

# Drug Concern

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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.

### **Directors**

Jim Le Pelley      *Chairman*

Chris Sackett      *Treasurer*

David Leafe

Mike Watson

Philip Eyre

Rob Prow

### **Staff team**

Tracey Rear      *Manager*

Nathan Miller      *Education & Training Drug Worker*

Gill Ogier      *Criminal Justice Drug Worker*

## Staff Profiles



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

Tracey has been working for Drug Concern for sixteen 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 completed a Masters degree in Public Administration, and prior to this she was awarded a Bachelors degree in addictions management. Tracey also has qualifications in drug dependency and clinical and pastoral counselling.



**Gill Ogier RGN, H dip AN, Dip HG  
Criminal Justice Drug Worker**

Gill has been working for Drug Concern for ten 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.



**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. Nathan has been instrumental in developing the multimedia presentations as part of our families programme.

## Manager's Report

The previous year has been both exciting and challenging for Drug Concern in many ways. In 2012 we were busy preparing for the launch of our Children and Families programme, Moving Parents and Children Together (MPACT); we delivered the first of these in January and a second in September, both with great success. A total of 10 families attended the programme, each affected by varying levels of parental substance misuse. This type of early intervention preventative work is new ground for Drug Concern and it is with a real sense of belief and purpose that we consider how we can continue to develop this work.

Evaluations of the programme have been positive and having completed the 12-month evaluation we are encouraged by the feedback from families telling us the changes that were first experienced continued 12 months on. These are promising results and something we will continue to monitor and evaluate as part of our own learning towards 'what works'. Liaison with the programme developers have resulted in an interest to use the Guernsey model as an exemplar for social return on investment (SROI). I have been invited to present our experience and results as part of a SROI conference in London this year. A more detailed account of MPACT occurs later on in this report.

The number of people accessing Drug Concern services has seen no real change, with small variances observed in the type of service individuals have accessed. A total of 240 people received structured work for substance misuse problems; our substance misuse worker in the prison contacted approximately sixty per cent of these. These numbers remain fairly consistent with previous years with only slight year-on-year changes. Conducting work with service users in the criminal justice system continues to be an opportunity for engagement for otherwise difficult to engage clients. Targeted work aimed to increase knowledge and instigate attitudinal change forms a part of the work Drug Concern delivers in the Prison. Results for this are detailed in the prison subsection of this report.

Patterns of drug use continue as with the previous years. Heroin and pharmaceutical opiates such as fentanyl and suboxone remain the primary abused substances amongst our community clients. The exception relates to our work in the prison where alcohol is reported as the primary substance for which prisoners are seeking support. It is commonplace to work with clients who have multiple addictions, and for whom availability of a particular substance dictates the substance that is used. Emerging drugs of concern (formerly known as "legal highs") continue to be used by a number of our service users; however, these appear to be used interchangeably with opiate use.

The majority of clients accessing Drug Concern are over the age of 26. This age range represents roughly sixty per cent of our annual clients. Twenty-eight per cent of our client base is between the ages of 19 and 25. Patterns of age range of clients accessing Drug Concern remains consistent. Slight changes in data appear to reflect an ageing drug using population rather than a shift in drug use initiation.

One of the major challenges for Drug Concern during 2013 has related to recruiting suitably experienced staff locally to fill vacancies for the more specialized roles and shorter-term contracts. Capacity building and increasing organizational resilience to external factors is a priority for Drug Concern during 2014. As we start the year we are considering how we can provide services to meet fluctuating demands across the broad range of our services, whilst at the same time balancing this with maintaining consistency with provision.

Measuring outcomes continues to be a focus for us. Evaluating the successes of interventions aimed at problems as complex as substance misuse is never straightforward. This is largely due to service users having multiple needs whilst at the same time presenting as difficult to engage. Changes at policy level undoubtedly impact work practice, and it is with this in mind that Drug Concern intends to work closely with the Bailiwick Drug and Alcohol Strategy to determine the most appropriate measures of 'success'.

Our multidisciplinary work during 2013 has been invaluable in the delivery of MPACT. We would especially like to thank the Kindred Family Centre workers and Young Persons Substance Misuse Worker for contributing towards delivery and success of MPACT; this really is joined up working at its best. Our thanks extend to the organisations and individuals who have continued to show their support throughout 2013. Thank you for being our partners in change.

## **Core Services**

### Support services

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. Numbers seeking support and structured work have remained similar to previous years.

Work towards a single treatment system is being developed with our partner agencies in both the statutory and non-statutory services. This is aimed at providing better opportunities for service users to access services that may improve overall outcomes. The system is also being designed to provide a core data set, which will enable comparisons statistics with our counterparts in the UK.

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.

### Needle Exchange

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 and potentially others 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. This service contributes to the States of Guernsey 2020 vision with the promotion of safer health within the islands community. A total of 79 individuals used the needle exchange during 2013. Comparisons with the previous two years reflect an overall decrease from those registered in 2011 and a slight increase (5) compared to 2012. Although there are insignificant changes in numbers of people attending the needle exchange there is a significant reduction in the reported frequency of injecting behaviour.

