



Quarterly Newsletter • Issue 1 December 2008



## Welcome from the Chair

### Over to you

Today's environment is a challenging, exciting and changing one for action teams. It is an environment in which communications and learning from each other will be of vital importance. This newsletter provides us with an opportunity to share our ideas, successes and challenges.

A special thanks to all who have contributed to our first edition. Among the interesting articles inside you will read about:

- Promoting zero alcohol use in pregnancy from Angus
- One year on - the LEAP project in the Lothians and Edinburgh
- The Circle pilot project offering services to women released from Cornton Vale prison
- Highlights from the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions conference in Cyprus
- Glasgow's first ever large scale community led investigation into how alcohol affects communities
- Key findings from the Grampian 'Usual Suspects Survey'
- Working with large scale outdoor music events in Perth and Kinross
- Forth Valley's Street Smart work

Of course, a new newsletter needs a name, 'Over to you' is a transitional title to give you the opportunity to send us your ideas. A small prize is offered for the best suggestion – so get your thinking caps on!

**Dr. Maggie Watts**  
SAADAT Chairperson



**We would like to wish all Association members  
best wishes for the festive season  
and the coming year**



**From**

**Dr Maggie Watts, Theresa Martinus, Leon Wylie & Kathleen Donnelly**



## **SAADAT Presents at ICAA 2008**

### **Empowering Practitioners – The 51<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Dependencies**

SAADAT took the Scottish Government's new strategic approach to alcohol to the 2008 ICAA conference to seek the views of the international community. Feedback was extremely positive with most discussion around the value of increasing age restrictions in off-sale outlets only. Ireland and Finland shared their experiences with us reinforcing that greater impact was achieved by altering availability and price than by age of purchase.

A summary report of the conference will be completed soon and will be available to download from the SAADAT website. Until then, a few of the highlights that may be of interest:

#### ***Swedish National Institute of Public Health - a parent focused prevention programme***

Local Swedish communities identified negative drinking trends among adolescents, agreed this was a problem that had to be addressed and with leadership from their public health institute developed a prevention programme actively involving parents as change-agents in their communities.

The programme met the following criteria:

- Academically robust, with university input for design and evaluation
- Focused on the effect of parental influence on young people's drinking
- Strengthened normative attitudes and unified parental action to reduce alcohol consumption
- Strengthen the importance of parental roles

A 15 min. input was delivered by parents themselves during routine parent evenings at schools. Parents discuss their role and are encouraged to sign a contract committing to:

- Challenging public drinking by young people in their community safe in the knowledge that they had the support of the children's parents.
- Monitoring their own drinking behaviour around young people mindful of mixed messages or double standards.
- Talk to their children about the project and make them aware of what the project means to them and their expectations about the behaviour of their children.

#### ***A 3-Year Follow-up of a national campaign to promote abstinence from alcohol during pregnancy***

This study is published in French but a translation is now available thanks to the contribution of Charles Piggott of AFS. A health warning now appears on alcoholic drinks packaging to promote abstinence during pregnancy. This was complemented with a press campaign and extensive media coverage around the implementation of this measure. A telephone follow-up study of 1000 people aged 15 years and above in 2004 and 2007 respectively produced the following results.

Knowledge of the recommendation that women should avoid alcohol if pregnant increased. The belief that risk to the foetus starts after the first glass also significantly increased. The study concluded that the social norm regarding alcohol consumption during pregnancy appears to have shifted to 'no alcohol'.

#### ***Societal changes affecting addiction practitioners: The Challenge.***

Dr. Peter A. Vamos focused on the increasing number of clients presenting with co-occurring psychiatric disorders, currently estimated at 40%. The following key points were made:

The absence of a common language, between and within the addiction and mental health communities, has led to confusion and suggests a lack of consensus about the conditions. He maintained that when services are combined, addictions become less significant. For practitioners this means they must understand the rules of evidence in order to correctly interpret and apply the literature on causation, prognosis, diagnostic tests and treatment strategy. Historically, it has taken almost 20 years for published research findings to be implemented into clinical practice.

