

National Advisory Committee on Drugs



NACD

Annual Report 2010

PRN A11/0648

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National Advisory Committee on Drugs (NACD)

Vision, Mission, Values

Vision

To provide a national focus for all knowledge related efforts that inform Irish policy in relation to drug misuse.

Mission

The NACD has undertaken to:

- Support the Government in significantly reducing the health, social and economic consequences of drug misuse through the provision of timely data and analysis of research;
- Review its knowledge base, identifying gaps which can be addressed through research;
- Ensure that evidence from scientific research forms the basis for policy formulation, development of services and continuous improvement in all its approaches to tackling drug misuse in Ireland;
- Work closely with the Evidence Generation and Knowledge Brokering Unit (formerly ADRU) of the Health Research Board, providing advice, coordinating research efforts and maximising the use of resources;
- Support the establishment of a National Documentation Centre;
- Liaise with the relevant agencies nationally in order to co-ordinate research and resources;
- Ensure participation nationally of a broad range of parties in fulfilling its research needs and dissemination of findings;
- Serve all drug misuse reduction activities in providing for an effective dissemination of research findings, information and other data thus linking research to practice.

Values

The NACD agreed that the following values would guide the implementation of its work programme. The NACD will:

- Manage the diversity of its membership and commit to a consensus approach in decision-making;
- Foster a culture of respect, dignity, transparency and fairness in all its operations;
- Advocate dialogue as a means of balancing the diverse views on and experiences of drug misuse in Ireland ;
- Be objective in the collection and dissemination of information in line with its commitment to the National Drugs Strategy (NDS) 2001-2008, and subsequently 2009-2016 Interim NDS ;
- Commit to the highest possible standards of excellence and ethical conduct;
- Seek out collaborations and partnerships where there is greater benefit to achieving its goal and co-operate with everyone who can benefit from its knowledge base.

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The past year has been a busy year for the NACD even though we published just one report during 2010. Much of our work involved preparation for the 2010/11 General Population Survey on Drug Use, fieldwork for which started in October. We expect to be able to present the first findings from this third survey towards the end of 2011. Another area of intense activity was generated by the public controversy surrounding the so-called "Headshops" and the New Psychoactive Substances (NPAS) being offered for sale by these outlets. At the request of Mr. John Curran TD, the then Minister of State with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy, the NACD established a multidisciplinary Research Advisory Group (RAG) which involved key stakeholders, to assist in developing advice and research into the challenges posed by these NPAS. The NACD subsequently commissioned a group of researchers at Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) to undertake an in-depth analysis and review of the phenomenon. Their report is being prepared for publication at this point in time. I would like to record my thanks and that of the NACD to the DIT team and also to those who so willingly gave of their time and expertise to work on the RAG.

During 2010 work also began on a major study of drug use in Irish prisons with a particular emphasis on the prevalence of injecting drug use and blood-borne viruses (HIV and Hepatitis C). This study has been made possible by co-funding from the Irish Prison Service and from the Office of the Minister for Drugs (OMD) on top of an allocation from the NACD budget. We are grateful to both the Irish Prison Service and the OMD for their support of this project. Work also commenced on alternative methods of estimating prevalence of opiate and cocaine use and on the design of a major study of rehabilitation outcomes.

I am delighted to report that the NACD was able to recruit a Senior Researcher, Dr Justine Horgan, in September. The NACD welcomes this key appointment and we are grateful to all those in the OMD, Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Health Research Board who helped bring about this appointment. Dr Horgan had previously worked for the NACD in developing the study of drug use in early school-leavers and in November she helped with the subsequent launch of the Report on *Risk and Protection Factors for Substance Use Among Young People*. The publication of that detailed report was quickly followed by a hugely successful seminar/workshop on its contents for stakeholders.

The varied and extensive work of the Committee would not be possible without the expertise and commitment of those who serve on the NACD, its sub-committees and research advisory groups. Members continue to give unselfishly of their time and knowledge and they represent a unique national resource which should not be lightly discarded at the present time. I am deeply indebted to all of them for their contributions to the success of the NACD to date.

As in previous years I want to record my appreciation of the support I have received from the Vice-Chair, Dr Mary Ellen McCann and to thank Mr. Liam O'Brien, Dr Eamon Keenan who chair the Consequences and Treatment/Rehabilitation Sub-committees respectively and also Ms Marita Kinsella, Chief Pharmacist at the Department of Health and Children who chairs the Early Warning and Emerging Trends Sub-committee.

My colleagues and I are deeply indebted to the staff of the NACD, Alan Gaffney and Mary Jane Trimble who work extremely hard to ensure that the outputs of the Committee are timely and of the highest quality. I also want to pay a special tribute to the interim Director, Ms Susan Scally for all her hard work for the NACD over the past two difficult years. My colleagues and I have been impressed by her ability to brief herself on the detail of the NACD procedures and its Work Programme and to add real value to our discussions. Her unflagging energy and good humour has been an example to us all. It was reassuring for me as Chairperson to have another Director on whom I could rely totally.

