

Croydon DAAT Newsletter



April/May 2007. Issue 7

www.croydondaat.org.uk

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BAGS OF CANNABIS DUMPED IN STREETS.....

..... See page 4

WELCOME

Welcome to Croydon Drug & Alcohol Action Team's newsletter. The purpose of this is to let people know what is happening in the drugs and alcohol world in Croydon and beyond. We hope you find the articles interesting and informative and would love to hear reports and stories from individuals and agencies about the latest news on substance misuse in Croydon. Please send articles to Karen.handy@croydon.gov.uk or fax to: 020 8633 9613 or by post to DAAT Unit, 6th floor, Carolyn House, 22-26 Dingwall Road, Croydon CR0 9XF.

CROYDON DAAT CO-ORDINATION UNIT

Andy Opie Co-ordinator	Janet Austin Joint Commissioning Manager	Jackie Cave YP Co-ordinator	Karen Handy Office Manager
Ray Rajagopalan Data Manager	Jennifer Francis DIP Project Manager	Taiwo Dayo-Payne DAAT Projects Manager	Petrina Parnell Data/Admin Assistant
Lola Kolapo Commissioning Assistant	Melanie Bowman DAAT ROB Co-ordinator	Stephen Christian DIP Data Co-ordinator	Selena O'Neill DIP Core Team Mgr

DAAT UPDATE

DAAT Housing Review

Since October 2005 the DAAT has funded a Temporary Accommodation Scheme and a Rent in Advance Scheme for drug users. Between October 2005 and February 2007, 69 clients have been placed in bed and breakfast and 56 into longer term accommodation through the Rent in Advance Scheme. The DAAT Unit has recently commissioned a consultant using underspend from the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund to carry out an evaluation of housing provision for drug and alcohol users with a particular focus on these schemes. The aims of the evaluation are to:



- Assess the impact of the projects in helping service users to find and maintain accommodation and remain in treatment
- Gain the views of users of the project on whether it helped them reduce or abstain from drug use or maintain abstinence
- Gain the views of partner organisations on the scheme

The review will help inform the future development of housing initiatives for drug users. It is anticipated that the review will be complete by the end of May 2007.

Future Drug Strategy

The Government's ten year drug strategy comes to an end in March 2008 and the Home Office has recently started consulting on its plans to develop the next one. A briefing event was held in London on 13 March 2007 that the DAAT Unit attended. The key messages that came from the event were that there had been some key successes over the last 10 years including, a reduction in young people using drugs, reduced drug related crime, the rollout of the Drug Interventions Programme, the increase in numbers of people entering treatment and reductions in waiting times for treatment. There is however much more work to do and there is uncertainty over the future investment that will go into tackling drug misuse.

DIP - Follow Up Assessments

From April 2007 there was a change to the DIP programme. At the moment all arrestees who test positive have to attend and remain at a Required Assessment (RA). This is conducted by the DIP Core Team and usually takes place in the police custody suite. The RA is an initial assessment and would only collect brief client details. As of 1st April 2007 individuals are now required to attend a Follow Up Assessment where further information will be taken plus a care plan developed. This creates an opportunity for people to engage with treatment or support, even if they do not go on to be charged with an offence. Sanctions exist and will be enforced by the Police against those who fail to attend and remain for either assessment without good cause.

Single Assessment Process Roll Out (Models of Care)

The DAAT Unit has been using a consultant to develop standardised assessment and care planning tools across adult drug and alcohol services. This work was a key recommendation from the DAAT Strategic Review (January 2006) and started in April 2006. The draft policy and tools were circulated for consultation during February 2007 and include:

- Standardised triage and comprehensive assessment tools.
- An information sharing protocol
- An integrated multi-agency care plan proforma.
- A single policy on key working and care co-ordination
- A carers policy
- A transitional policy

The next stage of the process is to agree the final amendments to the policy following the consultation. Electronic solutions to the sharing and transfer of client information will also be finalised over the next two months. Training for all members of staff who will use the new policy will be delivered on a multi-agency basis over 3 separate $\frac{1}{2}$ days (staff will only be required to attend one) in May with full rollout of the tools taking place on June 4th. A full evaluation of the policy and its implementation will take place after September 2007.

