

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Social Work and Health

Council: 26 November 2008

Subject: Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation – Update

1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an update on two linked programmes which received Council support in April 2008 to increase capacity within, and improve access to, addiction services.
- 1.2 The first, an Early Intervention Programme, aims to ensure that new referrals are able to receive support at the earliest possible point. Council funding provided the opportunity to pilot a new way of improving waiting times. Client waiting times have, as a result of this activity, been reduced.
- 1.3 The second programme is an Out of Hours Support service which will offer telephone support at times when clients feel vulnerable. The intention is to reduce the risk of relapse.

2 Background

- 2.1 At the March 2008 Council meeting, members supported the motion by Councillor Jonathan McColl seeking a proposal to “increase resources and capacity within our addiction services”.
- 2.2 As a result of Councillor McColl’s motion, a report (*Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation – Proposals*) went to Council in April, identifying two new programmes to improve service access.
- 2.3 The April report highlighted the priority of waiting times within both local and national plans.
- 2.4 West Dunbartonshire set an ambitious target of 90% of addiction clients receiving an offer of first appointment within 14 days of referral, and has shown progress towards that target.
- 2.5 Other areas are working towards an offer of first appointment within 21 days.
- 2.6 First quarter figures for 2008/09, April to June, indicate that 78.6% of new clients across West Dunbartonshire were offered an appointment within 14 days of referral. This represents an improvement from the same quarter in 2006/07, which was 55.9% on target (second quarter figures for this year are pending from the Government).
- 2.7 Current figures indicate that the majority of those not seen within 14 days are just outside the target, with 87.5% offered an appointment within 21 days.

- 2.8** The April report also noted the importance of service user views in service planning. An annual satisfaction survey is one tool used to test client views in West Dunbartonshire. Focus groups and a service user group, FAST (Future of Addiction Services Team), are also used locally.
- 2.9** As a result of seeking service user views, a need to offer support to individuals when mainstream addiction services were not available was identified. Late nights were universally identified.
- 2.10** Through FAST and with support from an external organisation, “Outside the Box”, the development of an Out of Hours Telephone Support Service has progressed.
- 2.11** Further consultation has been conducted. Delivery, support structures, job descriptions, training and operational procedures have been developed. Two members of staff have been recruited.
- 2.12** Members of FAST are currently involved in a course on Addiction Counselling being run by Anniesland College with a view to playing an active, future role in the delivery of the Out of Hours Telephone Support Service. Through surveys and interviews with service users, it is clear that the support line should directly involve those with personal experience of addictions – those now in recovery.
- 2.13** Linked funding from the European Social Fund has ensured there is direct support for the members on their course, demonstrating one of the opportunities seized to match this Council investment to other resources.
- 2.14** It is envisaged that this service, which will be the first of its kind in Scotland, will reduce the risk of relapse and associated health and social harms.

3 Main Issues

Early Intervention Programme

- 3.1** The early intervention worker commenced his post as part-time addiction worker within the Clydebank Community Addiction Team in June 2008.
- 3.2** The remit of the post is to promote an early intervention approach to assessment and treatment within the Clydebank team, where there has been the greatest pressure on waiting times. Clydebank was seen as an ideal team to develop this new approach to improving access times.
- 3.3** While across West Dunbartonshire there has been a trend of improvement in waiting times, there has been increased pressure on the Clydebank team, resulting in a recent negative shift in waiting times.
- 3.4** It was anticipated that by adopting an early intervention approach, waiting times would be reduced thereby ensuring clients received prompt access, in keeping with national guidance.

- 3.5** The total number of referral's directed towards the early intervention worker was 124 for the period 2nd June 2008 to 31st October 2008.
- 3.6** Since the start of the programme, waiting times have improved at the CAT. In the run up to the programme, increased referrals and increased complexity of cases referred were beginning to put a strain on access. While the majority of clients were getting appointments reasonably quickly (very few waiting more than 3 weeks), the percentages receiving first appointments within the target 14 days was slipping.
- 3.7** In May 2008, the last month of operation prior to the Early Intervention Programme, waiting times at the Clydebank team had slipped to just under 33% receiving an appointment within 14 days (although 87% were offered an appointment in Clydebank within 21 days).
- 3.8** In June, the first month of the pilot programme, 69.7% were offered an appointment within 14 days and by the end of July, the figure had risen to 83.6% within target. This was the best achievement for the team since the start of waiting times monitoring.
- 3.9** The quality of assessments have also improved since the early intervention worker came into post.
- 3.10** An audit of the quality of Single Shared Assessments was carried out in 2007. Several issues were identified as part of the audit with regard to the quality and consistency of assessments. The employee who has responsibility for the early intervention approach has used the audit to improve assessments.
- 3.11** A more recent audit of initial assessments was carried out. The results indicated that quality has been improved in the following areas:
- Clients history of drug / alcohol use;
 - Joint working with other agencies; and
 - Increased Care Management.
- 3.12** The average waiting time for first appointments with the early intervention worker is 8 days against the waiting time target of 14 days.
- 3.13** During this period the Clydebank team has seen a rise in the number of vulnerable adults assessed, especially the number of vulnerable women, often women with young children.
- 3.14** Early access has resulted in better access to more specialist services for a range of vulnerable groups. For example, those with more complex needs, who also have mental or physical health needs, are quickly referred to Tier 4 Services for closely supervised detoxification (inpatient or the Drug / Alcohol day unit at Gartnavel Hospital).

