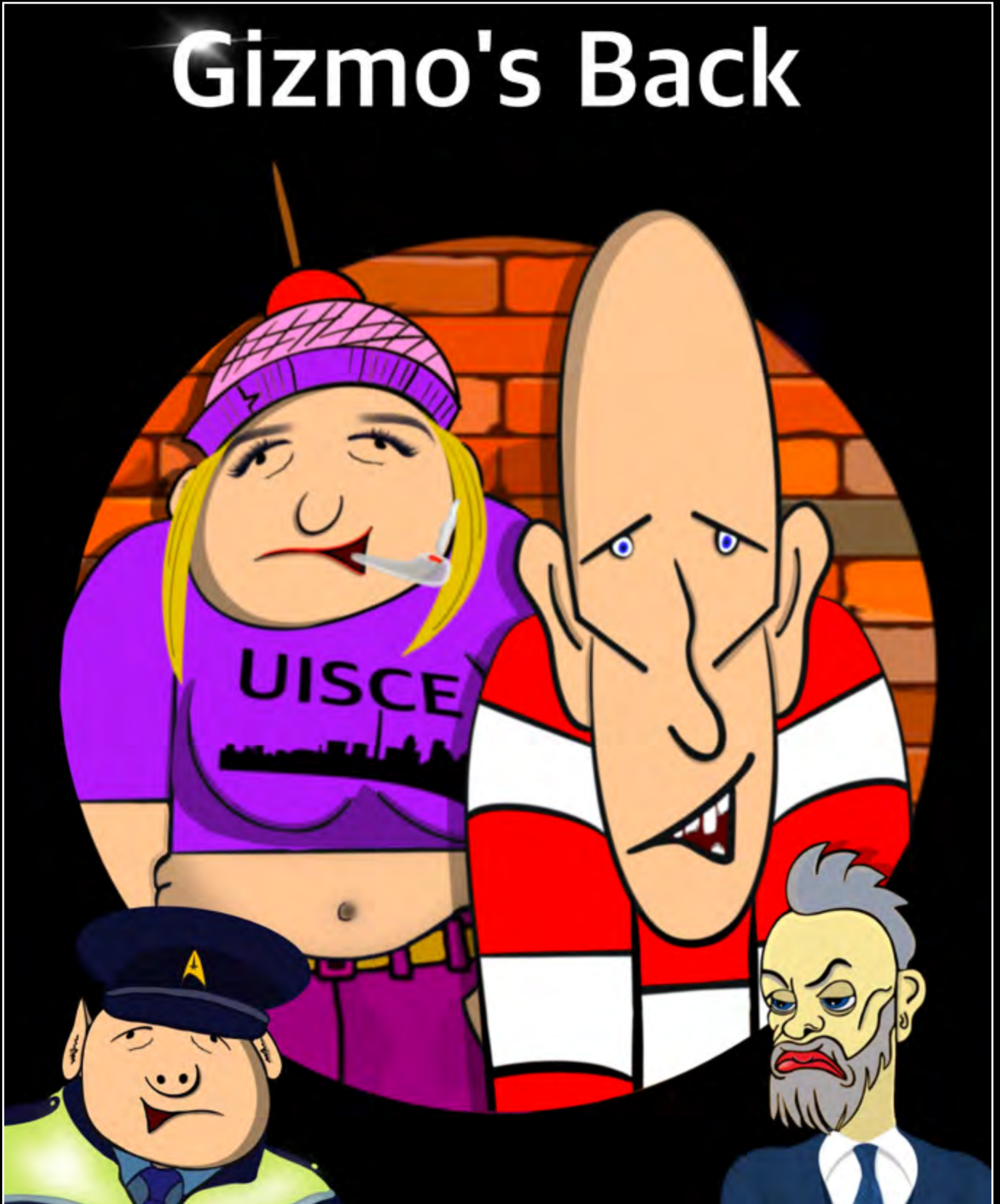


BRASS MUNKIE

Issue 41 | Winter 2022

Gizmo's Back



UISCE

Advocacy for People who use Drugs

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to all the peers for all the amazing pieces, especially Niall Hickey and Nicholas Diez, and Earthex who worked with us to bring Gizmo back from the dead. Then we have Kenny and Gerard O Keefe and for all the peers that took part in work that is in the magazine.

We have good content from Clondalkin Drug and Alcohol Task Force, D17 ACT in Darndale, Sankalpa and Jenny Smyth who is the new Naloxone lead for the HSE (who has been doing great work since they she started) who provided a poster with a QR code for all the info you need on Naloxone.

Nicki Killen from the Social Inclusion Office was brilliant as usual with some important updates on the back of house drug testing, safe tips for harm reduction and recovery around Christmas among other pieces which you will see once you get in to it.

Most important, we want to acknowledge YOU! The readers, we do it for you lot, and we love getting feedback keep reading and keep telling us what is what and keeping us on our toes.

WELCOME BACK READERS!

Here we are again sharing another Brass Munkie winter edition with all of you.

Hi folks, It's great to be back in touch with you all coming into the Christmas. It's a strange time, I know a lot of us can struggle at Christmas as it can bring a lot of pressure, and as we know a lot of us have lost people over the years so they are never far from our thoughts, especially at Christmas. However, in spite of all that we do love Christmas. It is a time for hope, and for spreading the love so we hope this edition brings a load of festive spirit while also looking at some of the issues you have raised in your contributions.

We are powering on with the implementation of our strategic plan Peer Partnership for Change, which is really about us shaping all our work around peers and letting them lead out. We have been busy with outreach, groups, Naloxone training, research and meeting people who we can work with to change things for the better. Read about some of that in this edition.

The big news is....Gizmo IS BACK! Some of you may remember the story of Gizmo (who is named after the old name for a works) who was created by the legend that is the UISCE founder, Tommy Larkin who is no longer with us. Gizmo is spitting truth from the streets with Piper and two other characters, who might seem like they have nothing in common, but might all be activists working for the same thing!

We have the all the usuals, which you can look over and of course some excellent new pieces from peers, services and the HSE. A special mention to Maria who moved on in the summer. You made a massive contribution, and you live on in the BM!

Enjoy the Christmas and we will see you in the new Year folks!

Andy O Hara

Who are yeah?

I'm Earthexit, obviously not my real name but it's my Twitter and Artist name. I come from Dublin, Ireland, and I'm many things, I am a dad first of 2 daughters, a husband of an amazing woman and a community worker/coordinator of an NGO. My history is a complex one.

Why am I in Brass Munkie?

Well I was a chronic drug addict, an xprisoner and I recovered from numerous health conditions related to addiction including mental health, so I feel like I belong in Brass Munkie. Also, I've been able to live drug-free for 17 years a day at a time. Most importantly I've always been a fan of the mag and love the work UISCE do. So when they approached me to contribute I was delighted.

Why Earthexit?

Well, it's a combination of being Anonymous and also a reflection of my curiosity and the fantasy that once fuelled my drug use. I always wanted to escape the earth into another world.

I'm able to do that now through art, there are no boundaries in creativity I can be or do anything I want through my drawings, poetry and storytelling.

So what have you contributed to this edition?

I wrote the poem Silent March, and I drew the Alien Addict and the short story that goes with it, but most importantly myself and UISCE brought Gizmo back to life, which was an honour considering the original creator is not with us anymore, so it's a spiritual thing to bring a piece of him back to life in the comic Gizmos back. I love being creative and also doing something meaningful. The storyline in Gizmos back is important also, so I hope you really enjoy it and take something from it.

How do we follow you?

If you want to see more of my work, follow me on social it's Twitter @earthexitart or Instagram @earthexit1. I also have a website www.earthexit1.com

NIALL HICKEY

PEER VOLUNTEER

Tell us about yourself?

Hi, my name is Niall Hickey, I'm homeless at the minute, but hopefully that will change soon. I've been through addiction all my life, well the one that I remember. I'd say I started young, first hash, then on and on until I was on my knees, but I am doing great now. I was drug free for a while before I got involved with UISCE, and I was doing a lot of college just to keep busy. About a year ago, I saw a flyer for UISCE and haven't looked back since.

Do you think that PWUD have a voice in society or in the services?

First of all, PWUD stands for people who have used or use drugs, and I hadn't got a voice through my addiction. No doctor got me drug free, I did but a lot of the time they ignored what I was saying. I know that I'm still on methadone, but I class addiction as a disease and if I have to take meds to make me feel some sort of normality, I'll do it, but I never had a say until I met UISCE, and was soon my mind changed. The services are thin and with the crack very bad, there's no meds for that except a few Valium but that can be hard to get as in doctors they have flyers saying they don't give Valium. We are actually trying to do a bit of peer research to see what type of things services could offer for crack. It can also be hard to get a benzo detox. They actually have a flyer on the wall in a lot of doctors saying they don't give Valium. God love us if the Meth hits hard, but to answer the question. No, I don't think that the right people are listened to in nearly all spaces.

How did you get involved with UISCE?

As I said, I was bored doing college all the time and I was looking for something to do, even voluntary work. I came across the UISCE flyer on the wall. I was already 5 years free from street drugs. It's worth saying that UISCE work mostly with people who are still using street drugs, even as peers who volunteer, so when I rang and was told that I would be going around the city talking to like minded people, and if I can help in any way, that's what I'm here for. If having a chat with someone in the height of addiction and giving them a cigarette, just to see them smile for those few minutes is a blessing. I want to give back to society as I feel I took a lot over the years.

What type of things do UISCE do, are you involved with?

