



**ANNUAL REPORT 2011**

**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

Chris Sackett

Judy Beaugeard

David Leafe

Mike Watson

Philip Eyre

*Chairman*

*Treasurer*

*Resigned 18<sup>th</sup> April*

**Staff team**

Tracey Rear

Nathan Miller

Gill Ogier

Sarah Fellowes

*Manager*

*Education & Training Drug Worker*

*Criminal Justice Drug Worker*

*Prison Substance Misuse Worker*

## Staff Profiles



**Tracey Rear** BSc (Hons), Dip DD, Dip CPC  
**Manager**

Tracey has been working for Drug Concern for thirteen 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 eight 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.



**Sarah Fellowes** Dip CCJ  
**Prison Substance Misuse Worker**

Sarah joined the team in August 2010 bringing with her a wealth of experience working with homeless substance users within the criminal justice system in the U.K.

Sarah has a diploma in community and criminal justice and completed the NVQ training with the UK Probation Service. Sarah is well versed in the delivery of evidence-based practice.



**Nathan Miller**  
**Drug Education and Training Worker**

Nathan joined the team in September 2010 having spent eight years developing and leading youth and community work locally.

Nathan is adept at delivering engaging presentations both in a formal and informal setting and has a good rapport with young people. Nathan's creative streak complements much of the theory-based practice of our work.

## **Manager's Report**

Throughout 2011 Drug Concern continued to deliver services to those affected by substance use either directly or indirectly; as demand for these services continues to grow Drug Concern is considering developing a more proactive approach towards prevention, particularly amongst the children of substance using parents. The challenge for Drug Concern is how we provide this type of early intervention whilst coping with the demand for our already existing services when both public and private purses are under great pressure.

We are pleased to report the reduction in contacts reporting problems or concerns relating to the formerly named 'legal highs'. Statistics relating to these substances continue to follow a downward trend; however, use of these substances continues to be an ongoing concern within the drug using community as drug users make informed choices to use these substances regardless of the levels of harm and unknown risks associated with them. Drug Concern actively communicates the risks associated with the use (particularly intravenous use) of these substances with its client base. Anecdotal evidence is suggesting that repeated use of these substances is causing extreme mood swings and suicidal tendencies.

Year on year Drug Concern has seen an increase of 54 people referred to our service for assessment; the primary substance of use continues to be opiate-based substances such as heroin, suboxone, fentanyl etc. Alcohol is not far behind in terms of problematic substance use. The primary age band of clients falls in the category over 26 years of age; however this is closely followed by those between the ages of 19-25.

The increased demand for Drug Concern's services we believe is two-fold. Drug Concern's profile is increasing and organisations are being more assertive with their referrals, particularly as their own resources are experiencing greater pressures. This is presenting Drug Concern with a very real challenge in terms of how we meet this increased demand.

Our short-term solution to this problem has been to develop one of our staff profiles to take on a limited client caseload; in the longer-term however Drug Concern needs to build in resilience within the staff team to be able to cope with the changing demands and external pressures upon the organisation.

Historically Drug Concern has been a predominantly reactive service, working within the principles of harm reduction with our services users; with the exception of our drug education programme in the schools our preventative work is limited.

With this in mind and considering our need to build in organisational resilience we have been engaging key stakeholders from various sectors to discuss the needs surrounding families affected by parental substance use. It is well documented that parental drug use is often a strong contributing factor to generational substance use, and one of local government's objectives is to prevent the early onset of substance use.

Mindful of the fiscal limitations of most sectors, Drug Concern committed to raising the funds to employ an additional full-time worker specifically to coordinate an accredited program aimed at targeting families with children between the ages of 8 years to 17 and whose parents are or have been substance users; the primary aim of this being to break the cycle of generational substance use early on; the States of Guernsey Drug and Alcohol Strategy is a keen supporter of this initiative.

This role (if our fund raising is a success) would also contribute to the existing work of Drug Concern and go some way to reducing the existing pressures, at least until the review of the Drug and Alcohol Strategy in 2015.

Addictive behaviour is not something which is solved overnight and is often described as a journey of recovery. Those affected by substance use, directly or otherwise will appreciate the time, energy and courage change requires. Providing services to respond

to the needs of those affected by addiction is equally as challenging and requires a service which provides consistency and flexibility at the same time.

Drug Concern would like to thank those who have supported us throughout 2011 as we have continued to provide services to those affected by substance use, without your support much of our work would not happen.

I also take this opportunity in thanking the staff and directors of Drug Concern for their contributions during 2011.

### **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 targeted psychosocial interventions, information, advice and support, and the provision of a needle exchange programme. We are strong supporters of a multi-agency approach to the problems of drug misuse and we recognise and support the work of the Bailiwick Drug and Alcohol Strategy Group in coordinating the efforts of a number of organisations in both the public and voluntary sectors.

