



Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force CLG Annual Report 2020





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Section 1: Background and overview of Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force

BLDATF is one of 12 LDATF around Dublin, which were set up in the late 1990s to address the drug crisis of the time. BLDATF support a number of organisations within the community to provide a range of services and activities across the region. The BLDATF recognises that the impact of problematic substance use extends beyond the individual, to the family and the wider community, and as such we work closely with the wealth of networks within the Ballyfermot community to collaborate, raise awareness and reduce stigma associated with problematic drug and alcohol use. This section takes extracts from the draft BLDATF Handbook which was signed off in March 2020.

1.1 Role of Drug and Alcohol Task Forces

Local and Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Forces¹ play a key role in assessing the extent and nature of the drug problem in their areas and coordinating action at local level so that there is a targeted response to the drug problem in local communities. They implement the National Drugs Strategy² in the context of the needs of their region or local area through action plans which have identified existing and emerging gaps. The goals of the strategy are:

- Promote and protect health and well-being.
- Minimize the harms caused by the use and misuse of substances and promote rehabilitation and recovery.
- Address the harms of drugs markets and reduce access to drugs for harmful use.
- Support participation of individuals, families and communities.
- Develop sound and comprehensive evidence-informed policies and actions.

Drug and Alcohol Task Forces comprise representatives from a range of relevant agencies, such as the HSE, the Gardaí, the Probation Service, Education and Training Executives, Local Authorities, Youth Services, as well as elected public representatives and Voluntary and Community sector representatives. There are 14 Local Drug and Alcohol Task Forces in Ireland, 12 of which are in Dublin and the other two are Bray and Cork.

1.2 Ballyfermot LDATF Company Structure

Ballyfermot LDATF became a CLG in March 2017; this was the outcome of an audit which made recommendations with regard to separating the administration of the Ballyfermot LDATF from another one of its funded agencies in the community. As such, although Ballyfermot LDATF has been in existence since 1998, 2020 was only its third year of operating as a CLG in its own right. In 2018, through a grant received from the Drugs Policy Unit (DPU), the BLDATF tendered for a consultant to develop a board handbook in

¹ Source: <https://health.gov.ie/healthy-ireland/drugs-policy/local-and-regional-drugs-task-forces/>

² Source: http://www.drugs.ie/downloadDocs/2017/ReducingHarmSupportingRecovery2017_2025.pdf



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line with the existing TF Handbook ³ and good governance. In Q1 of 2020 the draft handbook was approved by the TF members with a view to reviewing the handbook in 2021.

1.3 Memorandum of Arts

The following is an extract from the company's Memorandum & Articles of Association showing the Main Objects of the company, 2017.

The BLDATF is governed by the Main Object contained in its M&A, which states its aims as: The main objects for which the Company is established (the "Main Objects") are:

- i. To provide corporate governance, human resources, accounting and audit functions for the Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol BLDATF.
- ii. To ensure members of the community who wish to move from problem substance misuse have access to a range of evidence based early intervention, treatment and rehabilitation options within their community.
- iii. To provide support and information and training in relation to all aspects of addiction to drug users, their families and the wider community, through a range of awareness raising and capacity building initiative.
- iv. To work with the community and funded projects to respond to current and emerging drug related issues in the area, by developing and implementing a strategy to achieve these objectives under specified core themes.
- v. To provide an independent informed strategic response to existing and emerging issues relating to Alcohol and Drug use in Ballyfermot.

Our approach to our work is rooted in respect for our stakeholders with integrity and trust being the foundation of what we do and how we do it. We believe that our best work comes through collaboration and through the experience, expertise and creativity of our stakeholders.

1.4 BLDATF Legal Entity (BOD)

BLDATF (the company) is funded through core funding from central government, primarily from the Health Service Executive (HSE). BLDATF is a company limited by guarantee formed in March 2017 and registered with the Companies Registration Office, Registration No: 600165. It has two Executive members (directors) namely, Henry Harding and Vincent Jackson that fill the roles of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Company Secretary. The company has a support structure to help it fulfill its role.

³ Source: https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/16412/1/DTF_Handbook_Guidelines_Feb_2011.pdf



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1.5 Advisory Group (AG)

The AG consists of thirteen (13) representatives from the community and voluntary sector, key statutory agencies and the two directors. The work of the AG is governed by Terms of Reference issued by the company, being guided by the National Drugs Strategy, that involves the use of an innovative and evidence-based approach in ensuring the development of a coordinated and integrated response to the harms of drug use. The AG is supported by the following sub-committees with their own TORs.

- Treatment and Rehabilitation
- Financial Monitoring
- Governance

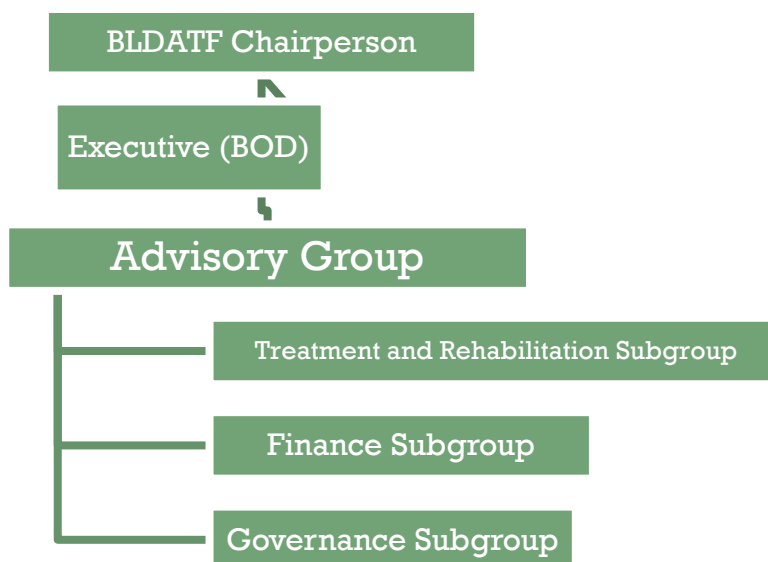


Figure 1: BLDATF Company Structure 2020

1.6 Employees

There were no staffing changes in the reporting period. The company has one direct employee:

- Financial and Operational Administrator

The company has two seconded employees:

- LDATF Coordinator (the coordinator), employed by the HSE assigned to BLDATF.
- Project Officer, employed by BCP on behalf of the BLDATF, through a GAA in agreement with the HSE.

Ballyfermot LDATF Staffing

Position	Employer	Time period	Hours	Grade
Coordinator	HSE	(since July 2018)	F/T	HSE 7
Financial and Operational Administrator	BLDATF	(Since May 2017)	F/T	HSE 4
Project Officer	BCP	Since March 2019	F/T	HSE 5 (BCP equivalent)



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1.7 Reporting Arrangements

- The Administrator reports to the Chairperson of the BLDATF, which may be varied to take into account any changing needs of the company. The Administrator's day-to-day work will be directed by the Coordinator.
- The Project Officer reports on a day-to-day basis to the CEO of the Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership. The day to day work of the Project Officer is guided by the BLDATF Workplan and informed by the Coordinator. The Project Officer works collaboratively with the Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup of the BLDATF.
- The Coordinator reports to, and is accountable to, the Local Area Operations Manager, HSE Addiction Services, for all human resources matters and work activity. For the efficient and effective delivery of programmes and services, it is necessary for the Coordinator to have a close working relationship with the Chairperson and the Advisory Group of BLDATF and to provide such supports, knowledge and expertise that will guide the company in the management of day-to-day operations and the development of its strategic plan.



Section 2: Overview of treated problematic drug and alcohol use in the Ballyfermot LDATF region

This section captures the data pertaining treated substance use in the BLDATF region. This information is taken from the BLDATF area National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS)⁴ treatment data. It is worth noting that not all TF funded agencies that provide drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation options in the area are engaged with the NDTRS system. Also at the time of writing the Central Treatment List data for the HSE Addiction Services was not made available. The BLDATF funds a range of service interventions, from youth activities and family support. This section focuses on treated problem drug and alcohol use only, as recorded by the NDTRS. This is done in order to capture patterns relating to drug and alcohol trends, but in terms of policy development and strategic direction, the BLDATF will always consider the broad range of interventions captured through other reporting mechanisms utilized under projects funding arrangements.

2.1 Central Treatment list

The Central Treatment List (CTL) reporting system was established in 1998 after the publication of the *Report of the Methadone Treatment Services Review Group 1998*⁵. The purpose of the system is to ensure that all individuals receiving methadone substitution in a given area are centrally recorded; individuals can access methadone treatment from one provider only. CTL data refers only to people receiving methadone substitution as a treatment for opiate dependence, for which the HSE has statutory responsibility. At the time of writing the CTL data was not available to the BLDATF.

In 2019 there were 304 people on MMT making up 1.5% of the total population of Ballyfermot, 22,091. A report from the Ballymun Local Drugs and Alcohol Task Force published in late March 2021 puts Ballyfermot in the second highest position for the numbers of people on methadone maintenance treatment per 1,000 of the population⁶.

The age profile of individuals who are prescribed methadone, an older drug using population, as referenced in the RHRS⁷. The national drugs strategy specifically names as an action within the strategy, 2.1.23 where it was identified that the needs of older people with long term substance use issues need to be examined. The low numbers of young people accessing methadone substitution is an indication of a

⁴ https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/26858/1/Master_NDTRS_2019_protocol_hard-copy_V5.pdf

⁵ <https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/5092/1/513-017ReportMethadone.pdf>

⁶ Montague, A (2021) Ballymun a brighter future. Ballymun Drug Alcohol Task Force Dublin. Retrieved from: Ballymun – A Brighter Future by Andrew Montague (drugsandalcohol.ie)

⁷ Department of Health (2017) *Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025* Dublin: DOH (p14; 34;44;



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change in drug use patterns, rather than an indication of a general reduction in drug use amongst young people in the BLDATF area.

2.2 NDTRS Treatment data

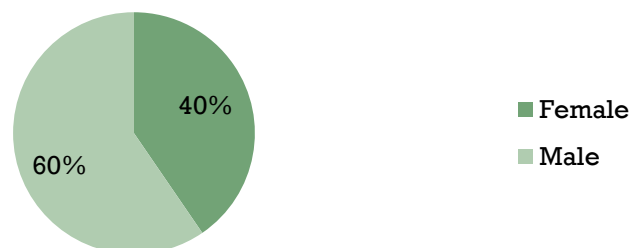
The following information is taken from the NDTRS data provided to the BLDATF annually by the Health Research Board (HRB). The contributors to this data are the BLDATF agencies funded through the HSE. There are some drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation services not captured by this data, both BLDATF funded and those which are not. Notwithstanding, the localized NDTRS data is an important tool in ascertaining patterns and emerging issues. The NDTRS data relates to services provided within the BLDATF region, not including prison settings, and, refers to new referrals in the reporting period, not the on-going treatment data for people already in services. As the NDTRS data sets refers to relatively few services, the data quality can be affected, and therefore conclusions drawn need to be taken with caution, and certainly in terms of policy development at a local level, treatment data alone will not provide the full picture. To inform strategic or policy direction, BLDATF will always couple data sets with other inputs and qualitative data collection.

Something of particular note for 2020 is the overall reduction in the number of people referring for treatment in the reporting period. This is not surprising due to Covid-19. It was widely reported the experience of isolation people went through, as well as challenges with mental health and family circumstances. These challenges will have impacted on people's capacity to reach out for help. Indeed such difficulties can often be the trigger for further drug and alcohol use as a coping mechanism. Notwithstanding, the on-going and clear messaging by both the BLDATF and the services, about the range of services available to people, including contact numbers and service times via both on-line platforms as well as leaflet distribution across the community, to some extent will have ensured that people in the community knew that services were open and available to them, albeit with restrictions.

2.3 Gender of Service Users

The NDTRS indicates that out of all service referrals in the year, 40% were female. This figure represents an increase on 2019 where the number of females was at 32%. It was reported at T&R that services were seeing more women refer and this is certainly borne out in the data. Although it is important to note that it is an ongoing piece of work to continue to engage women into services, it is promising to see such strong female engagement in services in 2020. At a national level the percentage of women engaging in drug and alcohol treatment services is at 26%⁸, which shows that Ballyfermot treatment services compare well in terms of their capacity to engage with more women.

