

Working with female street based sex workers

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Aims of presentation

- ◉ Give you an overview of street work in Dublin
- ◉ Give you an overview of drug using female sex workers needs
- ◉ Outline our role with this client group

Who are the clients in Dublin?

- ◉ Age profile from 18 years to 55 years
- ◉ The most prevalent age range is 30-35 years of age followed by 25-29 years of age
- ◉ Predominately white Irish women
- ◉ The majority are dependent on class A drugs and/or alcohol
- ◉ Victims of rape, sexual assault, violence at high levels, from range of perpetrators

Where do people work?

- ◉ Arbour Hill/Montpellier
- ◉ Hendrick Street
- ◉ Burlington Road
- ◉ The Pepper canister
- ◉ Fitzwilliam Square



Current Situation

Outreach January – July 2010

- ◉ 211 contacts made
- ◉ 75 individual sex workers

Why? Routes into sex work

- ◆ money to support own drug use
- ◆ money for food/accommodation
- ◆ make a living/get by/pay bills/rent/buy clothes
- ◆ pay debts
- ◆ friend/s working
- ◆ forced/coercion/abuse (as Child or adult)
- ◆ other alternative to other crime, money to support partner's drug use or they wanted to

CURRENT ISSUES FOR SEX WORKERS

- ◉ Violence
- ◉ Stigma
- ◉ Housing – moving between hostels, B&Bs and substandard rented accommodation
- ◉ Drug and alcohol use – barriers to accessing stabilisation programmes e.g. childcare & time restraints (work unsocial hours)
- ◉ Limited access to needle exchange
- ◉ Lack of informed support from agencies such as homeless, drug, alcohol, and health services

'Ugly Mugs' scheme: Prevention & Justice

What is it???

- ◉ early warning system for sex workers
- ◉ recording and monitoring violence
- ◉ encouraging reporting to Gardai
- ◉ local and National Schemes could challenge attitudes and culture
- ◉ supports the Garda role: supports investigations, identify hotspot areas & potential/repeat offenders

What is Chrysalis' role in this:

- ◉ liaise with Gardai re: crimes against sex workers
- ◉ encourage reporting
- ◉ support & address holistic needs of victims
- ◉ support victims through criminal justice system
- ◉ training & awareness raising for other agencies
- ◉ co-ordinate ugly mugs scheme



Low levels of reporting to Gardai

- ILLEGAL NATURE OF SOLICITING/FEAR OF ARREST/WARRANTS
 - SOCIAL STIGMA
 - LACK OF TRUST
- BELIEF NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY/WITH RESPECT
- POOR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE OF THE POLICE
 - FEAR OF REPRISAL FROM ATTACKERS
- ACCEPTANCE OF VIOLENCE AS PART OF THE JOB
 - ANXIETY ABOUT COURT PROCEEDINGS
- FEAR OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN SEX WORK BECOMING PUBLIC

Common support service needs

- Access to drug and alcohol treatment/counselling/detox/rehab
- Drugs awareness and harm reduction: safer injecting
- Needle exchange
- General emotional support
- Safer sex supplies
- Sexual health info
- STI screening
- Primary care
- Contraceptive care
- Pregnancy: support to access and stay in maternity services
- Support to access a& e
- Mental distress: e.g. Acute crisis to depression, bereavement
- Counselling to address range of issues
- Personal safety
- Negotiating with clients re money, safer sex and services
- Access to appropriate housing advice and accommodation
- Sexual assault and violent crimes/Garda liaison
- Court support
- Support & accompaniment to range of services
- Support re domestic violence
- Family mediation
- Training, employment advice& info

Elements of Chrysalis Sex Work Project

- ◉ Assertive outreach
- ◉ Referral to drug/alcohol detox and rehab
- ◉ Crisis intervention
- ◉ One to one support
- ◉ Counselling
- ◉ Community events/activities
- ◉ Mobile Health Clinic
- ◉ Link to SATU unit
- ◉ Case Management
- ◉ Sex Work Resource Library

Barriers to exiting

- ◉ Financial/economic survival debt pressures
- ◉ Drug /alcohol dependency/relapse
- ◉ Homelessness/accommodation issues
- ◉ Partner/coercers pressures
- ◉ Finding suitable employment
- ◉ Childcare
- ◉ Complex Emotional/confidence issues
- ◉ Social network of friends and acquaintances on the scene
- ◉ Independence and self-determination associated with street sex work
- ◉ Regular clients
- ◉ Fear/unfamiliarity of “straight” work/familiarity of the scene
- ◉ Rejection/delay accessing services
- ◉ Personal crisis

Safety Tips



Send the car reg to a friend by text or save it in your phone



Be prepared and have these essentials with you