



Annual Report 2007

Drug Concern is a charity involved in the delivery of services for those whose lives are affected by drug misuse within the Bailiwick of Guernsey, through education, information, advice, support and counselling.

Directors

Jim Le Pelley - Chairman
Chris Sackett - Treasurer
Judy Beaugeard
David Leafe
Bruce Riley
Mike Watson

Staff team

Tracey Rear - Manager
Jane French - Education & Training Drug Worker
John Knight - Substance Misuse Worker (Prison)
Gill Ogier - Criminal Justice Drug Worker

Staff Profiles



Tracey Rear BSc (hons), Dip DD, Dip CPC

Manager

Tracey has been working for Drug Concern for ten years, having started her employment with the organisation as the under 21s Drug Worker. She has worked in each area of operations. Underpinning her work experience in the field she has a degree in Addictions Management, a diploma in drug dependency, a diploma in clinical and pastoral counselling and is a practitioner of auricular acupuncture.



Gill Ogier RGN, H dip AN, Dip HG

Criminal Justice Drug Worker

Gill has been working for Drug Concern for five years and has a background in nursing. Whilst with the organisation she has completed a Diploma in Human Givens therapy, and is a practitioner and trainer of auricular acupuncture.



John Knight Cert ADS, SC

Substance Misuse Worker (Prison)

John has a background in social care with young people and, having worked in a number of residential settings, has a considerable knowledge of the issues relating to substance misuse. John is a practitioner of auricular acupuncture and a trainer for Therapeutic Crisis intervention.



Jane French Dip SW, Cert HE

Drug Education and Training Worker

Jane started at Drug Concern in August 2007. Her background is in the field of social work, predominantly working with children and families, and special needs. For the last three years she was employed in a community drug and alcohol service in the South West, where she gained valuable experience in addiction treatment and withdrawal in the U.K.

Manager's Report

I am pleased to report that 2007 was another successful year for Drug Concern. Largely as a result of our work in the Prison, we were able to reach a substantially increased number of clients. We also improved our responsiveness to other service users by offering more flexible hours of service provision.

There has been an increased emphasis in partnership work with other agencies, particularly with the NCH Guernsey branch, with whom there is a cross over of clients. Our existing partnerships with the Probation Service, Prison, and Police continue to go from strength to strength. We consider these partnerships to be a major factor in the success of our service. Drug Concern has an active role with the NCH Karabiner programme, which seeks to get young people 'work ready', and during 2008 we will be considering how we can further develop partnership work with other agencies.

During 2007 we were successful in increasing support for clients upon release from Prison into the community, with the aim of bringing about sustained change. To do this we arranged three-way meetings of the Drug Concern prison worker, the community drug worker and the prisoner prior to release.

The total number of new clients in the year was 298, a 50% increase from the previous year. This increase arose mainly from the appointment during 2006 of the full-time Drug Concern prison worker. More than a third of new clients went on to receive a structured programme of work.

While it continues to be the case that the majority of clients are 30 years and older, there has been a significant shift in the number of clients up to the age of 20. The drug for which the majority of clients seek help is heroin (or pharmaceutical opiates). Statistics for the needle exchange show an average of 31 persons using the needle exchange at any one time.

During the year we changed the service hours to include two early evenings each week, to respond better to our users' needs in terms of opening hours. The outcome so far has been positive. Clients have more choice, particularly those who are in full-time employment or education.

Drug Concern has continued to consider ways we can engage service users whose needs may not be addressed, and who are not primarily from the criminal justice organisations, but attempts to establish user groups along the lines of those in some parts of the U.K. have not proved successful.

Drug Concern is actively seeking alternative premises as those currently used have only a short-term lease. The needs of client confidentiality and of finance impose constraints on the choice of premises, but one possibility is being evaluated.

As a registered charity we count ourselves fortunate in having the financial support of a number of local charitable trusts and other organisations. We are extremely grateful to all our donors, who recognise the importance of our work and continue to support us. Special thanks go to the Lloyds TSB Foundation for the Channel Islands who have committed to providing funding for a period of three years, and to the Association of Guernsey Charities who have helped fund a large part of the educational work that we deliver in the community.

The directors join me in paying tribute to Barbara Minta for her substantial contribution made to Drug Concern over the years. Barbara retired as Chairman and as a director at the Annual General Meeting in June 2007.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the directors of Drug Concern who give of their time to contribute towards the governance of the organisation; and to the staff of Drug Concern for their dedication and commitment to helping those whose lives are affected by drug misuse.

Tracey Rear
Manager

Drug Concern's Services

Core services

Drug Concern is a local charity involved in addressing the needs of those whose lives are affected by substance misuse. This is achieved both in preventative ways, such as education or training, and by means of a variety of harm-reduction measures and treatments, including counselling, information, advice and support, and the provision of a needle exchange.

Counselling and support services are specifically designed to help people who are struggling to change behaviour. The focus is on problem identification and problem management, motivational work in relation to cessation of drug use, and specific relapse prevention techniques. Drug Concern also provides support to other charities such as Dads and Mums Against Drugs with the provision of training and general advice.

Advice and information extends to all in the community who have queries relating to substance misuse, the effects of substances, treatment routes, where to go for help, and more general enquiries.