He concluded that evidence based treatment also requires evidence of government commitment to encouraging and sustaining best practice treatment networks. Resources remain an important issue and these must be found to disseminate research findings to practitioners in a timely fashion, accompanied by training resources where necessary. Finally, a multi disciplinary treatment continuum needs to be fostered with a 'no wrong door' policy for access.

A translation of the full study is available by contacting Theresa.

## Around the ADAT's

### Action on Alcohol & Drugs Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray



#### USUAL SUSPECTS SURVEY – KEY FINDINGS



Presented results are representative of all those participating in the survey (Grampian wide) with a baseline of 1545 completed responses. Results have been reported in this way as it is worth noting that there was very little statistical variation in the results when directly compared between Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray.

On any one occasion (either at home or on a night out) individuals reported drinking more than the recommended guidelines at 5.2 drinks across the survey. That said it was very encouraging that nearly 40% of respondents drink at below this level (1-3 drinks) indicating closer adherence to the sensible drinking guidelines. The same individuals also perceived that the 'average north-east drinker' consumed an average of 7.9 drinks, which clearly over-estimates and represents a negative view of peer drinking habits, being nearly 50% higher than what is actually reported. This misperception may be significant, as the belief that others drink more than we do, could contribute to people conforming to a false and exaggerated norm. The net result could mean that our individual alcohol consumption may increase.

Other areas where perceived drinking norms varied from actual reported behaviour included that the majority of respondents were inclined to:

- think getting drunk is undesirable*
- pace themselves when drinking*
- eat food or drink water before/during drinking*
- not view drinking as a reward for hard work*
- not think that drinking excessively is acceptable when stressed*

These points varied significantly between actual and perceived norms with people generally feeling their peers would not share these views. For example, individuals assumed that 56% of their peers find getting drunk desirable, whereas this view, in fact, was only held by 14% of respondents.

Other findings include that:

- 90% of people have not experienced anti-social behaviour or violence*
- 98% have never been involved in a serious alcohol related accident*
- 80% of people have never missed their work through alcohol*

Worryingly, some 12% of the survey population reported having experienced a detrimental effect on their personal health due to their alcohol consumption (found to be highest in the 26-35 year grouping). However, this result may demonstrate that individuals, through increased awareness, are now making the connection between over-consumption of alcohol and its impact on their health and wellbeing.

Two-thirds of respondents reported that they had felt able to choose not to drink on occasions by stating they did not wish to drink, without the need to offer any excuses. On a similar note, it was encouraging that the majority of respondents reported that they kept 2 alcohol free days each week.

In summary it was encouraging that 95% of respondents reported being aware of sensible drinking guidelines and that drink-driving was regarded as an unacceptable behaviour. Although there was a high awareness level reported of sensible drinking guidelines, the survey demonstrated that the majority of respondents did not always apply this knowledge by monitoring their own consumption (e.g. calculating their alcohol intake in units). Therefore the key media message formed from the survey during Alcohol Awareness Week was to encourage the population of Grampian to 'take the challenge' by logging onto [www.alcoholawarenessweek.com](http://www.alcoholawarenessweek.com) for details of how they could take simple and practical steps to enjoy alcohol responsibly.

## Glasgow



'The Ripple Effect' is the first ever large scale community led investigation into how alcohol affects communities across the city of Glasgow. The project was commissioned by the Communities Sub-group and jointly funded by Greater Glasgow and Clyde Alcohol Action Team. Community members have been integral to the entire process of the survey. The methodology and ethos of the survey adhered to the National Standards of Community Engagement at all stages of the project.

Community members were identified through the various alcohol and drug fora across Glasgow to be trained as community researchers. The forums are affiliated to the Communities Sub-group, a multi agency group which also includes Glasgow Community and Safety Services, NHS GGC Health Improvement Alcohol and Drug Team, Glasgow Addiction Services and the Alcohol and Drug Action Team. The group reports to the Glasgow City Addictions Planning and Implementation Group and aims to support local communities and service providers to implement programmes and activities that reduce alcohol and drug use and associated harm.