The continued support of the Minister and his officials in the OMD, for the work of the NACD, is welcome and has been an ever-present ingredient in the success of the Committee since its establishment in July 2000.

Dr Des Corrigan FPSI
Chairperson.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2010 was an eventful year for the NACD, marked by many challenges, not least responding to the threat of new and emerging psychoactive substances available through Head Shop outlets. In January 2010, at the request of the Minister with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy, an expert and multi-disciplinary Research Advisory Group(RAG) was established by the NACD to carry out a review of new psychoactive substances and the outlets supplying them. On foot of the deliberations of the RAG, the NACD advised Government in February 2010 to bring a range of synthetic drugs under the control of the Misuse of Drugs Act. On the basis of the findings of the review, the NACD agreed final recommendations designed to address the harms of psychoactive substances which were subsequently submitted to the Oversight Forum on Drugs.

During 2010, six full Committee meetings, 15 sub-committee meetings and 31 Research Advisory Group meetings were held. The new NACD work programme was substantially progressed during the year. The NACD commissioned new research into the optimum methods of generating estimates of heroin and cocaine prevalence and a study to design a protocol to measure rehabilitation outcomes. In terms of in-house research, a review of literature on children of drug misusers was initiated which focuses on the impact of parental misuse on children's lives. Most notably, the All Ireland Drug Prevalence Survey 2010-2011 got underway in October. This is the third such survey on drug use in the general population carried out by the NACD, in collaboration with the Public Health Information and Research Branch at the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland.

A major highlight of the year was the publication of the report on "Risk and Protection Factors for Substance Use among Young People". Drawing on data collected in a survey of young people in 2008, the report explored the factors associated with substance use amongst those who left school early. The report found that both the family and experience of school can have a major impact on a young person's decision to use substances. The NACD organised a seminar in October 2010 to discuss the implications of the report with those involved in education provision and services for young people.

We are very lucky at the NACD to have a small but highly effective secretariat. I am immensely grateful to Alan Gaffney, the NACD Office Manager and to Mary Jane Trimble who provides reception and secretarial support to the NACD, for

their hard work during the year. I am also delighted to welcome Dr. Justine Horgan, Senior Researcher, to the team. As this is my last year with the NACD, I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the Committee members for their support and most especially, Dr. Des Corrigan, who has been a great mentor during my period as interim director.

Susan Scally

Director

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

C&AG	Comptroller and Auditor General
DAG	Drugs Advisory Group
DTMS	Drug Trend Monitoring System
DIT	Dublin Institute of Technology
ED	Electoral Division
EGKBU	Evidence Generation and Knowledge Brokering Unit (formerly ADRU)
FOI	Freedom of Information
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRB	Health Research Board
HSE	Health Service Executive
IAAAC	Irish Association of Alcohol and Addiction Counsellors
LDTF	Local Drugs Task Force
MQI	Merchants Quay Ireland
NACD	National Advisory Committee on Drugs
NHISU	National Health Information Systems Unit
NVDS	National Voluntary Drug Sector
NDS	National Drugs Strategy
NUI	National University of Ireland
OFD	Oversight Forum on Drugs

OJEU	Official Journal of the European Union
OMD	Office of the Minister for Drugs
PHIRB	Public Health Information and Research Branch
PQ	Parliamentary Question
RAG	Research Advisory Group
RDTF	Regional Drugs Task Force
RIWG	Research and Information Working Group
UCD	University College Dublin

Chapter One

Background and Functions of the NACD

1.1 Origins

The NACD was established in July 2000 to advise the Government on problem drug use in Ireland in relation to consequences, prevalence, prevention, and treatment including rehabilitation, based on its analysis and interpretation of research findings and information available to it. It also provides 'early warning' advice to Government. The Committee comprises representation from Government Departments, Academia, Community, Voluntary and Statutory sectors and reports to the Minister with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy. Further information can be obtained from the website www.nacd.ie.

Arising from a Government decision to renew the NACD mandate in 2004, a further work programme was developed. A consultation process was undertaken with key interest groups and stakeholders to explore further research and information opportunities. The business plan developed incorporates the continuation of the programme and identifies ongoing gaps in knowledge.

Further to Government approval during 2009 of proposals for a new National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016, the NACD mandate was extended until the end of 2011 and work began on developing a new work programme. This involved a consultation process with members of the five sub-committees of the NACD. The key priorities of the work programme for 2010-2011 were determined at a planning session of the NACD in November 2009. The work programme was agreed by the Minister with responsibility for the Drugs Strategy, the Office of the Minister for Drugs and the NACD in December 2009.

Over the years the NACD has worked closely with other agencies and organisations to optimise skills and resources in gathering information and filling gaps in knowledge. The NACD works with the Health Research Board's Evidence Generation and Knowledge Brokering Unit on meeting the information needs of the EU Five Key Indicators of Drug Use. The NACD is engaged in ongoing collaborative work with colleagues in the Public Health Information and Research Branch of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland, gathering information on drug prevalence amongst the general population on the whole island.

The work programme and *modus operandi* of the NACD is an evolving process and further information can be obtained on the NACD website. However, its core functions were set down by Government in 2000 and these have not altered.