Now, I am facilitating a creative writing class, so that's brilliant for me because I like talking about the issues and encouraging people to express themselves. We are learning how to make our own TikTok videos, and it should be a laugh as I haven't a clue about it, but I'm learning which is always good. We can then share videos about all the good work going on, and highlight the issues. It would be great to be involved in changing things for the better. Other days we go on outreach work which involves walking around the streets engage with people and giving some advice, or just listening what's going on for people, as that's all that some people need. We also do groups in some of the services. It's all about giving people a voice.

What are the issues that people are experiencing?

Well, I've been doing outreach for a while now and it's less about heroin, don't get me wrong, it's still there but the crack has got a hold of a lot and the street tablets as well. and it's a horrible sickness, not only on the body, but on the mind and the amount of people sleeping on the street is crazy. I know they say that they only have so many beds, but people are genuinely scared of staying in hostels, as they could bump into anyone. When you're in active addiction you have enemies or your paranoid and you think you have, so you're always looking over your shoulder. I know it's hard-to-gotten 24/7 hostels which I got, but they benefit you and do help you have stability.

Anything else you'd like to add?

I've been through a lot in my life. I tried everything but nothing worked for me. I could never get drug free. I have had two addictions, but I managed to give up heroin, which is good for me. As I said I treat methadone like a medicine. If you have Cancer, you need opioid medication and it's the same with heroin, so I stayed free from street drugs since I started working with UISCE. It's boosted my confidence, it's through the roof, all down to UISCE. So, with Many thanks to Andy and Caroline, who make my day every time I have to go and work for them.

TIPS ON RECOVERY CHRISTMAS

Support

Christmas and the New Year can be a tough time for some people, especially if you are trying to remain substance free or if you are recently in recovery from drug or alcohol use.

To support people during this difficult time, we have developed some tips that might help you if you are trying to avoid alcohol or other drug use.

Stay calm and remind yourself

Why you don't want the drink or drug, write it down and keep it in your pocket

Of the consequences of relapsing, such as danger of overdose

Of the benefits you have gained so far

Of how you will feel after

To avoid trigger situations

You are in control and can choose to say 'yes' or 'no'

Then

Find something to do that will take all your attention, like reading a magazine or doing the newspaper crossword

If you are in a risky situation where you are around people drinking or taking drugs, and you are finding it very difficult, leave

Read your list of reasons why you don't want to relapse

Find a friend or one of your support network to talk to

Have something to eat and go for a long walk

Whenever you feel very uncomfortable, upset or miserable, keep telling yourself it will pass. If you have cravings, pretend that the craving is like a sore throat that you have to put up with until it goes away

Overdose

Remember, there is a higher risk of overdose if you have not used drugs in a while. Find out more on our overdose page

KENNY'S STORY

My name is Kenny Eivers, and I am 44 years of age. I am originally from Swords, but I am living in the city now. My life growing up was not stable and I never really felt like I belonged at home, and because of this I was always running away. I started drinking alcohol when I was eleven, sniffing glue, petrol, and gas when I was thirteen, and smoking hash and taking ecstasy tablets when I was fourteen, and then by the time I was seventeen, I discovered heroin.

I only really started taking heroin to help me come down from the Es, and I mostly just dabbled with it, but by the time I was in my early twenties, I was completely strung out. When I was twenty-five, I got strung out on crack, and I was hooked on that for about fifteen years. When I was thirty, I done a jump over in Dundalk and received a four-year prison sentence because of it. After I got released from prison, I was still in addiction, and spent nine years living on the streets.

Finally, I couldn't take anymore, and I knew that I had to do something to change my life, so I decided to start the Coolmine day program, and spent 12 months in the stabilisation program. After spending twelve months in stabilization, I went to Keltoi for eight weeks, and then from there back to the Drug free day program in Coolmine. After



I graduated from the Drug free day program, I heard about a tour guide service that were looking for tour guides. I had to do a course and study for nine months, but eventually, I became a fully qualified tour guide. For a long time, my life was totally out of control with addiction and homelessness, but now I have my own place and have a job giving people tours around the city, and sharing my history of homelessness and addiction with them, while I'm giving the tours.

VIDEO WORKSHOP

As per our strategic plan Peer Partnership for Change, we have actions which look to develop peer led initiatives, as well as having stronger communication which can challenge discrimination and stigma, and hopefully work towards positive social change. To do this, we have set up a workshop that will upskill staff and peers on how to make our very own videos. These could be used to raise awareness and put forward solutions to issues experienced by People Who Use Drugs.

Having peers lead out on identifying the issues, developing the collective responses, and delivering the message is critical to challenging stigma and getting better outcomes for us all, as a society.

A special thanks to Jules Fitzimons for working with us on this programme.

Keep an eye on our social media in 2023!

VOICE FOR VOICELESS WORKSHOP

We are always looking to create spaces for peers to share and gain the skills for full participation, and to have a voice. We are also looking to make sure that voice is heard by the right people that can hopefully work with us to create change.

The 'Voice for Voiceless' workshop is an example of how we do that in practice. It uses creative writing as a tool to express ourselves and develop an analysis of what's going on through our own living experience.

Storytelling is powerful way for us to have ownership over our experiences and stories, and challenge negative stereotypes and see peers as actors of change who are part of the solution, and not the problem as we are so often perceived.

We will produce a short booklet, and a video (which will be done by peers in the video workshop!) and hopefully share those with the public, and use it as an opportunity to open up a discussion how we can include the voice for the voiceless with some of the people we work with in services, the HSE, the Department of Health and anyone else we work with it.

It was facilitated by Geoff 'The Poet' Finian and co-facilitated by our peer Niall Hickey.



UISCE / ALDP GARDEN GROUP



We have come to the end of our Garden Group with ALDP. We are always looking to build partnerships with other organisations to create spaces for peers to feel love and hope and to be able to talk about what's going on for them, and the wider community.

In this instance, the creating of a small garden in ALDP was the tool. We worked together to create a sense of belonging and a space where people could feel valued, irrespective of their use of drugs.

We had different levels of engagement over the year, with people dropping in and out according with what was going on for them.

I'm sure we will develop something new in 2023 with ALDP! See ya'll in the next episode!!



UISCE & NATIONAL DRUG TREATMENT CENTRE

Hi all, so we wanted to give you an update on our ongoing work in NDT. As you are aware we delivered a six-week Peer Participation Programme in collaboration with the NDT in the summer. It was co-facilitated by UISCE staff, and Niall Hickey who is a peer working with UISCE. Martin from the NDT was also part of the group.

The programme was successful in giving peers a space to talk about the issues that are important to them, build confidence and have a voice. The peers showed a great deal of passion, knowledge, and appetite to have a positive contribution to improving things in the NDT, and on wider issues. Peers from the group and UISCE put together a broad proposal which had several actions that we felt would improve engagement of peers, and eventually the experience and outcomes of everyone in the NDT.

The UISCE team (peers and staff) sat down with the NDT and agreed on a partnership going forward. Peer engagement leads to peers being involved in decision making, so it's important to create spaces for that to happen.

The plan is to increase peer engagement through inreach, community meetings and group work. This will then increase participation and inform a structure that allows peers engage directly with the NDT on an ongoing basis.

We have done 4 peer led inreach sessions in the NDT where our team engaged with people while they were accessing the service. We had really good engagement from peers and staff and plenty of interest from peers to be involved. We have had a one community meeting and our second group is taking currently taking place, both were peer led.

Peer led by peers from the first workshop, specifically Gillian, Daniel, and Johnny. Gillian is now co-facilitating the second group as well as leading on the inreach. Daniel is now involved in the planning of an Advisory Group with Gillian and participants of the second group. All three are involved in work with UISCE outside of the NDT, including outreach, workshops, research, and Naloxone training.

In the new year we will continue to engage people and build a structure that is centred around peers in collaboration with the NDT. This will inform a peer led, evidence-based toolkit on how to increase the participation of PWUD in services.

A special mention to all of the peers, Bill, Maura and Tracey for making it happen.

If you are a peer who has current experience in the NDT and would like to be involved contact us @ info@myuisce.org



Naloxone Training with CDATF

BRASS MUNKIE YES OR NO?

We want to discuss the Brass Munkie. The name for the magazine thought of in the 90's by a group of People Who Use Drugs who were regularly abused and put down by words such as 'junkie, druggie, and brass monkey (slang for junkie). We know language is power, and we called the magazine Brass Munkie to reclaim and own the word. Own the word, and therefore the insult and you take back the power from people who use the word to put you down.

Some people say if you control language, you control society - so taking control of that word (brass munkie) makes it useless to those that use it to slag us, depowering them, and empowering us. That's the idea, anyway!

However, one of the problems with reclaiming words is some people don't understand that we have reclaimed it, so they still use it the negative way or they might think because we use, they can. They can't. We can. We reclaimed it. But what do you think? Should we keep using it and hold the power, or is that not working and it's making the word okay for everyone to use?

Send your thoughts to
info@myuisce.org
 or call us on 01 5554693

GIZMO AND THE CREW

That leads us on to the animation we have in this edition of the BM. The cartoon was developed by a group of People Who Use Drugs in the 90's. All the characters are a stereotypical version of what people think we are like. The same as the name of the magazine, it's about us owning the language and labels people have put on us.