After training in consultation and research methods the researchers consulted with 4697 people from 16 different areas across the city. One of the most startling figures generated within this consultation was that 99% of people spoken to within Glasgow City felt that alcohol was having an effect on their community. For many residents the ability to live normally within their communities is negatively affected by problems and issues associated with alcohol use.

Like the ripple effect created by a pebble in a pond the 'ripple effect' of alcohol was found to go far beyond the individual and their immediate family. Groups of people felt to be more affected were young people, the elderly and younger children.

It was also widely accepted that Glasgow has a drinking culture and that this culture impacts on its communities. In spite of this, it was widely believed that the culture not only could be changed, but that it had to be changed in order to improve the quality of life of those living within the City.

Whilst acknowledging that these changes would take time, and crucially would require a coordinated approach by both the community and related services to tackle the identified issues, change was seen as achievable and would ultimately help to reduce the 'ripple effect' of alcohol upon communities.

The community researchers are now in the process of promoting the findings to groups and strategic planners across the city with a view to tackling the identified issues and areas of concern. It is hoped that the findings from the survey will attract community interest in alcohol and drug fora by tackling the issues identified by the community through consultation and engagement thereby demonstrating that community involvement can have an impact.



During the consultation it became evident that people felt that any attempt to redress any of the highlighted negative effects would be most beneficial if residents were both informed of, and involved in, any actions taken or planned. Encouraging residents to be involved will help ensure suggested actions are practical and realistic for the communities in which they are to be undertaken. Being informed and involved in this final planning stage will also help residents to feel ownership of planned actions and therefore will be more likely to help ensure their success.

For further information on The Ripple Effect please contact Lee Craig Alcohol Development Worker, Glasgow Community & Safety Services, Westergate, 11 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 6AB Phone: 0141 276 7652 Email: [lee.craig@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:lee.craig@glasgow.gov.uk)

The Ripple Effect and 16 local area reports can be downloaded directly from [www.glasgowgrand.org](http://www.glasgowgrand.org)

## Angus

### Angus DAAT's Carol Anne Carnegie supports the 'Alcohol and Pregnancy Doesn't Mix' campaign

The Angus Drug and Alcohol Action Team's Focus on Alcohol Angus project supported this month's Alcohol Focus Scotland national campaign promoting the message that an alcohol-free pregnancy is the best choice for expectant mothers to make.

Eileen McArthur, manager of the Focus on Alcohol Angus project which draws members from Angus Council, NHS Tayside, the emergency services and other groups said: "There is uncertainty about the safety of drinking small amounts of alcohol during pregnancy. The project wishes to reaffirm that the only way to put women's minds at rest is for them to adopt an alcohol free pregnancy and that by doing this, they are giving their baby the best possible start."



Carol Anne Carnegie (left) with Phyllis Winters, midwife, Montrose Maternity Unit.

Phyllis Winters, midwife from the Montrose Maternity unit, stated, 'We want to hear a clear and consistent message from healthcare professionals and the media that alcohol and pregnancy don't mix. There has been a degree of confusion recently where different bodies have given out different messages about alcohol and pregnancy and this needs to improve. I am clear about this: zero tolerance is best. I would urge anyone with queries or worries around this issue to contact their midwife'. Local mum Carol Anne Carnegie is pregnant with her second child and is also employed by the Angus Drug and Alcohol Team. A main part of Carol's job is to ensure that the most relevant and accurate information around alcohol and drugs reaches the citizens of Angus.

Carol was pleased to be able to support this campaign and commented: 'We are concerned that women have been given conflicting advice about whether or not drinking alcohol during pregnancy will cause harm to their developing baby. There is proven risk that heavy drinking during pregnancy can lead to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. However, the exact level for risky consumption is unknown. What we do know is that the risk of damage increases the more alcohol is consumed. This means that to drink no alcohol at all is the best and safest choice. This is also the advice given by Scotland's Chief Medical Officer and the British Medical Association.'

Carol concluded: "I am fortunate in my job to know exactly the right advice to take and I would like to get the message that alcohol and pregnancy don't mix to other expectant mums."

