



A guide to working in partnership

partnership

Employability provision for drug users

Effective Interventions Unit



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Making it work together

Scottish Executive Effective Interventions Unit

Remit

The Unit was set up in June 2000 to:

- Identify what is effective – and cost effective – practice in prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and availability and in addressing the needs of both the individual and the community.
- Disseminate effective practice based on sound evidence and evaluation to policy makers, DATs and practitioners.
- Support DATs and agencies to deliver effective practice by developing good practice guidelines, evaluation tools, criteria for funding, models of service; and by contributing to the implementation of effective practice through the DAT corporate planning cycle.

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Effective Interventions Unit

A Guide to Working in Partnership: Employability provision for drug users

WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE GUIDE?

To identify the key principles of partnership working and to provide case study examples of how partnership works in practice in employability provision for drug users.

WHO SHOULD READ IT?

Anyone involved in commissioning services for, providing support to, or evaluating services for, recovering drug users.

WHO PRODUCED THIS GUIDE?

Isabel McNab, Christine de la Cruz and Anita Morrison of the Effective Interventions Unit conducted this work. Martin King of New Horizons Project, Glasgow, Edel Tuckwood, Aberdeen Foyer and Helen Torrance, Next Steps Leven, Fife provided evidence from their organisations.

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INTRODUCTION

Developing and sustaining new and valuable relationships with the world beyond drugs is a key factor in **sustainable recovery** for drug users. This includes the worlds of employment, training and education. Research suggests that employment can aid the process of recovery. A qualitative study of drug users in Scotland highlighted the importance of employment and other activities to fill the 'void' left by drug use (McIntosh and McKeganey 2001).

Evidence clearly shows that people recovering from drug use are likely to have a **range of difficulties** in their lives including problems with their health, housing, debt, personal relationships and sometimes offending behaviour. A range of services is required by individuals as they progress through treatment, care and support. It is important that services provide a complementary and holistic service to the individual and this is best achieved by services working in partnership with others.

A range of factors commonly need to be addressed that are **specific to education and training needs including:** the need to tackle the general lack of qualifications among recovering users; and the need to provide specific training and retraining. Individuals may have missed periods of education and as a result have no educational qualifications, may require training in order to access work and may need support to get into employment and to sustain a job. Such support was identified as key to helping people into training, education and employment in the Effective Interventions Unit publication 'Moving On' (EIU 2001). Again, a partnership approach is critical in ensuring services are available, accessible and credible.

Partnership working across the public sector is **developing and improving**. In most areas, partnership working between DATs and drug agencies has been developing in practice for a number of years now. Working with other agencies is crucial to addressing the multifaceted needs of drug users. The EIU publication 'Integrated Care for Drug Users - Principles and Practice' sets out the rationale for setting up an integrated care approach for drug users (EIU 2002). Collaborative working between agencies which seeks to combine and co-ordinate all the services required to meet the assessed needs of the individual involves drug treatment services, generic and specialist health services, training programmes, educational sector and employment services, criminal justice services, housing services and childcare organisations among others.

It is also important that support is available **at all stages of the recovery process**, and to recognise the potential for relapse. Service users themselves commonly feel that support is weighted towards the beginning of the recovery process, jeopardising this process in the long-term (EIU 2001). The EIU 'Moving On' report highlighted that clients who have moved on to employment needed on-going support to cope with the transition in their lives (EIU 2001).

