

Issue 1. October 2005



# CROYDON DAAT NEWSLETTER



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## WELCOME

Welcome to Croydon Drug & Alcohol Action Team's first newsletter. The purpose of this is to let people know what is happening in the drugs and alcohol world in Croydon. 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](mailto:Karen.handy@croydon.gov.uk) or by post to DAAT Unit, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, Carolyn House, 22-26 Dingwall Road, Croydon CR0 9XF.

## INTRODUCTION TO CROYDON DAAT CO-ORDINATION UNIT

<b>Andy Opie</b> Co-ordinator	<b>Janet Austin</b> Joint Commissioning Manager	<b>Jackie Cave</b> YP Co-ordinator	<b>Karen Handy</b> Office Manager
<b>Ray Rajagopalan</b> Data Manager	<b>Lesley Tomkins</b> DIP Project Co-ordinator	<b>Petrina Parnell</b> Data/Admin Asst	

## STRATEGIC REVIEW OF SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES IN CROYDON

As many of you are aware, this review of substance misuse services in Croydon has been ongoing since August/September and will continue until the end of November. Findings and recommendations will then go out for as wide a consultation as possible.

## CO-LOCATED - THE OAKS RESOURCE CENTRE & SOCIAL SERVICES

The Oaks Resource Centre and Social Services Specialist Care Management, including Dual Diagnosis, and the DIP Team have now successfully co-located to Crosfield House, Mint Walk, Croydon CR9 3JS. Tel: 020 8276 5700. The service will now be known as **Croydon Substance Misuse Team**. This project has been ongoing for a few years and thanks are extended to everyone who has been involved for their hard work to make this happen. It will now be easier for service users to access treatment and information on drugs and alcohol in one place.

### **Drug Education in the Nation's Schools**

Jimmy Burke - Schools Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Volatile Substance Abuse Advisor

This year the government's Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) published a report on the state of drug, alcohol and tobacco education currently delivered in the nation's schools. Happily it stated that there has been significant improvement in provision since the last major review in 1997 but that we still have a great deal of progress to make.

Subject knowledge was seen to be weak among secondary school teachers. Assessment was seen as poor across the board. Drugs education is often one of those subjects that gets squeezed and marginalized in the race for league table success with statutory subjects and this further diminishes chances of broad ranging evaluation taking place.

Surprisingly, the Ofsted report claimed that pupils were keen to have more focus on alcohol and tobacco in their programmes as these were the drugs that they felt they were most at risk from. Evidence suggests that resilience around these two drugs is also a protective factor for more illicit substance use behaviours too.

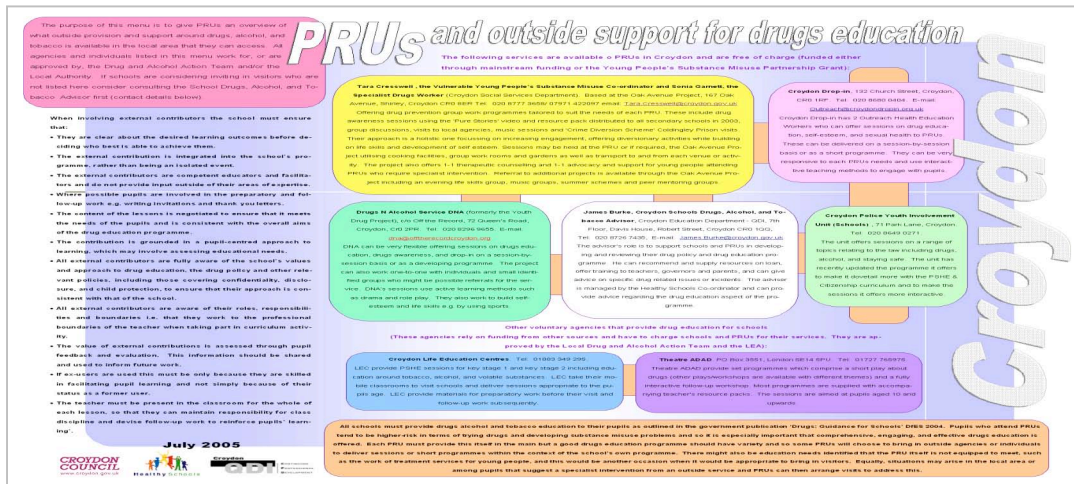
The report also recommended that schools forge stronger links between drugs education and sex and relationships education. Other research has established significant overlap between these two areas, with one survey claiming that a large proportion of young people report having their first sexual experiences whilst under the influence of alcohol.

Ofsted did acknowledge that the government has very high expectations of drugs education because unlike academic subjects, such as English, Maths, or the sciences, teachers are not just trying to impart knowledge and facilitate understanding among their pupils, they are also trying to give young people life-skills, and foster positive attitudes, and values. This is the challenge for those in education: to deliver a comprehensive and effectual programme alongside an already demanding curriculum in a subject that, while being compulsory in schools, does not have the status that statutory subjects enjoy.

### **Pupil Referral Units**

Jimmy Burke - Schools Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Volatile Substance Abuse Advisor

Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) offer alternative education for pupils who are temporarily excluded or unsuited to mainstream education. Pupils who attend PRUs often have social, emotional, or behavioural needs and this means that they are statistically a high-risk group for developing substance misuse problems. Croydon has five such units and it makes sense that these schools are at the front of the queue when trying to access support around drugs, alcohol, and tobacco from outside agencies across the borough. To this end an A3 sized colour menu detailing local provision has been provided for all PRUs. The Menu covers agencies such as DNA (the Croydon young people's substance misuse service), Life Education Centres, and the Police School Unit, giving details of what they provide and how they can be contacted. The menu also gives tips on the best and most appropriate use of outside agencies. If anyone would like to see a full size copy, please contact Jimmy Burke, 020 8726 7435 or email [james.burke@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:james.burke@croydon.gov.uk)



## SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT

My name is Bill - I am an alcoholic and illegal user of hard drugs for more than 35 years. I was 13 when I started drinking and 7 years ago I started to seek help for my conditions. I have been in 2 Priory's, NHS and alcohol counselling services, psychiatric programmes, self help groups etc. etc. - yet regardless of all their help and compassionate understanding there was always something missing - that something I was later to discover was me.