Gender of people accessing T&R services



⁸ HRB (2020) <https://www.hrb.ie/data-collections-evidence/alcohol-and-drug-treatment/latest-data/>

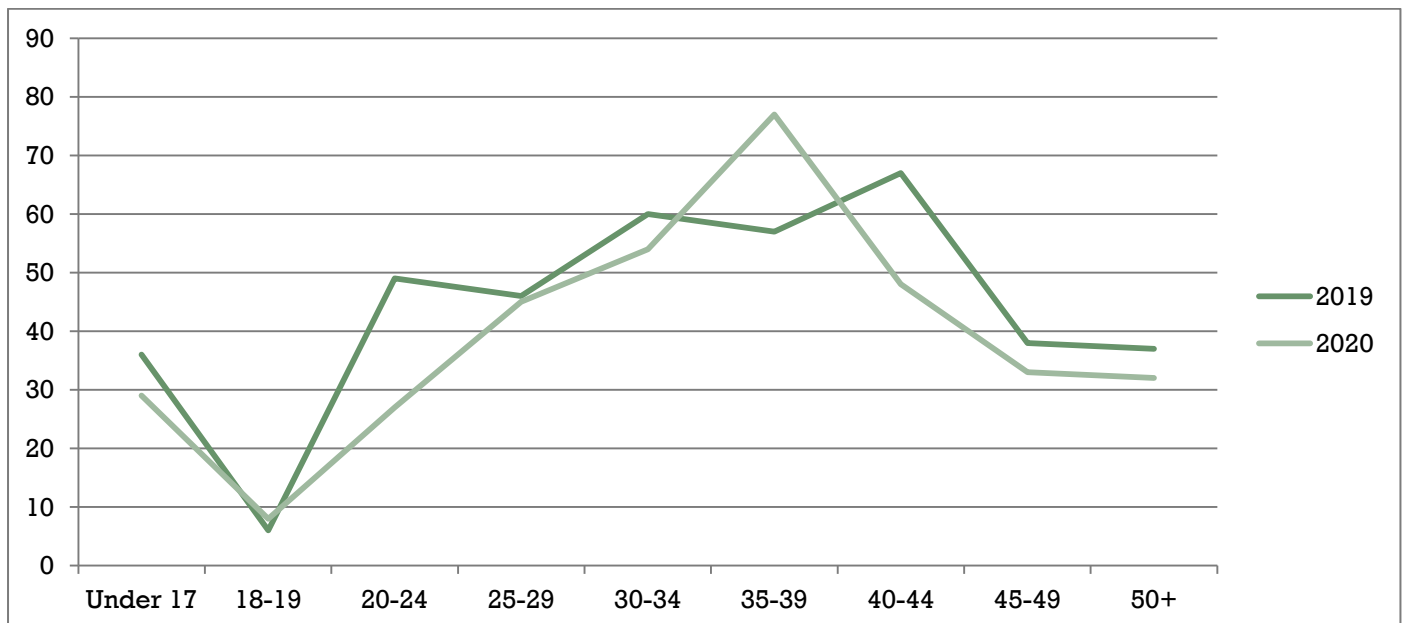


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2.4 Age profile of people accessing services

There are many challenges which people experienced during Covid-19, felt most acutely by individuals and families where poverty or health is already a concern. There are also many people and families, who rely on outside support and services, such support was considerably affected by the impact of Covid-19 and although services and the BLDATF worked hard to engage with the community during this challenging time, the restrictions did impact on the ability of services to reach people most at need. In this regard the overall numbers of individuals referring for support were lower in 2020 than in 2019, but at 8% difference indicates less of an impact on referrals as might be expected and therefore shows the capacity of projects to reach people in the community and to the wider TF in it's efforts to share information about services and supports.

The age profile of people accessing services is indicated here, which is compared with data from 2019. The data indicates a few changes from 2019 compared to 2020.



The number of people under the age of 17 dropped by 20% between 2019 and 2020. The highest number of people referring for support in 2019 was in the 40-44 category, whereas in 2020 it was the 35-39 category. There was a decline in the number of people in the 40-44 age category between the two years, with 29% fewer people aged 40-44 presenting to services in 2020 than 2019. There was however a significant increase of 26% of people aged between 35-39 years old presenting to services in 2020. There were noticeable declines in the number of older people seeking support during 2020, which could be indicative of the isolation felt by older people during the Covid-19 restrictions and their limited capacity to engage in remote/online support.

The drop in under 17s support is worth noting. Due to school and college closures as well as many other educational and social support services moving to on-line service provision in 2020 due to Covid-19, it is possible that the under 18 cohort were missed as they were not presenting at places where potential issues may have been identified which would have triggered appropriate referrals. It would be appropriate



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to suggest that the drop in referrals does not indicate a drop in drug or alcohol use, it just suggests it was more hidden for this age cohort.

2.5 Drug of choice

Of those who referred for treatment in the BLDATF region during 2020, that is a total of 355 new treatment episodes, 174 stated that they use only one drug, the remaining 181 stated that they used more than one drug. The range of secondary substances is quite broad but the main secondary problem substance reported are benzodiazepines (25%) followed by cocaine (24%) then cannabis (14%). The below chart shows the data pertaining to the main problem substance reported by service users upon treatment entry, comparing years 2015-2020. However, a degree of caution should be

taken when considering data pertaining to a number of years drilled down to a local level, as variations could be as much down to differences in reporting as much as they could be due to actual differences in the numbers of people referring for support. Notwithstanding such analysis can be useful for drawing patterns and conclusions which, when taken together with local research and consultation, form a framework with which to form policy and service supports.

“Steady increase in the number of people reporting cocaine as their main problem substance since 2015”

Drug of choice	Percentage of overall referrals according to the year					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alcohol	21%	16%	13%	14%	9%	11%
Benzodiazepine	5%	7%	8%	5%	4%	6%
Cannabis	15%	13%	20%	12%	22%	18%
Cocaine	21%	7%	20%	25%	24%	30%
Heroin/opiates	36%	48%	37%	38%	39%	33%

The number of people referring with problematic cannabis use as their main drug issue went from 22% in 2019 to 18% in 2020. This figure could be explained by the reduced number of <17s referring for support as this is one of the main problem substances for this age cohort⁹. There was a decrease in the number of people who reported their main problem substance as opiates, with 2020 showing the lowest overall since 2015. The data indicates a steady decline in the reporting of heroin use as main problem substance in the Ballyfermot area from 36% in 2015 to 33% in 2020, and sits just below the national picture of 37% of all referrals being for opiates in 2020.

Benzodiazepines as the main problem substance remains largely stable at 6% in 2020, the least reported main problem substance in all years consistently. However benzodiazepines are the most commonly reported secondary substance, therefore cannot be overlooked in terms of their impact and their significance as a drug of choice. Research on drug related deaths in Ireland conducted by the Health Research Board¹⁰ reveals that benzodiazepines are the most commonly linked drug to poisoning deaths in

⁹ https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/32738/1/Drugnet_Issue_74_WEB.pdf

¹⁰ Health Research Board (2017) “Drug Related Death – HRB Publishes its Latest Figures” available at: <https://www.hrb.ie/news/press-releases/single-press-release/article/drug-related-deaths-hrb-publishes-latest-figures/>



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Ireland, implicated in 37% of all poisoning deaths in Ireland in 2017 (ibid). Alcohol was a close second implicated in 33% of all poisoning deaths (ibid).

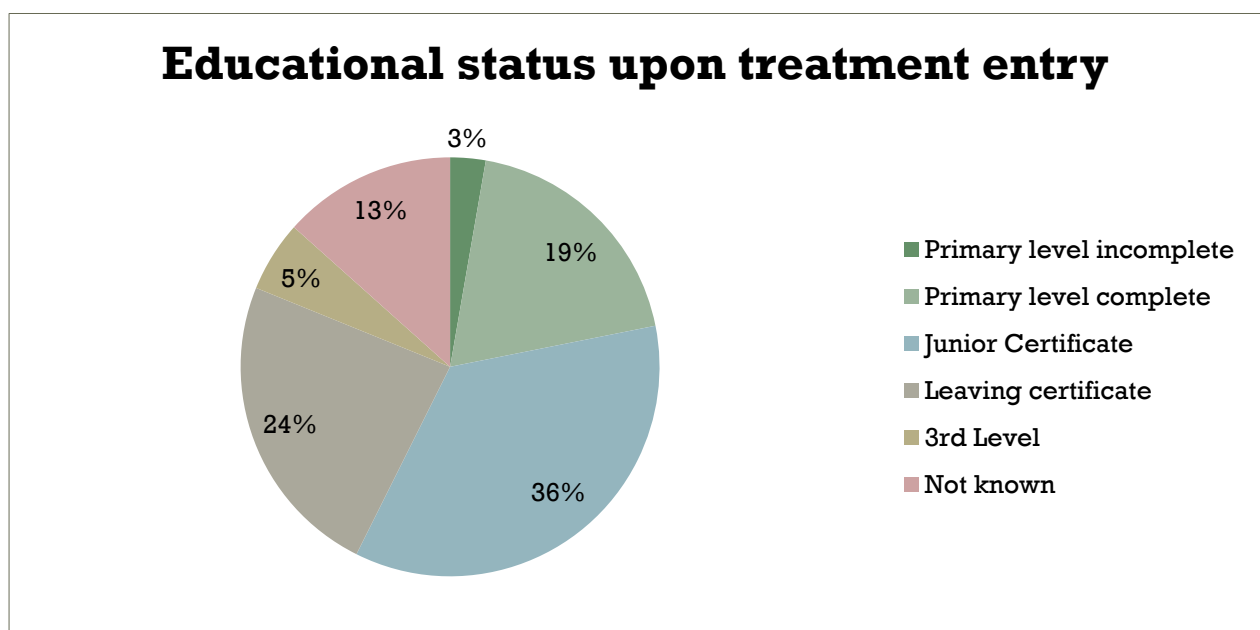
The number of people seeking support for problematic alcohol use in 2020 was greater than in 2019. Although the difference is small in terms of treatment data, when coupled with what was witnessed in the community and across the country as a whole of an increase in problematic alcohol use, an increase in alcohol referrals would have been expected. The increase in alcohol use, particularly in the home due to pub closures, would have compounded the wider impacts of job losses, domestic violence, isolation and school closures experienced across the whole of the country.

What is most noteworthy from the treatment data is the steady increase in the number of people reporting cocaine as their main problem substance, from 21% in 2015 to 30% in 2020. This aligns well with feedback from all projects during 2020 about the increase in cocaine use being reported amongst service users, in particular crack cocaine use, which is not differentiated from cocaine on the NDTRS form.

Research on drug related deaths in Ireland conducted by the Health Research Board reveals that benzodiazepines are the most commonly linked drug to poisoning deaths in Ireland, implicated in 37% of all poisoning deaths in Ireland in 2017

2.6 Educational status upon treatment entry

The below chart shows the breakdown of educational status upon treatment entry for all new referrals during the reporting period.



The number of people presenting services who had not completed primary school remains stable at 3%. As with 2019, the majority of service users have completed to Junior Certificate only, although the proportion of people who had completed Junior Certificate in 2020 is lower than in 2019. The number of people who have completed their Leaving Certificate is higher this year, as well as a slight increase in the number of



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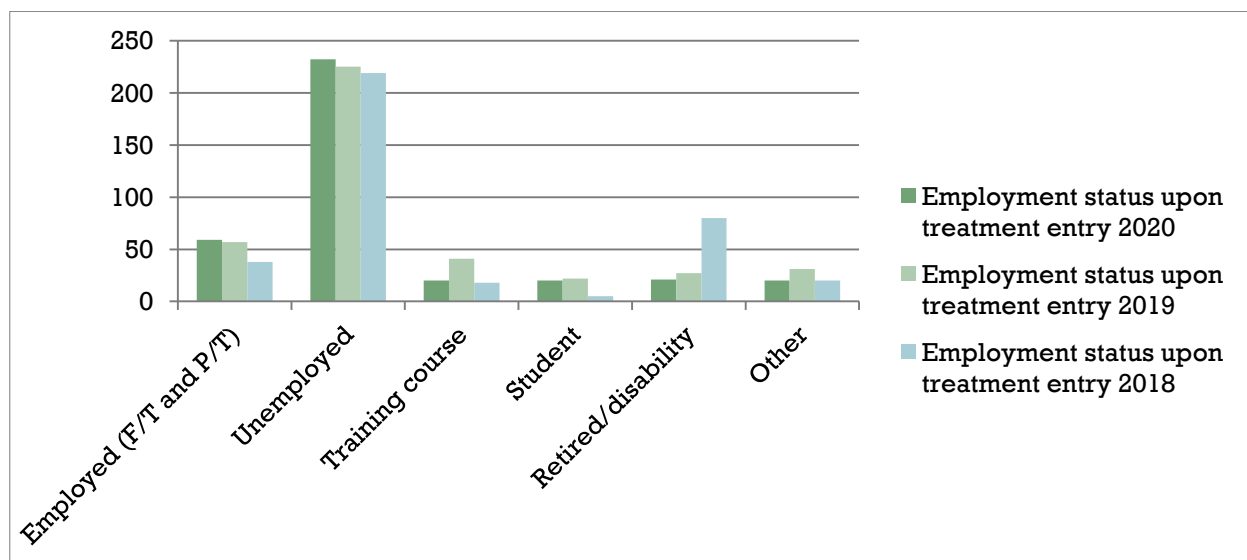
people referring with third level education completed. The figures remain largely stable from 2019, with only slight variations from year to year. What the figures do indicate is that the educational status of people referring for support is diverse, with a range of levels completed. This variation speaks to the nature of the services offered and their capacity to reach broad range of people across the community. However, the data also highlights that although early school leaving is without a doubt a risk factor to problematic substance use, it is not the only factor at play, and individual circumstances and other issues will always play a part in the impact of drug and alcohol use on someone's life.

The complex issues that arose as a result of Covid-19 including the lockdown periods, the stress of being out of work, working from home and school closures would have impacted more people across the Ballyfermot community, which we may not fully witness until subsequent years.