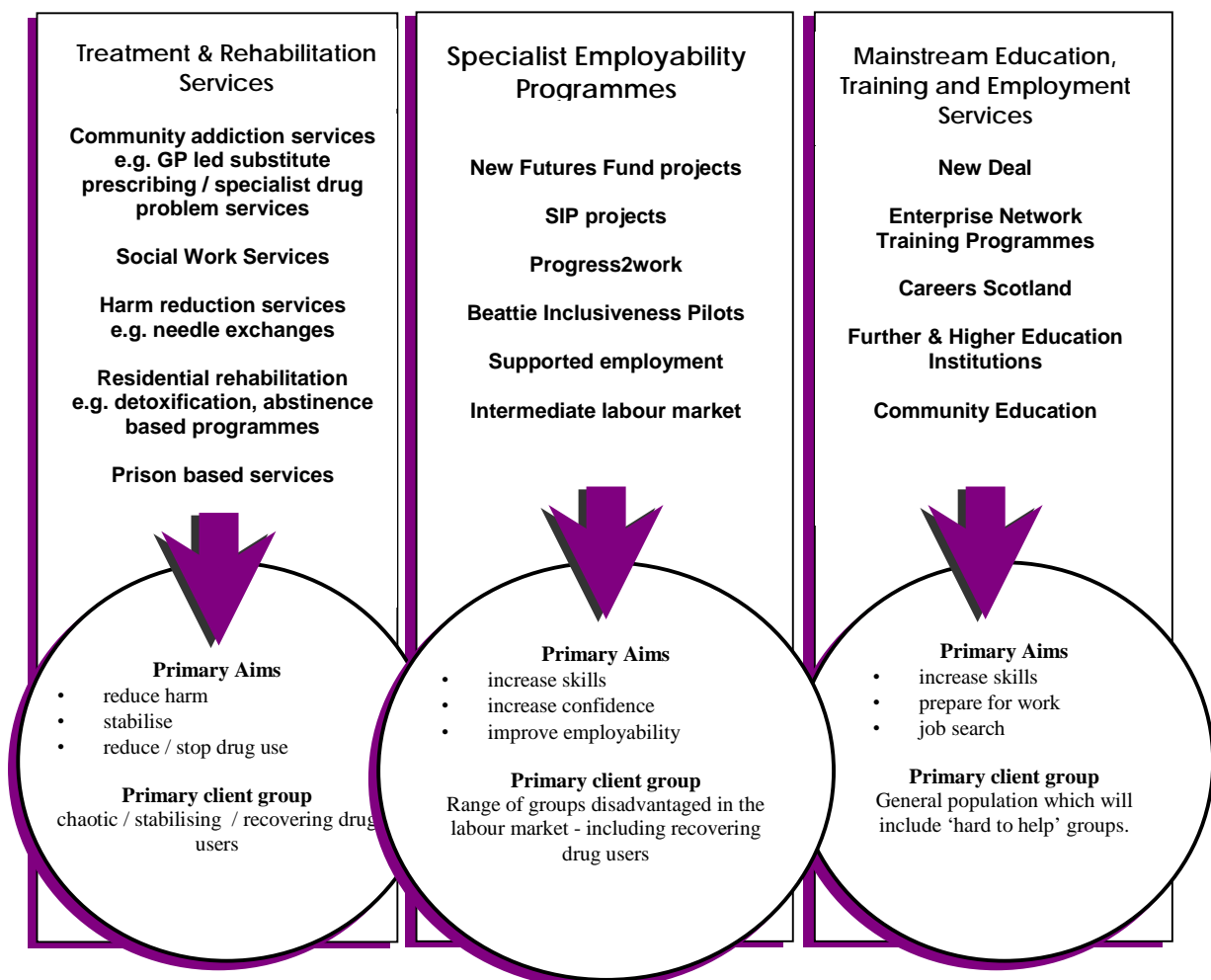
We are learning from early evaluations in this field. The New Futures Fund (NFF) Phase 1 evaluation indicates that **partnerships and networking** have improved significantly throughout Phase 1 of NFF. Networking with other employability and other NFF projects has broadened and deepened with some specific influence on policy and practice resulting. To read more about the NFF programme and the associated evaluation, please go to <http://www.scottish-enterprise.com/skills/personal/futures/>.

What is the progress to date?