DRUG INTERVENTIONS PROGRAMME (DIP) TENDER AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

The DAAT is pleased to announce the appointment of the Westminster Drug Project (WDP) as the new provider of the Drug Interventions Programme core team in Croydon. This follows an open tendering process that started in October 2006. It is anticipated that they will start operations in early August. In the meantime WDP will be introducing themselves and finding out more about the services that they will be working in partnership with.

LOCAL NEWS

Extracts from the Croydon Advertiser:

STORY 1:

Bags of cannabis dumped in streets

March 22 2007 By Neil Millar

HUNDREDS of cannabis plants - with an estimated street value of up to £30,000 - have been found dumped in three Croydon streets.

On a bizarre morning, more than 80 identical laundry bags stuffed with the drug were discovered abandoned in quiet residential roads.

Stunned police are now trying to figure out why a gang got rid of such a potentially valuable hoard.

They are sure the plants - which were still embedded in the soil in which they were growing - were dropped under the cover of darkness.



The first stash - an estimated 15 to 20 bags - was found by the side of Richmond Road, in Thornton Heath.

Another 34 bags were then picked up by a separate Streetscene crew, at the junction of Gibson's Hill and Covington Way, in Norbury, after a resident phoned the council.

But this team only discovered what they had picked up when they stumbled across another 32 bags at around 2pm from the pavement on Mersham Road, at the junction with Hythe Road, in Thornton Heath.

Having initially thought they had found fly-tipped waste they then opened one of the bags to find the haul of cannabis plants.

Detective Sergeant James Hallums, from Croydon police, admitted it was baffling as to why the bags had not all been dumped together.

And he does not hold out much hope of catching whoever decided to get rid of the drugs.

He said: "It's obviously the remnants of a cannabis factory from somewhere because it's been left out in the open for some considerable time, probably overnight, and you have had people walking past and looking at it, it's going to limit our chances of finding out where it came from."

The plants were taken away to be destroyed - and DS Hallums is now trying to get to the bottom of why they were so hastily discarded.

He said: "It could be a landlord who has come into his premises and found it totally wrecked or it could be the perpetrators getting rid of evidence because they have moved on somewhere else. Who knows?"

Chrissi Russell, deputy team manager for Streetscene in north Croydon, thought the drugs were probably of poor quality and that the gang had tried to disguise the bags as builders' rubble.

** Do you know where the drugs came from? If so call our newsdesk on 020 8763 6666.*

Source: www.croydonadvertiser.co.uk

Story 2:

Drugs den just yards from playground

There was a report in the Croydon Advertiser (20th April 2007) about an abandon block of flats in Cherry Orchard Gardens, Croydon being used by drug misusers. Needles were found near a children's playground and empty vials strewn in the hallway.



It was discovered by fire fighters after answering a call about a suspected gas leak.

"A spokesman for Croydon Council said: "The syringes are being cleared now. There will be daily checks and if there are any syringes there, they will be removed immediately and we are also increasing the warden patrols."

Procedures have been issued by Croydon Council to regain possession of the property from squatters.

Source: Maheesha Kottegoda www.croydonadvertiser.co.uk

A DAY IN THE LIFE....

Restrictions on Bail (ROB) Co-ordinator: Melanie Bowman

ROB is part of the extension of the original Drug Interventions Programme where the aim is to encourage substance mis-users to engage in treatment and to reduce crime whilst on court bail and beyond. Attendance at treatment appointments are a compulsory bail condition granted by the court. My role is to co-ordinate the ROB provision, by liaising with treatment agencies, police, court staff and other ROB Co-ordinators in other boroughs.