“What the figures do indicate is that the educational status of people referring for support is diverse...This variation speaks to the nature of the services offered and their capacity to reach broad range of people across the community”

2.7 Employment status upon treatment entry

The chart below shows the range of breakdown of referrals according to their employment status, the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.



There were some variations in the number of people newly referring to services across the years which will account for some of the differences in the figures shown above. The overall breakdown is largely the same across the three years with the majority of people referring for support stating they are unemployed at treatment entry. The high level of unemployment is to be expected as it is well established that



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employment acts as a protective factor when it comes to problematic drug and alcohol use¹¹. The relatively low numbers of students/training course participants in 2020 compared with the other years could be due to school and college closures during 2020. This, much like the reduction in cannabis referrals, is indicative of the significantly reduced number of young people accessing services during 2020.

There remains a steady rate of people referring who are in paid employment, with a slightly higher number in 2020 than other years. When looking at the data, it is clear that unemployment is not the only risk factor and that people are referring for supports that are in paid employment. We also know that a lot of problematic drug and alcohol use is hidden in the community, and while it may well be hidden amongst those out of work, it could equally be hidden amongst those in employment. Notwithstanding, the fact that people are referring in for support speaks to the capacity of services to reach out to the working community and also indicates that projects can provide a more flexible approach to individuals who may have work commitments.

2.8 Source of referral

The below charts show the data pertaining to sources of referral in 2019 and 2020, giving the reader the opportunity to analyze the differences between the two years. Of all the referrals which were made, 31% had never been treated previously for problem drug and alcohol use, which compares with The number of referral sources is not provided by the HRB where the figure is below 5, this is denoted as <5 in the table.

Source of referral	2019 (% of overall referral sources)	2020 (% of overall referral sources)
Self	36%	54%
Family	6%	5%
Friends	5%	4%
Other drug treatment centre	24%	22%
GP	4%	3%
Hospital (not ED)	<5	<5
Social services/community services	9%	5%
Court/probation/police	2%	<5
Outreach worker	4%	2%
School/college	2%	<5
Prison	2%	<5
Employer	0	0
ED ¹²	<5	0
MH Professional ¹³	3%	5%
Needle exchange	0	0
Not known	4%	0

¹¹ Sfendla et al (2018) "Risk and protective factors for drug dependence in two Moroccan high-risk male populations [available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6230435/>]

¹² Emergency Department

¹³ Mental Health Professional



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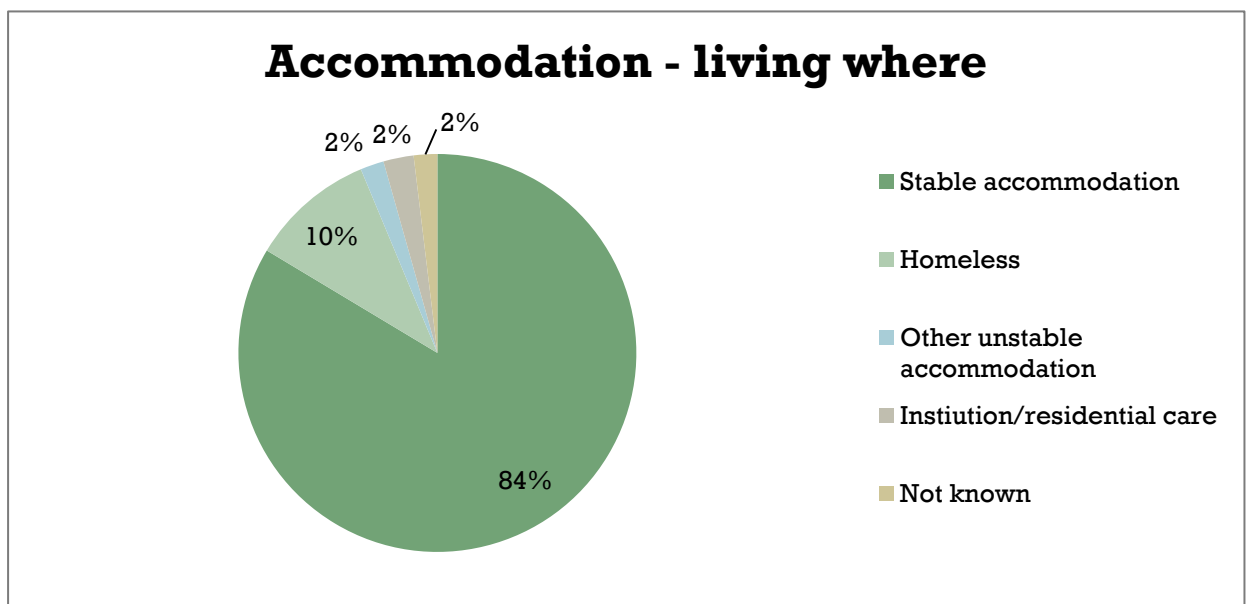
In the main the breakdown of referral sources are largely the same across both years. The biggest differences lay with self-referral being which rose to 54% of all referrals in 2020, compared with 36% in 2019. This indicates that people continued to seek support even during the restrictions brought on by Covid-19. The data shows an increase in people seeking the support for themselves even where access to other referral sources may have been impacted, such as their GP or other community services. Self-referral remains the most common source of referral, even when looking across all previous years too. What may be useful in the future is to ask those who have self-referred where they heard about services, collation of this information would help to guide communication strategies in the future.

We also see a drop in the number of referrals which came from another drug treatment centre. What can be discerned from this information is that upon referring to a service, individuals were not referred on, that they remained with that service. We see a slight increase in the number of people being referred by MH Professional, but also slight decreases in terms of GP referral and the prison service. There were no referrals from ED in 2020. In light of the very slight increases and decreases in these figures, it would be risky to draw conclusions from these aspects of the data. Notwithstanding, it must be noted the decrease in referrals from schools or colleges, which no doubt will be down to the school closures which occurred across the country in March 2020 until September 2020, where young people and children would not have had contact with their teachers and other school supports to pick up any potential issues.

2.9 Living arrangements

This section provides the opportunity to see what the housing circumstances are like for people referring into services in the BLDATF area. Out of all the referrals in 2020, 16% said they were living alone, with the largest

proportion saying that they live with parents or family (36%). Considering the relatively low number of young people referring to services, the data indicates



that there are quite a significant number of adults living with their family, who are unemployed and experiencing problematic drug and alcohol use. This would demonstrate that there are some complex living arrangements being experienced by many of the individuals captured by the data. Notwithstanding, the vast majority of people referring to services identify as living in stable accommodation.

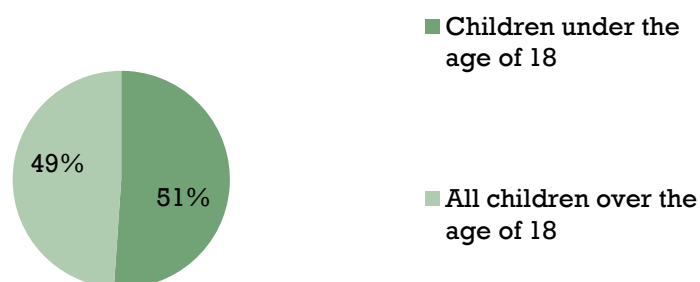


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2.10 Children identified in the NDTRS data

The NDTRS captures data on the number of children living with service users and children who are under 18 and not living with their parent. Each service user upon service entry and working through the NDTRS form is asked about their children. Of all referrals the vast majority (89%) are parents, about half of these have children over 18 only. The data captures the number of children under 5 and in the 5-17 category.

Number of clients with children

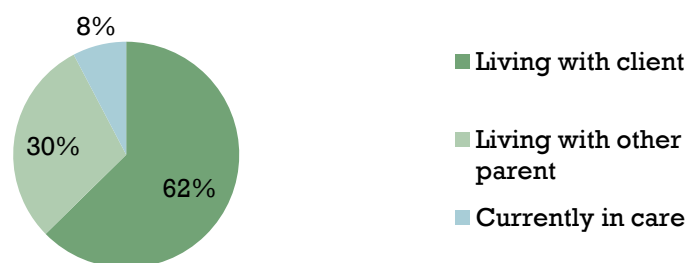


The majority of children under 5 years old were living with the client. A small number of under-5s are reported as living in care (n7). There is a larger proportion of service users whose children are aged 5-17 than are under 5. There is a much higher proportion of children aged 5-17 who are living in care, with far fewer living with the parent.

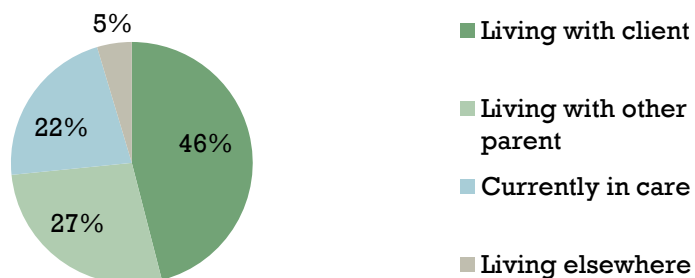
Working through this data and gaining a clear picture of the circumstances surrounding the data would be helpful. Notwithstanding, what seems clear is that the older the children are, the less likely they are to be living with the parent and more likely to be in care.

The data suggests that a number of children under 5 may not have come to the attention of services but who are living with a parent who is experiencing problematic substance use. This reinforces BLDATF efforts to support people to reach out for support early, to reduce the stigma around drug use and help-seeking and to continue with our connections with family, children and youth services. We need to ensure that referral pathways into the TF community based drug and alcohol rehabilitation services are clear and networking can occur which allows for the range of services to learn about each other and provide shared care planning as required.

Total number of children under 5



Total number of children aged 5-17





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Section 3: Covid-19 – the impact of the pandemic

Restrictions associated with Covid-19 began in Ireland in March 2020. Although up to this point some pieces of work had begun, the bulk of activity in this report was all under the backdrop of Covid-19. The BLDATF adapted its planned activities in-line with the restrictions, was forced to cancel some, redirect resources and to respond to new demands and challenges associated with Covid-19.

3.1 BLDATF operations

3.1.1 Meeting and network engagement

Due to the restrictions associated with Covid-19, the BLDATF moved to remote meetings and online networking in March 2020, with some face-to-face meetings as required, in particular to maintain the requirements with regard to document signing. All operations continued, including community networks as well as TF meetings and subgroup meetings. All payments including TIF payments, and IWD invoices all continued, and all deadlines of returns to both the HSE and DPU were met. The BLDATF Coordinator was also redeployed for some hours during the week to administrative supports required elsewhere in the HSE Addiction Services.

3.1.2 Changes to work plan activities

The Older Persons Research project which began early 2020 was disrupted as the researcher could not complete the fieldwork, the research was paused until Q4 2020. The strategic planning process was postponed in 2020 until 2021. The Highscope¹⁴ training which had been budgeted for in 2020 was delayed due to the closure of early year's services and staff not being available to attend training. It was agreed to hold the Highscope budget until training could go ahead in 2021. The Highscope training was organized in partnership with the ABC Family Matters Programme¹⁵ in BCP.

3.1.3 BLDATF Communications

The pandemic provided opportunity for the BLDATF to strengthen its digital and social media communications. The BLDATF Project Officer significantly developed our online profile during 2020. In addition to this, in the 2020 dTalk magazine a section was dedicated to supporting people to mind their mental health during the pandemic. This section was written in collaboration with D10 Be Well and informed by information supplied the HSE Health and Well-being. It was hoped that the information would reach people who may be struggling with isolation in their homes, in the community and to provide some advice as to self-care as well as the care of young people.



Figure 2: Extract from dTalk 2020

¹⁴ Highscope was approved to be paid for using a Childcare Fund underspend from 2019. Details of the programme which targets the early years sector, can be found here <https://highscope.org/our-practice/curriculum/>

¹⁵ <https://www.bcpartnership.ie/family-matters-abc-programme/>



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3.2 Service Provision

3.2.1 Operations

All services continued to operate throughout the pandemic albeit with restrictions. In the initial phase some projects reverted to online/remote work entirely, others retained onsite with some outreach or “garden visits” for people engaged in their services. A template for current service provision was circulated and updated to ensure the community were aware of services operating. Projects updated the BLDATF Project Officer weekly about any changes. The Familibase/Advance International Women’s Day event was cancelled due to announcement from government on Thursday 12th March advising of closure of all schools, crèches and colleges, and placing restrictions on public gatherings.

3.2.2 Covid-19 Protocols

All HSE funded agencies were required to submit Return to Work Templates to the HSE by 4th June. Other funders contacted projects separately. The BLDATF Coordinator hosted two support meetings with all funded agencies to share ideas and resources. Non-HSE funded agencies were invited to engage in the meetings and were provided with same resources as HSE funded agencies. Templates and risk assessments were provided. General feedback about templates was positive although there was agreement that considerable work required to completing the work.

3.2.3 Feedback from projects

Concerns raised about children who are at home full time on account of school and crèche closures. Likewise there were concerns over food poverty for vulnerable families. All projects were reminded to make contact with Tusla and/or CFSN should they have any particular concerns around children. The CFSN Coordinator advised that standard Child Protection procedures were operating at this time. Projects also advised that initial adherence to social distancing guidelines in the community was not strong and also reported a range of HR issues as staff were forced to work from home due to school and crèche closures and other family/personal demands as a result of Covid-19.

