
Welcome to the third edition of the Safer and Stronger Newsletter. In this issue we focus on the concept of 'Recovery' in drug treatment. There's also an update on Community Payback and news about funding opportunities for business, social enterprise and community groups. If you've got information you'd like to include in a future Safer & Stronger newsletter, please contact us at Community@n-somerset.gov.uk

Integrated Recovery in North Somerset

A new national drug strategy is due to be launched in December. It is widely expected that the strategy will drive drug treatment focused on recovery. But, what is recovery and what does it mean for drug treatment in North Somerset? What does recovery mean for your service?

What is recovery?

Recovery is about:

- Achieving the best possible treatment outcomes
- Sustaining outcomes after treatment
- Improving positive reintegration into the community

We asked Jon Griffiths (Joint Commissioning Officer in the Community Safety & Drug Action Team) to tell us more about achieving the best possible treatment outcomes.

Jon explained that "traditionally 'recovery' is abstinence based and refers to an individual who is trying to stay clean of drugs. Often this involves use of detoxification to slowly remove dependence and manage withdrawal symptoms. There is also a harm reduction approach to treatment which eliminates the harmful elements of illicit drug use. That might be crime or injecting. This type of treatment may involve use of substitute medication like methadone, which is intended to replace the need to use illicit drugs"

What does Recovery mean for treatment in North Somerset?

We are aiming to increase the number of service users who successfully exit treatment, drug free. As part of our Recovery drive, we want to ensure that maintenance on methadone does not become the 'only option' for an individual.

By increasing the quality of treatment, improving aftercare services, developing peer support programmes and developing better reintegration options we aim to reduce the number of re-presentations to treatment services. We are retendering services from April 2011 and recovery will be at the heart of future provision.

What does recovery mean for your service?

Drug misuse is far-reaching and cuts across many agencies such as:

- Housing – to achieve recovery service users need stable, suitable accommodation. Service users need housing support to resolve homelessness and to achieve resettlement away from other users and dealers. Reducing substance misuse reduces anti-social behaviour.
- Job Centre Plus and Benefits Agency – service users often need housing benefit and other benefits. With recovery claims reduce or cease
- Adult Social Services – service users need care and support but their needs reduce when they achieve recovery
- Police – successful treatment reduces crime, demands and costs for the Police and other criminal justice services
- Health Services – from GPs to hospitals – service users often have complex health needs. These reduce as recovery progresses
- Children’s Services – social care faces significant demands in supporting the children of substance misusing parents. Achieving recovery means fewer families with complex needs using intensive resources and fewer looked after children
- Education providers – a key part of recovery is education and training

It’s clear from the above list that achieving recovery is not just the task of the Treatment Service Providers (currently ARA and AWP provide the main community treatment services in North Somerset). A fully integrated recovery system involves all of us - knowing each other’s roles and responsibilities and ensuring that service users can move seamlessly between each agency. Joined up services will help us achieve our safeguarding responsibilities for both adults and children.

What can you do?

Advocacy

If in your dealings with an individual they inform you that they would like to receive treatment or are not getting the treatment they want, please act as an advocate on their behalf, encouraging them to talk to their local treatment agency, help them to write down their issues or contact CSDAT

Integration

Many of the drivers behind drug addiction are socially based. Abuse, relationship breakdowns, bereavement, job loss are all common factors. Treatment alone will not address the social issues.

Housing

Most of our service users have accommodation but it is the location that is the key to recovery. It is often important for an individual trying to become or remain abstinent that they are re-settled away from areas prone to drug dealing and using. Without this, they may quickly relapse when they are at their most vulnerable.

Education

Many service users have deprived backgrounds or may have been in care and lack basic educational skills. Where these needs are identified service users need to be encouraged to use facilities such as the Carlton Centre to build up their skills.

Employment

Service users have a wide variety of employment backgrounds. Some have very little whilst others have recognised trades such as building or plumbing. Agencies such as 'Working Links' can provide useful advice on how to return to work and the range of benefits on offer.

Children's and Social Services

If you become aware of adults/parents who are misusing drugs, call our providers or us. If we can get people into treatment we can reduce the burden they place on our services and help rebuild family life.

Where to find out more

The NTA together with Society Guardian has launched a new microsite promoting the benefits of recovery and reintegration from drug addiction:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/drug-treatment>

The site features positive accounts of treatment including healthcare, criminal justice and wider social support including:

- a Chief Superintendent describes how the police are playing a leading role in tackling drug misuse and reducing crime;
- a GP describes why health workers can and should be ambitious for clients;
- a former addict now in recovery attributes her new positive life, which includes a stable job and motherhood, to effective drug treatment;

If you have any queries, please contact jon.griffiths@n-somerset.gov.uk or ted.sherman@n-somerset.gov.uk or call 01934 426752

ARA can be contacted on 01934 412273 or visit www.addictionrecovery.org.uk

Searching for funding

North Somerset Council provides online funding search portals designed to help local businesses, social enterprises and voluntary groups in their search for available funding and support. There is no charge for the service, all businesses or groups have to do is register their details and they can then access details of thousands of different funds and trusts.

Businesses can find details of grants, loans and venture capital, as well as advice and help with searches, at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/NorthSomerset4Business.

There is another portal especially for social enterprises at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/NorthSomerset4SocialEnterprise which offers help and guidance along with details of public and private funds.

Voluntary and community groups can also search for trust funds or grant schemes and find the latest news on funding at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/NorthSomerset4Community.

There is more help and advice for businesses and community groups on the council website. Look at the 'Advice and Support' pages of the 'Business' and 'Community' sections at www.n-somerset.gov.uk.

This is a really important resource provided by North Somerset Council for the benefit of local residents. If you know any businesses or voluntary groups who might be interested, please pass on the details or if you have any queries please contact Phil Humphries, Senior Development Officer Phil.Humphries@n-somerset.gov.uk

Community Payback Launch

The new Community Payback initiative which featured in last month's edition had its official launch on Saturday 9th October. Representatives from partner agencies, local councilors and the media were invited to come along and see the scheme in action at Drove Road playing fields.



Those who came down to the launch saw the Payback team hard at work clearing rubbish, painting out graffiti and cutting back overgrown brambles at the site in Weston-super-Mare. The scheme received some very positive media coverage over the weekend which has seen a large number of community groups and members of the public make contact to offer suggestions of projects the team could undertake over the next few months.

If you would like any further details on the scheme, or have any suggestions of projects the team could assist with, please contact Amy Hurst Amy.Hurst@n-somerset.gov.uk

Coming up in our next issue:

- Neighbourhood Management
- Faith Week