1.2 Functions

On its establishment in 2000, the functions of the NACD (the Committee) were set out as follows:

- Based on the Committee's analysis and interpretation of research findings and information available to it, to advise the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion and, through it, the Government, in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment and consequences of problem drug use in Ireland;
- To review current information sets and research capacity in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment and consequences of problem drug use in Ireland and to make recommendations, as appropriate, on how deficits should be addressed including how to maximise the use of information available from the community and voluntary sector;
- To oversee the delivery of a prioritised programme of research and evaluation as recommended by the Interim Advisory Committee to meet the gaps and priority needs identified; by:
 - a) using the capacity of relevant agencies engaged in information gathering and research, both statutory and non-statutory, to deliver on elements of the programme;
 - b) liaising with these agencies with a view to maximising the resources allocated to delivering the programme and avoiding duplication;
 - c) coordinating and advising on research projects in the light of the prioritised programme;
 - d) commissioning research projects which cannot be met through existing capacity;
 - e) commissioning additional research at the request of the Government into drug issues of relevance to policy.
- To work closely with the Health Research Board (HRB) on the establishment of a national information/research database (in relation to the prevalence, prevention, treatment and consequences of problem drug use) which is easily accessible; and

- To advise relevant Agencies with a remit to promote greater public awareness of the issues arising in relation to problem drug use and to promote and encourage debate through the dissemination of its research findings.

Chapter Two

Structures and Work Programme

2.1 Structures

2.1.1 The NACD

The NACD comprises 19 members who, with the exception of the Chairperson, participate on a voluntary basis. Since 2005, the Chairperson receives a small honorarium. Members serve at the invitation of the Minister and their participation requires them to sit on the NACD main committee and at least one sub-committee. NACD meetings are generally scheduled to take place every six weeks excluding July and August. In 2010, there were six meetings held. Full membership is detailed in Appendix 1.

2.1.2 Sub-Committees

Due to the complexity of the drugs issue the NACD manages its work programme through sub-committee structures including research advisory groups (RAGs). There are five sub-committees in operation: Consequences; Early Warning Emerging Trends (EWET); Prevalence; Prevention; and Treatment/Rehabilitation. Each committee meets as required and according to the needs of the NACD work programme. In 2010, a total of 15 sub-committee meetings were held as follows: Consequences (1); Early Warning Emerging Trends (4); Prevalence (4); Prevention (4); and Treatment/Rehabilitation (2). There were a total of 31 RAG meetings in 2010. A special meeting of the laboratory stakeholders on the EWET Sub-committee was also held to explore how NDS Action 54 might be advanced.

Full sub-committee membership is detailed in Appendix 2.

2.1.3 Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for sub-committees and research advisory groups are available on the NACD website.

2.2 Work Programme of NACD

The National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016 details the actions for which the NACD has lead responsibility. These actions are set out in Appendix 3 of this report and further information is available on the website of the Office of the Minister for Drugs www.pobail.ie. In light of the research and information priorities identified in the Strategy, the development of a new NACD work programme to cover the period up to 2011 was advanced in the latter part of 2009.

In 2010, there were five new research projects externally commissioned, one new internal research project and three ongoing research projects carried over from the previous year.

2.2.1 Summary of 2010

The ongoing work programme included the following projects:

- Finalising the study on the comparison of risk and protection factors for drug use amongst early school-leavers and school-attendees ;
- Research into drug markets in Ireland;
- Planning for the 2010-2011 Drug Prevalence Survey;

Internal research:

- Review of the literature on Children of Drug Users.

Externally commissioned research:

- An Overview of New Psychoactive Substances and the Outlets Supplying them;
- General Population Survey on the Prevalence of Drug Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland 2010/2011;
- Design of the Protocol for National Substance Misuse Rehabilitation Cohort Study;
- Identify Methods and Data Sources for the Estimation of Prevalence of Problematic Opiate and Cocaine Use in Ireland;
- The Prevalence of Drug Use Including Intravenous Drug Use, and Blood Borne Viruses among the Irish Prisoner Population.

Internal work – summary of activities:

- A report of the study to compare the risk and protection factors for drug use amongst early school-leavers and school-attendees– editing, proofing, tender issue/evaluation for design and print, launch and distribution;
- Organisation of a Seminar for over 100 stakeholders to discuss the findings and policy implications of the NACD study on the comparison of risk and protection factors for drug use amongst early school-leavers and school-attendees;
- Drug Markets Study – ongoing monitoring and support;
- Tender issue/evaluation and contract drafting for all commissioned research;
- Feedback to the Oversight Forum on Drugs;
- Preparation of the 2009 Annual Report for publication on the web;
- Maintenance of the website and ongoing Irish translation of relevant uploads to website;
- Preparatory work on Population Survey 2010/2011
- Provision of secretariat support to NACD, sub- committees and RAGs ;
- Office management and financial reporting.