3.3 Funding

3.3.1 Summer Programme Budgets

In response to the support meetings provided by the BLDATF to help projects with their covid protocols, a fund was provided to all TF funded agencies to support them in the provision of quality summer programmes for young people and families. It was noted by projects that the cost of running programmes increased due to social distancing guidelines. An outline of the projects funded is provided on page 29 of this report.

3.3.2 BCP/DCC Coordinated food distribution work

While food poverty was identified early in this pandemic, the response to this evolved at both a local and national level. For children and families at particular risk, referrals were made to Tusla as needed and services reached out to families as best they could. The Department of Education began providing food for families of children in local schools, and a significant local effort was organized through the Dublin City Council Local Community Response Forum, which here in Ballyfermot was coordinated through Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership. All referrals for families in need of food and other deliveries were coordinated through BCP. In May 2020 the BLDATF approved the allocation of the €6900 unspent TIF budget to be put towards the community-wide food distribution.



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3.3.3 One off PPE Grant for projects

Again based on feedback from projects on the increasing costs associated with adherence to Covid-19 public health guidelines, in September 2020 the BLDATF approved a one off PPE support budget for funded agencies. This was at a maximum of E500 per funded agency.

3.3.4 Additional therapeutic counselling services

Based on feedback from local services and networks it is clear that members of the community are experiencing an increase in mental health issues and stress as a result of Covid 19. The proposal was approved by the BLDATF to fund counselling hours with a budget of E6000. This was done through an Expression of Interest process to projects across the community limited to max 10/12 sessions per participant.

3.3.5 Drugs Policy Unit Once off Covid Budget

In November 2020 the Drugs Policy Unit provide an opportunity for all TFs to apply for one off grant up to €20,000 (appendix 4). This grant came about from feedback which went to the DPU with regard to the impact of the pandemic on projects' capacity to operate. A national working group was established with LDATF representation, RDATF representation as well as C&V sector representation, HSE representation and was led through the DPU. The BLDATF Coordinator was the LDATF representative on this group and coordinated and compiled all feedback from all LDATFs. Consultations on the range of impacts of covid1-9 were conducted across all TF areas identifying a number of key resourcing issues. Although the grant was called the "Restoration of Drug and Alcohol Services" it was noted throughout the work that the services had continued to operate throughout the pandemic and that although operating with restrictions, services retained connection with all existing service users as well as accepting referrals from new referrals. The grant was provide to support TF



Figure 3: two local artists and street based outreach workers in the 2020 dTalk magazine

projects in their adherence to public health guidelines, to upgrade IT infrastructure and to support additional needs as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions. The BLDATF approved an allocation of €6000 to support additional outreach hours for Christmas and New Year period to be operated by Ballyfermot Advance project and the remaining €14,000 to be allocated to projects via application per project up to a maximum grant of €2000. Projects applied for a variety of supports, some connected to IT and communications infrastructure whilst others applied for money to support additional facilitation costs and services. All TF funded agencies applied for the full grant which was paid out in early 2021 once budgets came in from the HSE.



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Section 4: Targeted Intervention Funds

In 2020 the BLDATF continued with the Targeted Intervention Fund (TIF). Applications were invited in February 2020. As with the TIFs in 2019, the fund was to support interventions in the community not otherwise covered by existing services. Applications were accepted from TF/HSE funded and non-funded agencies. The overall budget for TIF this year is €40,000 with the maximum award being €10,000.

4.1 Targeted Intervention Funds Awarded

Project(s)	Purpose of fund	Target Group	Amount awarded
Advance	Assertive Out of Hours Outreach	Those not already engaged in services	€9,600
Candle Community Trust	Funding towards therapeutic space for young people accessing Candle Community Trust.	Service users of Candle with referral from BYS.	€10,000
FamiliBase	Run a programme 10 week programme called Young Persons' Support Programme ¹⁶ . This programme has been developed and evaluated by the National Family Support Network.	Young people impacted by drug and alcohol use in the home.	€1,500
FamiliBase (in partnership with Advance and Fusion)	Family counselling	Family therapy with a focus on supporting children and families impacted by Parental Substance Misuse. Described as a community based systemic family therapy approach.	€10,000
Matt Talbot	Funding for 4 day hike in the Dublin mountains under the Project Based Learning Module. Participants plan and schedule the whole trip.	Service users of Matt Talbot.	€2,000
Total awarded:			€33,100

4.2 Contracting and Reporting

Work was done in this reporting period to strengthen the contracting for these funds. The contracting helped to standardise how projects are reported upon project completion. Such reporting helps the BLDATF retain a bank of information from which it could review funds, and consider what activities or supports it can support on a longer term basis. Many of the TIFs were impacted by Covid-19 and a planned review of TIFs could not go ahead due to these delays. The contract became the basis for all similar budgets again helping to strengthen the governance around budgets and standardise how funds are allocated and reported on.

¹⁶ <http://www.fsn.ie/resources/young-persons-support-programme/>

4.3 Targeted Intervention Fund Project Outcomes

Project(s)	Completion date	Outcomes achieved (hard)	Outcomes achieved (soft)	Feedback from service users
Advance Assertive Out of Hours Outreach	September 2020	595 contacts (535 male and 60 female). NSP ¹⁷ = 107 and 23 referrals to other services.	The out of hours outreach has managed to strengthen referral pathways to Disability Services and support those engaging to access the support they need in relation to their physical health needs. As the programme visibility improved, people are now approaching the out of hours outreach for support, they are now known as a support in the community.	“It’s great to have you out late to help us” “it makes it accessible when we are in work” “Thanks for ringing the Freephone for us” “thanks for checking in on me” this last one came from an SU who hadn’t engaged with the service for some time and the outreach team called to his home. “Its great if we forget to get an exchange and we can call you”
Candle Community Trust Therapeutic Space	September 2020	28 young people engaged with the supports, with an attendance rate of 85%.	Young people are happier in themselves and have normalised seeking help and talking about their problems. Attendance has been strong and overall the aims of the project have been achieved, with young people engaging positively with the therapeutic space.	Young people report improved home life and less depression. Young people report a decrease in their drug and alcohol use.
FamiliBase Young Persons’ Support Programme.	December 2020	Due to Covid-19 restrictions the group was limited to 4 participants. One female participant decided to wait until the next group in January due to gender imbalance. Of the 10 sessions, each week had full attendance.	Participants found the programme beneficial and are enjoying taking part. They have requested for the programme to continue as they didn’t want it to end and have formed a bond as a group through their shared experiences. Young people within the group have expressed the need for confidentiality (within the boundaries of safety and child protection). There is a strong sense of secrecy of their lived experiences. Early on, it was recognised that the educational elements of the programme were difficult focus on entirely as the children engaged needed therapeutic support following trauma they had experienced due to substance use in the home.	During group a young person spoke about responding aggressively to another student in school and his previous experience of primary school where emotions were left unresolved. This allowed an opportunity to discuss the feelings underneath his anger and connect his behaviour with this feeling. The young people have requested to continue in the programme . There is a keen understanding that the group carry shared experiences of parental addiction. One young person in the group regularly addresses the group with “you know how it is”, implying he feels the others may have experienced what he has experienced.

¹⁷ Needle Syringe Programme (exchange)



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FamiliBase (in partnership with Advance and Fusion) Family counselling	October 2020	9 families 58 sessions were provided; 22 were online (due to Covid-19 restrictions) and 36 were in-person.	<p>Each agency involved, has said that the inter-agency piece has worked very well and has been a great initiative for the families involved.</p> <p>The therapy programme would not have been able to provide intensive support to those who needed it if this funding had not been received.</p> <p>Family therapy has also facilitated children to understand why they do what they do and to understand how their brain works and reacts.</p> <p>Young mother in long term familial abusive relationship, who began therapy in April has started college, found her own apartment and is looking for part time employment.</p> <p>The integration of therapy, working alongside the existing young mothers programme in FamiliBase is significant in facilitating young women to heal, progress, and find a meaningful purpose.</p>	<p><i>'it worked wonders, like a miracle. She is back to herself and the nightmares have stopped'[mother about her child]</i></p> <p>A sensory motor psychotherapy approach by the therapist allowed the client experience what she termed 'the badness leaving my body'</p> <p>As one grandmother commented after watching her two grandchildren in a sand therapy session... <i>'it really clicked to me when they did the sand, I got the meaning of things'</i></p> <p><i>'...it's good being here....the head part. I liked the hand thing...the way when you get angry and when you do that [demonstrating] it calms me down'.</i></p>
Matt Talbot	Hike in the Dublin mountains could not go ahead because of Covid-19 restrictions. Project planned for summer 2021.			

Section 5 Drugs Policy Unit Funding Initiatives Strand 1

In the summer of 2019 the Drugs Policy Unit (DPU) offered the opportunity for all Drug and Alcohol Task Forces to apply for additional funding under three headings, Strand 1 one off and Strand 1 recurring. The application and criteria were reporting on in the previous reporting period. This section will outline the activities associated with these funds in 2020.

5.1 Best Practice Responses to Domestic Violence Training for Frontline Staff

This was funded under the Strand 1 once off funding. Women's Aid were contacted to provide the training for frontline staff in Ballyfermot. The original plan was to provide a two day training opportunity which trained staff in best practice interventions for women and children experiencing domestic violence (see appendix 1). This training was planned to go ahead in March 2020, however had to be cancelled due to the covid-19 restrictions. Through on-going consultation with the TF funded agencies as well as the wider networks to which the BLDATF are connected, it was clear that domestic violence was an issue being increasingly reported across projects and a pressing issue in the community. As such, in discussion with the trainers, an alternative on-line version of the training was provided (see appendix 2). The training was for half a day and focused only on the best practice responses to women experiencing domestic violence, there remained a gap in relation to the responses to children.

A total of four online training sessions were provided, offering training for 48 staff across the Ballyfermot community. As with all training opportunities priority was given to the TF funded agencies, but other services were offered the training as places opened up, the other services which availed of the training included Pieta House, Focus Ireland and Tusla. The feedback from the training was very positive from participants. As a result of engaging with the training, Ballyfermot LDATF featured as part of the Women's Aid report "When Home is not Safe"¹⁸.



WOMEN'S AID

Making Women and Children Safe

In terms of next steps the BLDATF engaged with the local research into the needs of women who tragically died by suicide across the Ballyfermot region in 2018, where issues of domestic violence were highlighted. As a result of this piece of work, Tusla were in a position to offer the Ballyfermot community a much needed dedicated domestic violence outreach worker which without a doubt was much needed. Likewise a range of referral pathways and information which was developed by Tusla and the CFSN were shared across all projects in the BLDATF region.

¹⁸ https://www.womensaid.ie/assets/files/pdf/womens_aid_when_home_is_not_safe_covid-19_supplement_-_embargoed_20820.pdf



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5.2 Research into the needs of older drug and alcohol users

This was funded under the Strand 1 once off funding. The scope for this research was as follows:

1. Research the needs of older drug and alcohol users in the community
2. To make recommendations with regard to the development and strengthening of appropriate supports in partnership with other key stakeholders.

The tender requirements were as follows:

- To develop a brief literature review setting out the national and international research into the particular challenges faced by older drug users and identifying current best practice responses both nationally and internationally.
- Desktop research to estimate the overall number of older persons in the Ballyfermot LDATF region experiencing problematic substance misuse.
- Consultation (to include one-to-one meetings and focus groups) with the local specialised substance misuse services with regard to the experience of working with older drug and alcohol users (services include the HSE Addiction Services, the BLDATF funded agencies and 2 other services connected with the BLDATF Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup JobPlan and Liberty Recycling).
- Consultation with other service providers in the community to establish the nature and extent of drug and alcohol use amongst older people in Ballyfermot.
- Consultation with community groups to establish the potential barriers to accessing support which older people experiencing problematic drug and alcohol use may encounter.
- To provide the BLDATF with an executive summary document for wider dissemination.
- Provide the Ballyfermot LDATF and TF funded agencies with a mid-term presentation of findings ahead of the development of the final recommendations.
- To development of robust recommendations for BLDATF next steps, key actions under 4 core headings:
 1. The identification of key partners in the community (both NGO and statutory).
 2. Recommendations for drug and alcohol specific services in how to support older drug users in services.
 3. Recommendations for the wider support services for older people in how to identify and provide suitable support with regard to drug and alcohol use amongst the target population.
 4. Recommendations on how to outreach to older people in the community who might be experiencing problematic drug and alcohol use but are not accessing appropriate services.
- Please note that service user consultation will be an expectation of this piece of work.
- To liaise with the BLDATF Coordinator re progress and barriers.

5.2.1 Older Persons Research Progress in 2020

This piece of work went out to tender twice in 2019, the BLDATF agreed to revise the advert after the first round having received limited interest in the project. The BLDATF also agreed to increase the budget for this piece of work to €8000. Audry Deane Consulting was successful in securing the tender in December 2019. Fieldwork began in early March 2020. The project was interrupted by Covid-19 and was put on hold for much of the remainder of the reporting period, with consultations resuming in Q1 2021. The final report was signed off in Q2 2021. On a broader scale across the BLDATF area, there remains a deficit in terms of supports for the needs of older people and as such when this piece of work is completed there exists a positive energy around collaboration to see how best to collectively respond to the needs of older people in the community, including those who use drugs and alcohol.