## Forth Valley

### Forth Valley Street Sense Project

'Street Sense' developed in Forth Valley from a community project championed by Elaine Cochrane from Health Promotion. Elaine visited soup-kitchens across the 3 local authority areas in Forth Valley asking men if they would be interested in playing football. A league was set up and to cut a long story short, the initial evaluation showed that those involved had reduced their alcohol and drug use, reduced criminal activity and improved their sense of wellness. Often the first time in their lives, people experienced a sense of achievement, supportive networks and a sense for doing something right.



This project represented a catalyst for turning around lives, and graduates from the football league trained as sports coaches and were given work by local authorities.

Graduates from Street Sport now volunteer to make up the Street Sense Team. They present sessions utilising their own life experiences in schools, colleges and youth groups. The volunteers lead workshops which discuss alcohol and drug related violence, the impact of alcohol on decision making and the long term effects of substance misuse. The workshops also focus on the legal implications of knife carrying and the impact of peer pressure upon young people in communities today. To date they have delivered to over 900 young people from across Forth Valley.

Due to the overwhelming interest shown in Street Sense, a DVD is currently being developed for use as an educational aide by teachers and youth workers throughout schools and community groups.

For more information contact: [Elaine.cochrane@nhs.net](mailto:Elaine.cochrane@nhs.net)

## Edinburgh

### LEAP's first year

The Lothians & Edinburgh Abstinence Programme (LEAP) celebrated its first year of treating clients in September. A Scottish Government funded pilot, its aim is to help clients dependent on alcohol and drugs achieve their goal of reaching a substance-free recovery. The service is highlighted in the Government's new drugs strategy 'The Road to Recovery' as an example of good practice.

The model is quasi-residential, which involves two sites: one as a centre for the day programme run by NHS Lothian and another where City of Edinburgh Council staff provide supported accommodation in a former homeless hostel. A small number of patients attend the programme from home.

The programme lasts three months and its core components include:

- Physical and mental health assessments and treatment
- Therapy (one to one and group psychotherapy)
- Provision of safe/sober housing (both during and after treatment)
- Vocational training (provided in-house by partners 'Transition')
- Mutual aid (connections to recovery groups in the city)
- Family therapy
- Aftercare (for up to two years)

The first year has seen over 300 referrals from Edinburgh and the Lothians with around 100 people commencing treatment. Retention rates are 62% for the whole year, with this climbing in the last quarter to more than 80%. A follow-up survey of the first 40 clients completing treatment found that more than two thirds were maintaining their abstinent recoveries with an average recovery time of 5 months for the sample.

The project is being externally evaluated by Figure 8 Consultancy, who in their first annual evaluation report, found high service user and stakeholder satisfaction with the service and scored the service highly in terms of quality. LEAP compared very favourably with other services in Scotland. A report due at the end of 2009 will detail outcomes for the treatment group using the European Addiction Severity Index tool.

There are plans to work actively with waiting list clients to keep them engaged and to tackle an unforeseen problem. Because of the high retention and recovery rates, the aftercare groups are bursting at the seams! Increasing the provision for this group around recovery management principles is on the cards.



In April 2007, Circle undertook a piece of research in Cornton Vale Prison. The report 'What Life After Prison? Voices of Women of Cornton Vale' was launched in August 2007. Following on from this, Circle has begun a pilot project offering services to women being released from the prison who have children affected by parental drug and alcohol use, using our existing Harbour Project service in Edinburgh as well as our services in West Lothian and North and South Lanarkshire. The project will also support a number of women returning to Glasgow East. The project aims to develop parenting capacity and minimise the risk to children through parental drug and alcohol use and imprisonment.

Through the support of the Robertson Trust, Circle has been able to employ a worker who will be based in Cornton Vale. The worker will be responsible for identifying women who are eligible for the service and will co-ordinate a handover to the Circle worker in the community as well as offer direct support herself in some cases.

If you would like more information about this new service, please contact Grant Sugden, Operational Manager on 0131 552 0305 or [grant.sugden@circlescotland.org](mailto:grant.sugden@circlescotland.org)

## Perth & Kinross

# Safe-T in the Park

The number and scale of outdoor music festivals held across Scotland continue to grow and with these pressures on local partnerships and services to respond. We approached this year's local festival with the following questions in mind:

What can our local partnership influence?