There is a growing number of services which provide support to recovering drug users and other disadvantaged groups to progress *towards* the labour market. Mainstream providers are also becoming more aware of the need to meet the needs of vulnerable

groups. These different providers must work in partnership to maximise opportunities for their clients. The 'Moving On' report outlines **three major categories** of support:

- 1. Treatment and rehabilitation services** whose primary aim is to help an individual overcome problem drug use but could potentially include some employability provision. These services may also be an important source of referral for the provision outlined below.
- 2. Specialist employability programmes** with specially targeted provision tailored to help those disadvantaged in the labour market (including recovering drug users) to improve their skills. The vast majority of the clients of these projects are unlikely to be ready for open market employment when drug treatment is nearing completion. Therefore, employability projects aim to support clients to progress along a pathway to employment. A number of projects fall into this category. They provide counselling, training and other one-to-one and group activities mainly aimed at personal and basic skills development. Referrals to training and education opportunities and after care are important aspects of these projects. Examples include New Futures projects in Scotland and Progress2Work across the UK.
- 3. Mainstream education, training and employment services** designed to meet the needs of the general population (such as Job Centre Plus, further and higher education or the careers service). Most mainstream programmes will have had some contact with individuals experiencing drug problems and some have developed initiatives to address these needs.



WHAT IS PARTNERSHIP WORKING?

A lot has been written about the theory of partnership working. However, translating theory into practice is **not always easy**. Partnerships can be formed between a number of individuals, agencies or organisations with a shared interest. There is usually an overarching purpose for partners to work together and a range of specific objectives. Partnerships are often formed to address specific issues and may be short or long term.

As already mentioned, in the area of substance misuse there is evidence to show that people who have drug problems will often have a range of other difficulties. A wide range of support may be needed to enable them to deal with their problems and these support services will be most effective if there is work undertaken in partnership. This will allow the drug users to have a **co-ordinated and seemingly seamless service** of treatment, care and support. Partnership working is advocated to support effective commissioning of services, effective co-ordination of services, smooth transition for the individual, and the development of shared assessment and information sharing processes.

In order to achieve a co-ordinated service partners need to:

- **Communicate**
- **Co-ordinate**
- **Co-operate**

What are the benefits of partnership working?

There is emerging evidence about the benefits for both service users and service providers of working in partnership with other services. A partnership approach founded on co-operation and collaboration between all relevant providers will have a number of **benefits for service users**. These include:

- removal of barriers to progressing towards stabilisation / rehabilitation
- providing more consistent, co-ordinated and comprehensive care
- access to a range of training, education and employment opportunities.

The **benefits for service providers** of partnership working include the ability to:

- develop a 'whole person' approach
- manage a broader range of services which address the individual's needs
- develop a better understanding of other's skills and to develop a wider range of personal skills in dealing with clients
- develop a wider skill base for staff to meet more effectively the needs of individuals
- recognise and utilise the strengths and areas of expertise of all the partner agencies involved
- make the best use of available resources by managing care of more people in a co-ordinated and cost effective way – including pooling resources.

Key principles and ingredients of a successful partnership

There are a number of **key principles** of partnership working. These are :

- openness, trust and honesty between partners
- agreed shared goals and values
- regular communication between partners.

There has been a lot of research undertaken to identify what makes a good partnership and what the barriers are to achieving effective partnership working. Some key documents are listed in the further resources section. Partnerships can work in different ways and there is no one model that can be considered to be the 'best'. There are, however, **a number of ingredients** which - if they are present - will facilitate successful partnership working:

- the aim of the partnership is agreed and understood by all the partners
- the partnership has clear, effective leadership
- the role of each partner is identified and clear to others in the partnership
- there is shared ownership of the partnership and the partners feel there is 'something in it for them'
- there are dedicated time and resources for the administration and operation of the partnership
- there is recognition of different organisational cultures within the partnership
- a supportive atmosphere exists within the partnership where suggestions, ideas and conflicts are addressed.