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5.3 Governance support and guidance for funded agencies

This piece of work was funded out of the Strand 1 on-going budget. There was a total budget allocation of €20,000 for this piece of work to run from Q4 2019 to Q4 2020. The tender was awarded to Ambit Compliance¹⁹ after a competitive tendering process in Q4 2019²⁰ (appendix 3).

5.3.1 Project scope and implementation in 2020.

The contract focussed on assisting the projects to demonstrate compliance with the GDPR, The Charities Governance Code and Corporate Governance, the brief included:

- Complete a health check of individual projects to establish gaps in compliance
- Issue a list of recommended actions to be implemented
- On-going mentoring and support throughout the process.
- Provide policy and procedure templates
- Review of draft policies and procedures

After the project initiation meeting with the BLDATF, Ambit reached out to all of the projects that were funded by BLDATF. Site visits were convened with the most of the funded agencies. Following these visits a “health check” involved a face-to-face interview with the project manager and follow up information gathering via email questionnaires and desktop reviews of the charity information and documentation.

5.3.2 Issues which were highlighted

The health checks identified that the majority of projects have extensive policies and procedures in place. But many common issues/gaps were identified across the projects, including:

- Anomalies between board members registered on the Charity Regulator Account and with the Companies Registration Office
- No Protected Disclosure Policy in place
- No Information Security Policy in place
- Insufficient data protection policies and procedures in place
- Constitution of Charity not updated since the 2014 Companies Act
- Websites missing governance information and RCN Charity Number
- Emails missing Full Charity name, RCN Charity number and CRO number
- No skills audit/matrix for Board members
- No induction checklist for Board member

A recommendations report was issued to each project. A recommendations report was also sent to the non-engaged or lesser engaged projects. These recommendations were based on a desktop audit of compliance (e.g. website review and statutory register reviews) and/or the initial face to face meeting.

5.3.3 Implementation of recommendations

Further site visits to each of the projects in addition to remote engagement since the onset of COVID 19 enabled the projects to advance the actioning of the recommendations. Due to the pandemic an extension was offered to projects to March 2021, which most took the offer of support. Next steps for BLDATF will be to support projects further based on the recommendations of the final report which will be used to inform the BLDATF strategic planning process in 2021.

¹⁹ <https://ambitcompliance.ie/>

²⁰ See appendix 3 for full tender



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Section 6: Drugs Policy Funded Initiatives Strand 2

6.1 Supporting Women to Access Appropriate Treatment

This is a joint initiative between Tallaght and Ballyfermot LDATFs. The host for the worker was selected as Ballyfermot Star in 2019 and recruitment for the position began in early 2020 with the worker in post in March 2020, two weeks before the onset of the Covid-19 restrictions in Ireland. Due to COVID 19 the SWAAT Coordinator was unable to visit projects across the two TF areas as intended in the introductory phase of the work plan. Likewise, the project was unable to hold female focus groups so instead asked existing service providers what the main barriers for women accessing appropriate treatment at present. Engagement with the project managers took place over the phone and/or Zoom. In March 2020 the SWAAT Coordinator met with Paul Duff – Recovery Academy Coordinator to discuss how to help women affected by problematic substance use to build their recovery capital. It was agreed that this could be achieved by holding an event in Ballyfermot and/or Tallaght as part of Recovery Month (September 2020). SWAAT participated in International Recovery Day 2020 #leaveALightOn campaign in Ballyfermot.



The project strengthened its social media presence during 2020 and was also profiled in the dTalk magazine 2020, highlighting the activities of International Women's Day in Ballyfermot. The SWAAT Coordinator also

conducted a brief survey monkey to gather some feedback from projects on International Women's Day, which contributed towards the planning of the events for IWD 2021.

The SWAAT Steering Group met bi-monthly throughout the reporting period, offering support and guidance on the research being conducted by TCD as well as the broader community activities as the project awaited the research results. The SWAAT research by TCD was delayed considerably as a result of Covid-19, with the research being finally signed off and launched one year later than had been planned for. In the meantime, the SWAAT Coordinator immersed herself into other community networks in Ballyfermot and Tallaght.



Figure 4: example of social media work in 2020

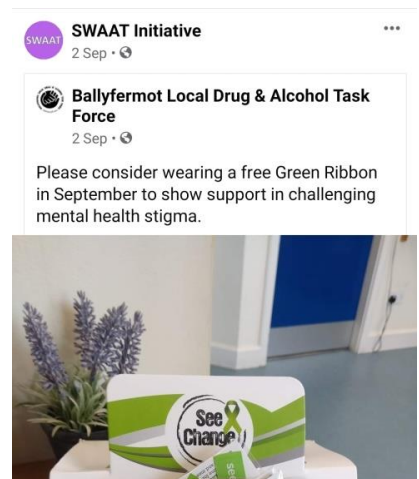


Figure 5: Connecting the SWAAT Project and BLDATF project social media



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6.2 Community Alcohol Detox Project

The Community Alcohol Detox project was established to cover Ballyfermot, Canal Communities, Dublin 12 and the South Inner City. The Community Alcohol Detox project focused on four core areas: the employment of an Alcohol Liaison Worker to complete the work programme, to strengthen the interagency model of practice under the National Drug Rehabilitation Framework, to develop a best practice model for a Community Alcohol Detox project framework for use by community drugs projects in partnership with the HSE Addiction Services, Primary Care and Community General Practitioners, and to build the capacity of all stakeholders through training and meaningful engagement.

The Regional Alcohol Liaison Worker was recruited in early 2020, hosted by Community Response. The worker embedded themselves in the community projects across the four TF areas by a blend of in-person and online meetings and consultations. In order to prevent any cross over, the consultations very much focused on information sharing and ideas generating for the final community alcohol detox framework. At the same time the initial tender for scoping and needs analysis in relation to the community alcohol detox. The outcomes from this review were utilized to inform the development of a best practice model for a Community Alcohol Detox Project framework for use by community and voluntary projects in partnership with the HSE. Potential project leads were identified in each area and the range of training in each project was identified.

A core component of the project was to build on existing mechanisms and progress service user involvement and consultation to have an active role in the development of the framework and model of practice and to identify useful training and information resources. Likewise, GP and medical engagement was regarded as key, and as such the Liaison Worker focussed their engagement with stakeholders on gathering service user feedback and working towards GP engagement.

The training plan was impacted by Covid-19 restrictions, as the plan had been made for in-person motivational interviewing training throughout 2020, with a plan for an MI train the trainer in late 2020. The first round of basic MI training was only partially completed as the covid-19 restrictions began the day before the 2nd day of the training. Eventually in Q4 2020 the first round of on-line basic MI was run, feedback about the course was positive, and a waiting list developed for subsequent training. The MI training plan is to continue into 2021.

6.3 SAFE Project

The SAFE initiative is an information and awareness campaign funded across 4 DATFs to advertise outreach points / supports at each train station from the Midlands into Heuston to access harm reduction supports. Posters are displayed at train stations and cards with contact details are provided as part of outreach being provided in each area. The aim of campaign is to provide information of services available to those who are using crack cocaine and heroin and engage them in the most appropriate supports locally. The steering group, in consultation with service users, worked on the design and development of the 'SAFE' campaign targeting those who require information of services available to them. This project recruited the Assertive Case Manager (ASM) in November 2019, and the work continued throughout the reporting period. Ballyfermot remained connected with the project on account of the outreach element to the work, with local outreach workers engaging with the ASM in 2020. A review of the initiative is planned for 2021 due to staffing changes in the lead TF area some restructuring and communication protocols require strengthening.



Section 7: Community Engagement

7.1 Nitrous Oxide

In 2020 concern around the use of Nitrous Oxide in the community, in particular amongst young people. The issue was raised at the BLDATF and it was agreed to set up a small working group with representation from the BLDATF and youth services in the area to explore how the BLDATF could respond. It was agreed by the BLDATF to keep the group task focused and time limited. The working group was chaired and minuted by the BLDATF Coordinator and a total of 5 meeting held between July and October 2020.

BLDATF would like to thank the Working Group for their support and contribution to this piece of work. Membership was made up of the working group was:

- Ballyfermot Youth Service - Gerry McCarthy
- Familibase – Brendan Cummins
- HSE Adolescent Addiction Services – Denis Murray
- Cherry Orchard Integrated Youth Service – Amanda McCoy
- Ballyfermot Star – Sunniva Finlay

7.1.1 Summary of concerns regarding Nitrous Oxide as discussed by working group

- Evident of use of nitrous oxide around the community
- Young people in services are not necessarily disclosing use, but staff are aware of it.
- Many young people are out of school which may be impacting the use of drugs and alcohol.
- There are reports of children as young as 11 using NOs.
- Young people do not necessarily see their use as problematic or risky.
- Canisters are available to buy in bulk online.

7.1.2 Summary of recommendations to address Nitrous Oxide

- Parents to be supported in their role in talking to their children around drugs and alcohol use.
- Some young people who are at most risk will require a more concentrated support.
- There are pockets of activity in the community and outreach supports which could reach young people in the community.
- Workshop to support young people to understand the risks associated with NOs.
- Training/support for staff working in organisations.

Nitrous Oxide

How is it used?

- It is inhaled, sometimes referred to as 'nagging'
- It is safer to not inhale directly from the canister





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- Provide small written piece in Dtalk magazine for distribution across the community.
- Key messaging has to support young people to discuss issues coming up for them.
- Feedback to the community needs to ensure that young people are encouraged to come forward should they need help.
- Parents to be understood as the main role models in young people's lives.
- Youth and family supports can be a means to help divert young people from drug and alcohol use.

7.1.3 Summary of activities undertaken

Webinar

A webinar was held in September 2020 for project staff and management to provide information and training on nitrous oxide. Speakers included:

- The Chair of the BLDATF, Vincent Jackson, opened the event.
- An input from Tusla provided information about when/if to report drug and alcohol use by young people.
- Dr Bobby Smyth provided an overview of the Parent's Guide to Drugs and Alcohol²¹.
- The BLDATF Project officer provided an overview of all services in the community who can offer support around all drug and alcohol use amongst young people.
- An input from the Ballyfermot Youth Service highlighted the importance of activities for young people as a diversion from drugs and alcohol and as a means to develop life skills and strengthen their self-esteem.
- Nicki Killeen from the National Social Inclusion Office provided an overview of Nitrous Oxide, it's effects, the legal status of the drug and how to respond to its use.
- HSE Adolescent Addiction Services provided an input which covered the range of issues surrounding drug and alcohol use amongst young people, and the role played by the schools, family and the community in supporting young people. This input provided information regarding the evidence base around addressing drug and alcohol use amongst young people and recognised the important role played by the HSE Adolescent Addiction Services in the myriad of supports at a local level to support young people.

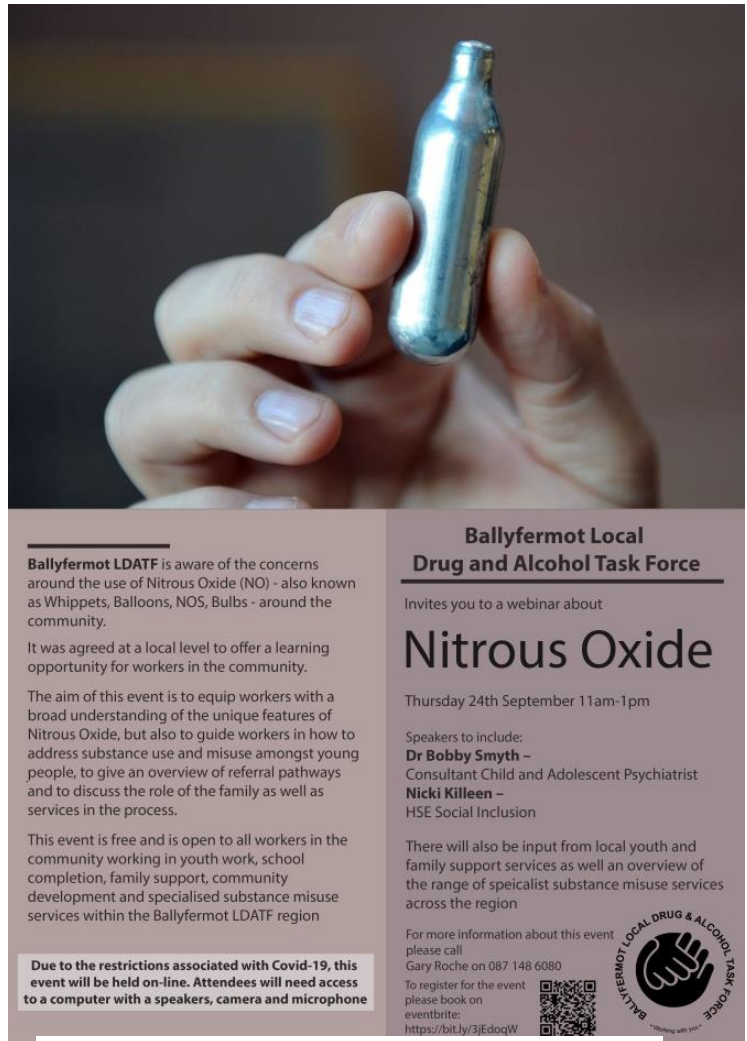


Figure 6: Webinar Promotional Poster

²¹ Available at: <https://ballyfermotldatf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Parents-Guide-HSE-AlcoholDrugs.pdf>



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Training and information sharing

Hidden Harm²² training and SAOR²³ training information was distributed to all attendees as well as a package of information from Tusla, following the event. In 2021 a follow up event was held providing more opportunity for projects to discuss young people and referral pathways, this event was linked with the parental drug and alcohol use work highlighted through T&R.