2.2.2 The Research Process

All research has the support of a Research Advisory Group (RAG). The Terms of Reference for these RAGs have been noted in previous reports and are now available on the website. The RAG comes together once the research question has been decided by the relevant sub-committee and then the commissioning process for implementing the research study can begin. Research can be externally contracted via requests for tenders, direct engagement or conducted internally by the NACD Senior Researcher. The RAG, which generally comprises relevant stakeholders and/or experts, reviews the research, supports the researchers, advises and guides when appropriate and reviews written output. The RAG then passes the report on to the relevant sub-committee along with suggested recommendations arising from the research. The sub-committee will then review the report and agree recommendations for consideration and final approval by the NACD.

2.2.3 Commissioned Research

Five research projects were commissioned in 2010, as outlined below:

(i) An Overview of New Psychoactive Substances and the Outlets Supplying Them

Article 14 of the National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016, provides for the monitoring of activities of 'Head shops' and all businesses involved in the sale of psychoactive substances to ensure no illegal activity, and to highlight gaps in our knowledge about these substances and their supply.

Following a competitive tendering process, Dublin Institute of Technology were commissioned in May 2010 to review the psychoactive substances sold in 'Head shops' and other outlets including internet sites. The researchers were required to carry out an analysis of the substances contained in the products and compare them with the contents as stated on the labels. They were also asked to gather information on the user's experiences of the substances, and the psychoactive effects on cognition, mood, mental health and dependence.

A better understanding of the risk factors associated with the use of these products and suggested harm reduction measures to minimise the risk to users, together with information on the availability of new reference standards to facilitate the analysis of new psychoactive substances is helpful to fill knowledge gaps in this area. The final report is due in 2011.

(ii) Drug Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland 2010/2011 Drug Prevalence Survey

Further to the planning and preliminary work that started in 2009, work in 2010 concentrated on finalising the questionnaire, the tender, and the commissioning process for this, third all Island population survey.

The 2010/2011 survey of Drug Use in Ireland and Northern Ireland is broadly similar to the 2006/2007 survey, but contains additional questions designed to estimate the prevalence of alcohol and cannabis dependence in the general population. Care has been taken to ensure that comparisons can be made with the previous two surveys carried out in 02/02 and 06/07.

The 2010/2011 Drug Prevalence Survey is being carried out according to standards set by the EMCDDA. The fieldwork, which is being undertaken by Ipsos MORI, started in October 2010 and is expected to finish in 2011. A series of NACD bulletins arising from the survey will be published in 2011/2012.

(iii) Design of Protocol for National Substance Misuse Rehabilitation Cohort Study

The University of Glasgow were awarded the contract to design a national cohort study protocol, to measure the rehabilitation outcomes for people with substance misuse problems who have availed of rehabilitation services in Ireland. The study will provide information on the effectiveness of the different models based on rehabilitation outcomes for the participants of the study.

The aim of this study is to provide evidence based recommendations to policy makers and service providers, define, derive and measure a set of rehabilitation outcomes for problem drug and alcohol users in Ireland, and to provide an understanding of progression pathways to employment for recovering users. Expected to report in early 2011.

(iv) Methods and Data Sources for the Estimation of the Prevalence of Problematic Opiate and Cocaine Use in Ireland

The University of Glasgow was commissioned to determine statistical approaches to estimate the prevalence of problematic opiate and cocaine use in Ireland. This study will help to identify statistical and practical adaptations to improve the reliability of the estimate generated by the capture/recapture method. The study will identify all the data sources in Ireland that could be used to estimate the prevalence of problematic cocaine and opiate use and will apply a systematic approach to evaluating the usefulness of these methods. The researchers will design a pilot study to test the preferred approaches and methods. Work started in September 2010 with the final report due in early 2011.

(v) The Prevalence of Drug Use, including Intravenous Drug Use, and Blood Borne Viruses among the Irish Prisoner Population

University College Dublin has been commissioned to carry out a study to determine the need for drug treatments and harm reduction (including needle exchange) services in Irish prisons. The study will describe the nature, extent and pattern of consumption for different drugs, and the methods, including intravenous, of drug use among the prison population. The study will also provide an estimate of the prevalence of blood borne viruses, identify associated risk behaviours among the prison population and measure the uptake of individual drug treatment and harm reduction interventions (including hep B vaccination) in prison. Work started in November 2010 and the final report is due in December 2011.

2.2.4 Ongoing Research

(i) Risk and Protection Factors for Substance use among Young People: A comparative study of early school-leavers and school-attending students

The NACD acted as Principal Investigator in this internally designed study. Ethical approval for the study was given by the Drug Treatment Centre Board Research Ethics Committee. The aim of this study is to examine drug use among early school-leavers and school-attendees in the context of risk and protective factors. Following completion of the pilot study, a tender issued for the fieldwork element of the main study and this was awarded to Ipsos MORI. Fieldwork was completed in 2008. Following an initial analysis of the survey data, completed in 2009, the NACD commissioned an external researcher to draft a report based on the results of the research. This report, was finalised and published in October 2010 and the subject of a Seminar hosted by the NACD in November 2010.

