



Citywide Drugs Crisis Campaign

CITYWIDE UPDATE

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What will the 2005 Budget say about this Government's commitment to communities dealing with the Drugs Crisis?

During the past two years, Community Representatives on Local Drug Task Forces (LDTF) have been expressing serious concerns about the lack of commitment by government to ongoing support and resources for the LDTF - at a time when the drug crisis is having a major impact on local communities.

Drug Strategy Review
During the current review of the National Drugs Strategy, the concerns of communities have had to be restated yet again.

Budget will be announced in early December - this will show us what resources are being committed to the Drugs Strategy in the coming year.

The concerns of Community Representatives on the Regional Drugs Task Forces have also been clearly expressed during this review.

Reps to meet
In January, Citywide will bring together the community representatives from Local Drugs Task Forces and Regional Drugs Task Forces.

Taoiseach meeting
These concerns were brought to the attention of the Taoiseach at a meeting with Citywide in April.

The lack of progress in the regions is set against the background of a drugs crisis that continues to escalate outside Dublin (see P3 for more).

This conference will look at what the Budget provisions (or lack of them!) will mean for the future of the Local and Regional Drug Task Forces and the implications for the future role of Community Representation on the Task Force Structures.

This meeting produced no specific response from the Taoiseach or the Government.

So will we see any improvements in this situation in 2005?
The provisions of the

Citywide Website

Our website is under construction.

From Jan next you will be able to access our site for information about Citywide networks, community drug projects, national and international policy, latest news, publications and more...

Watch this space: www.citywide.ie

NDST Cocaine Sub-group

Last edition we reported on the setting-up of a NDST sub-group, which was to look at developing a number of pilot projects around cocaine.

who were invited to the table.

through Local Task Force Structures. That's what they are there for - to respond to the changing local drug problem.

While any initiative to develop services is welcome this sub-group has effectively by-passed local structures and will divide out the available resources amongst those

Where does that leave the 28 projects that replied to a Citywide survey last November, who despite having no additional resources are working with clients who use cocaine?

The Local Drugs Task Forces should be given an immediate mandate to draw up action plans on cocaine that are appropriate for their local areas and a budget to deliver on the plans.

The response to cocaine should be progressed

National Advisory Committee on Drugs Community Based research published

Four new reports have been produced by the NACD of research conducted in local communities by community and voluntary groups. The four areas of research are:

Drug use among new communities in Ireland. Author: Merchants Quay Ireland.

This exploratory study examines the pattern of drug use among new communities and looks at the reasons and motivations for drug use; establishes the risks that people are exposed to; explores the level of awareness of health promotion/harm reduction strategies and services. The report includes a series of recommendations to assist drug services in dealing with the needs of drug users from new communities.

Heroin - the mental roof over your head. Links between homelessness and drug use. Author: Tallaght Homeless Advice Unit

This research examines the links between homelessness and drug use and the nature of drug use amongst the homeless population in Tallaght. It also explores the reasons behind their homelessness; examines the practices and policies of local authorities in relation the housing of homeless drug users; and explores the expectations of homeless drug users. Primary among the recommendations made by the research is the need to recognise the links between homelessness and drug use at policy and practice levels.

Benzodiazepines -whose little helper? The role of benzodiazepines in the development of substance misuse problems in Ballymun. Author: Ballymun Youth Action Project.

This report studies the role of benzodiazepines in the development of substance misuse problems in Ballymun. It explores the dynamics of supply and demand in the local context, and highlights the factors that allow the continuance of a relatively high level of benzodiazepine use in the community. The report recommends strategies that may facilitate change. It stresses the need to invest in the development of services to complement medical practitioners and develop non-pharmaceutical supports for benzodiazepine detoxification and alternatives to benzodiazepine therapy.

Prevalence study of drug use of young people in a mixed suburban area. Author: Kilbarrack Coast Community project.

This study establishes the patterns and trends of drug misuse in the Kilbarrack area amongst young people aged 10 - 17 and examines their attitudes to drug use, and the risk factors accompanying their use. The study assesses drug use among a sample of early school leavers and the views of community members on the drug situation in their area. Representing a socially mixed area, the research is important in providing an indication of drug use and attitudes to drug use of young people in similar communities around the country. Recommendations include an examination of the feasibility of a pilot project in Kilbarrack bringing together schools, sporting organizations, community and voluntary groups in partnership with the statutory agencies particularly the health board to tackle drug by young people.