Community information

A brief article was developed for the 2020 dTalk magazine which highlighted the key messages about nitrous oxide. Parents were advised to keep lines of communication open with their young people and the risks of the use of nitrous oxide were highlighted. Readers were also encouraged to visit other websites for information or to contact support services should they be concerned about a drug or alcohol use by their young person. Young people were advised of the importance of seeking support if they need it. The leaflet was further developed in 2021 and distributed across the community.


Young people's support

In Summer 2020 BLDATF funded a range of youth and family summer programmes. These programmes were in response to the impact of Covid-19 for families and young people and in recognition of the important role played by youth and family activities. All projects had to be completed in July and August 2020.

Summer Programme Funds 2020

Project	Activity
Ballyfermot Youth Service	Outdoor activities including arts project, music nights, out door film and trips for watersports in the Liffey and the canal.
Ballyfermot Advance	Family activities including zoo trips and picnics.
Familibase	Summer programme targeting teen parents including zoo trips and outdoor activity centre in Newbridge.
Ballyfermot Star	Zoo and outdoor adventure activities for family support and women's groups.

Nitrous Oxide



Ballyfermot LDATF is aware of the concerns around the use of Nitrous Oxide (NO) - also known as Whippets, Balloons, NOS, Bulbs - around the community. The use of NO brings on nausea, dizziness, tiredness and numbness and its effects are short lived. Due to the risk of loss of oxygen in the blood, there is a risk of sudden death when using this substance.

People are reminded that it is illegal to consume this substance.

It is important to be aware of the facts and risks associated with drug and alcohol use. There are many websites and supports available where information can be found. Remember that all drug or alcohol use carries risk.

For young people who may be using drugs or alcohol, you are reminded to speak with a parent, a family member you trust, about what is going on for you and to be honest about their drug and alcohol use. It is important to stay safe and to stay informed. If you are with a friend and you are worried about your health or their health after taking drugs or alcohol, please call an ambulance, and stay with your a friend until medical help comes. Always tell medical professionals what drugs or alcohol have been taken.

"Start a discussion... be sure to take in the young person's perspective. Be open, don't get angry. Come from a place of care."

(Alcohol and Drugs: A Parent's Guide, Page 9).

Parents play a key role in their child's life. By keeping the lines of communication with your child open, regardless of the actual drug being used, a young person will often talk about what is going on for them. If you are a parent and concerned about your child's drug or alcohol use, there is a helpful parenting resource available for download from the Ballyfermot LDATF website, or make contact directly with any of the services listed on the Ballyfermot LDATF website for guidance as to where to go for help.

For more information please visit: www.drugs.ie www.Ballyfermotldatf.ie

²² <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/primarycare/socialinclusion/addiction/national-addiction-training/national-hidden-harm-project/>

²³ <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/primarycare/socialinclusion/addiction/national-addiction-training/alcohol-and-substance-use-saor/>



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7.2 Digital communications

7.2.1 Social Media

All social media is administered and coordinated by the BLDATF Project Officer. BLDATF began using Twitter in 2020 with website and Facebook having already become active in late 2019. By the end of 2020, there were 384 followers on Twitter and the Facebook page has 417 follows and 372 likes. While word of mouth remains the leading promotion tool of the Community Addiction Studies course, the social media platforms have also generated applications. Social media was also a positive way for the BLDATF to promote other aspects of the work across the community, and share posts with the projects in the community also.



Ballyfermot Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force

29 Jul • 🌐

Great programme being offered in Familibase to young people who could do with some support with drink or drug use at home. See be... See more



Ballyfermot Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force

@local_task Follows you

Supporting Addiction Recovery and other community services in Ballyfermot

Joined September 2020

648 Following 387 Followers

Followed by S.W.A.A.T. Initiative, Marie Simpson, Ballyfermot STAR CLG, and 54 others

7.2.3 BLDATF Website

The BLDATF website is administered by the BLDATF Project Officer. Although work on the website began in previous years, the website saw further development in the reporting period. The website is now populated with downloadable documents relating to BLDATF with other health promotion material including the recent NO2 leaflet and the alcohol leaflet. There is also other downloadable material available on our Publications page such as dTalk, BLDATF Annual Reports, SWAAT report etc. there is also a dedicated tab for the SWAAT project on the site. In September 2020, the Project Officer attended the BLDATF meeting to advise the group of updates on the BLDATF digital platforms. The input was well received by the group.



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7.3 dTalk Magazine

dTalk was published in 2020 with the theme of the Arts in Ballyfermot. The magazine was printed and delivered to every household in Ballyfermot LDATF area, and a number of additional copies left in public buildings such as the library and primary care centre as well as all local projects. The aim of this year's additional was to celebrate local artists who have overcome addiction to develop meaningful careers in art. This also benefitted local funded agencies who assisted the artists at various stages in their recovery and career. There were three local artists highlighted including one who uses art therapy with local people engaged in Ballyfermot Advance. The magazine itself was produced with great input from students of BCCE. While this gave the magazine a fresh look and a more visually stimulating appeal, it was also an opportunity for young people from outside Ballyfermot to have lived experience of the work done locally. This will hopefully challenge social stigma on a small scale as the journalists progress with their careers in the media. International Women's Day events were recorded with photos of an event in Ballyfermot Star kindly shared by Denise Joy. Other features of the magazine were: promotion of work being done in Familibase; Minding Mental Health; NO2 information including guidance on how to talk to young people about substance use; Promotion of the Community Addiction Studies course; Examples of local artwork from participants in local funded agencies; a piece on International Overdose Awareness Day which was also a promotional event for Naloxone and the services contact information page.



7.4 Community Addiction Studies Course

The Community Addiction Studies is coordinated by the BLDATF Project Officer, with the support of the BLDATF Finance and Operational Administrator. The course is delivered supported also by a co-facilitator who is a worker from one of the local agencies, Ballyfermot Star. We were lucky enough to conclude the Community Addiction Studies just before Covid closed the country in March 2020. There was a high standard of achievement with 17 graduating – 14 with distinctions. The course was due to start again in September 2020 however, due to uncertainty with Covid regulations it was decided by the Steering Group to postpone it until January 2021. Through liaison with Urrus, an online version was prepared to roll out in January 2021. Thanks to word of mouth and social media the 2021 online course was fully subscribed by close of 2020.



Figure 7: Art work from Fusion CPL which featured in dTalk 2020



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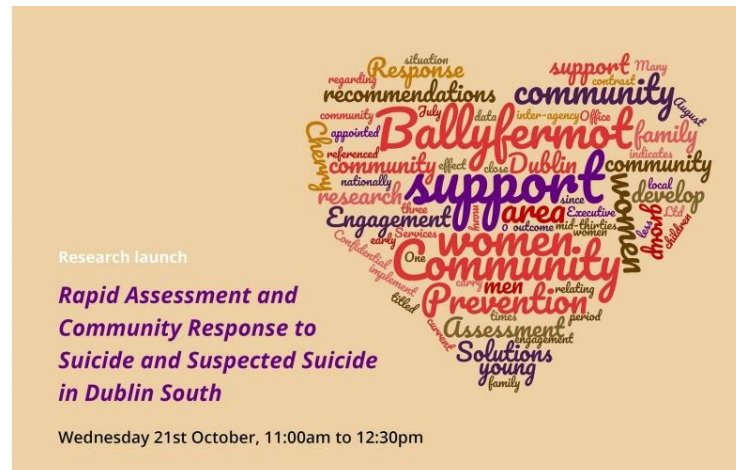
7.5 SPACE Project

In February 2020, the Health Services Executive, National Office of Suicide Prevention (HSE NOSP) appointed S3 Solutions to carry out a rapid assessment of the current situation regarding suicide within the Ballyfermot community. The brief for this research referenced that there have been 26 deaths by suspected suicide²⁴ in the Ballyfermot and Cherry Orchard community since 2015; many of which, were young women with children. Confidential HSE NOSP data for 2015-2017 relating to the Ballyfermot area (including Cherry Orchard) indicates that women are as likely to die by suicide in the area as men. In contrast, women are three times less likely to die by suicide than men nationally. The BLDATF Coordinator was invited to support the assessment of the tender applications and also to be a member of the research advisory group. The purpose of the research was twofold; to efficiently work with key stakeholders to gain insights and understanding about the range of factors that may be affecting suicidal behaviour in the community and to identify how best to support those impacted to minimize any possible contagion.

Due
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that

and

a
the



to the similarities in
piece of research and
of the SWAAT
Project, it was
important to reduce
participant fatigue
also to ensure limited
crossover of the
research questions.
Although research is
very important tool in
work of the BLDATF,
being part of

simultaneous research projects can be time consuming, particularly when drawing from the same stakeholders. This research was conducted throughout Q1 and Q2 of 2020. All BLDATF funded agencies were invited to participate in the research, as well as members of the BLDATF.

This research was completed in summer 2020 and the launch was held in October 2020²⁵ (see appendix 5 for the launch agenda). The BLDATF supported this work throughout and played an important role in promoting and coordinating the launch. The BLDATF Coordinator remains on the steering group for the recommendations of the research report going forward, actions from which have included the design and distribution of mental health information posters across the community. The Research advisory group disbanded but members of which became the local area steering group for the rollout of the recommendations and renamed the group as SPACE (Suicide Prevention and Community Engagement). The BLDATF continue support SPACE at a community and interagency level to raise awareness of the BLDATF, the work of its funded agencies and to reduce the stigma associated with problematic drug and alcohol use.

²⁴ The assessment of whether a death is a suicide in Ireland is determined by a Coroner's inquest. It can be lengthy process from the time of death, through the legal investigation, and the issuing a verdict, depending on the complexity of the case. A Coroner's verdict of suicide is based on legal guidance surrounding the weight of evidence that a person intended to take their life 'beyond reasonable doubt'.

²⁵ Rapid Assessment Research available at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/connecting-for-life/publications/rapid-assessment-report.pdf>



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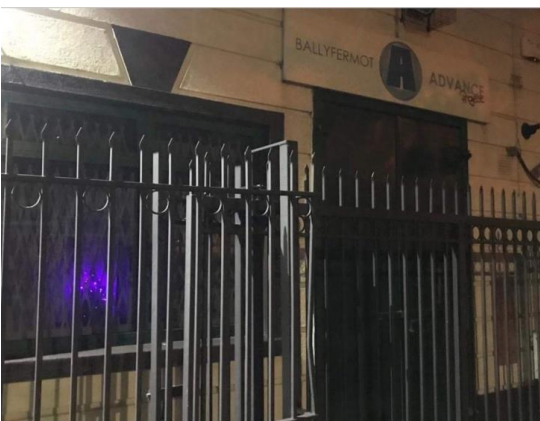
7.6 International Women's Day

In 2020 BLDATF again supported a range of events as part of International Women's Day. All TF funded agencies were invited to run an event and a small budget was awarded to support each activity. Due to Covid-19, the planned event between FamiliBase and Advance could not go ahead. Likewise a planned large in-person event for the week of 16th March was cancelled due to the restrictions. Notwithstanding a series of events did run and the SWAAT Coordinator used these events as an opportunity to meet with projects and collate feedback to inform International Women's Day 2021. BLDATF are grateful again for the support of the BCP in organizing and publicizing events across the community. On International Women's Day itself, BYS ran a community based workshop in the Civic Centre, St Ultans also ran a workshop in partnership with BSII and the previous Friday the Civic centre ran a fashion show; these events are welcomed alongside those which were organized and run by the specialist community based drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation services.



7.7 Recovery Month

2020 was the first year that BLDATF engaged in work around promoting Recovery Month. The aim of recovery month is to showcase that recovery can happen, it helps to reduce stigma around drug and alcohol use and is used as a time for highlighting that recovery is possible and instilling hope. This year due to the restrictions associated with Covid-19, any large scale events were



not possible, however through the SWAAT project two local services lit up purple and promotion occurred on social media.

Initial findings from the SWAAT research indicate that the recovery movement is a strong feature of supporting women to access appropriate treatment but is also more broadly helpful in terms of the wider work of the BLDATF to promote services, to reduce stigma and shame and to highlight the significant recovery capital in the community.