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. This is an area of work which is experiencing increasing demand and for which Drug Concern is going to have to seek additional funding to resource if it is to prevent waiting lists from becoming a 'norm'.

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 a growing number 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 risk of transmission of certain viruses.

At Drug Concern we work hard to engage with needle exchange users, with the aim of building therapeutic relationships that can lead to behaviour change. Our evening opening times have allowed service users access outside their working day, which means there is more opportunity to engage them in conversation and build relationships.

Auricular acupuncture is used as a treatment to reduce the discomfort of withdrawal from substances by helping to reduce 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 all secondary schools from years seven to eleven, together with the sixth form centres and the College of Further Education. The programme addresses the issues and choices relating to substance misuse and its associated risks and potential consequences. Since 2009 there has been the need for a particular focus on emerging drugs of concern (previously known as "legal highs") as they encouraged a culture of experimentation among young people, who were not aware of the harms associated with their use. Information sessions are also provided for parents and teachers.

New for 2011 was an updated education programme that has been developed by Nathan with all sessions being interactive and embracing the technology that is available in the school classrooms. The programme addresses the issues and choices relating to substance misuse and the associated risks and potential consequences.

Drug Concern also provides support to other charities, businesses and organisations.

On Tuesday evenings throughout 2011 Drug Concern was a presence amongst the young people on Les Genat estate where we partnered with the Sports Commission and Arts

Commission. Whether we were playing football or just sitting together it was a good opportunity to engage with the young people where they live while continuing to build good relations and answer any questions or concerns they have about drugs.

Education, wherever it is delivered, is a key factor in prevention, particularly amongst young people. Hence we are keen to further promote this aspect of our work within the community, and to develop our work with other agencies in promoting the social and emotional wellbeing of young people.

### **Criminal Justice Drug Service**

The *Criminal Justice Drug Service* (CJDS), introduced nine 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 Board with the facilities necessary to enable them to impose treatment as a condition of supervision.

We see the partnership work between the Probation Service and Drug Concern as fundamental to the success of the CJDS.

The rate of referrals had an insignificant increase compared to 2010; similarly those accepted onto the service did not reflect significant changes (21 were accepted onto the service).

Significantly fewer individuals breached their supervision orders during 2011 which we believe is a direct result of the change in legal status of these substances.

Successful completion of orders remains higher than breaches, which continues to be an encouraging statistic. Clients can choose to receive support from Drug Concern upon completion of their order if this is identified as a need.

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. Involvement in the scheme is voluntary and not an alternative to prosecution or due process. 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 their engaging with a service that they would not otherwise access.

Drug Concern conducted a 12 week pilot study in a response to suggestions younger substance users were 'falling through the net' as no provision was offered over the weekend period.

The studies findings reported an increase of 23 contacts over the 12-week period; of these 2 individuals established contact with Drug Concern within the first few weeks of extending the service. No further appointments were received throughout the duration of pilot; on this basis Drug Concern could not justify reallocating resources from other work areas which demonstrated a high demand in need.

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**

The scope of our work in the prison focuses on drugs and alcohol, and acts as a conduit to some of our other community-based services upon release. During 2011 Drug Concern

considered how to improve support after release from prison into the community. Although work practice has not changed, uptake for post release work has improved reflecting equal numbers of released prisoners attending appointments compared to those who do not attend post release.

The Substance Misuse Worker (SMW) contributes to the activities of prison administration in a variety of ways 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, focusing on best practice within the Prison, and safe and healthy outcomes.
- Offender Management Unit (OMU) – The SMW has a significant input in the OMU, which concentrates on the individual cases within the Prison, specifically prisoners' needs whilst in custody and ensuring these needs are adequately met.
- Interagency forum – dealing with issues that affect the various organisations which have an input into the Prison system.

A key objective is to assess every prisoner received into custody within 48 hours, or at most a week, of reception to establish his or her need for continuing therapeutic input. This gives an opportunity for prisoners to discuss confidentially their individual needs with the SMW as some do not wish to disclose their drug-use issues to prison or healthcare staff, feeling they risk incriminating themselves further. The first hours and days are also statistically the time when new inmates are at most risk of self-harm and suicide so this also provides a service to those with no identified drug or alcohol misuse issues to speak to an external, non-judgemental, agency during this difficult time.

Drug Concern re-established a substance use group within the prison during 2011. This has been well received by the prisoners and aims to increase awareness and motivation for changing substance use habits. This differs from one-to-one as it provides a peer learning element.

# *Thank you*

As ever we remain appreciative and grateful for your support. Our services would not operate if individuals and organisations did not give generously.

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