All of these reports are available from the NACD, 3rd Floor Shelbourne House, Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. Tel: 01 6670760, Email: info@nacd.ie, or download reports on www.nacd.ie

NACD to examine the experiences of families seeking support for problem drug use.

The National Advisory Committee on Drugs has just announced that it will commission a study to look at the experiences of families seeking support for problem drug use within their families.

The study will consist of a series of individual in-depth interviews with thirty families - 20 from the Dublin area and 10 regionally. The study will focus on a number of areas including:

What (and where) support has been sought by the family/ family member?

What were their expectations in seeking this support?

What support has been most/ least helpful?

What are the barriers in seeking support?

What would help family members to cope?

The project is expected to take 12 months to complete. The closing date for tenders is December 22nd 2004.

The first report on the management of people with mental health and addiction problems has found that in most cases there are no specific services for people with a dual diagnosis in Ireland.

The report, entitled "Mental health and Addiction Services and the management of dual diagnosis in Ireland" was launched on November 1st and is available from the NACD

Increased numbers in treatment for opiate use outside of ERHA area

"The increase in new problem opiate users using treatment services indicates a spread of heroin use in these seven health board areas, indicating the need to expand the number and range of services in these areas"

*DMRD,
Occasional Paper
13/2004*

The Drug Misuse Research Division of the Health Research Board have just published the results of research on the trends in treated problem opiate use in health board areas outside of the Eastern Regional Health Authority.

The New Cases

There was a sharp increase in the numbers of new cases treated for opiate use in the seven health board areas outside the ERHA area between 1998 and 2002.

In 1998, 2.0 per 100,00 new opiate users were receiving treatment - by 2002, 8.3 per 100,00 of the 15-64 year-old population were receiving treatment.

This increase in new problem opiate users at treatment services indicates a spread of heroin use in these seven health board areas indicating the need to expand the number and range of services.

Numbers of people in treatment

The numbers of people in treatment also increased steadily, from 6.6 per 100,00 of the 15-64 year-old population in 1998 to 25.4 per 100,00 in 2002.

Geographical Spread

There was a spread by county in demand for treatment for new cases, with very high rates of treated problem opiate use in counties Carlow, Cavan, Louth, Meath and Westmeath. The lowest rates of treatment were along the western seaboard.

Polydrug use

The most commonly used secondary drug used by those treated in these health board areas was cannabis. During the period under review the use of cocaine and benzodiazepines as second drugs increased while the use of amphetamines decreased.

Reported polydrug use decreased from 80% of those in treatment in 1998 to 74% in 2002. The decrease was more marked in new cases.

Time to Treatment

Between 2000 and 2002, 50% of new opiate users reported that they started using illicit drugs by the age of 15.

The age by which half of new cases reported first using opiates increased from 19 in 1998 to 21 in 2001 and decreased to 19 years in 2002.

The median interval between starting to use opiates and initial treatment remained between 3.5 and 3.8 years from 1999 to 2002.

The full review of 'Trends in treated problem opiate use in the seven health board areas outside the Eastern Regional Health Authority, 1998 - 2002' can be obtained from the

**Drug Misuse Research
Division
Health Research Board
Holbrook House
Hollis Street
Dublin 2
(01) 6761176
www.hrb.ie
dmrd@hrb.ie**

New Database for Community & Voluntary Sector

ADM, Combat Poverty Agency and Comhairle have developed a new database.

Information about publications and resources from these agencies can be accessed by searching the database under topic, title, author, agency or text/keyword search.

www.cidb.ie/interagen/cyvcresources.nsf/

LDTF Community Reps - Training Programme

Local Drugs Task-force Community reps will be contacted by Citywide and invited to attend focus groups from mid-October to assess the type of training they would find most useful in supporting their role representing local communities on Task Forces.

Gearoid O' Loingsigh will conduct the focus groups and will arrange and organise a series of workshops based on the themes identified by community reps.

Initial contact has suggested that training in negotiating skills, public speaking, confidence building and understanding financial reports would be some of the areas that community reps would find helpful to their roles.

We hope that the first training session will happen before Christmas with further sessions scheduled during next year.

You can find out more about this training by calling the Citywide office at 8365090.