The choice of partners is important. Partnerships are often formed from existing networks or where there is a history of collaborative work between potential partners. However, there will be circumstances where it will be important to invite **new partners** to the table. For example, traditionally, employment and training providers have not formed part of the DAT or their fora. However, this is changing, and will need to change to effectively respond to the needs of drug users. Each partnership will be established for specific reasons, some will be strategic and others at an operational level.

Strategic partnerships should identify:

- the aims and objective of the partnership
- the range of agencies that could be engaged
- the commissioning and management arrangements
- arrangements for sharing information
- arrangements for multi agency training to promote mutual understanding
- monitoring and evaluation arrangements for both the partnership and the service.

Operational partnerships will commonly focus on more practical aspects and should identify:

- the aims and objective of the partnership
- common procedures
- protocols and systems for sharing information
- joint training opportunities
- arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.

Barriers to effective partnership working

There are some potential difficulties for partners. Misunderstanding of the reasons for the partnership and a lack of commitment to the partnership can cause barriers. Other recognised barriers are:

- no clear boundary between partners responsibilities'
- reluctance to share information and data with other partners
- lack of time available to commit to the partnership particularly in the early stages
- misconceptions or previous negative experiences of partnership working
- conflicts in philosophies of the potential partners
- lack of training among partners on substantive issues and partnership working.

Key Steps

- 1. Identify aims and objectives**
- 2. Clarify roles and remits**
- 3. Ensure partners are committed, willing and supported**
- 4. Ensure partnership has resources**
- 5. Establish structure and processes**
- 6. Get working!**
- 7. Review and evaluate**

The Case Studies

The EIU identified a number of examples of good partnership working from around Scotland. Of the examples identified we chose three to include in this Guide (see case studies 1-3).

CASE STUDY 1 NEW HORIZONS PROJECT, EASTER QUEENSLIE, GLASGOW

BACKGROUND

The New Horizons Project (NHP) developed as a result of a campaign conducted by Mothers Against Drugs (MAD) in the East End of Glasgow. There was a serious drug problem that was drawing in young people from the area. In particular, there was concern about the number of drug related deaths. A group of mothers who were concerned for their children and young people formed a group to address the concerns but they had a problem in identifying what they wanted to achieve and how it should be achieved.

The Drugs Action Team (DAT) and Social Work (SW) Department became involved. A Social Worker was appointed to work with the Group and to develop the New Horizons Project.

The Partners

- MAD (commissioners)
- Greater Glasgow Health Board
- Glasgow City Council
- Local enterprise companies, and colleges

The project has itself been the driver for partnership working. The enthusiasm of staff from NHP has inspired and attracted partners. There are shared common goals and willingness on the part of all those involved to support the client.

NHP AIMS

The aim of the NHP is to help people from the community who are drug free or stabilised to:

- access training
- access education
- help rebuild social relationships
- access employment

This is achieved by promoting an environment that gives back self respect and dignity so creating a platform for individuals to progress. NHP ensure that individuals have appropriate housing and that the building and rebuilding of family and social relationships is supported. The NHP approach is person centred and involves flexible multi agency working. NHP has no formal partnership agreements but there are a number of informal arrangements. The partnership or joint working initiatives are person centred and are driven and maintained by good working relationships between the key players. NHP has an independent status from the key stakeholders and control of their own funds. This puts the Project on sure footing and in a strong position to operate in Partnership.

The relationships between partners are built on by NHP making contacts with agencies or organisations which are able to contribute to the work or development of client(s). This can be a time intensive process but the 'pay off' is very effective. This involves picking up the phone and cultivation a working relationship. Often this develops into a social relationships and NHP are active in arranging away days and social events for their own staff and those in partner agencies. It is clear that the Director's network of contacts has been invaluable in establishing these relationships. The success of the partnership project has been enhanced because of one or two 'trial runs', which have been successful and have built confidence both for the component organisations but also for the partnership.