All the characters in this episode are the stereotypical version of their character, but also shows the human side of everyone while exploring the issues in a hard hitting and gritty way. It's reporting directly from the streets and the lives of those people most impacted. If you would like to talk to us about this contact us on info@myuisce.org



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

HSE Drug and Alcohol Helpline Christmas Opening Hours 2022

Regular opening hours: Monday-Friday,
9.30am-5.30pm

Week Monday 19th Dec - Friday 23rd December:
9.30am-5.30pm

**CLOSED Monday 26th December and
Tuesday 27th December**

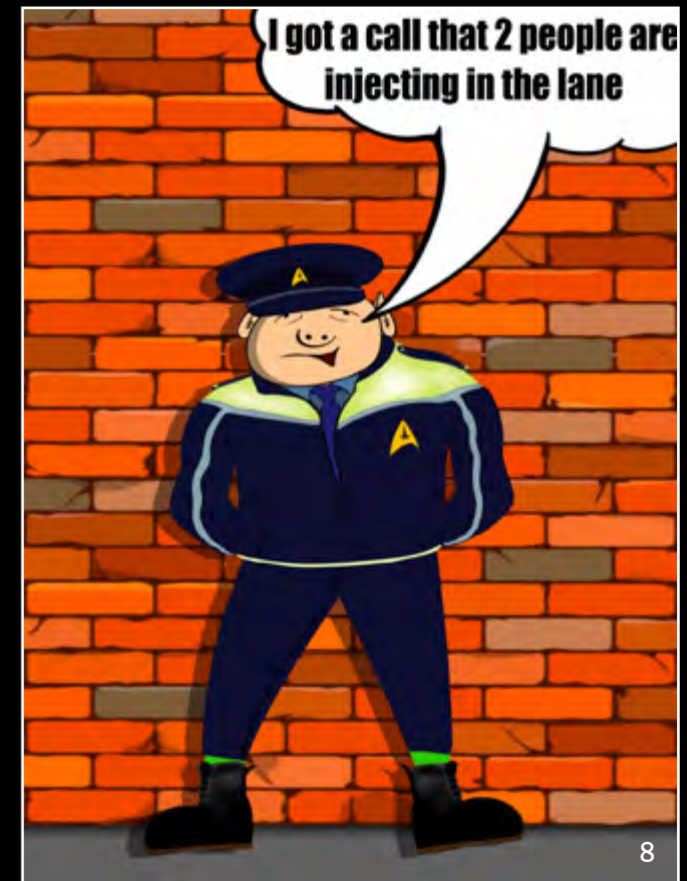
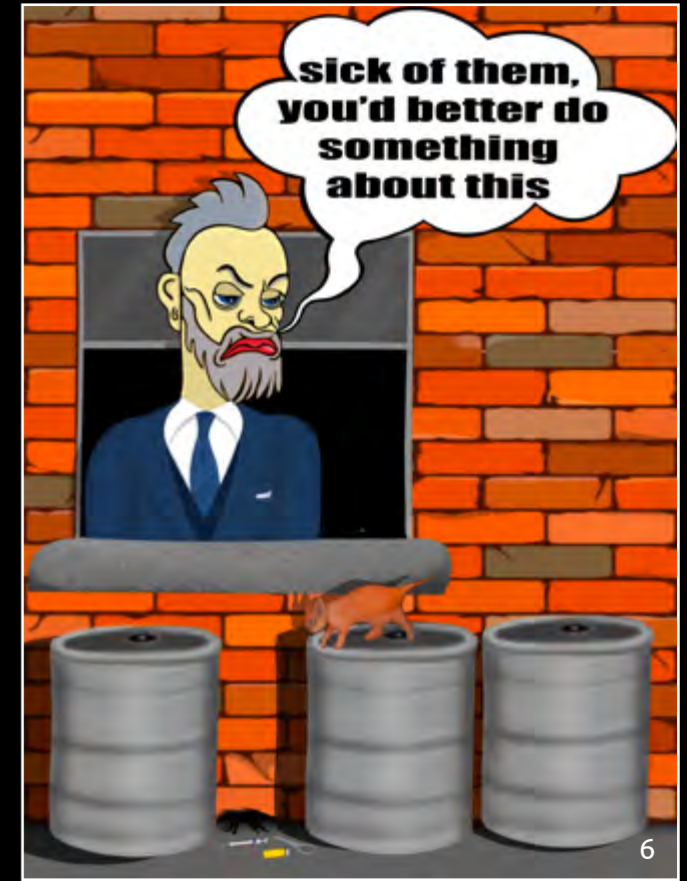
Week Wednesday 28th December - Friday 30th
December: 9.30am-5.30pm

CLOSED Monday 2nd January

Tuesday 3rd – Friday 6th January:
9.30am-5.30pm

Gizmo's Back

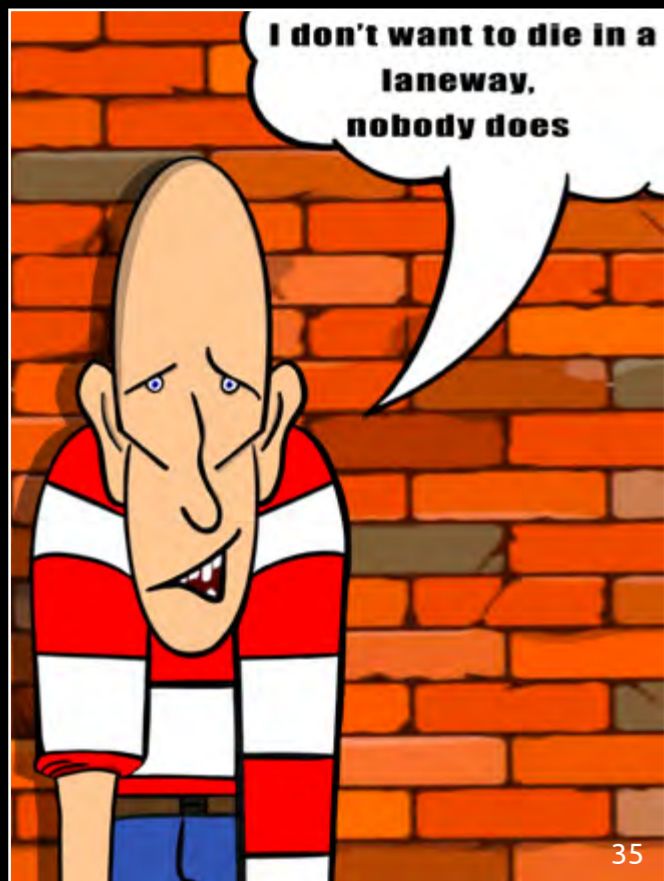
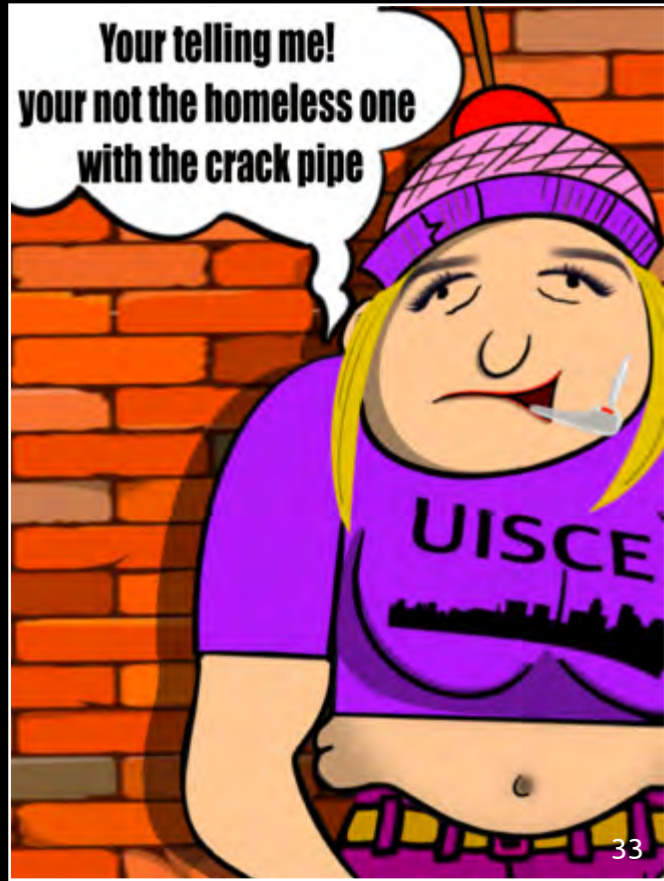














NEEDLE EXCHANGE & HARM REDUCTION SUPPLIES

DUBLIN 1
Summerhill Hub
 Tues 2pm-4.30pm
 01 876 5200

North Strand Health Centre
 Fri 2pm-4.30pm
 (01) 707 2300

Dublin Simon Outreach
 Mon-Fri 8.30pm - 10.30pm
 Sat 10am - 10:30pm
 Sun 4pm - 10.30pm
 01 872 0185

Ana Liffey Drug
 Tues & Thursday mornings at Granby Clinic
 Vanaliffey (Mobile Service)
 Tues & Thurs Afternoons, all day Friday
 087 712 7059

DUBLIN 2
HSE Outreach
 Thurs 10am-12pm
 Loretta 086 604 1013
 Clodagh 086 604 1029
 Call for out of hours

Coolmine House - 19 Lord Edward St
 Thursdays 11am-12pm
 Loretta 086 604 1013
 Clodagh 086 604 1029

DUBLIN 5
Kilbarrack Health Centre
 Mondays (except BH) 2:15pm-4:30pm
 John 086 605 7181

