
- assisted in compilation of recommendations from SACDM's short-life working group on reducing drug related deaths
- undertook membership consultations – and forwarded submissions – on Scottish Executive proposals for mandatory drug-testing of arrestees; mandatory testing of crime suspects at risk of carrying bloodborne viruses and the Hepatitis C Action Plan
- consulted members on changes to legislation regarding administration of water for injection and naloxone
- worked in partnership with the Scottish Needle Exchange Workers Forum in revising and updating the national guidelines, due out early 2006
- chaired the policy development sub-group of Action on Alcohol and Drugs in Edinburgh (Edinburgh DAAT)
- worked closely with Action on Alcohol and Drugs in Edinburgh and voluntary agencies on proposed changes to service delivery in the capital
- facilitated the creation of a new drug and alcohol independent sector forum in Ayrshire
- led the establishment of a national Arrest Referral Workers Forum
- led the development of a drug death prevention communication campaign over the 2005 festive season in NHS Greater Glasgow and Argyll & Clyde areas

Promoting access to education, training and jobs

- assisted in securing extension of funding for New Futures Fund projects until March 2006
- successfully completed SDF's new training initiative for former drug users entering the substance use field, through the development of the Addiction Worker Training Project
- launched a website-based database of employability projects throughout Scotland
- prepared a new booklet, *Methadone at Work: Guidance for Employers*, due for publication early in 2006

Summary of Accounts

	2004 £	2005 £
Total Income	1,045,625	1,134,695
Total Expenditure	1,164,349	1,184,244
Increase/Decrease in Funds in Year	-118,724	-49,549
Total funds brought forward from previous year	283,955	165,281
Total Funds as at 31 March 2004	165,231	115,682
Allocated as follows:		
Restricted Funds	99,353	85,088
Unrestricted Funds	65,878	30,594
	165,231	115,682

SDF is a member of:

- The Scottish Advisory Committee on Drug Misuse (SACDM) chaired by the Deputy Justice Minister
- The Hepatitis C Parliamentary Working Group
- European Federation of Professionals Working in the Field of Drug Abuse (ERIT), which supports the work of the European Union
- Correlation – the network of European agencies aiming to increase access to health services to marginalised and excluded social groups.

SDF Director David Liddell is Secretary to the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Alcohol and Drug Misuse. He holds the 2004-2006 Presidency of ERIT.

SDF co-ordinates a range of working groups and forums on drug issues, including:

Scottish Needle Exchange Workers Forum
Glasgow Voluntary Sector Drug Agencies
Lanarkshire Voluntary Sector Network
Lothian Coalition of Drug Agencies
Drug and Alcohol Independent Sector Ayrshire
National Voluntary Sector Forum
Scottish Arrest Referral Workers Forum

ScottishdrugsForum

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	Liam Wells
	Lucy Cockayne
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Katharine Ronald
Ken Butler
Lisa McKibben
Michael Griffin
Pat Greenhough
Patrick McVey
Simone Ledraw
Stephen McGill
Stuart Anderson
Susan Dean

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

Scottish Executive
Scottish Enterprise

Fife Drug & Alcohol Action Team
Highland Drug & Alcohol Team
Midlothian Drug & Alcohol Team

NHS Fife
NHS Greater Glasgow
NHS Highland
NHS Lanarkshire

Glasgow City Council
South Lanarkshire Council

Big Lottery
Robertson Trust
Lloyds TSB
British Aerosol Manufacturers' Association

Drumchapel Social Inclusion Partnership
Dumbarton Road Corridor Social Inclusion Partnership