How can our methodology be modernised?

What resources are needed to achieve results?

The published literature on involvement in these types of events is predominantly, but not solely, negative. One major criticism is that partnership and community action programmes in such environments are like "*a barricade of small sandbags attempting to hold back the effects of a huge rising flood of alcohol consumption*". On the positive side, most of the literature refers to traditional information campaigns and does not address the positive influence partnerships can bring to bear on shaping the environment through committee structures. Furthermore, the impact of using modern communications technology to engage people before the event itself is not addressed in previous research.

We identified the following list of potential wins which highlight the leverage community planning partnerships have in their role as grantors of any licences:

- Monitoring trader practice by trading standards
- All serving staff trained and demonstrate good serving practices
- Commitment to 'Challenge 21 or 25' policies and practices
- Learning from high profile tragedies, ensure that event organiser staff produce enhanced disclosure as a condition of employment at the event
- Survey target audience to obtain social marketing data that can be used to shape future involvement
- The provision of low and no alcohol alternatives
- Full cost recovery of enforcement and emergency services
- Incentives for participants to participate in the survey e.g. free tickets to next year's event
- Permission and support to survey festival goers

**Modernising the methodology:** We began our dialogue with event-goers before the event took place. By adopting this approach, we hoped to promote recognition of the brand 'partying hard? stay safe!', the staff attending the event, and the survey and incentives on offer for participation. This was achieved by creating a direct link from the official web-site to a purpose-built site designed to promote harm reduction and safety messages in the three month run-up to the event, [www.safe-drink-drug.com](http://www.safe-drink-drug.com).

**Social networking sites:** A social network page was set up on Bebo, a highly popular social networking site for young people in Scotland. To engage festival goers in discussion, promote awareness of action team staff attending the event, and to direct friends to the information website.

**The survey:** Twelve peer educators from local projects volunteered their services to be trained as interviewers. The survey form was designed to provide data on age, gender, postcode, first time or seasoned music festival goer, and a range of questions considered valuable by the SAADAT communications sub-group looking at music festivals.

**Tools of Engagement:** Lightsticks were selected based on previous experience and their dual role as safety lighting for campers and dance props for non-campers.

**Results:** For a budget of £6000, 900 event goers interacted with our Safe-T messages through the website before the event took place. 150 'bebo' friends were established, and 2000 questionnaires were completed.

For more information contact: Liam McLaughlin at: [ljmclaughlin@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:ljmclaughlin@pkc.gov.uk)

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*“SAADAT - Providing a strong and unified voice for all of Scotland’s alcohol and drug action teams”.*

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Established in May 2006, SAADAT is a voluntary association.

The views expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views & policies of SAADAT.

SAADAT welcomes contributions—please send them to: [kathleen.donnelly@saadat.org.uk](mailto:kathleen.donnelly@saadat.org.uk). Please note they may be edited.



## Training & Events

- **6th Annual Drug & Alcohol Professionals Conference 13 January, London**  
*This years presentations will cover subjects including the new drug strategy & evaluation of the first drug strategy, working with families, getting people into employment & diversity & inequality at work.*  
**Further information:** [www.fdap.org.uk/fdapevents/conf2009.html](http://www.fdap.org.uk/fdapevents/conf2009.html)
- **Making Recovery Real 26 February, Perth**  
*Scottish Recovery Network is hosting its 5th national conference. A free event focusing on learning about recovery from mental health problems, consider initiatives related to promoting recovery & encourage debate about the concept of recovery.*  
**Further information:** [www.scottishrecovery.net](http://www.scottishrecovery.net)
- **Psychological Evidence-Based Approaches to Addiction: Thursday 4 June 2009, Glasgow**  
*An advanced training for experienced professionals in the addictions field. Provided by Professors Robin Davidson, John B Davies and Richard Velleman.*  
*Cost: £185 including lunch, refreshments and handouts*

**Further information** and to book a place contact Christine McKendrick, University of Strathclyde Department of Psychology on 0141 548 4263 or email: [casp@strath.ac.uk](mailto:casp@strath.ac.uk)