(ii) Drug Markets Study

The Health Research Board was commissioned to conduct a study on the illicit drug markets in Ireland in order to address a gap in available research in this area. The study is intended to examine the factors which can influence the development of local drug markets, the nature,

organisation, and structure of Irish drug markets and the impact of drug dealing and drug markets on local communities. It is hoped that the research will assist in furthering the objectives and key performance indicators outlined under the supply reduction pillar of the National Drugs Strategy. Qualitative interviewing and analysis of data collated in relation to the research sites was completed during 2009. As of the end of 2010 the final report is being completed and is expected to go to the NACD for consideration in early 2011.

2.2.5 Collaboration

Collaborative working is a core principle of the NACD and every effort is made to involve stakeholders at various levels in relevant discussions, research projects and research activities. Over the last year the NACD has been very active in collaborating with colleagues in Northern Ireland on the third All Ireland Drug Prevalence Survey. In addition, the NACD convened relevant stakeholders in the various RAGs to support other research projects. They included representatives from: the Forensic Science Laboratory; Youthreach; State Laboratory; Beaumont Hospital; Drug Treatment Centre Board; Irish Medicines Board; The Health Research Board; Barnardos; Food Safety Authority of Ireland; Citywide; Merchants Quay Ireland; Coolmine; Irish Prison Service; Casadh; Dublin Aids Alliance; Ana Liffey Drug Project; Family Support Network; Health and Safety Authority; UCD; Trinity College; University of Glasgow; Dublin Institute of Technology; National Youth Council of Ireland; Crosscare Drug and Alcohol Programme; An Garda Síochána; Customs Drugs Law Enforcement Unit of The Revenue Commissioners; Departments of Education and Skills; Justice and Law Reform; Health and Children; The Health Service Executive; Office of the Minister for Children; and Office of the Minister for Drugs.

2.3 Performance Management

2.3.1 Staff

The NACD has four core posts. The Director post has been filled on secondment from the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs since February 2009, the Senior Researcher was contracted in September 2010 and a Higher Executive Officer and Clerical Officer are also on secondment from the Department of Community Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs.

2.3.2 Balanced Scorecard

In 2010 the NACD had an efficiency rate of 84%. There were 20 internal meetings some of which were team meetings held to manage the flow of work and to maintain the high levels of productivity from such a small team. The remaining meetings related to the work of sub-committees, RAGs and visitors to the NACD.

Ministerial Briefings, advice to Government and information relating to Parliamentary Questions were provided on 20 occasions. There were 15 external meetings, relating to the provision of support to other agencies and to the research programme of the NACD. The NACD was also represented at meetings of the Oversight Forum on Drugs (OFD) and other fora on five occasions.

In addition to commissioning and managing research, the work programme generates a range of other activities which adds another project management dimension to the operations of the NACD. Internal work includes providing secretariat support to the various committees, organising events, media relations and managing the publication process (which involves proofing, editing, checking in great detail all drafts going to and coming from the design house and co-ordinating the printing process). Each publication generates a series of activities related to planning and organising the dissemination of reports, to key stakeholders.

2.3.3. Freedom of Information (FOI)

The NACD makes most of its information available on-line. Nonetheless, it receives FOI requests from time to time. A reference book has been published on the website in accordance with the requirements of Sections 15 and 16 of the FOI Acts. In accordance with Section 15 of the Act, the purpose of this reference book is to facilitate access to official information held by the NACD, by outlining the structure, functions and details of the services provided by the NACD, how they may be availed of, information on the classes of records held, and information on how to make a request to the NACD under the Freedom of Information Acts, 1997 and 2003. Section 16 of the FOI Act requires the NACD to publish a book containing the rules, procedures, practices, guidelines and interpretations used by the NACD. Copies of this publication are available at www.nacd.ie and upon request from the offices of the NACD.

The FOI Officer at the NACD is Mary Jane Trimble. Alan Gaffney is the FOI Decision Maker and internal appeals are dealt with by the Director. There was one FOI request in 2010.

2.3.4 Office of the Minister for Drugs (OMD) Support

The NACD provided information in response to Parliamentary Questions (PQs) to the OMD, at the Department of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs and provided other information in response to general queries on drug issues throughout 2010. The OMD supported the NACD in the preparation and signing of contracts and in the administration of financial resources allocated to NACD.

Chapter Three

Communications

One of the core functions of the NACD requires a commitment to communications in its broadest sense to promote and encourage debate and discussion of drug issues internally and externally amongst the wide range of stakeholders who interact with it. The publication and distribution of NACD research is a further dimension to using communications tools to achieve goals.

The objectives of the communications strategy are:

- To provide timely advice and briefings to the Minister on key issues and emerging trends;
- To advise service providers and practitioners across sectors in relation to research findings that may inform current thinking and practice;
- To promote the research agenda amongst key influencers in those agencies and bodies that promote, commission, fund or undertake drug-related research and/or have access to relevant data in this field;
- To represent the NACD and Ireland at international fora.

3.1 Advice to Government

The NACD provides ongoing advice to Government through its participation on the Oversight Forum on Drugs, in its briefings with the Minister and through recommendations made based on research or information it had considered. The NACD also provides advice and support to the Office of the Minister for Drugs in responding to parliamentary questions and general queries relating to its work.