DUBLIN 7
HSE Outreach
 Pam Whelan 086 605 7205

DUBLIN 8
MQI Riverbank
 Mon-Fri 8am-9pm
 Sun 9am-1pm
 01 524 0160

DUBLIN 9
Ballymun Healthcare Facility (entrance Shangan Road)
 Tues 6pm-8:30pm
 Robert 087 967 6304

DUBLIN 10
Ballyfermot Advance Project
 Mon-Fri 9:30-1pm, 2pm-5pm
 01 623 8001
 Outreach for the same hours for people who can't access static - 087 4319921
 Out of hours NSP team - 3 evenings per week (vary each week) - 087 361 8422

DUBLIN 11
Wellmount Primary Care Centre (Finglas)
 Mon 2pm - 4:30pm
 01 856 7700

Ballymun Youth Action Project (BYAP)
 Mon-Fri 10am-1pm, 2-5pm
 01 846 7900 *Pipes only*

DUBLIN 12
Inchicore/Crumlin/Rialto HSE Outreach
 Mon 11am-4pm
 Derek/Paul 086 604 1014

DUBLIN 13
HSE Outreach
 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
 John Kelly 086 605 7181

DUBLIN 15
Corduff Primary Care Centre Blanchardstown
 Thurs 5pm-7pm
 Catriona 086 854 3770

HSE 37a Coolmine Industrial Estate
 Monday and Friday 11am -1pm
 Catriona 086 854 3770

DUBLIN 17
Darndale Needle Exchange Belcamp Lane
 Thurs 2pm-4pm
 01 848 8951

DUBLIN 18
HSE Dun Laoghaire
 Mobile service Tues 10am-4pm
 Serves the greater Dun Laoghaire area - Sandyford, Shankill etc.
 Marlina 086 605 7149

DUBLIN 22
CASP
 Just after the Fonthill retail park, big green and white building
 Monday-Friday 9.30am-1pm, 2pm-3pm
 01 616 6750

Clondalkin Tus Nua New Nangor Rd
 Mon 10am-12pm, 2pm - 4pm
 Tues, Weds, Thurs 2pm - 4pm
 Fri 10am-12pm, 2pm-3pm
 01 457 2938

Clondalkin/Lucan Clinic CLAC, St Lomans Rd
 Monday - Friday 9am-5pm
 Peter Homen 087 798 0175

DUBLIN 24
HSE Outreach -
 Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
 Nicola 086 806 5014
 Debbie 086 859 0733

St. Aengus Centre, Castletymon, Tymon North, Tallaght
 Monday - Friday 10am-2pm
 Mick 087 286 5570 (can contact out hours/emergency)

JADD, Jobstown, Tallaght
 Monday - Fri 9am-5pm
 Sat & Sun - 9:30am-11:30am
 085 781 6183 / 01 459 7756

CARP Killinarden CLG Tallaght
 Two buildings up from Killinarden Pub
 Mon - Fri 9am-4:30pm
 01 462 6082

NORTH COUNTY DUBLIN Harm Reduction Health Promotion Van
Confidential Mobile Service serving: Skerries, Lusk, Rush, Balbriggan, Baldoyle, Sutton, Howth, Swords.
 Call between Mon - Fri 9am-5pm
 John Kelly Outreach 086 605 7181
 Catriona Brady 086 854 3770

The Pharmacy Needle Exchange Programme is carried out in more than 100 pharmacies nationwide. Community pharmacy-based needle exchange allows patients to pick up sterile injecting equipment and return used items. Patients can identify pharmacies taking part by the international needle exchange logo on their shopfronts.



CARLOW ARDU
 Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm
 059 917 8050 // 1890 464 600

CORK
Cork City Outreach
 Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm
 Frank Horgan 086 025 5410

KILDARE
ARAS HSE Outreach Main St, Newbridge
 Tues 11am-1pm, Thurs 2pm-4pm
 045 488 670 / 045 446 350
Outside of hours:
 Suzanne 086 8065013
 Wynne 087 617 2517 //
 Des 086 6041015

KILKENNY ARDU
 Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm
 056 778 4638 / 1890 464 600

LAOIS
MQI Outreach
 Barry 087 292 5727

LIMERICK
ALDP Mid-West Assertive Outreach Team
 Mon - Fri 9:30am-5:30pm
 NSP: 085 871 0983 //
 Rachel: 085 155 9158
 Barry: 085 768 5522 //
 Pat: 085 143 6981
 Nicole: 085 155 9158 //
 Tris: 085 753 7073

LONGFORD
MQI Outreach
 Mon-Fri 8:45-5:15pm
 Derek 086 411 3628

OFFALY
MQI Outreach
 Mon - Fri 8:45am-5:15pm
 Lauren 087 914 8782

WATERFORD
St. Otteran's Hospital John's Hill
 Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm
 051 848 658

WESTMEATH
MQI Outreach
 Mon - Fri 8:45am-5:15pm
 Angela 087 915 0329

WEXFORD
HSE Substance Misuse Team - St. John's Hospital -
 Appointment based
 Claire 053 925 9825

WICKLOW
HSE Arklow Addiction Centre
 9a Upper Main Street, Arklow
 Call Mon-Friday 9am-5pm
 Sean 086 859 0734 -
 Appointment based

Bray Community Addiction Team
 37 Beechwood Close, Boghall Road, Bray
 Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm
 01 276 4692

Bray Mobile
 Mon-Friday 10am - 5pm
 Sean 086 605 7150

These locations have been confirmed as of July 2022 by UISCE. To be added to this mailing list or for updates or corrections please contact info@myuisce.org.

PATIENT ADVOCACY IN MENTAL HEALTH AND DRUG & ALCOHOL SERVICES

Is there a point to making a complaint or reporting your experience within medical services? The answer is YES!

Here is my story...

My name is Nicholas Jose Diez McKenna, I have struggled a lot this year with my mental health and unfortunately, despite my desire for help, it wasn't there when I needed it. Over the last 11 months, my mental health declined and as that happens, my local mental health team also declined. However, I contacted the service with a letter explaining my experience, suffering and disappointment in my treatment, which you may call a 'complaint' and I also contacted the HSE 'Your Service Your Say' which can be found online, via telephone or by post to share your positive or negative feedback of a service, recommendations or suggestions and in my case, to advocate for my own health, complain about the treatment of the mental health team and overall, to try get help.

It started with the doctor forgetting to conduct the telephone appointments, forgetting what time the appointment was at, requesting the presence of both myself and my husband but then never attending the appointment which also was a major inconvenience because myself and my husband would have to book time off work for these appointments which started to be forgotten about by my designated psychiatrist in my local mental health service. Unfortunately, the decline went hand in hand with my mental health and it ultimately resulted in laying in a hospital bed and not hearing anything from my mental health team for over 4 months, which in no doubt, may have prevented my hospital attendance, the decline in mental health or at least would have helped and supported me as my mental health declined. They actually have a flyer on the wall in a lot of doctors saying they don't give Valium. God love us if the Meth hits hard, but to answer the question. No, I don't think that the right people are listened to in nearly all spaces.

It wasn't until the last straw broke and I was in the Emergency Department that I finally got the motivation to write a letter and reach out to the service and HSE. Many people, especially when it comes to Mental Health Services or Drug & Alcohol Services feel as though complaints or feedback will not help, won't be useful and may even worsen the situation. Nevertheless, I did exactly that, I wrote a letter and reached out to the my local mental health team and the HSE 'Your Service Your Say' and a month later I was seen by a new doctor and I am happy to say, things have improved from there. Of course, in the ideal scenario, we would not be put in a position to have to complain or access patient advocacy supports but that is why they are there in the first place, because of things out of many people's control, there are not enough supports, not enough doctors, nurses, services and people, just like me, get lost in the cracks and forgotten about sometimes.

I also suffer from physical health issues so I am familiar with patient advocacy and writing to them when I am not satisfied with my care or



treatment and I must say, it may seem like it's 'too much hassle' or 'causing a fuss', those supports are there for a reason, the job of those staff is to advocate for us on our behalf, to ensure our feedback, experience and opinions are taken into consideration and combined with the medical treatment to ensure a holistic, well-rounded approach to our treatments.

It also doesn't have to be a catastrophic incident to contact these departments, it can be for anything and it will always be met with sincerity, care and understanding. So it may be that you didn't like how someone spoke to you, or you don't like your treatment plan, or, like me, you may have been forgotten or an appointment missed on the services behalf, or you just need to explain to them that you are struggling and you need more help, like my experience. I am lucky to have already been aware of ways to 'complain', 'ask for help' or to contact 'patient advocacy' because of my other health issues, also because I am honoured to volunteer for drug, alcohol and addiction organisations, like UISCE or the Clondalkin Drug & Alcohol Task Force and because of my privilege to volunteer, give back and share experiences with other people like myself, I am more motivated or tuned in to these services designed to help us when we feel like we're not being listened to. So I truly urge anyone who needs help, isn't happy with their service or treatment or anyone who simply wants to communicate their experience, be it for, improving their treatment, providing feedback for the service to improve themselves or just to be heard and to be given more time, consideration and support.

There is often a very difficult power balance here, in Ireland, when it comes to the 'patient', 'service user' or 'client' and the 'professional', 'doctor', 'staff' and it can be intimidating and put us off from being 100% open or honest and the only way to help yourself, to help other people that may be experiencing the same thing as you and to give feedback so the service is bettered for the greater good like for the community, other patients or even providing the staff with a better 'real life' perspective of what it is like living with a mental health issue, a substance use problem, a physical health issue or just a better perspective of what it is like to be 'the patient'.