3.15 In summary the additional funding has demonstrated the approach can improve waiting times, the quality of assessments and access for those with complex needs. The challenge for the service as a whole is to continue to maintain our 14 day waiting time target and improve the quality of assessment and care planning throughout the service.

Out of Hours Telephone Support Service

3.16 The Future of Addiction Services Team (FAST) has been working on the establishment of an out of hours telephone support service for individuals who currently access addiction services.

3.17 The group expressed a clear view that the delivery model should be based on self help and active participation by recovering and ex-service users.

3.18 For service users to undertake this role, they recognise that they require certain competencies, such as counselling and assessment skills. In light of this, members of FAST are participating in a Counselling Course in Anniesland College. Thus far all have passed their assignments and are on schedule to successfully complete the course.

3.19 Whilst group members are developing their own skills and confidence, they have agreed that appropriately qualified individuals should be employed to allow the service to commence and ensure that there are supports available during the festive period, a time when many feel particularly vulnerable.

3.20 Two individuals with counselling and telephone helpline skills have been recruited, which will allow the service to launch prior to Christmas (currently planned for 12 December).

3.21 In addition, one of the local Addiction Intermediate Labour Market graduates has also been offered sessional work to develop resource materials to ensure telephone operators have information about local and national services. This will enable them to signpost individuals to appropriate services.

3.22 A local voluntary organisation, Alternatives, have agreed that their premises could be used as a base for the new service.

3.23 Senior Addiction staff will be “on call” to offer support to the operators should they have to deal with difficult or distressing situations.

3.24 Work on setting up the telephone line is ongoing.

3.25 It is envisaged that the service will be available, in the first instance for approximately 10 – 12 hours per week.

3.26 An additional 4 hours will enable debrief, supervision and training for the staff and enable monitoring of the effectiveness of the service.

3.27 Operating hours are still to be confirmed, but a survey has provided information regarding times when clients feel the service would be beneficial. This will be used to ensure the service is provided at priority times.

4. Personnel Issues

4.1 A temporary secondment of staff, and a temporary appointment to cover the secondee's post, has enabled the early interventions work to begin.

4.2 Sessional contracts for trained individuals have been issued for the Out of Hours service.

4.3 In the longer term, sessional contracts for former and recovering service users will enable the delivery of FAST's vision of a self help service.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 A copy of full 12 month estimated costs is attached as Appendix 1 (based upon 2008/09 costs).

5.2 Additional funding allocation from NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde (via Scottish Government alcohol and drug allocations) has been indicated and is pending confirmation. This recurring funding will allow the continuation of the Out of Hours service, at the proposed 12 operational hours per week, beyond current 12 months of Council funding.

5.3 Other funding sources for the Out of Hours Telephone service are being explored. Any expansion beyond 12 hours will require additional investment.

5.4 No alternative funding has yet been identified for the Early Intervention Programme.

5.5 The Early Intervention Programme has proved to be successful in reducing waiting times. Any additional funding could be directed to continue within Clydebank and/or extend the Early Intervention approach (reaching other teams while embedding the improvements achieved in Clydebank).

5.6 The Council motion in April sought an assessment whether these programmes "should be included in mainline Departmental Budgets for the future." Contingent upon continued success to attract external funds, this will require further consideration.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 As indicated previously, this proposal provides an opportunity to progress the good work of Council staff in improving waiting times figures. It also provides a positive message to service users that their views are being listened to.

6.2 Failure to adequately implement the proposal could delay improvements in waiting times and negatively affect levels of commitment from service users.

- 6.3 Failure to undertake appropriate analysis of both initiatives would negate potential access to ongoing funding.
- 6.4 Steps have been taken to mitigate against these risks, with an implementation plan in place, including a robust monitoring and review process.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The Council motions from March initiated an opportunity to progress established practices and pilot unique models of practice for internal use as well as to attract external funders.
- 7.2 The evidence is that the Early Intervention Programme has been successful and efforts are underway to identify funding for its continuation and possible expansion beyond the Clydebank service.
- 7.3 The Out of Hours Service will be launched in December, and early indications are there will be sufficient funding for its continuation at 12 hours per week.
- 7.4 Efforts are underway to identify funding to expand the number of hours of operation.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 Elected Members are asked to:
 - 8.1.1 Note the contents of the report.
 - 8.1.2 Support the continued efforts to secure funding for both developments.
 - 8.1.3 Participate in the Launch of the Out of Hours Helpline in December 2008.
 - 8.1.4 Receive a further report regarding both initiatives in early 2009.

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Background Papers: Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation - Proposals
Report to Council 30th April 2008

Wards Affected: All wards

Appendix 1

Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation - Project Proposal Costings

Early Intervention Programme

Cost Component	12 month estimate
Salary and Oncosts	£16,435
Travel/telephone/postage	£500
Publicity	£100
Training	£400
Administrative Support	£1,745
TOTAL	£19,180

Out of Hours Support Programme

Cost Component	12 month estimate
Programme Development	£1,200
Recruitment	£200
Wages of Staff	£16,970
Training and Supervision	£2,400
Unsocial Hours Support	£3,575
Publicity	£350
Telephone	£2,055
TOTAL	£26,750

Total Proposal

Early Intervention	£19,180
Out of Hours Support	£26,750
Proposal Total	£45,930

**Salary costs based upon proposed new Council wage structure.
Some other costs pending confirmation.**