KEY TO EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING

NHP and their formal and informal partners have:

- clear shared aims and objectives
- administration and secretarial support provided by NHP and the SW Dept
- an Advisory Committee drawing its membership from the 3 key partners and informal partners
- the local enterprise companies, college, local services and other schemes operating in the area work in close partnership with the Project but there are no formal partnership contracts
- meetings of the Advisory Committee are held ever 3 months and are a regular commitment for those involved
- the informal partners share staff and other resources in kind. This is enhanced by team building activities which are undertaken about every 6 months. These activities involve partners, staff and service users.

PROPOSED FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

In order to maintain the momentum gained by New Horizon there is a need to develop services in line with identified gaps in the existing service provision. Services to women including a creche would go a long way to meeting a major lack in service provision.

The ethos of the project is to provide individuals with hope for the future, nurturing and supporting a vision that will enable each person to develop their full potential enabling them to reintegrate successfully in their local community.

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CASE STUDY 2 ABERDEEN FOYER

BACKGROUND

Aberdeen Foyer was established in 1995 and developed out of a need for young people who had a chaotic life style (often as a result of drug use) to be able to progress towards a more stable life. The Foyer developed from co-operative work between the Education Department of the then Grampian Regional Council and the Grampian Health Board. At the time the Foyer was developed, there had been a long history of inter agency working in the Aberdeen area. There was also recognition that the needs that services had been set up to serve had changed. A needs assessment was undertaken.

THE PARTNERS

- Aberdeen College
- Communities Scotland (formally Scottish Homes)
- Grampian Housing Association
- Aberdeen City Council
- Aberdeen Inner City Health Care Co-operative
- Aberdeen West Health Care Co-operative
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Careers Scotland
- Grampian Health Board

These key partners are linked with the Foyer under the terms of a formal partnership agreement. These partners form the Board of Management responsible for strategic directive of the organisation and receive quarterly reports for the work of the project and the state of the organisation. In addition there is an annual report which is widely circulated.

As well as the Board partners there are 51 investors in the Foyer. There is no formal partnership agreement with these investors but because of their financial commitment and the accountability issues that are involved they can be considered to be partners based on financial agreements. The majority of the Investors are private sector companies offering financial or in kind support.

Much of the success of the Foyer's partnership is as a result of the vision and commitment of the staff in the Foyer. Staff in the Foyer have a clear sense that the success of their work and the achievement of a good outcome for their clients depends on the strength of their partnership working. The Foyer has a number of sources of funding and has independent control over these funds.

AIM OF THE PROJECT

The aim of the project is to provide high quality, safe accommodation and to help young people into meaningful education and employment. The aim is achieved by providing high quality furnished accommodation for young people. The young people also have support and counselling to help them move on towards education and training appropriate to their situation.

The Foyer provides education and training programmes for young people, many of whom will be recovering drug users. With the assistance of local businesses the Foyer is able to arrange work experience, job shadowing and training for work opportunities. The long term aim is for these young people to be able to access work and to reach a stage in

their life which will enable them to be in employment and to live independently. Under the banner of, ' Foyer Enterprise', Aberdeen Foyer run three enterprise companies which are a key source of income for the project. The enterprise companies enjoy a good reputation both locally and nationally and operate to a high professional standard. These companies also provide work opportunities for clients.

Partnership working is key to the Foyer's work. The needs of each young person vary and to meet their needs a number of agencies need to work together at any one time. There is strong sense of commitment to the project by both the staff who work in the Foyer and also the young people who participate. The approach of the Foyer is person centred and, therefore, there needs to be flexibility in the services available for clients. In order to maintain a partnership approach to working with clients good relationships between the partners is crucial. Staff at the Foyer actively work at team building with both the staff of their partner agencies but also within their own staff team.

While there is not a shared aim for the partnership, the partners have 'bought into the vision and aim of the Foyer'. There is also a strong sense within the partnership that there is a 'buy in ' and a 'pay off ' element. This is founded on mutual respect and shared benefits. The credibility of the Foyer, its staff and the standards it sets has been important in establishing and maintaining its partnerships.