3.2 Media Relations

In October 2010 the NACD launched the report *“Risk and Protective Factors for Substance Use Among Young People – A Comparative Study of Early School-Leaving and School-Attending Students ”* via a media briefing and there was a broad range of media representatives in attendance. The author Mr Trutz Haase presented the report and Minister Pat Carey TD, the NACD Chairperson Dr Des Corrigan and other NACD members were on hand to give interviews on various issues arising from the research.

NACD publications generate good news coverage and although there was only one report launched in 2010, it was well covered by the media. Three daily newspapers published articles relating to the report; it was covered in news bulletins on 12 radio stations; on national television news bulletins; and also featured in many online news publications.

3.3 NACD Website

The website contains all the necessary information about the NACD, including its vision, mission, values, functions and membership. Information on the sub-committee structure and the NACD's programme of work is also included.

The site was restructured to make it more user-friendly and has been updated to include the research projects, events and seminars which took place in 2010 and in previous years.

All NACD reports are published simultaneously on the website and can be downloaded free of charge. The website is in bilingual format - English and Irish - thus Irish versions of annual reports, business plans, press releases and research summaries dating from 2003 can be downloaded.

3.4 Seminars /Conferences organised by NACD staff in 2010.

NACD Conference "Responding to the Challenges of Substance Use Among Young People in Ireland" - Gresham Hotel, Dublin. 17th November 2010

Following on from the media launch of the report "*Risk and Protective Factors for Substance Use Among Young People- A Comparative Study of Early School-Leaves and School-Attending Students*" the Prevention Sub-committee decided that a half day seminar would provide an opportunity for stakeholders from the State, Community and Voluntary sectors to discuss the findings of this research.

Over 100 people, from a very wide range of agencies attended the seminar. There were four keynote speakers, Mr. Trutz Hasse and Dr Jonathan Pratschke presented the key findings of the research; Dr Bobby Smyth, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist with the HSE, gave a talk on strategies to enhance resilience among Irish teenagers; and Mr Dermot Stokes, National Coordinator for Youthreach spoke about the risk and protective factors in young people's use of alcohol and drugs from an education perspective.

Those in attendance were then given time to discuss the themes emerging from the research in a group setting and the seminar concluded with a lively questions and answers session.

3.4.1 Seminars /Conferences attended by NACD staff in 2010

Head shops - Risk Assessment of the 'Legal Highs'

Mullingar, 26 January 2010

Irish National Drugs Conference 2010

Dublin, 4-5 November 2010

3.5 Publications by NACD in 2010

NACD Annual Report 2009. Published on the web only in June 2010

Risk and Protective Factors for Substance Use Among Young People: A Comparative Study of Early School-Leavers and School-Attending Students. Published in October 2010

Chapter Four

Finance

4.1 Research – Funding Allocations

(for Research Projects Commissioned in 2010)

(includes VAT where applicable)

Prevalence

General Population Survey of Drug Use 2010/2011

Ipsos MORI €689,700

Study on the Prevalence of Drug Use, including Intravenous Drug Use, and Blood Borne Viruses among the Irish Prisoner Population

University College Dublin €289,647

The Irish Prison service contributed €80,000 towards the total cost of the Study.

Study on Alternative Methods and Data Sources for Estimating Prevalence of Problematic Opiate and Cocaine Use in Ireland

University of Glasgow €24,152

Treatment/Rehabilitation

Design of a Protocol for a National Substance Misuse Rehabilitation Cohort Study

University of Glasgow €29,606

Research Advisory Groups

An Overview of New Psychoactive Substances and the Outlets Supplying Them

Dublin Institute of Technology €25,350

Total NACD Allocation €1,058,455

4.2 NACD Expenditure

An annual budget of €700,000 was allocated by the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs towards the operation of the NACD. Seventy per cent of the annual budget is allocated to research funding and the remaining 30% to general administration.

The figures presented are a description of NACD expenditure on research and general administration for 2010. NACD finance is integrated within the general accounts of the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs.

NACD expenditure on new and existing research projects, including media relations, for 2010	€554,773.13
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NACD expenditure on general administration, including pay and legal services, for 2010	€150,425.69
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Appendix One

Membership of NACD Committee at 31st December 2010

Chairperson

Dr Des Corrigan, Visiting Academic, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Trinity College

Vice-Chairperson

Dr Mary Ellen McCann, Academic Appointment

Members

Prof Joe Barry, Academic Appointment

Mr Denis Bradley, National Voluntary Drugs Sector

Mr Declan Byrne, Community Sector

Mr Michael Conroy, Dept. of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs

Senator Maria Corrigan, Clinical Psychologist

Mr Joseph Doyle, National Drug Rehabilitation Implementation Committee

Mr Tony Duffin, National Voluntary Drug Sector

Mr Bill Ebbitt, HSE Health Promotion Directorate

Ms Deirdre Meenan, Dept. of Justice & Law Reform

Dr Eamon Keenan, Consultant Psychiatrist, HSE South Western Area

Dr Jean Long, EGKBU, Health Research Board

Ms Geraldine Luddy, Dept. of Health & Children

Mr Charles R. Murphy, IAAAC

Mr Liam O'Brien, Community Sector

Dr Máirín O'Sullivan, Dept. of Education & Skills

Det. Supt Michael D. O'Sullivan, Garda National Drugs Unit

Ms Fiona Walsh, HSE Western Area

Retired NACD Members (2010)

Mr Tony Barden, HSE South East

Mr John Garry, Dept. of Justice & Law Reform

Members of Sub-committees (during 2010)

(Not sitting on Main Committee)

Consequences

Mr Stephen Bartley, Dept. of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs

Dr Suzi Lyons, NHISU, Health Research Board

Ms Mary O'Shea, Dublin Aids Alliance

Dr Cathal O'Sullivan, HSE

Ms Alison Reilly, Dept. of Justice & Law Reform
Mr Gabriel Staunton, Dept. of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs

Early Warning/Emerging Trends

Ms Marita Kinsella, Dept. of Health & Children
Ms Niamh Arthur, Irish Medicines Board
Mr Stephen Bartley, Dept. of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs
Ms Helen Crosse, Toxicology Department, Beaumont Hospital
Dr James Gray, Emergency Dept. AMNCH
Mr Gerry Hayes, Dept. of Justice & Law Reform
Ms Jelena Ivanovic, Crosscare Drug & Alcohol Programme
Dr Pierce Kavanagh, Trinity Centre for Health Sciences
Dr Richie Maguire, Medical Bureau of Road Safety
Ms Peggy McGlynn, Forensic Science Laboratory
Mr Barry McGreal, Dept. of Justice & Law Reform
Mr Chris Murphy, Crosscare Drug & Alcohol Programme
Ms Lorraine Nolan, Irish Medicines Board
Dr Audrey O'Donnell, Forensic Science Laboratory
Dr Dan O' Driscoll, Forensic Science Laboratory
Ms Mary O'Reilly, Dept. of Health & Children
Ms Noreen Quinn, Dept. of Health & Children
Mr Liam Regan, State Laboratory
Det Sergeant Brian Roberts, Garda National Drugs Unit
Ms Maria Ryan, Revenue Commissioners
Dr Bobby Smyth, HSE South Western Area
Mr Gabriel Staunton, Dept. of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs
Ms Siobhan Stokes, Drug Treatment Centre Board
Ms Gillian Treacy, Dept. of Health & Children
Dr Joe Tracey, Toxicology Department, Beaumont Hospital
Ms Fiona Walsh, HSE Western Area

Prevalence

Mr Eddie Arthurs, Dept. of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs
Mr Barry McGreal, Dept. of Justice & Law Reform
Dr Bobby Smyth, HSE South Western Area

Prevention

Mr Robbie Breen, Dept. of Health & Children
Mr Pat Hanna, Rehabilitation and Support Programme (RASP)
Ms Mary Johnston, Walk Tall Programme Support Services
Ms Ger McHugh, National Youth Council of Ireland
Ms Ruby Morrow, Church of Ireland College of Education
Ms Dairearca Ní Néill, Dept. of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs

Ms Clare O'Reilly, Dept. of Health & Children
Ms Mary O'Shea, Dublin Aids Alliance
Mr Conor Rowley, Office of the Minister for Children & Youth Affairs
(OMCYA)

Treatment / Rehabilitation

Mr Alan Bell, Dept. of Health & Children
Ms Elaine Butler, Homeless Agency
Mr Paul Conlon, Coolmine Therapeutic Community
Ms Miriam Conway, FÁS Community Services
Ms Frances Nangle-Connor, Irish Prison Service
Mr Seamus Hempenstall, Dept. of Education & Skills
Dr Suzi Lyons, NHISU, Health Research Board
Ms Siobhan Maher, Family Support Network
Mr Tim McCarthy, Dept. of Health & Children
Ms Dairearca Ní Néill, Dept. of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs
Mr Brendan Ryan, Dept. of Health & Children
Ms Elizabeth Toal, Homeless Agency

Appendix Two

Table of Sub-Committee Membership at 31st December 2010

		Consequences	EWET	Prevalence	Prevention	Treatment
Dr Des Corrigan	Visiting Academic, School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Trinity College	✓	✓	✓		
Dr Mary Ellen McCann	Academic Appointment	✓			✓	
Prof Joe Barry	Academic Appointment			✓		✓
Mr Bill Ebbitt	Health Service Executive				✓	
Senator Maria Corrigan	Clinical Psychologist				✓	✓
Mr Declan Byrne	Community Sector					✓
Mr Tony Duffin	National Voluntary Drug Sector		✓			
Dr Eamon Keenan	Consultant Psychiatrist, HSE South Western Area	✓				✓
Dr Jean Long	EGKBU, Health Research Board		✓	✓		
Ms Geraldine Luddy	Department of Health and Children			✓		
Mr Joseph Doyle	National Drug Rehabilitation Implementation Committee			✓		✓
Det Supt Michael D.O'Sullivan	Garda National Drugs Unit	✓		✓		
Mr Liam O'Brien	Community Sector	✓				✓
Ms Fiona Walsh	HSE South East Region		✓			✓