I truly hope that by sharing my experience, I can encourage others to reach out, give feedback, access help and stand up for themselves and their fellow patients, service users or clients and to remind professionals that things can always be improved, they can always learn more and new things, to remind organisations to keep updating their services and to always ensure that

the service user or the patient's voice is heard and taken into account while decisions are made. That is also why I am dedicated to being a 'Service User Representative' in my volunteering to always keep advocating on behalf of those who may not be heard or who may need someone to give a life experienced perspective to all the administrative, legal and professional decisions, policies and treatments.

To access patient advocacy supports you can always write or ring the service and ask for the appropriate person to explain or discuss what you want to. For large organisations there are often designated 'Patient Advocacy' Departments or 'Patient Liaison' Departments and if you are unsure or cannot find it, the HSE's 'Your Service, Your Say' is available online, by post and via telephone.

Their website is:

<https://www2.hse.ie/services/forms/your-service-your-say/>

According to the HSE's 'Your Service Your Say' webpage on how to 'make a comment, compliment or complaint'

'There are many ways you can tell us about your experience:'

Tell the people caring for you today.

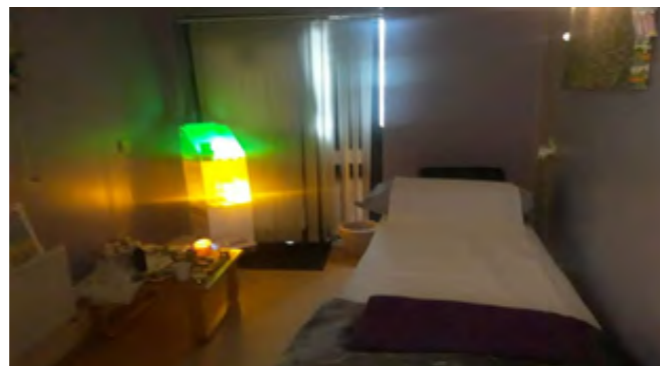
- Fill in the online feedback form.
- Email us at yoursay@hse.ie.
- Fill out the paper feedback form and put it in the feedback box or give it to a member of staff.
- Send a letter to the service - a staff member can give you the contact details.
- Call us on 1890 424 555 from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Call 045 880 429 from a mobile.
- Call HSELive on 1800 700 700 from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 5pm on Saturday. You can call +353 1 240 8787 from outside of Ireland.

CLONDALKIN ADDICTION SUPPORT PROGRAMME CASP 2022 A YEAR IN REVIEW

As covid restrictions eased from February 2022, CASP were eager to reenergise our in-person services. Services such as key working, group work, counselling, needle exchange, family support, prison links and methadone dispensing clinics continued throughout the pandemic but there was a great energy and enthusiasm from both staff and service users to re-build the service post pandemic.

Women's Group

CASP Women's Group took place over 6 months from November 2021. The women who attended really enjoyed meeting weekly for discussions on addiction related topics, outings, women's issues and an overnight to our respite house in Brittas.



Recovery Cafes

We opened up our first Recovery Cafe on the 21st of February from 6:30 – 8pm in the CASP building Fonthill Rd., Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

The aim of the recovery café is to provide a space for people in recovery and their supporters to celebrate recovery together. It is a venue for people to relax, eat some food, have tea and coffee and socialise with other people who are in recovery. We also want to make recovery more visible so that it can become a reality for more and more people.

Everything at the Recovery Café is completely free including hot dinner, tea, coffee and refreshments, in addition to monthly holistic therapies and live music.

Cocaine Anonymous, CA meets in CASP from 8pm on Mondays after the Recovery Café.

On May 4th, 2022, CASP began hosting a second weekly Recovery Café from 6:30 – 8pm on Wednesdays, followed by AA meeting afterwards from 8 – 9pm.

Come along for a friendly and relaxing evening in a really fun atmosphere! Spread the word!!!



International Women's Day 2022

On Wednesday, 9th of March, CASP celebrated International Women's Day 2022. The theme for International women's Day theme for 2022 was Break the Bias. People were encouraged to imagine a gender equal world, a world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination, a world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive, a world where difference is valued and celebrated.

This theme resonated with the ethos of CASP, and we were delighted to play our part in promoting women's equality.

This free event was open to all women in the community. On the day, we had a hot cooked breakfast, angel card readings, holistic therapies, arts and crafts, one to one consultations with our nurse and inspiring female speakers. Tea, coffee and cakes were also available throughout the day!

The event was an amazing success! In particular, our two inspirational female speakers who spoke about their addiction and recovery journeys from their own and a family member's perspective. The feedback that we got from this event was incredibly positive!



Saoirse Domestic Violence Clinic

On May 6th, Saoirse Domestic Violence Service opened a weekly walk-in clinic in CASP every Friday from 10am to 12pm for support and information. For more information, call Corina on 0873935053 or email corina.brennan@sdvs.ie. For immediate crisis support, call the 24-hour helpline at 014630000.



Community Family Day

Our Community Family Day took place on July 27th after a two-year absence due to the pandemic.

Everyone in attendance enjoyed a range of fun activities including the BBQ, games, races, popcorn, slushy, candyfloss, ice-cream truck and the Bumblebee character which all the kids loved!!!



CASP Celebrates September Being Recovery Month

On September 28th, CASP hosted its Recovery event to mark September being Recovery month. It was an amazing day and evening.

The event featured an inspiring talk from a man who attends our Recovery Cafes about his own journey into recovery, a tree planting ceremony in Ballyowen Park, holistic treatments, a BBQ and an outstanding performance by Clondalkin Recovery Choir.

In the evening at our Recovery Cafe, we had live music, a powerful play and another BBQ to round off the event.

The aim of the event was to celebrate and support people in recovery and encourage others that there is happy and fulfilled life beyond addiction.

Homeless Outreach Clinic

From Thursday, 8th of September, Martina Birmingham, SDCC Homeless Outreach Worker began hosting a weekly clinic on site in CASP. She provides support with applications for housing, HAP and if you are homeless, she will support you in accessing emergency accommodation.

Female AA Group

On October 6th, a new female only weekly AA group started in the CASP building, Fonthill Road, Clondalkin from 8:30 - 9:30pm.

The benefits of a women's only AA meeting are:

- More time can be dedicated to talking about issues most common among women in addiction.
- Women can tell their stories and relate to other women.
- Women can talk about issues that they may not be comfortable sharing among men.

Like all fellowship meetings, AA is open to everyone who is looking to remain free of all mood and mind-altering substances and not just alcohol.

Welfare Advice and Information Clinic

From November 30th, Richie Mac Ritchie, Welfare Advice and Information Officer will host a monthly walk-in clinic in CASP to offer support, advice and information on social welfare entitlements. This monthly clinic will take place on the last Wednesday of every month on site in CASP, Clondalkin.

Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

On Monday, November 28th at our premises on the Fonthill Road, CASP will be hosting our annual Tree Lighting Ceremony to remember our loved ones who have passed away often as a result of addiction and also to commemorate those that are continuing to struggle with their own or a family member's addiction. The event is

celebrated by switching on the Christmas lights on our outdoor Christmas tree, live music from Clondalkin Recovery Choir, Santa meeting the children in attendance and light refreshments. The event is very special and brings people in the local community together to support each other in the lead up before Christmas when loss and bereavement can be particular challenging.

Ongoing CASP Services

In addition to all of the above, CASP continue to provide a range of services to people who use substances and their family members including key working, group work, counselling, community prison links, holistic therapies, daily drop ins, homeless support (showers, laundry services, food), nursing care, on site methadone dispensing clinic and family support.

The CASP needle exchange service (Monday - Friday 9:30 - 1pm and 2 - 3pm) provides harm reduction information and new drug paraphernalia to people who are use drugs.

The family support team facilitate three separate support groups in addition to meeting family members individually. Family members can also access both our counselling and holistic therapy services.

We also have another service in the Mid-West, CASP Community Substance Misuse Team, CSMT which provides supports to young people and their families in Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary.

If you would like support from CASP, please phone 01 6166750 for an appointment.



D17 ASSERTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT TEAM (D17 ACT)

Mission:

"Reaching out to individuals in the community affected by drugs and alcohol and helping them to rebuild a better future by creating a safe, supportive environment"

What We Do?

D17 ACT is new drug and alcohol outreach support service based in the Dublin 17 area. We are an integrated outreach service for adults and young people, in the Northeast Dublin area with a focus on the catchment area of Darndale, Moatview and Belcamp. D17 ACT was set up in 2021 to pilot an expanded integrated street/case management drug's work program in the Dublin 17 area. Five organisations came together to set up this initiative. (The Dales Centre, EDIT, KCCP, DYP and The Task Force). A year later and we are now a team of Four staff and a Recovery Coach. We engage with all



individuals in particular the "Hard to reach people" who may not be accessing services. We can offer appropriate referral and progression pathways for individuals through outreach, case management, detached work, advocacy work and interagency structures and linkages.

The service is located at Office Number 2, First floor, side of village centre, Dublin 17 which is over the angel shop in the Belcamp Village centre. We work with all ages from 14+. We conduct outreach in Darndale, Moatview and Belcamp to build up relationships with people living in the community and to inform people of the supports we can offer. We are identifiable when completing outreach as we have bright red jackets with D17 ACT written across the back in bold white writing.

D17 ACT are a team of experienced individuals working in the area of addiction. We are on the ground reaching out

to people in the community affected by addiction. We create a safe and supportive environment. People can access the service by self-referral, referrals from other agencies and engaging with the outreach team on the street. If you need support or are a concerned person give us a call or an email. Whether it is you or someone you know struggling with addiction and need support get in touch by calling or emailing us.