Drug Concern endeavours 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 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.

All sessions are interactive and embrace 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 supplied material to teachers to enhance the work already delivered by our worker and with the aim to improve outcomes. At least 70 lessons used this material.

Encouraging feedback was received in the Healthy Schools Report, which focused in part on drug using behaviour. The report reflected a four per cent reduction in drug use among teenagers, over a three year period. We believe that the drug education programme contributed to this positive outcome.

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

### Criminal Justice Drug Service

The Criminal Justice Drug Service (CJDS), introduced ten 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 referral criteria were reconsidered during 2013 to prevent unnecessary referrals and the associated administration burden. This focus reduced the referral rate by almost sixty per cent. The number of individuals accepted onto the service remained the same as previous years, confirmation of a more focused referral process.

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.

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.

There was concern raised during 2012 regarding the dramatic reduction of referrals to this service. Drug Concern worked with the custody staff to raise awareness and provide information about the brief assessment process for this service. This was successful and resulted in an increase of just over 20% referral rate for the year. Alcohol use still is still the primary substance reported within this service.

### Prison

Our work in the prison covers both drugs and alcohol, and acts as a conduit to some of our other community-based services upon release.

The Prison Substance Misuse Worker (PSMW) plays an important role within the wider offender management team. This team concentrates on individual cases within the Prison, specifically prisoners' needs whilst in custody and ensuring these needs are adequately met.

This service has proved the most challenging in terms of continuous service provision and recruitment. Over the last four years Drug Concern has had to recruit from the UK to meet the skill base and experience needed for this role. 2013 was no exception as we experienced a disruption of service provision due to staff returning to the UK for residency.

In spite of this Drug Concern has continued to provide group work to prisoners who have been identified as ambivalent about their substance use. The programme targets offenders who have reported problems relating to drugs or alcohol and aims to increase the participants' awareness of how substance use impacts key areas of their lives using a variety of methods; outcome evaluations measure changes in attitudes as a result of group participation as well as collecting 'soft' data in the form of participant feedback.

The 2013 evaluation comprised pre- and post-programme testing in the form of a set of short questions focusing on change, with the following results;

- 33% of participants reported an increased need to make changes in their lives.
- 33% reported an increased understanding relating to the specific changes they needed to make
- 20% reported to be feeling more motivated towards changing behaviour
- 13% reported to accept more responsibility for the changes they needed to make
- 13% reported to be more open to receiving help than when they started the programme

These outcomes are extremely positive, reflecting a majority of prisoners experiencing attitudinal changes. These prisoners will go on to receive one-to-one work with the Drug Concern prison worker to focus on progressing these attitudinal changes into practical change.

#### Moving Parents and Children Together (MPACT)

The MPACT programme is Drug Concern's newest initiative and is aimed at providing early intervention services to children between the ages of 8 and 17 years of age in families affected by parental substance misuse. The programme works with the whole family and focuses on the primary aim of improving the safety and well-being of children within substance using families. It aims to provide the children with a voice, to promote the use of positive communication, increasing the child's resilience, help the family to work better together and to reduce feelings of isolation often associated with parental substance use.

This is an eight-week programme, which runs after school one night of the week. The ethos of the programme is about bringing families together, and one of the ways we achieve this is by providing a hot meal at the start of each session so families have an opportunity to sit down together.

Sessions are broken down into key topics such as making sense of addiction, self-esteem, communication etc. and comprise a mixture of whole group involvement as well as separating adults from children to focus on age appropriate content.

The programme requires a minimum of four facilitators to deliver the content and Drug Concern is grateful to our colleagues in the statutory services who contribute to the delivery of this innovative intervention.

Two programmes were delivered during 2013, made up of ten families, 10 adults and 12 children. Outcomes relating to individuals ability to cope for programme one increased by 45% and for programme two 50%.

Outcomes relating to functioning within the family and as individuals for programme one increased by 45% and for programme two by 60%.

A 12-month follow-up conducted for programme one produced the following results

- 100 % of participants reported that the family continued to communicate well with one another.
- 73 % reported a reduction in family problems all of which attributed change to participating in the programme.
- 64 % reported to be coping better as individuals.
- 100 % reported to be coping better as a family.
- 91 % reported that since completing MPACT their families worked better together.

These results are extremely encouraging. It is normal for change to occur in the time during and immediately after a programme, but to be able to report maintained changed is a significant outcome.

The initial plans for MPACT were to provide 6 programmes over a period of three years. We were presented with similar recruitment challenges for this position, and after discussion with our primary funder for the programme agreed to provide 9 programmes over a four-year period. This enables us to be more flexible in areas of service demand and Drug Concern's response to this demand.

As we continue to monitor and evaluate the programmes outcomes we hope to continue to produce such encouraging results.

## *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.

Association of Guernsey Charities

BBC Children in Need

Collas Crill Trust Limited

Financial Risk Management Charitable Trust

Insurance Corporation of The Channel Islands Ltd.

Lloyds TSB Foundation for the Channel Islands

Medical Specialist Group

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