Interaction between staff from partner agencies is particularly helpful. The Foyer offer secondment positions to staff from such agencies. There are a number of shared posts and facilities.

KEY TO EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Foyer and their partners have:

- invested time in planning and setting up
- start up agreements
- share a commitment to the values and aims of the Foyer
- share common goals
- share ethos and values – culture is important
- trust between partners
- evaluation processes and reports on progress open and available to all partners.

There is always a danger of partnerships ceasing to be effective or falling apart when the key personalities change. While this is difficult to avoid the partnership needs to operate on an organisational basis as well as benefiting from personality and leadership.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Aberdeen Foyer needs to be proactive in establishing and maintaining partnerships with employers to take forward their work. The need for the services provided by the Foyer continues to grow and there are pressures from clients out with the immediate area. New partnerships have been set up in Aberdeenshire using the Aberdeen City model through the provision of supported accommodation and education and training programmes for North Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeen Foyer run a Lifeshaper programme within Aberdeen City Integrated Drug Service in partnership with Aberdeen College and NHS Grampian. A pilot Lifeshaper programme is to start in March 2003 in Peterhead.

The Foyer has recently launched a three year project entitled ' Sorted Not Screwed Up '. The project recognises the value of addressing health issues, especially psychological and emotional issues which are inextricably linked with homelessness, unemployment and chaotic lifestyles.

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CASE STUDY 3 NEXT STEPS, LEVEN, FIFE

BACKGROUND

Next Steps was developed as a result of a need identified by staff at Lauder College, Dunfermline, Fife. A number of students (often for reasons related to drug use) 'dropped out' of government training courses offered by the college on behalf of Employment Service, now Job Centre Plus, and Local Enterprise Companies (LECs). These students found themselves out of the training system and also often suffered from cuts to their benefits. There were a number of reasons for students leaving training and although the College was sympathetic to these students the mainstream college courses could not provide the flexibility required by some students. Next Steps was set up to support and provide training and education for these students most of whom were recovering drug users. An important element of the Next Steps programme is that it is person centred and can accommodate periods of relapse and opt in and out of the programme by students.

The project took a long time in the planning, three years in total. The Development Manager, a member of Lauder College staff, saw Next Steps as a personal challenge. The project has benefited from the clear vision and strong leadership from the Development Manager. The project is run by a Management Board, the membership of which reflects the key partners. An important factor in the success of the board is the choice of Chair. He is a charismatic leader and is independent of all the partner organisations, he is aware of the range of issues involved in the work of Next Steps and is well respected by Board members. He is also well known and respected in a number of areas.

Next Steps is a training and employment organisation which helps students undertake appropriate training in preparation for work. As well as responding to the needs of their clients Next Steps often responds to the needs of clients of others. In this way the partnership provides benefit to all the parties.

AIM OF THE PROJECT

The project aim is to provide appropriate training to students that will lead them to employment. The project is student based and the staff are clear that the organisation is student-led. Staff understand that some students will take time out and return to the course at the same or a different stage. A flexible approach is, therefore, vital. There is a 25% -30% relapse rate and this can be accommodated. Often students go around the training loop a number of times.

Although Next Steps has a clear aim their partners need not share it. It is, however, important that the partners have a similar aims and that their organisations are person centred. Next Steps are committed to working in partnership and to maintaining good working relationships. Next Steps cannot work successfully in isolation and have invested a lot of time in cultivating partnerships and strong working relationships.

Next Steps consider the support available from the Fife DAAT to be excellent. There is a good flow of information and feedback. Student feedback is a key aspect of the operation. Referral and relapse forms are completed in discussion with students and they complete feedback at each stage of their involvement with Next Steps.