With the aid of Kirsty Hoyle the ROB/CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) Administrator and Core DIP Team, I also gather information about ROB eligible clients prior to their court hearing and

make the court aware of their drug issues so they can be considered for ROB and possibly a Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR). The DIP Court Assessor (Jodie Plumley) provides the court with drug assessments. I then track those that are eligible and monitor compliance and progress for those that receive ROB conditions from the court whilst they are on bail.

Although most days throw up a range of activities, here is snapshot of one particular day.....

8.30am Arrive at Croydon Magistrates Court. The day begins immediately as information has to be gathered and summarised for the CPS on all ROB eligible clients for today.

I call the Arrest Referral Workers at Croydon & South Norwood Police Station who would normally provide me with details of those testing positive to a Class A overnight and are attending court in the morning. There is no-one coming over, although there is a query with a defendant who has committed a trigger offence.

Liaise with ROB Team regarding those on court list & any possible missed police station overnights.

9am - complete Drug Test Notification form for CPS which summarises any assessments that have taken place, drug test result and any treatment information which is available. This is completed for all first appearances and for those who have been unsuccessful in obtaining ROB conditions in the past.

9.15am - call to Crosfield House Criminal Justice Team to confirm treatment details of a current ROB client whose attendance I have been monitoring. I complete two progress reports for existing ROB clients for the Magistrates.

9.30am - debrief with ROB Team regarding events from the previous week and review tasks that need to be completed for the day.

Calls to Cygnet House (DIP) main office and police station, establish trigger offence client tested negative.

10am - check emails and prioritise responses.

Receive a call from the Court Administrator to say there will be industrial action next week and the court will be closed for one day.

Several calls made to out of borough ROB Co-ordinators to track court outcomes.

11am - "DIP Team to Court number 6 please" A tannoy requesting DIP Team to attend court to provide an initial treatment appointment date for a client who had preferred to take his chances and not sign up to ROB. The Magistrates gave him a chance to reconsider his refusal. If he wants to be granted bail, he must comply with ROB conditions. The defendant agrees and I ask him to come to our office following court.

Back upstairs to make an appointment with the treatment agency.

11.30am - speak to client about drug issues, re-iterate conditions and his responsibilities and give appointment.

12pm - continue tracking clients and calling agencies to check attendance.

1pm - Ahhh. Lunch!

2pm - Tannoys for various people signal the end of lunch as the Courts start back again.

A call to one of the agencies reveals that a ROB client has not attended their appointment, and is therefore in breach of their bail conditions. I call the original Case-Manager to see if they have made contact. Negative. I request the non-attendance paperwork and begin completing my own in preparation for the Police to circulate tomorrow.

3.30pm - organise and input ROB data on Home Office spreadsheet.

4pm - outcome received regarding one of the ROB clients who had been on ROB for 3 months. She had received a suspended sentence so that she could continue to attend a detox. A very pleasing outcome!

Review clients due in Court tomorrow and ensure relevant paperwork is available.

4.30pm - Home time.

If you would like to volunteer to submit 'a day in the life...' article then please email Petrina.Parnell@croydon.gov.uk

SERVICE USERS

Bill Dryden attended the National Drug Treatment Conference on 15 & 16 March. The Conference papers will soon be on the Conference website, and those from the NTA on that organisation's website.

It had been worth attending and had a large User Rep agenda. There were many interesting things coming out. The main ones were:

Drug dependency and collecting medication - the stigma still attached to attending a pharmacy to have medication dispensed or to collect it.

Human Rights Act - Sections 1, 2 and 14 are not always met e.g. in prison. If medication is withheld this can be construed as inhumane treatment.

Methadone in prison - is badly/poorly delivered in some establishments, as is care after release and reintegration into society. Through-care is not as good as it should be, with a lack of proper communication between agencies.

Hepatitis C - the rates of infection are still increasing.