Contact No.: 083 010 8277
Email: referral@d17act.ie

Instagram: @d17act
Facebook: D17 ACT



PATRICK MCCANN

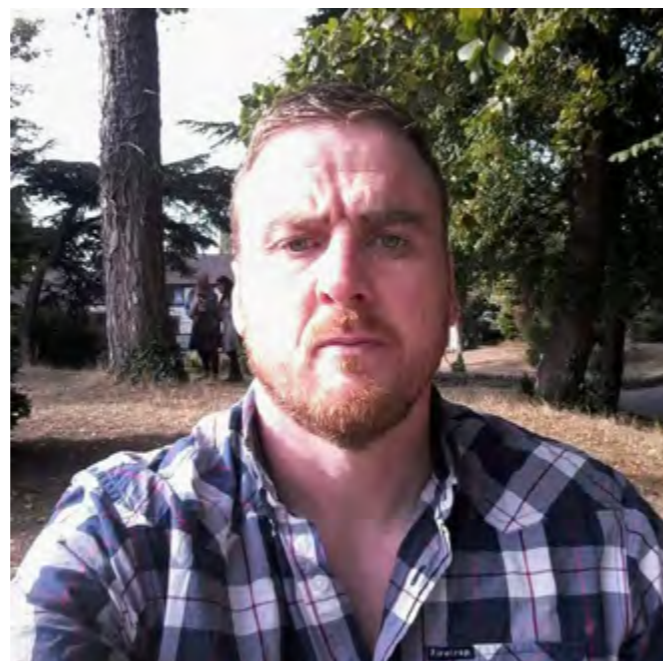
AN IRISH TRAVELLERS STORY

My name is Patrick McCann, and I am an Irish Traveller. I was born in St Finbarr's hospital, in County Cork, in 1981. I am not originally from Cork; My family were just travelling that part of the country when I was born, and we never lived there since. There are five boys in my family and one girl, and I am the second youngest.

We moved to England when I was three years of age and lived in a house in Manchester. We lived in Manchester for about ten years, and I have a lot of good memories from my childhood growing up there. Even though I knew that we were Travellers, we never really lived like Travellers over there. We lived in a house, and I went to school, and I had loads of friends from the area. When I was thirteen, my mother told us that we were moving back to Ireland. The reason she said for this, was because there was too much drugs in Manchester.

We came back and lived in a few different halting sites around Dublin and then settled in Dunsink lane, in Finglas. I come from a small family, and the McCann name is not a common name for a Traveller in Ireland, and most of the kids in the halting sites never even heard of my surname before. Clan mentality is a big thing in the Travelling community, and the family name is important, and members are proud and protective of their family name. I always wanted to be a part of a big Traveller family, and I was resentful because my surname was not held in as high regard as other Traveller names. This left me with a lot of issues around my identity, and it didn't help that myself and my father started to have a terrible relationship and stopped talking to each other for a number of years.

My father changed when we came back to Ireland, and he started to become very abusive, and as I started to get older, I could tell that he didn't want me living in the yard. This had a negative effect on my mental health because there was always tension, and a bad atmosphere whenever he was around. I boxed for a club in Coolock called St Luke's and I would go there three times a week. I was talented at boxing, and I dreamed of becoming a world champion. When I was seventeen, I reached



the All-Ireland finals in the national stadium, and I lost narrowly on points. I said to myself, that I would win the title next year.

When next year came, I won three fights and reached the final again, and I lost narrowly again on points. I remember feeling devastated over not winning the title and was very disheartened because of it. After the loss, I decided to take a break from boxing for about six months and start to experience things that most young men of my age did, like going to night clubs, and going on dates with girls, but I always planned to start back boxing after I had enjoyed my break.

I started to go out drinking in a site where my oldest brother lived. I was related to most of the people in the site, and I always felt like I was welcome there, and everyone was happy to see me, and I think that my clan mentality was starting to be fulfilled by being around these people, and I started to feel that I belonged with them. I would go to nightclubs with them and take Ecstasy tablets, and then we would go back to one of the mobile homes in the site and we would be off our heads in a love buzz, sometimes for a couple of days at a time. I started going out to the site every weekend, and I would start drinking on a

Friday, and I would take Ecstasy tablets and drink until Monday without going to sleep. Eventually my mother said that she couldn't take any more of my drug use and threw me out of her yard, and I had to go out to live in my brother's site. To be honest, I think my mother wanted me to leave her yard before I even started taking drugs, because I wasn't getting on with my father, and she couldn't take any more of the tension.

This was the worst thing that could have happened, and it didn't take long for my life to spiral out of control. The partying was fun for a while, but then it seemed like that was all that I did. I would start drinking on a Friday, and not stop until Monday, and then I would be dying sick on a come down from the E's for a few days, and then by Friday, I would start to feel fresh, and I would start drinking again, and this went on for over a year. My life hit rock bottom, all my hopes and dreams were gone, and I was just wasting my life in this site, and it seemed like there was no hope for the future. I got involved in crime to start earning money, and I started off by robbing scrap from building sites, and then robbing the sheds for tools. Then my crimes progressed from robbing building sites, to burgling shops and houses, and this went on for about ten years. I spent a number of years in prison, and apart from Limerick, I was in every other prison in Ireland at one point in my life.

About seven years ago, I got completely strung out on tablets, and I would be constantly off my head, on Zimmos, or Trannex, that I would buy in the city centre. I ended up seeking help for my addiction in the Anna Liffey project, and they got me into the Lantern, which is a residential treatment centre of Peter McVerry. Although I knew that I had an addiction problem, the main reason that I went into treatment was because I was up on charges and I knew if I went into treatment, that it would help me with my court case. After I completed the three months there, I went to live in a recovery house, and started the Coolmine day program. During the six months that I was in the Day program, I started to feel differently about myself, and I was thinking clearer about my future, and I knew that I had to change my life. After completing Coolmine, I started the INOU, (The Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed) and completed a level 5 in community development, and then went on to Maynooth University to do a bachelor's degree in the social science of youth and community, and I am currently in my final year of the course. When I graduate from university, I plan to work towards identifying core issues that Travellers face, such as intergenerational poverty, racism, and social exclusion. These issues have led to a high percentage of Travellers to have mental health problems, drug addiction, and the revolving door of the criminal justice system.

CHRISTMAS HARM REDUCTION TIPS

- Make a plan with your keyworker, know your services opening hours for the period
- Ask for enough works, you may need more if you are using stimulants
- Avoid using alone, try to let someone know if you are using
- Avoid mixing drugs, this includes alcohol and prescription medication
- Start low and go slow – start with a small amount and wait to see how you react
- Remember that you can't trust the contents of street tablets, drugs could contain harmful mixtures that increase your risk of overdose
- Look out for the signs of a drug emergency and don't be afraid to get medical help



The Dales Centre is a community organisation set up to address the problems of drugs and drug use in the area.

We work with individuals and families from the Dublin 17 and surrounding areas, to assist people in addressing the issue of problematic drug and alcohol use.

We provide;

One to One Support that includes;

- Key working
- Care Planning
- Case Management
- Psychotherapy/Counselling

Crisis intervention

All of our staff are trained in ASIST suicide prevention programme

Family Support

For people within the family, who are impacted by addiction of a family member or loved one.

Group work is an important part of the work we do, and the Dales runs a number of different types of groups;

- Reduce the Use Programme
- Alcohol Aftercare Programme
- Pre-Treatment Programme
- Decider Skills Programme (emotional regulation)
- Art, Drama, Yoga, Health and Nutrition groups run on an ongoing basis.

Our Service is free and confidential, and we currently have no waiting list
Feel free to drop-in or call us on the numbers below to make an appointment.

We are located at

The Dales Centre,
Unit 3, Rear of the Village Centre,
Darndale,
Dublin 17.
D17 HC93

Tel: 01 848 7733 Mob: 089 241 4289

Email: info@thedalescentre.ie

www.thedalescentre.ie

“Reducing the harm to individuals and the community by supporting people through each stage of addiction”.

THE LONELY MARCH BY EARTHEXIT

The Liffey runs cold beneath Sean Heuston bridge, the light of the Tram reflects on the water's edge, a cold winter night as darkness descends, a couple of coins begged at the station, to help the night end.

People going home loved ones to see, missed, and cared for, not knowing how fortunate they be, a mother, a child in hand, a vague thought flashes by of a different time, of something so special, of when they belonged, a time of warmth, fleeting memories of life now long gone.

The soldier keeps marching to the silent drum, as the tram moves along the soldier looks on, a glance meets eyes peering upon, a wish of going home to loved ones, theirs long gone, disowned, ashamed, left alone in this pain for dishonouring their name.

The tram trundles on into the distance its roles, again, again alone with the dis-ease, the only voice thy hear so familiar it seems, the silent whisper that fuels the malaise, "c'mon let's get it, we need it will end our unease"

The loneliness, the isolation, the despair, the shame in the air, around this fair station the architecture so rare, beautiful, and old from a time moved on, the man it's named for 100 years gone, he died for the Republic that we all very much need, not for a place of oppression and greed.

Ten thousand slaves the city it has, the clinics their screws, keeping them enslaved to placate me and you, it's hard to break through the cycle of greed when profit from pain is greater than addressing the need.

They say we can't afford to treat all that want, but we bail out the banks without a second thought, yet the addicted and homeless on the street they keep dying as waiting list grows and the government keeps lying, they put out statements that say 'oh but we are trying, we've spent millions on treatment, it's not our fault they are dying' and actually, we don't really don't care about the poor mothers crying.