THE PARTNERS

Next Steps has only one formal partnership agreement and that is with the New Futures Fund (Scottish Enterprise). This is the key source of funding for the project. Lauder College continues to support Next Steps by providing seconded staff and facilities. There are a number of partners who are represented on the Management Board.

These are:

- Lauder College
- DAAT
- Fife Council Social Strategy Unit

Other partners are:

- Health Board
- Criminal Justice interests (DTTO)
- Drug Court
- GP representatives
- Voluntary Sector organisations providing a range of services
- Cranstoun
- Homeless Team
- Job Centre Plus
- Other Training Providers

There was a concerted effort by the Next Steps team to seek and cultivate partnerships. The planning of Next Steps is considered to have been key to its success. It was formally launched and this sent a strong message to potential partner agencies. There has been a series of open events for those with a potential interest. There is an open door policy for students as well as partners and this is actively encouraged by open days, shared training and the extensive use of the Next Steps facilities by their partners.

Next Steps is the driving organisation in many of the partnership although as it is more established other organisations are increasingly seeking partnership. However, the Next Steps Project is the driver as well as the facilitator. It is in a pivotal role amid a number of organisations (see chart) and holds the middle ground.

KEY TO EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Next Steps attribute successful partnership working to:

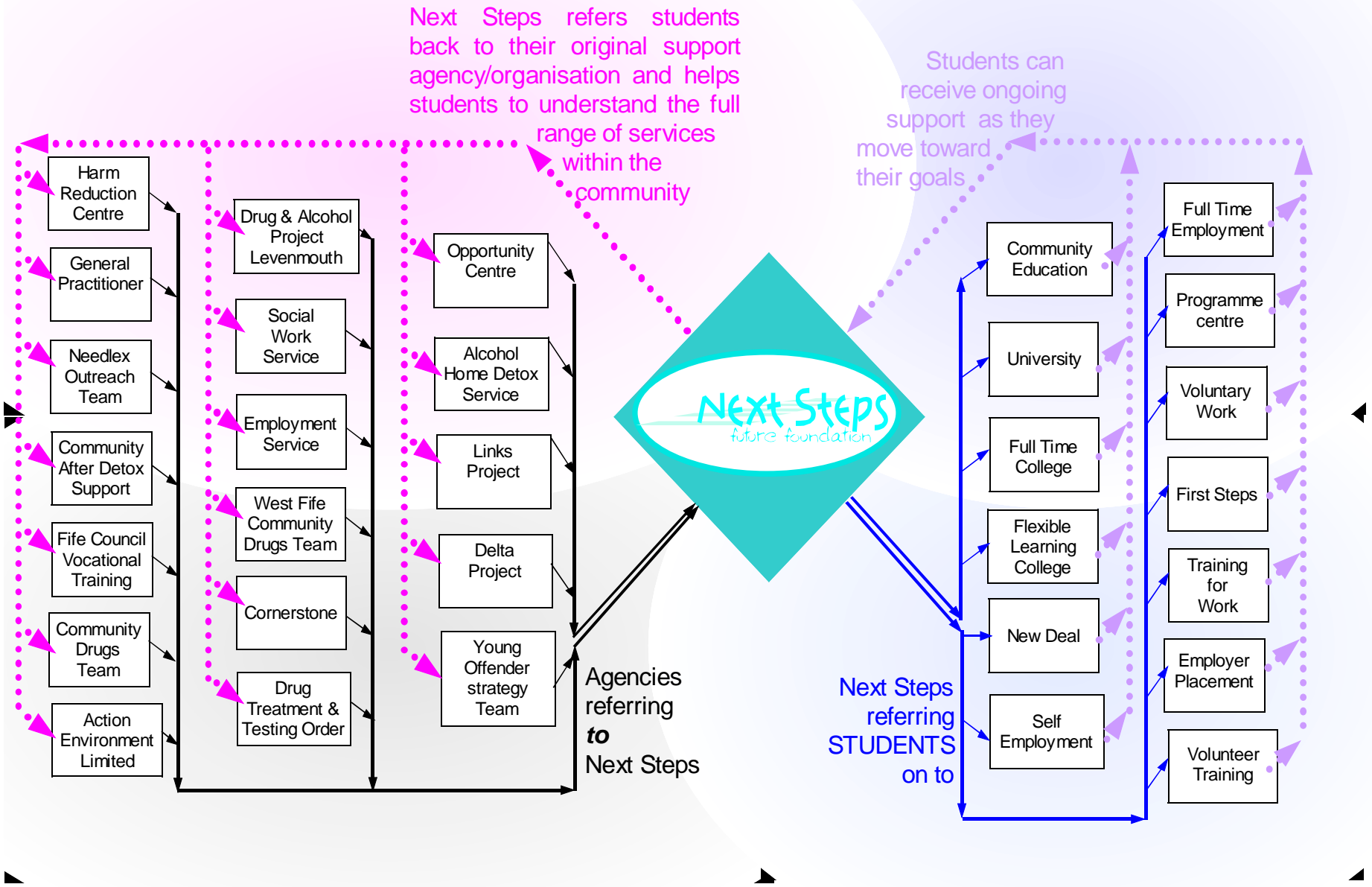
- openness and willingness to be inclusive
- transparency
- honest and trust between partners
- sharing information, resources, training and development opportunities
- mutual respect
- common aim and values
- common focus
- shared achievements
- willingness to share.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Next Steps are seeking to strengthen existing partnerships and to develop new ones in order to widen the range of opportunities for students.