The needle exchange is specifically a harm-reduction measure. Its introduction was a response to concerns that growing numbers of users were injecting drugs, often with used and shared needles, thereby putting themselves at risk of contracting a number of blood-borne viruses. The needle exchange enables drug users to collect clean injecting equipment, and receive safer injecting advice, thus reducing the rise of transmission of certain viruses.

At Drug Concern we work hard to engage with needle exchange users, with the aim of building good working relationships, leading to behaviour change. The introduction of evening opening times has allowed service users access outside of their working day, which means there is more opportunity to engage them in conversation and to build these good relationships.

Auricular acupuncture is used as a treatment to reduce the discomfort of withdrawal from substances by promoting a reduction in the symptoms of anxiety. It is also provided for individuals who have successfully changed their drug use but benefit from receiving the treatment on a regular basis to promote relaxation.

Education and Training

The drug education programme delivered in Guernsey and Alderney schools is one of our well established services. The programme covers years seven to eleven in all secondary schools, and the College of Further Education. The programme addresses the issues of substance misuse and its associated risks. Information sessions are also provided for parents and teachers.

Demand for drug awareness training generally is on the increase. Businesses, local community groups, and other organisations are becoming increasingly aware of the need to provide training for key personnel who may come into contact with drug users, or with those affected by someone else's misuse of drugs. Drug Concern both responds to these demands and actively seeks ways to carry the drugs message.

Drug Concern has committed to providing more input into the eight-week Karabiner programmes. The aim of this increased involvement is to reduce the barriers and stigma some young people experience, which may prevent them from contacting drug services. It also serves to develop stronger, less formal, links with this particular group of young people.

Criminal Justice Drug Service

The Criminal Justice Drug Service (CJDS), introduced five years ago on the initiative of the States Chief Officers Drug and Alcohol Strategy Group is a partnership between Drug Concern and the Probation Service. The primary purpose is to provide the courts, prison, and parole review committee with the facilities necessary to enable them to impose treatment as a condition of supervision.

The service has been a great success and the growing demand for it meant that by the end of the year it had reached the capacity available from present resources. If demand for the service continues to increase, an increase in staff will also be needed. In 2007, eighteen people received a probation order with a drug testing condition attached to it. There were two completions in 2007; the remainder continue with their orders.

Arrest referral is a partnership between Drug Concern and the Guernsey Police. The aim is to raise awareness of services available to drug using offenders at the point of arrest. The Criminal Justice Drug Worker makes regular visits to the court and the custody cells to make contact with potential service users, with the aim of engaging with a service that they would not otherwise access. During the year seven people were identified as using substances, and all of these accepted follow-up contact with Drug Concern.

Involvement in the scheme is voluntary and not an alternative to prosecution or due process. The Arrest Referral Scheme has been extended to those individuals detained by Customs in their custody suite.

Shared care between the Criminal Justice Drug Worker and the Substance Misuse Worker in the Prison enables continuity of care. Joint meetings for clients who are either entering or leaving custody are arranged, to decide upon the best treatment options for them, from arrest through to release.

Prison

Drug Concern's role within the Prison has changed considerably since the introduction of a full-time Substance Misuse Worker (SMW). Previously our primary focus within the prison was illicit drug use. This is now extended to include alcohol misuse.

The SMW participates in a number of committees within the prison, including,

- Risk Management Board – dealing with prisoners who are at risk of self harm or suicide and putting into place individual plans of care to safely manage times of crisis, thus reducing the risk of death or injury in custody.
- Prison Therapeutics Committee – dealing with the logistics and practice of prisoners' healthcare needs, focussing on best practice within the Prison and safe and healthy outcomes.
- Residential – dealing with the development of the Prison regime.
- Interagency forum – dealing with issues that affect the various organisations having an input into the Prison system.

A major procedural change in the delivery of the substance misuse service to the Prison is the assessment of prisoners within 48 hours of admission. This provides an opportunity for prisoners to discuss their individual needs with a worker, confidentially and without fear of recrimination. The first hours and days are the time when new prisoners are at most risk of self harm or suicide, so this also provides an opportunity for those with no identified drug or alcohol misuse issues to speak to an external, non-judgemental agency.

The open and honest relationships built up in prison with Drug Concern staff have helped to provide a more robust through-care provision. This has resulted in more prisoners taking advantage of the offer of assistance on their release from prison, enabling an easier transition when granted parole with a condition of drug testing by the Criminal Justice Drug Worker.

Another new development has been the involvement of the Substance Misuse Worker in addressing the training needs of prison staff in terms of drug education. The SMW has developed a programme to increase the knowledge and develop the skills required when working with prisoners who use substances.

Thank you

Thank you all sincerely for supporting us during 2007. Our work could not continue without you.

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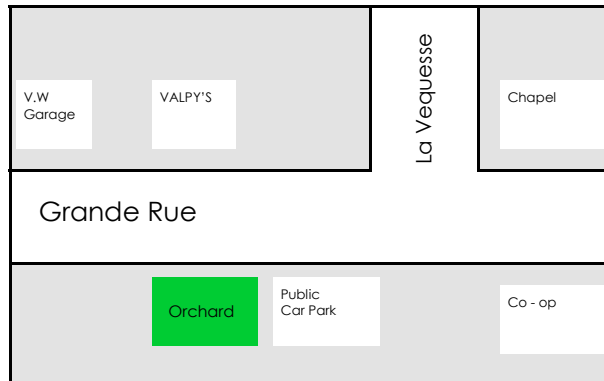
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