The soldier begs God to end this nightmare for so long, "please lord allow me to return to whence I belong", but the disease whispers a prompt response "they hate you; you don't belong, no one

wants you, your sisters your brothers, and your parents are gone they succumbed to this disease a long time ago their legacy to you the illness lives on".

In the darkness thy goes, oblivion is sought, some escape from this nightmare this disease has wrought, the pride long gone, the begging done that, they slip the coins to the dealer of death, then retreat to a place off the street where no one goes, a place only soldiers would dare to show, this secret lonely ritual so familiar it be, the pain of the job is the only reason to be, nothing else matters cause thy life is not worth having, a hope not to awake "please god bestow on me this blessing",

Before thy sleeps, they beg one more time, "please o lord end this curse you have given thee", a few hours solace is all they receive, the disease is awake long before thee, the pain starts to grow as the tent is packed the darkness elopes and the dawn light encroaches, the sunlight breaks through as daylight awakens, if thy wasn't so sick it's the beauty would have your breath taken, down by the river the sounds are so peaceful, the birds sing their songs and the trout jump for flies, the water flows by, so gentle, so calm, like a mirror reflecting the big blue sky.

A cry out to God 'why didn't you take me while I was sleeping, I can't go on, please, please you cruel bastard why do you forsake me, I've no more tears to cry, my eyes have run dry, oh why, o why, won't you just let me fucking die,

The pain it grows, another day on this march so familiar it be, again, again, it never ends, oh the lonely miles I have travelled through this city so alive, I will walk your streets till this body dies, an OD, a murder, a suicide will take me or my heart will break from living how you've made me, and when you decide it's time to finish this cruel show, I welcome it, I want to go.

The Liffey she calls me, she welcomes me in, a new journey she tells me I must now begin, a promise she makes, no more suffering and pain, I will forever be free of the sorrow and shame. Her embrace is cold which is familiar to me. It comforts my soul that I'll soon be free, it won't be long as I slip down beneath, soon I will meet my maker with open arms, maybe we will greet.

ADDICTION

Tattered shoes
Clothes in rags
Carry's his clothes
around in bags

Walking the streets
Of Dublin town
Nowhere to live
His luck is down

He smokes his crack
Reflects on his life
He has lost it all
His kids his wife

But the addiction
Is strong he cannot resist
Getting high
Is top of the list

He has not always
Been this way
He worked so hard
Earned his pay

2021 Gerard O'Keefe

The job closed down
His landlord sold
Wife and kids
Out in the cold

He lost his pride
When he could not provide
For those he loved
He died inside

He stole to keep
his family fed
Ended up inside
The wife she fled

Nowhere to go
When he was freed
Became dependant
On crack and weed

He wants to stop
Someday he will
Life has dealt him
A bitter pill

CRIB

Homeless and hungry
This city is my crib
The streets are my room
In its hallway I live
No shelter from the rain
No roof to keep me dry
I'm young now and healthy
But I'm fearful that ill die
I drink to forget
And get me through the day
I hate the way it is
Don't want to live this way
All I need is a chance
To prove I can do good
Contribute to society
Have my own place in the hood

2021 Gerard O'Keefe

PROUD AGAIN

As I walk the streets
Of Dublin
I'm sad at what I see
Its dirty and neglected
Not like it used to be
In my youth
I felt so proud
That this city was my home
But now I'm full of anger
As through its streets I roam
Moore street is a ghetto
Not safe to walk at night
O'Connell street
Once majestic
Is now a sorry sight
Talbot street is a loo
The stench would knock you down
Those in power in the DCC are screwing
up this town
Henry street at Christmas
Was a wonderland to see
Now there's tents outside the shops
Where the traders used to be
The GPO shelters
Homeless folks
It's a dining room for some
Those men of 1916
Would be sad to see what it's become
So, Dublin city council
Its time to up your game
SO, we can be proud again
Of the place
From where e came

2021 Gerard O'Keefe



The Smuggler

This is Larkin, a former soldier and now a smuggler and a chronic user of narcotics. It got seriously injured in a galactic war and has become addicted to a potent narcotic, which it uses to cope with the emotional and physical pain and trauma it experienced during the battles. The illicit drug it uses and smuggles is suspected to be the most addictive and dangerous substance ever made and is ominous to both those deep in addiction who use it and to those unfortunate to meet them. The drug's original purpose was to be a consumable, stimulant painkiller for soldiers in a galactic war. However, the soldiers realised when heated with a Laser beam and then smoked allayed all their fears and suffering, enabling the user to be in a state of bliss until the drug wore off, unfortunately most don't last long on this drug, it causes significant and rapid deterioration of the body. This smuggler has flown across the solar system to a rendezvous on a space station to drop off the deadly cargo, you may notice it displays an obvious effect of the drug as the eyeballs start to deteriorate, and death soon follows. Though certain death doesn't seem to prevent these poor unfortunates from transporting the drug, they know it's a one-way trip but they can't stop. The station cartel bosses are happy to use them up and throw the bodies out of the airlock as there are many more like them, expendable!

RESULTS FROM IRELAND'S FIRST BACK OF HOUSE DRUG TESTING AT ELECTRIC PICNIC

The HSE National Social Inclusion Office has launched their findings from Ireland's first 'back of house' drug testing pilot programme.



The pilot programme initially took place at Electric Picnic between the 2nd and 4th September as part of the HSE 'Safer Nightlife' harm reduction campaign. The aim of the pilot was to access, test and identify substances in a festival setting, alert the public, harm reduction services and onsite medics to any dangerous substances and gain insights on drug trends.

The pilot involved people anonymously surrendering substances in HSE bins which were rapidly analysed by the HSE National Drug Treatment Centre Laboratory using an on-site temporary laboratory.

In total, 46 samples of drugs were surrendered to the HSE over the 3 day period; which led to the HSE issuing three different risk communications relating to concerns around a particular MDMA product, high strength powders and crystals and the emergence of a new substance 3-CMC (a cathinone drug which can cause significant mental health problems).

Speaking about the report, Professor Eamon Keenan, National Clinical Lead: Addiction Services, said: *"While this report represents a relatively small number of samples numerically, we must recognise the importance of this pilot project and our findings. "The pilot is a real example of cross sectoral collaboration, where all agencies agreed on the need to collaborate to identify emerging drug trends, with an aim of protecting the health of people attending the event."*



MAIN FINDINGS

- 46 samples submitted to the HSE for analysis
- 74% of samples identified on-site at event using FT-IR (n=34)
- 17% of samples identified on further analysis in NDTC laboratory (n=8)
- Drug content was identified in a total of 42 samples (91%) as part of pilot
- 4 samples remain unconfirmed
- 19 MDMA samples submitted (8 powders and 11 pills)
- 5 MDMA powders tested as almost pure MDMA
- 'Ecstasy' pills ranged from 36mg to 235mg of MDMA
- 12 novel substances submitted- 7 tabs, 4 powders/crystals and 1 tablet
- 3 new psychoactive substances identified not previously detected in Ireland (3-CMC, 5-MAPB, 4-HO-MiPT)
- 3 risk communications issued relating to high strength MDMA and the emergence of 3-CMC in white crystals

WHAT'S ON THE STREET???

SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS "SPICE"

Drugs known as 'synthetic cannabinoids' have been found in herbal, vape/liquid and edible products in Ireland. We would be familiar with this family of drugs from when they were sold in Head Shops in Ireland known as 'Spice' and 'Black Mamba'.

The effects of synthetic cannabinoids will be much stronger than cannabis and will greatly increase the risks. The HSE are currently concerned that people may consume these drugs without knowing. These substances could be sold in any cannabis products (Vape/liquid, sweets and plant mixtures).



Signs of concern to look out for include

- Feeling dizzy, confusion, abnormal sweating, respiratory issues (difficulty breathing), chest pain/rapid heartbeat, nausea and vomiting, agitation, aggression, psychotic behaviour, hallucinations, delusions, seizures or fits.
- They can also lead to sudden loss of consciousness.

WINTER 2022



SYNTHETIC CATHINONES

The HSE recently found new versions of the drugs known as 'synthetic cathinones' in Ireland.

What are these drugs?

'Synthetic cathinones' are a large family of stimulant (upper) drugs which we would be familiar with in Ireland from their sale in Head Shops. At this time, the drugs sold were known as 'Mephedrone' and 'Snow Blow'.

The HSE recently found the drug 3-MMC by testing used syringes in Dublin and the Midlands Regions and they also found the drug 3-CMC at the Electric Picnic festival. These drugs are newer versions of the ones previously sold in Head Shops.



3-CMC in large white crystals found at Electric Picnic festival 2022.

Concerns and synthetic cathinones

- You could be sold these drugs as MDMA or cocaine without knowing.
- Short effects and strong cravings: The effects of synthetic cathinones are short and can cause strong cravings to re-dose and keep using. This can lead to you using more than planned and it could be hard to stop use in one session. Using larger amounts can increase the risk of a drug emergency.
- Short-term health harms: There is a risk of over-stimulating the heart, over-stimulating the nervous system and causing fits.
- Doing things you might not otherwise do: These drugs can lower people's inhibitions, what this means is you might do things they otherwise wouldn't. We have seen HIV outbreaks in Ireland linked with 'Snow Blow' in the past. This outbreak was associated with unprotected sex and sharing needles after using 'Snow Blow'.