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Next Steps position within the community network



CHECKLIST

Finally, we have set out below some key questions to help assess the health of a partnership.

- ✓ Is the overarching aim of the partnership clear?
- ✓ Are the specific aims of the partnership clear?
- ✓ Are the specific roles and remits of each partner clear to the partnership as a whole?
- ✓ Are all potential partners included and actively participating in the partnership?
- ✓ Are the strengths of each partner recognised and maximised?
- ✓ Does the partnership have clear and effective leadership?
- ✓ Does the partnership clearly communicate with its wider stakeholders?
- ✓ Does the partnership have dedicated time and resources (e.g. admin support)?
- ✓ Have the training needs of all partners (including community representatives) been addressed?
- ✓ Is the atmosphere supportive?
- ✓ Are the partnership's aims, specific objectives, activities and achievements regularly reviewed?
- ✓ Are there still barriers to effective partnership working? What are they? How can they be tackled?

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John Renwick	Scottish Executive
Martin King	New Horizons
Edel Tuckwood	Aberdeen Foyer
Helen Torrance	Next Steps

Scottish Executive Effective Interventions Unit Dissemination Policy

1. We will aim to disseminate the right material, to the right audience, in the right format, at the right time.
2. The unit will have an active dissemination style. It will be outward looking and interactive. Documents published or sent out by the unit will be easily accessible and written in plain language.
3. All materials produced by the unit will be free of charge.
4. Material to be disseminated includes:
 - Research and its findings
 - Reports
 - Project descriptions and evaluations
 - Models of services
 - Evaluation tools and frameworks for practitioners, managers and commissioners.
5. Dissemination methods will be varied, and will be selected to reflect the required message, and the needs of the target audience.

These methods are:

- Web-based – using the ISD website ‘Drug misuse in Scotland’ which can be found at: <http://www.drugmisuse.isdscotland.org/eiu/eiu.htm>
 - Published documents – which will be written in plain language, and designed to turn policy into practice.
 - Drug Action Team channels – recognising the central role of Drug Action Teams in developing effective practice.
 - Events – recognising that face-to-face communication can help develop effective practice.
 - Indirect dissemination – recognising that the Unit may not always be best placed to communicate directly with some sections of its audience.
6. This initial policy statement will be evaluated at six-monthly intervals to ensure that the Unit is reaching its key audiences and that its output continues to be relevant and to add value to the work of those in the field.

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