		Consequences	EWET	Prevalence	Prevention	Treatment
Mr Charles R. Murphy	IAAAC					✓
Dr Máirín O'Sullivan	Department of Education and Skills				✓	
Ms Alison Reilly	Department of Justice and Law Reform	✓				
Ms Mary O'Shea	Dublin Aids Alliance	✓			✓	
Dr Suzi Lyons	NHISU, Health Research Board	✓				✓
Dr Cathal O'Sullivan	HSE	✓				
Mr Stephen Bartley	Department of Community Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs	✓	✓			
Ms Marita Kinsella	Chief Pharmacist, Department of Health and Children		✓			
Dr Joe Tracey	Toxicology Department Beaumont Hospital		✓			
Ms Peggy McGlynn	Forensic Science Laboratory		✓			
Dr James Gray	Emergency Department AMNCH		✓			
Ms Gillian Treacy	Department of Health and Children		✓			
Mr Gerry Hayes	Department of Justice and Law Reform		✓			
Det Sergeant Brian Roberts	Garda National Drugs Unit		✓			
Ms Mary O'Reilly	Department of Health and Children		✓			
Mr Liam Regan	State Laboratory		✓			
Dr Daniel O'Driscoll	Forensic Science Laboratory		✓			
Ms Noreen Quinn	Department of Health and Children		✓			

		Consequences	EWET	Prevalence	Prevention	Treatment
Ms Helen Crosse	Toxicology Department Beaumont Hospital		✓			
Dr Bobby Smyth	HSE, South Western Area		✓	✓		
Dr Richie Maguire	Medical Bureau of Road Safety		✓			
Ms Maria Ryan	Revenue Commissioners		✓			
Ms Lorraine Nolan	Irish Medicines Board		✓			
Dr Pierce Kavanagh	Trinity Centre for Health Sciences		✓			
Ms Siobhan Stokes	Drug Treatment Centre Board		✓			
Mr Chris Murphy	Crosscare Drug and Alcohol Programme		✓			
Ms Jelena Ivanovic	Crosscare Drug and Alcohol Programme		✓			
Mr Barry McGreal	Department of Justice and Law Reform		✓	✓		
Mr Eddie Arthurs	Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs			✓		
Mr Robbie Breen	Department of Health and Children				✓	
Ms Ruby Morrow	Church of Ireland College of Education				✓	
Ms Mary Johnston	Walk Tall Programme Support Services				✓	
Ms Clare O'Reilly	Department of Health and Children				✓	
Mr Conor Rowley	Office of the Minister for Children & Youth Affairs				✓	
Ms Ger McHugh	National Youth Council of Ireland				✓	

		Consequences	EWET	Prevalence	Prevention	Treatment
Mr Pat Hanna	Rehabilitation and Support Programme (RASP)				✓	
Ms Dairearca Ní Néill	Department of Community Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs				✓	✓
Ms Frances Nangle-Connor	Irish Prison Service					✓
Mr Alan Bell	Department of Health and Children					✓
Mr Paul Conlon	Coolmine Therapeutic Community					✓
Mr Seamus Hempenstall	Department of Education and Skills					✓
Mr Brendan Ryan	Department of Health and Children					✓
Ms Elaine Butler	The Homeless Agency					✓
Ms Miriam Conway	FÁS Community Services					✓
Ms Siobhan Maher	Family Support Network					✓

Appendix Three

Actions required of the NACD under the National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016

- 49 Continue to implement and develop, as appropriate, the five key EMCDDA epidemiological indicators and the associated collection systems;
- (i) Prevalence and patterns of drug use among the general population;
 - (ii) Prevalence and patterns of problem drug use.
- 54 Consider the further development of systems monitoring changing drugs trends in line with the EU Early Warning System
- 55 The Minister of State, the OMD and the NACD will develop and prioritise a research programme, revised on an annual basis. This would consider the following areas among others for possible research;
- Areas of research recommended in the report of the Working Group on Drugs Rehabilitation;
 - Harm reduction approaches, based on an evidence-based approach covering developments internationally;
 - Examining the evidence of the effectiveness of the progression of clients from substitute maintenance treatments to abstinence;
 - Psychosocial adjustment, and quality of life, of patients on long-term methadone maintenance treatment;
 - Examining the misuse and prolonged use of psychotropic drugs;
 - Factors influencing deaths that are indirectly related to drugs;
 - New developments in treatments for drugs;
 - The impact of alcohol and drugs on the Irish health and justice systems;
 - Further research on psychiatric co-morbidity among drug users;
 - Prevalence patterns of problem substance use among prisoners and homeless people; and
 - Examining the feasibility of developing an indicator to monitor changes in the prevalence of substance misuse among youth at risk
- 56 Develop a research management framework in regard to problem substance use in Ireland. Disseminate research findings and models of best practice.