- Strong effects on mental health: There is a link between these drugs and negative mental health effects such as causing anxiety, paranoia, low mood, self-harm and suicide. You could also experience severe 'comedowns', pro-longed insomnia and depression after use.
- Dependency: It can be difficult for people to stop using synthetic cathinones if they use frequently which can lead to dependency issues for some people.

STREET TABLETS

Remember, you can never be fully sure of the contents of all street tablets (opioids, pregabalin, benzodiazepines and Z type drugs), always practice harm reduction.

NEW BENZOS

New types of benzodiazepines continue to be a concern in Ireland. We know that street benzos can contain new and risky combinations of substances. In Ireland, Wales and other countries, we have now witnessed benzodiazepines containing both a benzo and tramadol (opioid).

They can state a name brand or dose, but you still don't know what is in them or how strong they are. They can also be more potent at lower doses, which increases the risk of overdose. Remember to **START LOW AND GO SLOW**.

Sourcing without a PRESCRIPTION?



SYRINGE ANALYSIS PILOT PROJECT

The HSE and Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI) recently launched the findings from the first Syringe Analysis Pilot Project in Ireland.

Syringe analysis is a scientific approach that involves getting information through the analysis of used syringes to help identify drug use trends at that particular point and it can help us find if worrying trends start to emerge.

The HSE National Drug Treatment Centre laboratory analysed 155 used syringes from MQI Dublin and Midlands services in 2021 and published the results this year.

What did they find in used syringes?

Heroin was the most common drug found in syringes across the Dublin and Midland Regions. Following this, there were high levels of cocaine and poly drug use found in syringes.

New trends were identified that require further monitoring in Ireland such as the presence of synthetic cathinone 3-MMC, methamphetamine and the possible injecting of flurazepam in the Midlands Region.

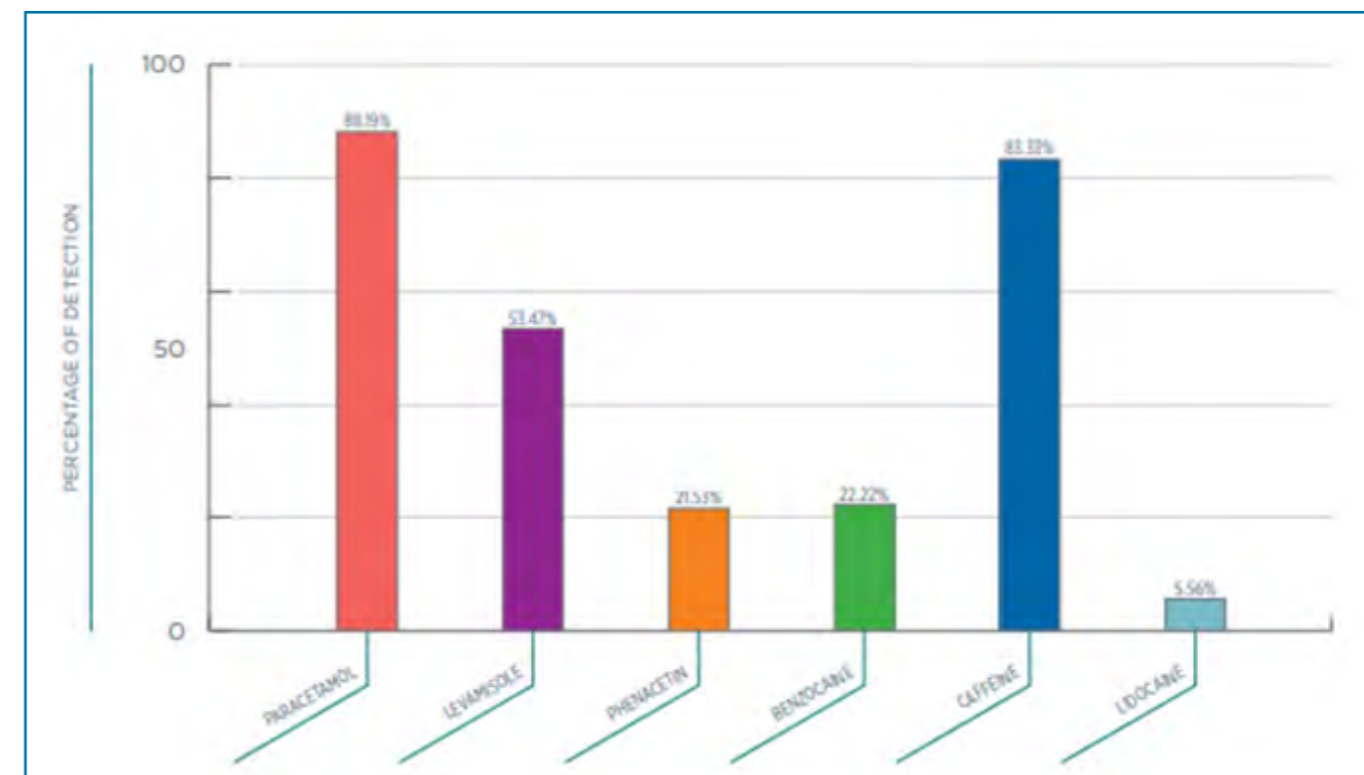
Table 1: Drugs detected in the syringes

Drug	Dublin	Midlands
CATHINONES		
3-MMC	11.3%	23.6%
AMPHETAMINES		
Methamphetamine	32.6%	18.2%
Amphetamine	9.0%	1.8%
MDMA	1.1%	0.0%
BENZODIAZEPINES		
Flurazepam	0.0%	12.7%
Diazepam	2.2%	3.6%
Alprazolam	1.1%	0.0%
COCAINE		
Cocaine	86.5%	89.1%
OPIOIDS		
Heroin	93.3%	98.2%
Oxycodone	7.8%	0.0%
Methadone	61.8%	50.9%
OTHER MEDICINES		
Zopiclone	4.5%	9.0%
Dextromethorphan	0.0%	3.6%
Pregabalin	24.7%	34.5%
PIPERIDINES AND PYRROLIDINES		
Methylphenidate	1.1%	0.0%
KETAMINE		
Ketamine	7.0%	0.0%

Adulterants

Adulterants are commonly used to cut the primary drug controlled drug (EMCDDA, 2021a) or are used to augment the effects. Adulterants were present in many of the syringes from both the Dublin and Midlands Region and included caffeine, levamisole, paracetamol, phenacetin, lidocaine and benzocaine.

While these adulterants are commonly used, they can have known health implications. Cocaine contaminated with levamisole can impact on white blood cells and cause inflammation of blood cells, joint stiffness and discolouring of the skin. Exposure to phenacetin has been linked with effects on the heart with more frequent exposure associated with kidney issues leading to incontinence and back pain.



Stimulant injecting

If you inject stimulants

- The effects will be short and may feel the need to use more often
- Ask for enough needles and works in case you use more than expected
- Know your injecting sites and rotate injecting sites to give areas a break
- Ask for safer injecting advice and condoms at the exchange - using stimulants may also enhance your sex drive, increasing the risk of unprotected sex.
- Mixing stimulants and downers (heroin, methadone, tablets) can increase the risks
- Start low and go slow - always start with a small test dose to see how you react to the drug and inject slowly.
- Cook up with sterile water. Substances should be fully dissolved before injecting - citric may not be needed.

- Don't reuse the same needle. Needles become blunt after being used once. If you don't hit a vein the first time, use a new needle until you inject successfully.
- Use your own injecting equipment and works. Sharing injecting equipment increases the risk of getting blood borne viruses like HIV.
- Stay hydrated and try to drink a pint of water an hour.
- Use in trusted company, never use alone.

Stimulant overdose

It is possible to overdose on stimulant drugs. Signs of an overdose are overheating, fast breathing or difficulty breathing, rapid heartbeat, seizures, shaking, paranoia, psychosis and loss of consciousness. If you encounter someone who has overdosed, place them in the recovery position and call 112.



Drop-In

Every Thursday, provides drop-in service weekly with information on services we have to offer and as the assessment route to our other services

Access - 083 0283688

Social Aftercare Club

Wednesday's from 6pm to 9pm

ACCESS

Every Tuesday & Thursday, Individualised client support plan, one to one key-working, brief interventions and acts as a pre-entry programme and as a route to our other services.

Access - 083 0283688



Every Friday

TURNING POINT

9-12, month group based stabilisation programme for those service users experiencing poly-drug addiction issues, focusing on providing a therapeutic environment, addiction awareness skills and substance misuse understanding

Turning Point - 083 0286901



Every Wednesday

CONNECT

Drug Free Day Programme

A substance free programme, with a therapeutic process of recovery. The programme offers a structured development, which is essential to empower and enable participants to address their recovery, self-esteem, self-confidence, personal growth and development and life skills. The eventual goal for participants is a progression pathway to our Connect to workplace programme to help with preparation for further education or employment

Connect - 089 2557493



CONNECT to Workplace

A DEASP Community Employment Scheme specialising in therapeutic community work placement and matches people to a placement opportunity where they will gain meaningful work experience. As part of our criteria all Connect participants must be stable and drug free

At Sankalpa take a Person centred Recovery Approach by facilitating the following;

- Reduce the Use
- Recover Me
- Art Process
- Social Activities
- Relapse Prevention
- Education & Employment Programme
- Creative Writing
- Healthy Eating

Plus, Many more.....



NALOXONE SAVES LIVES



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DRUGS.ie
Drug and Alcohol Information and Support

UISCE

Advocacy for People who use Drugs

www.myuisce.org

Email: info@myuisce.org

Phone: 01 555 4693