One day whilst rummaging through a notice board at the Oaks, I came across a notice that literally changed my whole life.

### Service User Involvement Meeting - Croydon - at the Town Hall

Since that first encounter I realised they were serious about our views and opinions, not just on their operational activities but my level of recovery. Since then I have been totally committed to expressing and venting my thoughts and aspirations - to which they have actually listened and taken note. For the first time in my recovery someone was listening to ME

I was assigned a keyworker - again - but this time it was different - my keyworker was in fact my key holder. It would be through their commitment and compassionate understanding that I was liberated to unlock the door to my future wellbeing.

They have been my support and my gateway to tackling MY obstacles on MY journey on MY care pathway. They do not decide my future. Just as David Beckham needs coaching to bring the best out of him, so do we.

The toolkit produced is a reference document - what's missing is 'U', 'ME and U' = partnership. Used properly the toolkit can be the building blocks to a brighter more rewarding future.

**Bill**  
**Service User Representative (SURep) Croydon**  
**Member of the SURG Group**  
**Contact via Substance Misuse Services at Crosfield House 020 8276 5700**

## **Involving Service Users in Croydon**

Jan Annan – St George's Hospital, International Centre for Drug Policy (ICDP)

The Service User Representation Group (SURG) was set up in 2004. It was established to bring all service providers in Croydon together with service users to decide how to set up a model of service user participation in Croydon. The group decided that it needed to get more service users involved to help steer the developments and to guide on this area of work. This led to the event in the town hall in July 2004, when all services and service users were invited to attend a full day's event on service user involvement with a good lunch in the Mayors Parlour.

At the event participants were invited to share their ideas about their experiences of the services in Croydon, followed by workshops in the afternoon to think about how we should organise service user involvement in Croydon. The services users put forward some good ideas and also showed interest in participating in the SURG meetings. Since then, the group has been steered by the experiences and knowledge of the service users and together we designed our 'model' for Croydon. We decided to write up the model as a guide and the toolkit was produced. This was achieved through the service users and staff of services working together and was a good example of partnership between providers and service users.

The service users who participate in the strategic activities and planning are called Service User Representatives (SUReps) in the Croydon model and each one participates in the SURG. Each SURep has an identified mentor (who is a member of staff) in a service that provides them with support and guidance and each SURep also attends one of the Drug and Alcohol Reference Group Focus Groups as a member. SUReps are regular attenders at the DARG. The SURG now has a work programme and we would like to see more service users getting involved in whatever way they can.

As part of the strategic review, the SUReps have been developing questionnaires for handing to service users attending services, so that we can seek the views of those attending services and those not in contact with services.

The SUReps now meet monthly and are about to design the timetable for meetings, which will include undertaking activities, receiving training and team building. It is an absolute delight to work with the SUReps, who bring enthusiasm and energy to the activities and who have grown over the year to become invaluable participants in this work. Our next strategy has to be SUReps retention and recruitment and enabling experienced SUReps to share their experiences and knowledge with others to enable them to 'move on'

If you would like to know more about these activities contact the DAAT office on 020 8700 8851

## NEW GROUPS & SERVICES

Dean Parsons, Croydon Community Drug Agency (CDA)

Croydon CDA is pleased to offer a new **'Family, Friends and Carers Support Service'**. This service is for those who are affected by the substance misuse of somebody close to them. The service is a group, co-facilitated by a Project Worker and a Health Advisor and is in the format of Peer Support. The group runs **every Monday from 5.30pm to 6.30pm** and is available by referral or self-referral and then by appointment. For more information, please contact **Mercy or Natalie at Croydon CDA on: 020 8686 7500**.

**Croydon CDA Counselling Service** is entering it's second year. The pilot has proven to be a success and agencies can now refer Service Users into the Croydon CDA Counselling Service directly. Service Users can also access the Croydon CDA Counselling Service via their Key-worker, if they are already accessing Croydon CDA's day service. The service operates in line with the Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy, set by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and is staffed by Counsellors who are members of the BACP. For more information, please contact **Nicola at Croydon CDA on: 020 8686 7500**.

## MOVERS & SHAKERS

### New Appointments

DNA	Chanelle Ali (Service Manager)
Drop In	Angela Ben-Arie (Outreach worker), Sharon Seaborne (Outreach Health Education Worker)
Dual Diagnosis	Alfredo Felices, Susan Henry, Spencer Dowwiana (Social Services work placement student)
YOT	Simon Maynard (drugs worker), Maria Lazarou (RAP Co-ordinator)

The DAAT and partners welcome newcomers to Croydon and look forward to working with them.

### Leavers

DAF	Sharon Seaborne
Drop In	Denize Stephenson
YOT	Naomi Campbell (mental health worker) is on maternity leave
DIP Team	John Clancy

Ray McKnight from the YMCA and Croydon Alcohol Counselling Service will be re-locating to Scotland soon - Ray has worked in Croydon for 11 years and has made contributions to many projects.

The DAAT and partners wish all leavers well and every success in the future.