

AGENDA ITEM No. 9.....

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject: Planning and Provision of Drug Misuse Services
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 20 January 1998	
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REF: JD/GMCI/JMCF	

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of guidance issued by the Scottish Office to Local Authorities, Health Boards and NHS Trusts on the planning and provision of drug misuse services.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The guidance is in two distinct parts.

Part one sets out the national strategic objectives and, for Health Boards, provides the context for guidance against the background of the Health Service Management Executive's planning and performance management process.

Part two sets out the key principles that Health Boards, Local Authority Social Work Departments and others need to take into account when planning and ensuring the provision of effective care and treatment services for drug misusers.

- 2.2 The guidance is issued in support of a multi agency approach.

3 NATIONAL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR TACKLING DRUG MISUSE

- 3.1 Whilst this section of the guidance is primarily aimed at the health service it is suggested it should inform the action by other agencies where drug related activities impact on their work.

- 3.2 The report highlights that Drug Misuse has gained a strong hold in Scotland and impacts on health, crime and local communities.

3.3 It is acknowledged that there have been major changes in recent times in the planning of services as a result of the establishment of Drug Action Teams, who are charged to produce and implement a strategic plan for their area for tackling drug misuse. Such planning needs to complement community care, child care, criminal justice and health improvement.

3.4 The guidance covers other important areas which include:-

Accountability

Greater freedom on the use of resources will require revised arrangements for the delivery of drug misuse services and will therefore be subject to planning and performance management process.

National Strategic Objectives

The priorities agreed with the Scottish Advisory Committee on Drug Misuse and the key performance indicators include matters such as:

- changing attitudes to drug misuse
- reduce harmful behaviour related to drug misuse
- raise public awareness of the benefits of a drug free community
- reduce availability of drugs through police activity
- reduce drug related crime
- develop constructive alternatives to prosecution and imprisonment
- reduce health risk and social damage attributable to drug misuse

National Priorities

Where appropriate, the relevant Scottish Office departments will set national priorities which should be reflected in locally set objectives.

National Application of Objectives

This section covers issues such as setting priorities, national performance indicators, monitoring and measurement of performance.

Local Application of Objectives

This relates to the preparation Drug Action Team strategic planning health improvement programmes, community care plans and criminal justice plans.

Key Performance Indicators

Measurement of the strategic objectives is planned, however it is acknowledged at this stage not all the data is available but this will be built up and refined over time as part of the information strategy.

Research

The Department of Health in conjunction with the Scottish Advisory Committee will shortly establish a research strategy for drug misuse which is expected to be wide ranging in scope and application.

4 PLANNING AND DELIVERING EFFECTIVE TREATMENT AND CARE FOR DRUG MISUSERS

- 4.1 The guidance sets out the key principles for the Social Work Department in the planning and commissioning process. The main thrust is that commissioning of services should be based on the principles of joint planning, joint commissioning, an evidence base and clinical effectiveness.
- 4.2 The guidance is aimed at relevant officers in all agencies concerned, including Local Authority Chief Executives, Directors of Social Work and Members of Drug Action Teams.
- 4.3 The document does not cover alcohol misuse services. It recognises that these services are often commissioned alongside services for drug misuse and suggests that Commissioners may wish to consider the scope for combining action as many of the principles, concerns and opportunities outlined in the guidance are relevant to the commissioning of alcohol services.
- 4.4 It is indicated that Health Boards, local authorities and other agencies should use the guidance to inform the 1998/99 service planning process.
- 4.5 Other areas dealt with in part two of the guidance document relate to the following areas:

Drug Action Teams

Drug Action Teams have a critical role as the focal point for local action on drug misuse. Emphasis is made to their lead responsibilities and their co-ordination role in matters related to:

- collecting and sharing information
- assessing the quality and range of services
- initiating evaluations and review of services and activities of agencies working in the field
- ensuring joint working between the key agencies represented on the Drug Action Teams
- ensuring the wider interests on drugs fora, such as family support groups and users
- taking account of the interests of the wider community.

It is assumed that Drug Action Teams will be fully involved in decision making processes; even though the statutory responsibility for the care and treatment of drug misusers rests with other agencies such as Health Boards and local authorities.

Ministerial Drugs Task Force

Reference is contained in the guidance to the report of the Ministerial Drugs Task Force in March 1995. The guidance issued at that time continues to be relevant. However, the current document also takes account of the Polkinghorne report which examined Drug Misuse Services in England.

National Strategic Objectives

Emphasis is made on the need to take account of the national strategic objectives outlined in 3.4. However it is recognised that Health Boards and local authorities require to take cognisance of local variations.

Information

Drug Action Teams, Health Boards and Local Authorities are requested to contribute information to the Scottish Drug Misuse Database in order to monitor activity and to assist in the planning of services.

Joint Commissioning

The Scottish Advisory Committee on Drug Misuse has expressed concern that, in general, agencies represented on DATs are often unable or unwilling to surrender resources in support of the corporate decisions required of DATs. The Committee has concluded that joint commissioning of services for drug misusers following identified need, would be one way of addressing this difficulty and was the key to effective service provision. The Advisory Committee looked to the DATs to initiate and lead the joint commissioning of services and this view is supported by the Scottish Office.

Priorities

The document recommends the following priorities in service provision:

- Practical co-operation and, wherever possible, long term partnership between all the agencies involved in the commissioning and delivery of services.
- Systematic and comprehensive assessment of the nature, extent and distribution of need.
- An evidence based approach to commissioning underpinned by monitoring of costs and outcomes towards the achievement of cost effective services.
- The need for information on clinical and relative cost effectiveness of various types of service provision, including advice on what type of service, or combination of services, suits which type of user.
- Monitoring by DATs to ensure that arrangements are in place to evaluate the extent to which services are meeting the needs of drug misusers.

Key Issues

The guidance document concludes by identifying a range of key points on commissioning from the Polkinghorne report and the Advisory Committees, consideration of issues which have a bearing on Scotland.

5 ADDICTION SERVICES REVIEW

- 5.1 The Social Work Committee at its meeting on 10 June 1997, gave approval to a report proposing a strategic review of services provided and funded by the Social Work Department in North Lanarkshire.
- 5.2 The review of services is being carried out jointly with Turning Point, a specialist voluntary organisation in the addiction field. Major progress has been achieved to date with this review and the completed report will be available towards the end of January 1998.
- 5.3 When the review of services is completed, it was intended that the Social Work Department would seek to agree to a joint strategy with representatives of the Lanarkshire Health Board, including the development of joint initiatives where this had been identified as a priority.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The guidance document issued by the Scottish Office on the planning and provision of drug misuse services, is a significant development and requires the Council to give full consideration as to how the objectives of the report can be applied in North Lanarkshire.
- 6.2 The Council is obliged to take account of the guidance to inform the 1998/99 service planning provision.
- 6.3 The timing of the report on the review of addiction services in North Lanarkshire is opportune as it will "better" inform the Council on how to apply the Scottish Office guidance in a North Lanarkshire context.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Committee is asked to note this report and agree the following action:

- i) Await the completion of the report on the review of addiction services in North Lanarkshire.
- ii) To request the Director of Social Work to submit a further report to the Social Work Committee detailing how the addiction review can complement the Scottish Office strategy document.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 The report on the Planning and Provision of Drug Misuse Services produced by the Scottish Office can be made available to members if they wish a copy.



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12 January 1998

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