Local services, Ballyfermot Star and Ballyfermot Advance left purple lights on last night in support of International Recovery Day.
Addiction recovery works 😊
Thanks to Denise Joy, SWAAT Coordinator for Ballyfermot & Tallaght for photos.
- SWAAT Supporting Women to Access Appropriate Treatment



Some people may face additional barriers to accessing treatment ...[they] do not have the internal and external resources needed to achieve and maintain recovery from substance misuse... Internal resources may include their resilience, whereas external resources may be their social networks, family or community supports. These resources are also referred to as "recovery capital"(DoH (2017) Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery (p39)



Section 8: Community Development Grants

8.1 Grants overview

Ballyfermot LDATF fund small community projects in the community as a means to strengthen the community capacity to minimize the impact of problematic drug and alcohol use. In 2020 the BLDATF agreed to retain the criteria which was used in 2019 and to also continue with the support of Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership (BCP) for the administration and promotion of the grants. The maximum budget available in 2020 for these grants was €15,000 which was inclusive of an administrative fee to BCP.

The grants were launched in January 2020 with all projects approved by February 2020. The grant applications were assessed by an inter-agency committee made up of BLDATF, the BCP and Dublin City Council. All applicants were offered the opportunity for support with their application through BCP and any group that was awarded was given on-going support as needed for the duration of their project. A number of new organisations applied in 2020 which suggested an extended reach in to the community. Given the challenges which arose as a result of Covid-19, some projects were not able to complete their activities in 2020, and therefore carried the work into 2021.

8.2 Grants awarded

Project	Purpose	Total award
Ballyfermot Men's Shed	Tools, materials and accessories (not specified)	1610
Basement Productions	Materials and props for <i>Dyin for it</i> play	1170
Celtic Football Club	Equipment and training costs	1610
CO Boxing Club	Equipment and training costs	1290
CO Tae Kwon Do Club	Equipment and training costs	1509.2
Dragon Twirlers	Equipment and shoes.	1060.4
Gurteen Youth Club	Drug awareness course and night away	1130
Hiking Club	Bus hire, safety equipment, and First Aid training	1610
St John Ambulance	Training equipment	1610
Together FM	Equipment and materials for training.	1066
Walkers and talkers	Support women's group, including personal development classes and a counsellor on-site	810
Total spend		14500



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Section 9: Service User Engagement

Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force are committed to seeking service user feedback. Projects involve service users in their service plans and reviews consistently. BLDATF ensured that SU engagement featured in its work this year in a number of ways:

- As with previous years, service user involvement was a core component of International Women's week with projects running open days which were planned with existing service users designed to encourage more women into the services.
- People who are engaged with services were involved in the content of the 2020 Dtalk magazine where the value of the arts was promoted. There were a range of art projects published in the magazine which showcased the work of people accessing the TF agencies. Interviews were also conducted in the magazine with people engaging with services.
- Service user consultation was a requirement of the Older Persons Research project.
- As part of the work with the rapid area response to suicides which was conducted by S3 Solutions on behalf of NOSP, BLDATF facilitated access to projects to provide opportunity for SU feedback into the research project.
- Service user consultation was a requirement of the Supporting Women to Access Appropriate Treatment research project.
- Service user feedback is a requirement of Targeted Intervention Funds outcome reporting, which has been outlined in this report.








Figure 8: Art work supplied by Ballyfermot Advance



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Section 10: Overview of funded projects

10.1 Overview of funded organisations

Ballyfermot Advance 	<p>Ballyfermot Advance Project is a community based project helping people who are drug and alcohol users and those affected by drug and alcohol use in the family. The organization provides open access low threshold services to people with drug/alcohol problems through daily access to drop in services (food, crisis intervention). The services offered are: one to one key working, care-planning and case management using evidence based approaches (MI, CRA) and in line with the Continuum of Care process developed by Ballyfermot LDATF. Advance also offer out of hours outreach to deliver services to hard to reach drug/alcohol users in the Ballyfermot area.</p>
Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership 	<p>The Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership on request from the Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force act as the employer for the BLDATF Project Officer. The overall aim of the Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership is to support the community to reach its full potential, to encourage participation, and to target its resources at those most in need in our community. BCP was set up in 1996 as a response to long term unemployment and poverty. BCP was an initiative of local community activists and Ballyfermot Area Action Co-operative who sought funding from Government to support a range of programmes which would support the local community to tackle social exclusion and poverty caused by unemployment, and other social factors.</p>
Ballyfermot Social Intervention Initiative 	<p>Ballyfermot Social Intervention Initiative's target groups are those who are hardest to reach and have a poor history of engaging with services. The project provides support to families (parents and siblings) where one or more members is engaged in drug related anti-social behaviour. The project offers one-to-one support with the aim of strengthening people's coping mechanisms, often with the goal of helping people to maintain their tenancy. The service also offers outreach to the specialised drug and alcohol services, and collaborate on a number of community based interagency networks</p>
Ballyfermot Star 	<p>Ballyfermot Star provides non-judgemental support, guidance and education to drug users, their families and the community, enabling them to cope with and overcome the effects of drug use. Ballyfermot Star runs a range of groups and services. Realt Solas (Star Light) is a programme that supports individuals with problematic use of Cocaine, Cannabis/Weed, and Alcohol. Realt Na Clann offers family support using the CRAFT model to families affected by problematic substance misuse. The project also hosts a childcare service and a CE scheme.</p>
Ballyfermot Youth Service 	<p>The main objectives of BYS are to work with young people in the Ballyfermot area to empower them to make positive decisions around their life choices, to meet their needs by providing appropriate social, personal and developmental programmes. These programmes use social and non-formal education approaches. Peer Education rests on the view that young people learn a lot from one another as part of their everyday lives and that peer groups play an important part in</p>



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	defining and maintaining an individual's identity. The method of Peer Education has been very successful over the last number of years, as an effective approach to drug prevention. The programme aims to draw on an approach which empowers young people to work with other young people and which draws on the positive strength of the peer group. By means of appropriate training and support the young people become active players in the educational process.
FamiliBase 	FamiliBase is a community based, not for profit organisation with charitable status that works with children, young people and families supported by a range of funders. FamiliBase consists of a multi-disciplinary team with staff recruited from the following range of disciplines; Early Years, Arts, Social Care, Youth Work, Youth & Community Work, Formal Education, Addiction Counselling, Business, Administration and Finance. FamiliBase has three programme delivery pillars i.e. Early Years Supports, Child and Parent Supports and Youth and Community Supports. FamiliBase operates an integrated model of practice with integration occurring within the programme pillars and also across them.
Fusion CPL 	Fusion CPL is based in the heart of the Cherry Orchard community. Fusion provides support to individuals who are coping with addiction issues either living in the community or incarcerated in prison. Support such as keyworking, counselling, holistic therapies and group work using both therapeutic and social skills are available. Supported Community Employment is also available. In addition we provide support to individuals under the Community Prison Link programme. Between 2015-2018 Fusion CPL developed a family support programme called the Reach Out programme. This programme seeks to help restore the relationship between prisoners and their children.
Matt Talbot 	The Matt Talbot Community Trust, based in Ballyfermot, provides support for individuals in recovery from addiction and returning from prison. The Matt Talbot Community Trust works with both males and females between the ages of 18 and 65. The majority of our group on our day programme in 2017 were between the ages of 20 and 57 years of age. The organisation also works with family members of all ages. Most participants have a criminal history or involvement in the wider criminal justice system, and most are early school leavers with no formal qualifications and minimal employment history. The project runs a Future Options Programme, the aim of which is to equip participants with the necessary skills and competencies for a successful move on to further education and/or employment.



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10.2 List of funding streams within the BLDATF region

Project Code	COF ²⁶	Funding (€)	Project Promoter	Funding Purpose
BF3	HSE	130,319	Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force	BLDATF Administration and programme costs, inclusive of grants for one off initiatives.
BF7	HSE	294,551	Ballyfermot STAR	Programme and salary budget for substance misuse treatment and rehabilitation support services. Including Family Support.
BF2-1	HSE	398,000	Ballyfermot Advance Project	Programme and salary budget for low threshold substance misuse treatment and rehabilitation support. Including brief intervention for family support.
BF2-2	HSE	110,829	Fusion CPL Project	Programme and salary budget for substance misuse treatment and rehabilitation supports. Project hosts CPL worker.
BF2-4	HSE	13,601	Ballyfermot Youth Service (BYS)	Programme budget for peer education model for young person's drugs and alcohol education.
BF2-9	HSE	68,385	FamiliBase	Programme and salary budget line for child welfare key workers addressing the impact of parental substance misuse.
PS1	HSE	13,601	Ballyfermot STAR	Peer support programme budget for across whole Star project.
BF2-9A	HSE	152,000	FamiliBase	Administrative budget and programme costs to cover childcare fees for individuals looking to access support for problematic substance misuse.
BF10	HSE	50,000	Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership (BCP)	Acts as the employer of the Project Officer for the BLDATF. The worker provides community based supports to the BLDATF.
BF2-10	CDYS B	97,742	Ballyfermot Social Intervention Initiative (BSII)	Programme and salary cost for service based in Cherry Orchard addressing tenancy sustainment.
BF2-14	CDYS B	106,503	Matt Talbot (MT)	Programme and salary cost for drug free day programme.
BF2B-3	CDYS B	51,201	FamiliBase	Salary cost for youth substance misuse worker providing one-to-one and group interventions as well as school based drugs education.
TOTAL BLDATF annual budget		1,486,732		



Section 11: Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force Meeting Activities

11.1 Meeting schedule and frequency

Upon sign off on the governance manual in March 2020, the BLDATF agreed a six weekly schedule for main TF meetings and the Finance and Monitoring Subgroup meeting. The Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup remained at bi-monthly. All meetings moving to online format upon the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions in March 2020. Some subgroup groups which have lower membership were held in person, in line with public health guidelines. It is worth noting that the move to online format and the wider restrictions around social distancing impacted on some members' capacity to engage with TF meetings, in this regard, email follow up and sharing of information was vital during this time in particular. Due to the adjustment to budget lines and the allocation of a number of one off funding schemes in 2020, additional finance meetings were required to process decisions.

Meeting	Frequency	No. 2020 meetings
TF meeting	6 weekly	6
Financial Monitoring and Audit Subgroup (FMA)	6 weekly	7
Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup (T&R)	Bi-Monthly	6

11.2 BLDATF Membership list

Name	Organisation/Sector	Other Subgroup membership
Vincent Jackson (Chairperson)	Community	Finance and Monitoring
Henry Harding (Secretary)	Community	Finance and Monitoring Governance Subgroup
Anne Fitzgerald	Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership	Finance and Monitoring T&R Subgroup
Maureen Bahaouri	ETB	
Derek McDonnell	Community	
Fiona Kearney	Voluntary Rep	T&R Subgroup
Esther Wolfe	HSE Addiction Services	T&R Subgroup
Padraig Doherty	HSE Primary Care	Governance Subgroup
Damian Murphy	HSE Addiction Services	Finance and Monitoring
Sunniva Finlay	Voluntary Rep	T&R Subgroup
Sean Mangan	DCC	



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11.3 Summary of BLDATF achievements and activities in 2020

Month	Brief note on output achieved this month
January	Targeted Intervention Funds (TIFs) launched Community Grant scheme launched in partnership with Ballyfermot Partnership
Feb	Budgets and activities approved for International Women's Day TIF budgets approved and sent to projects
March	Supporting Women to Access Treatment Coordinator appointed and hosted in Star International Women's Day 3 rd year went ahead Covid 19 restrictions began Friday 12 th March
April	Annual Report published on BLDATF website and submitted to DPU On-going Covid related support and information provided to projects BLDATF website and social media expanded and developed.
May	Budget approved to support community wide support coordinated through BCP 2x Support meetings with all funded agencies with regard to return to work protocols requirements of HSE
June	Summer Programme Budgets approved for projects 3 rd Round of Best Practice Responses top Domestic Violence training organized
July	Surveying and collating local data as well as across all 14 TF areas for submission to the DPU as part of restoration of services national working group
August	Supporting Overdose Awareness Day PPE Grants approved and processed
Sept	Nitrous Oxide Webinar
October	Motivational Interviewing Training online organized NOSP Webinar
Nov	Dtalk printed and distributed across the community. Older person's researcher supported and reconnected with the community.
Dec	Application submitted to the HSE for additional 20k to be allocated towards Covid related costs and address covid related service delivery. Follow up webinar for youth/family workers 16 th December.

11.4 Financial Monitoring and Audit Subgroup

Key activities of in reporting period:

- Streamlined and strengthened contracts and governance around small and large grants through the TF.
- All payments to projects and suppliers continued throughout pandemic.
- On-going support to projects regarding quarterly returns throughout pandemic.
- On-going monitoring and reporting on additional budgets from Drugs Policy Unit..
- All returns to HSE and DPU/CDYSB on time and without issue.
- Monitoring of TF account to see where repurposing of some budget lines could be done to serve the needs of the community (Summer Programme Budget, PPE and Community Wide Food Delivery Support).
- Processed Targeted Intervention Fund applications.
- Processed all reallocation and funding requests from funded agencies.
- Processed PPE grants and one off DPU Covid grant to projects



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11.5 Treatment and Rehabilitation Subgroup membership

Name	Organisation/Sector	Comments
Aidan O'Halloran	Ballyfermot Social Intervention Initiative	Joined February 2020
Anne Fitzgerald	Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership	T&R Chair
Brendan Magee	Liberties Recycling	Left in June 2020
Clara Geaney	Task Force Coordinator	
Denise Joy	SWAAT Coordinator	Joined June 2020
Esther Wolfe	HSE Addition Services	
Fiona Kearney	Familibase	
Gary Roche	Project Officer	
Gráinne Finnegan	Túsla/Regional CFSN Coordinator	Joined August 2020
Gráinne Jennings	Matt Talbot Community Trust	
Kathy Watts	Fusion CPL	
Mick Mason	Ballyfermot Advance	
Miriam Schweigard	Túsla/Ballyfermot CFSN Coordinator	Joined August 2020
Sunniva Finlay	Ballyfermot Star	
Wayne Martin	Job Plan	

11.5.1 Key achievements in the reporting period

- Worked together to ensure that an up-to-date list of services and contact details were available to the community during the covid-19 restrictions.
- Tusla Child and Family Support Network representation at the T&R secured.
- SWAAT Coordinator joined the group in June 2020, strengthening the link between SWAAT and BLDATF T&R.
- Group established to explore the issues pertaining to the impact of parental drug and alcohol use on children.