Annual Service
of
Commemoration
and Hope
February 1st
2005

If your group
hasn't
participated
previously in
the annual
service and
would like to be
involved in the
upcoming
service

or

if you need any
information
about the
2005 Service

Contact Sadie
(01) 836 5090
sadie@citywide.ie



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Managers training - Return your questionnaires

Last month we sent out a training requirement questionnaire to Drug Project Managers to gauge the level of interest in management training and to identify the type of training and supports required and the amount of time that individuals/projects can commit to this training.

If you haven't done so yet, please return your questionnaires ASAP.

If you haven't received a questionnaire or you wish to discuss particular training needs please contact Ruth at ruth@citywide.ie/ 01 836 5090

Family Support Resource Pack to be re-printed

1,000 copies of the Citywide Family Resource Pack have so far been distributed to family support groups, community groups, Task Forces and individuals nationwide. Due to continued demand and thanks to funding received from Minister Noel Ahern's office, a further 1,500 copies will be ready in January 2005.

If you or your group wish to make any changes to contact details or wish to have your group included in the directory, contact the Citywide office before Dec 8th.

Blanchardstown Drug Awareness Week

The Blanchardstown Drug Awareness Week kicks off on Monday November 22nd with the launch - by Minister Noel Ahern - of three documents commissioned by the Local Drugs Taskforce, dealing with Treatment, Policing and Education Initiatives.

Activities are planned for the entire week including a Question and Answer Road Show, Workshops, Drug Awareness Table quizzes, Drama and Stress management classes.

Information about events is available on the events page: www.dublin15.info or by contacting GBRD: (01) 826 2364 or the Blanchardstown LDTF: (01) 860 4845

Conference launches report on 'Supporting Grandparents, Supporting Children' - the "granny issue"

There was a great deal of interest from health board workers, community groups, media, political representatives and individual family members in the launch of the Citywide Family Support Network report of the consultation with carers of children of drug users.

The launch took place on Oct 21st in Ozanam House and was addressed by the authors of the report and by three grandparents caring for their grandkids.

The grandparents spoke of the difficulties they faced with officialdom when they first came to care for their grandkids.

All three are still encountering problems. So much so that one grandmother is taking her case to the Strasburg to get recognition for her right to foster her grandchild.

Many carers in the audience could identify with the sense of frustration and inequality expressed by the contributors.

The speakers noted the support that they had received from the Cumas project and from the grandparents support group that had formed within Cumas.

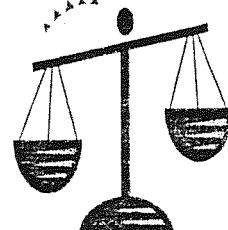
Copies of the report are available from the Citywide Offices.

A report of the workshop recommendations from this confer-

ence will be available in December (and covered in the next issue of UPDATE).

For further information about support for grandparents and family support contact Sadie at 01 836 5090 or Email: sadie@citywide.ie

? Any pain release
or photos



Central Treatment List Summary Report for period 01/09/04 to 30/09/04

THE DRUG TREATMENT CENTRE BOARD

CLINICS				
	Total Patients during period	Total Patients at End of Period	Clinics	New (1st time patient on CTL)
East Coast A.H.B. Clinics	418	408	14	0
Northern Area H.B. Clinics	1781	1740	31	10
South Western Area H B Clinics	1631	1567	31	14
Western Health Board Clinics	15	15	1	1
South Eastern H.B. Clinics	44	41	2	2
Mid Western H.B. Clinics	41	39	1	1
Midland Health Board Clinics	62	60	2	4
Prisons	385	340	7	9
Drug Treatment Centre Board	523	489	5	4
Totals	4900	4699	94	45
GENERAL PRACTITIONERS				
	Total Patients during period	Total Patients at End of Period	GP's	New (1st time patient on CTL)
ECAHB General Practitioners	314	302	32	3
NAHB General Practitioners	718	710	48	4
SWAHB General Practitioners	1255	1234	97	0
Western Health Board GP's	14	14	9	0
Southern Health Board GP's	23	23	7	0
South Eastern H.B. GP's	7	3	3	0
North Western H.B. GP's	5	4	3	0
North Eastern H.B. GP's	82	77	6	7
Mid Western Health Board GP's	38	37	8	0
Midland Health Board G.P.'s	11	11	6	0
Totals	2467	2415	219	14
Grand Totals	7367	7114	313	59
Actual Patients Attending	7235			

Compiled by CTL 12 October 2004