One size does not fit all - there is a need to consult users about all aspects of services and at all levels of provision.

Nicotine - should be more widely recognised as a substance of misuse in the same way as alcohol and drugs. Zyban, used in treating addiction to this substance, has side-effects. A new product, Granprix (?), is undergoing trials in Brixton and Streatham to see what side-effects there may be.

Scotland will be joining the NTA soon - possibly next year. There is no increase in funding for the NTA.

There is greater 'penetration' by treatment services into the heroin-using and iv user populations than those using crack/cocaine and those in the Criminal Justice System.

EVENTS/ CAMPAIGNS/ PUBLICATIONS

- This year National Drugs Day will be on 23 May 2007. Further information about this day will be published on <http://www.drugs.gov.uk/communications-and-campaigns/> by the end of March 2007.

If you are thinking of hold an event please let the DAAT know.

- **Treatment Awareness Week**

A new initiative from the field supported by the Home Office, will generate series of open days and half days in Alcohol and drug-treatment agencies across the UK from 25 June 2007 to 1 July 2007. For more information please visit: <http://www.drugs.gov.uk/news-events/latest-news/treatmentaware>



Events by the NTA:

The London NTA team has recently set up a carers forum to ensure that we are hearing current views and issues that families, carers and friends of drug users face on a day-to-day basis. The aim of the forum is to:

- Hear the views of carers about services that they receive with a view to improving them
- To hear carers views on local treatment systems with a view to improving treatment effectiveness for users
- For the NTA to involve carers in its regional work
- To provide feedback on regional and national work and policy
- To feed into the National Advisory Group for Carers
- To allow carers to network with each other.

If you are a family member, partner or friend of someone with a drug problem, we would like to meet with you to hear about your experiences as carers as well as of treatment services.

The next carers forum will be held in London on 25th July from, 6.30 - 8.30 pm

Publications:

- The latest government publication is a summary of the review of the effectiveness of treatment for alcohol problems. If you would like to read this report, please go to: <http://www.nta.nhs.uk/publications/publications.aspx?CategoryID=6>
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Outreach Service re-tender

Contract(s) for the provision of Outreach Services for Croydon Drug and Alcohol Action Team and the London Borough of Croydon

Croydon Council, on behalf of the Croydon Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), is inviting expressions of interest from suitably experienced organisations to provide Outreach services.

Outreach provision will be delivered using the Models of Care Framework to reach vulnerable, 'hard to reach' individuals who need support around their substance misuse. A target group has been identified as Women; Sex workers (male and female); minority groups, i.e. people from BME, LGBT populations and refugees, as well as those disengaging from treatment and support services.

It is anticipated that the successful provider(s) will offer a service which includes one or more of the following:

- An assertive outreach function;
- A housing advice, information and support function including floating support;
- Targeted satellite services within the borough;
- A proactive response to new outreach demands.

The contract(s) will be awarded for 3 years for the period 1st October 2007- 30 September 2010, subject to continued funding.

Interested organisations will be required to complete a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire. Responses to the questionnaire will be used to create a shortlist of providers who will then be invited to tender against the service specification. The Council's decision on selection to tender will be final. For a pre-qualification questionnaire please apply in writing to:

**Contracts Unit
London Borough of Croydon
Adult Social Services Department
Room FR4.1
Fell Road
Croydon
CR9 2BA
Email: Tracey.Hawks@Croydon.gov.uk
Fax 020 8760 5509**

The closing date for the return of the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire is **Friday 8th June**

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

New Appointments:

The DAAT are pleased to welcome Lola Kolapo and Stephen Christian who are helping us out in the DAAT on a temporary basis - Lola is supporting the Commissioning function and Stephen is supporting the DIP Data Co-ordination function.

Leavers:

Ryan Williams: Data Analyst - DAAT

Dean Parsons: CDA Manager - CDA (Natalie Howarth is now the acting manager at CDA)

All images from www.google.com

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