11.5.1.2 Parental Substance Misuse Task Group

During 2020 the issue of parental substance misuse was discussed at the T&R Subcommittee. This is an issue under a national umbrella of Hidden Harm. The Project Officer was tasked with carrying out some preliminary research into the number of children whose parents are engaged with local addiction recovery services. This cohort of children was discovered to be high and with the realization that not all people using substances are in treatment, the real number would be higher than our research suggested. Based on this, the T&R subcommittee decided to set up a task group²⁷.

People working with adult addiction services and child & family services were asked to participate in a series of 6 workshops. The workshops identified 6 areas where children are involved in service provision:

²⁷ Data pertaining to children of service users is provided in this report in section 2.10



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Pre Conception, Antenatal and Post Natal Care; Early Years ;Children /Youth Services/Schools; Specialist Services for children affected by PSM ; Adult Drug Services; Safeguarding/Child Protection Services. These workshops carried on until mid-2021. The idea was not to explore the harm caused by exposure to parental substance misuse, rather, it was to explore service provision in response under the 6 areas outlined above. The group looked at the following questions in relation to Hidden Harm Practice.

1. What good Hidden Harm practice /service provision have we in Dublin 10?
2. What are the gaps in provision or improvements in Hidden Harm Practice in Dublin 10?
3. Are there changes we can make locally that require minimal resources to address these gaps?
4. Are there changes we can make locally that require significant resources to address these gaps ?

The Task Group workshopped these questions and the Project Officer recorded the findings. These findings have been fed back to members and stakeholders, the report on which will be provided in the next reporting period. Following completion of the consultations in early 2021, there is now a PSM Implementation group with membership being offered to those attending T&R.



Section 12: Appendices

Appendix 1: Women's Aid Training

Two-Day Training with Women's Aid on Best Practice in Woman and Child Protection in the Context of Domestic Violence

About Women's Aid

Women's Aid is a leading national organisation that has been working in Ireland to stop domestic violence against women and children since 1974. We work to make women and children safe from domestic violence, offer support, provide hope to women affected by abuse and work for justice and social change. Our Direct Services for women experiencing domestic violence underpin and inform all of our work to end domestic violence. For more information, please visit: www.womensaid.ie

Why Attend the Training?

Research indicates that domestic violence affects 1 in 5 women in Ireland in their lifetime. In 2018 there were 19,089 contacts made to all Women's Aid Direct Services. During these contacts 16,994 disclosures of domestic violence against women and 3,728 disclosures of child abuse were made²⁸.

Since 1996 (up to Nov 2019), 230 women have died violently in the Republic of Ireland. 56% were killed by a current or former boyfriend, husband or partner²⁹.

The link between child abuse and domestic violence has been clearly established, with domestic violence being the most common context in which child abuse takes place. As recognized by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, exposure to domestic violence in itself is a form of emotional abuse and a risk factor for neglect with detrimental effects to children's well-being.

Domestic violence awareness training is important for all service providers, enabling participants to deepen their understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence against women and children and equipping participants with the knowledge and the skills necessary to respond appropriately to individual cases.

Important consideration

Please note that the training may not be suitable for anyone currently experiencing, or who has recently experienced, domestic violence as the material may be distressing. The training is designed to upskill those supporting women and children experiencing domestic violence. If you are a woman experiencing domestic violence or are concerned on behalf of someone else please contact Women's Aid Helpline on **1800 341 900**.

²⁸ Women's Aid Impact Report 2018

²⁹ Women's Aid Femicide Watch, November 2019



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About the Training Content

The aim of this two day training is to support best practice responses in woman and child protection in the context of domestic violence.

About the training days

This is a two day training block. Both training days normally run from 10.00am to 4.30 pm. Registration takes place at 9.45am on day one. Participants are requested to attend the two full days of training.

Participants will have an increased understanding and information on the following;

- Dynamics of domestic violence;
- Forms of abuse used by perpetrators against women and children;
- Short- and long-term impacts on women and children living with abuse;
- Barriers in accessing support and protection;
- Effective engagement that prioritizes the safety of women and children;
- Supporting the non-offending parent in line with Children First Guidelines;
- Risks involved in engaging with the perpetrator and key practice considerations;
- Referral options for women and children affected by domestic violence

Some Testimonials from previous participants

'A fascinating insight into a subject I knew very little about even though I work with women on a daily basis'

'Interactive, informative and essential for anyone who comes in contact with vulnerable people'

'Training was very well organised and delivered, giving the basic principles and understanding means it can be applied widely and easily to all practice'

'All health care workers need this training and more within the justice system'

'Super delivery/facilitation, very balanced and professional'

'All frontline services should have this training. Great work and really beneficial and dynamic training'
Supported by;



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Appendix 2: Women's Aid on-line training

Online Training

Best Practice Responses to Women Experiencing Domestic Violence

About this Training

Covid-19 pandemic, is an unprecedented crisis affecting us all. Restrictions are in place to support and protect our individual and community health. However, for women living with their abuser this time is one of elevated risk and even greater isolation within the home.

In view of the restrictions in place, we have developed this half day Online Training to support accessibility to training, to safeguard all our physical health and to support participants to continue to address the needs of victims of domestic violence, especially at this critical time. This training is suitable for staff, volunteers and board members looking to enhance their responses to the issue of domestic violence currently.

Why avail of the Training?

As domestic violence affects 1 in 5 women in Ireland, anyone working with women can encounter domestic violence through their work. The responses women receive when seeking initial support from frontline services can have a major impact on their safety and well-being, and that of their children. Whatever your work role, this training will give you the foundation knowledge to appropriately respond and to link women to support services both locally and nationally.

What will I gain from the training?

Participants will have an increased understanding and information regarding:

- How to Recognise

- What is going on in domestic violence and abuse
- What forms and tactics of abuse are used by the perpetrator, including coercive control
- Impacts on the victim and coping mechanisms of the victim
- The indicators that may alert us that a woman is experiencing domestic violence and abuse
- The intention behind the abuser's tactics

- How to Respond

- What is your role in responding
- What principles should guide your response
- The barriers facing the victim in seeking and accessing support
- How to support a disclosure safely

- Referral information

- Referral options for women affected by domestic violence, including frontline domestic violence services and legal options available



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About online training

This training will take place through the online platform Zoom. When you register, you will receive an email confirming your place and providing you with a link to join the training on the day. We will provide you with directions on how to do this. For anyone who has not as yet used Zoom, we would like to reassure you it is relatively easy. You do need to download the app to your device in advance. We will additionally send you written back up material to support your learning.

About Women's Aid

Women's Aid is a leading national organisation that has been working in Ireland to stop domestic violence against women and children since 1974. We work to make women and children safe from domestic violence, offer support, provide hope to women affected by abuse and work for justice and social change. Our Direct Services for women experiencing domestic violence underpin and inform all of our work to end domestic violence. For more information, please visit: www.womensaid.ie

Important: Please note that the training may not be suitable for anyone currently experiencing, or who has recently experienced, domestic violence as the material may be distressing. If you have any questions or concerns about participating in the training, please feel free to contact us. You will be put in touch with a trainer who can provide you with more information on the training content.

The training is designed to upskill those supporting women experiencing domestic violence. If you are a woman experiencing domestic violence, or if you are concerned on behalf of someone else, please contact Women's Aid 24hr National Freephone Helpline on **1800 341 900**.

For additional information and to register interest, please contact:

Training Administrator, Email: training@womensaid.ie

Supported by;



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland





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Appendix 3 Governance tender 2019-2020



Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force invite tenders for the following brief:

To work with the agencies funded through the Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force (BLDATF) to provide a needs analysis in relation to governance requirements within projects and to provide practical support and guidance to projects to achieve these requirements, as required.

Context and Background

BLDATF is one of 12 LDATF around Dublin, which were set up in the late 1990s to address the drug crisis of the time. LDATFs play a key role in the identification of emerging drug and alcohol trends within the local community and are responsible for developing and implementing a local strategy in line with the national substance misuse strategy *Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery (2017-2025)*. BLDATF support 9 agencies in the community who hold a Service Level Agreement with our funders in the provision of locally based services to address substance misuse and related issues within the region. Through the course of its work, the BLDATF is increasingly made aware of the demands placed upon projects in relation to governance and compliance with relevant company legislation. BLDATF are keen to offer support and guidance where it can.

The scope of the tender is as follows:

BLDATF are seeking the support of an individual or organisation to work with their funded projects in the following areas of work:

1. GDPR
2. The Charities Governance Code
3. Corporate Governance
4. Safer Better Health Care

The scope of the tender is as follows:

- General information sessions for all funded agencies in respect of the 4 areas above.
- A company “health check” of funded projects in respect of the 4 areas named above.
- Support projects to devise and implement measures to ensure they are fully compliant and working to audit standard with regard to each area.
- Provide practical support to each project on policy development and governance which may include further training, this can consist of one to one support and group work where appropriate.
- Working in an outcome focused way to ensure KPI's are clearly identifiable for each project
- To liaise with the BLDATF Coordinator re progress and barriers.



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Budget and timeline:

- The deadline for receipt of applications is 5pm Monday 16th September.
- It is expected that the successful applicant will begin this project by the first week in October 2019, and will work with projects for the period October- December 2019 and will then, in collaboration with projects, develop a plan of support for 2020 with an anticipated finish of project by 30th November 2020.
- The value of the tenders submitted must be inclusive of VAT and to cover the term of the contract. The price stated must be the total all-inclusive price for the duration of the tender.

Decision making procedure

- All tenders received will be reviewed by a panel nominated by the BLDATF.
- Shortlisted candidates may be asked to present their tender to a panel nominated by the BLDATF.

Tender assessment will be based on the following:

- Applicant's ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of the tender request.
- Applicant's ability to demonstrate an understanding of community based drug and alcohol rehabilitation services.
- Applicant's understanding of the community and voluntary sector.
- Applicant's understanding of Local Drug and Alcohol Task Forces.
- Experience of having previously conducted similar projects.
- Quality of the tender document submitted, with clear timelines and project plan.

Other information:

- This piece of work is being funded through the Ballyfermot LDATF.
- Price increases during the term of contract will not be accepted.
- All completed tenders to be submitted to Charlene Behan at: clara.geaney@hse.ie **no later than 5pm 16th September 2019.**

Informal enquiries to be directed to Clara Geaney Coordinator of the Ballyfermot Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force 087 3309024.

Appendix 4 DPU One off Covid-19 Grant



Context and fund details:

The Minister for Public Health, Well Being and the National Drugs Strategy, Frank Feighan TD has announced the allocation of a fund of €480,000 to Drug and Alcohol Task Force areas for the restoration of Drug and Alcohol Services in 2020. It is important to note that this funding is once-off. The HSE will act as a channel of funding for the distribution of this funding to Task Forces following an application process.

Under this initiative Task Forces can apply for funding of up to €20,000 to assist with the delivery/restoration of services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications can be made to support drug and alcohol services/initiatives within their geographical area.

Applications for this once-off funding will be considered subject satisfactory confirmation that the funding will be used to cover costs associated with the restoration of drug and alcohol services.

Applications must be categorised under one or more of the headings below:

- Development of ICT facilities
- Changes in layout of offices
- Additional training for staff
- Safety equipment
- Reconfiguration of services
- Support for service users (phone credit etc)
- Safe operation of drug and alcohol support groups and addiction programmes
- Exceptional costs in meeting client needs

Information for projects:

As approved by the Ballyfermot LDATF 20th November, all projects funded through a funding arrangement (HSE or CDYSB) to operate drug and alcohol support services in the region can apply for one off costs up to a maximum of E2000 per project. Please complete the table on page 2 with the amount you are requesting and under which category (you can use a number of categories if you wish).

Please note that the following:

1. The full amount requested is not guaranteed.
2. This is a one off budget, there is no guarantee of funding in the future.
3. This funding will need to be spent by Q1 2021.



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Name of project:		
Heading	Brief description	Amount sought
Development of ICT facilities		
Changes in layout of offices		
Additional training for staff		
Safety equipment		
Reconfiguration of services		
Support for service users (phone credit etc)		
Safe operation of drug and alcohol support groups and addiction programmes		
Exceptional costs in meeting client needs		
Total		

Signed:

Date:

CEO/Manager

Please return completed application forms to charlenebldatf1@gmail.com no later than close of business on Thursday 26th November.

