



Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol Local Health Board

Sir Benfro
Pembrokeshire

Tel no: 01437 771 255
Ref: rs.apr.2004/rs2
Date: 23 April 2004

Mr R Chaffey
Clerk
Social Justice and Regeneration Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CARDIFF
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Chaffey

Re: Social Justice and Regeneration Committee Substance Misuse Policy Review

Thank you for providing the opportunity to contribute to the above review. Pembrokeshire Substance Misuse Action Team (SMAT) is a multi agency partnership group of key organisations who have a role, remit or interest in addressing drug and alcohol issues within the county. As such, it is made up of partners from the field of education, prevention, enforcement and treatment and has been instrumental in the planning and prioritisation of service developments in this field.

Individual agencies have been invited to contribute their own views to this review, but as Chair of the SMAT, I would ask that the following comments are noted on behalf of the group:

Planning and Coordination

The committee will be aware that currently, responsibility for the implementation of Local Substance Misuse Action Plans rests with the 22 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) across Wales. The previous system of Local Action Teams based on unitary authority areas, supported by five regional Drug and Alcohol Action teams was dissolved as of April 2003.

In the year that has followed, there has been some success in integrating substance misuse issues within the community safety agenda, but some areas of concern still remain. Namely, the capacity for CSPs to handle the quantity and complexity of the issues surrounding the local strategic and commissioning responsibilities they have inherited. As substance misuse is just one of the issues that CSPs have to address as component parts of their strategies, it may in future be more difficult for this issue to get as much time to be discussed in depth as it needs.

Alongside this, is the need for regional or national levels of commissioning of specialist treatment interventions which entail working across county borders to ensure economies of scale are maximised. For example, in the areas of residential rehabilitation and in patient detoxification services, it would not be possible to maintain equity of provision across the nation as a whole and some degree of spatial planning by the Assembly may be necessary to ensure equality of access to such facilities.

One additional limitation that has been noted over the last year is the lack of robust evidence locally and nationally in order to base planning and commissioning decisions upon. The Assembly will need to take a view as to the support that can be offered centrally to provide data on prevalence and incidence of substance misuse within local authority areas so that future demand for services can be assessed more appropriately.

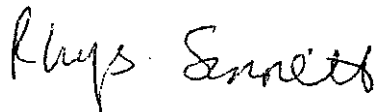
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On a positive note, it has been possible in the last year for substance misuse to access funding streams from community safety sources and this has led to increased investment locally in new service provision to the tune of approximately £100,000. This has greatly helped the SMAT in addressing areas of priority for service development, in particular with regard to services for young people.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Rhys Sinnett
Chair
Pembrokeshire Substance Misuse Action Team

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cc Sally Thompson, Community Safety Coordinator, Pembrokeshire Country Council
Hayley Lewis, Assistant Regional Advisor, Dyfed Powys Substance Misuse Advisory
Regional Team