

Drug & Alcohol Forum Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross

Skye & Lochalsh collaboration sub-group Supporting notes 18 July 2023

Aim of today's Workshop

- To understand what challenges/issues affect our communities
- To identify what support there already.
- To look at how groups, services, the public sector and businesses can work together to tackle the drug and alcohol challenges facing communities, families and individuals in Skye and Lochalsh.

Purpose of the Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross Drug and Alcohol Forum

- To achieve improved outcomes for individuals, families and communities by preventing and reducing drug and alcohol related harm by:
- Sharing knowledge, data and information to better understand the local needs relating to drug and alcohol prevention, recovery and the demand on local services.
- Sharing Information regarding local, regional and national activity including training, service provision and events
- Highlighting good practice and learning from the Forum to a wider audience.
- Facilitating training and collaborative working.

Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Local Improvement Fund

There is a real opportunity for Forum members to work together to secure one of six £50,000 grants over three years. Projects must support delivery of the Highland Alcohol & Drugs Partnership Strategy: Rights, Respect & Recovery, to:

- Reduce the number of people developing problematic use of substances by tackling the root causes of alcohol and drug-related harm at a local level.
- Reduce the number of people developing alcohol and drug-related harm by developing prevention and early intervention programmes through whole family approaches and family inclusive practice.
- Reduce harmful behaviours by offering targeted local support to individuals, families and groups.
- Improve access to support and treatment for individuals affected by alcohol and drug-related harm.
- Reduce stigma and improve reach and engagement with people affected by drug and alcohol problems, by promoting more inclusive, supportive communities

They encourage collaborative bids, where more than one organisation will be delivering the activity, and projects should help whole communities and/or community groups of any age.

Expression of Interest needs to be in by 24th July by the lead organisation and full application by 21st August. Groups applying should have previous experience operating or delivering services in the area and have previous experience working with vulnerable people. The proposals should be people-led (lived experience shaping the project) with clear outcomes for the participants (which will be measured).

So we are adding on another aim for today and that is:

- by the end of today's session we will have a foundation for an EOI to be submitted by a collaboration of groups from the Forum.

Landscape of Drug and Alcohol Support



Prevention

Strategies and interventions that help prevent harmful use of alcohol and drugs for example the development of programs to educate regarding the risks of substance use. This can include

- Information Dissemination, for example
 - awareness and knowledge of the nature and extent of alcohol, and drug use, abuse, and addiction and their effects on individuals, families, and communities.
 - knowledge and awareness of prevention policies, programs, and services.
- Education such as toolkits for use in schools

Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is an approach that promotes health in a way that meets people where they are at, accepting that not everyone is ready or capable of stopping their substance use at a given time. Harm reduction focuses on promoting evidence-based methods for reducing associated health risks in the current moment. The defining features of harm reduction is a focus on the prevention of harm, rather than on the prevention of substance use itself, and reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with substance use

Treatment and Recovery

Treatment and recovery includes a range of interventions and support programs that encourage people with addiction problems to make healthier decisions about their lives. Treatment and Recovery supports the development of services and programs that meet a wide-range of needs such as community and residential withdrawal management (“detox”), inpatient and outpatient treatment services, counselling, self-help programs and so on. The goal of treatment and recovery is to improve quality of life and to optimise health, while addressing substance use, this includes:

- Improving the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health of people who use or have used substances
- Improving the quality of life of families, neighbourhoods, and communities affected by substance use
- Reducing the barriers that prevent people from becoming engaged in care
- Increasing the number of people who access treatment
- Expanding treatment programs; and
- Building community capacity to provide services

Community Safety

Community safety recognises the need for public order and safety. It works to reduce crime and community harms associated with alcohol and substance use. This includes local police services as well as the broader criminal justice system of the courts, crime reporting/victim support organisations, housing, social service etc. Activities could include:

- Encouraging working partnerships between police, justice and social/health service providers to address hard challenges
- Developing effective pathways to support community members with substance issues transition safely out of the justice system
- Supportive Housing, and developing case management models to support clients who have been released from custody.

Exercise 1: Mapping of services and making connections

Exercise 2: Identifying needs and issues

Exercise 3: Opportunities and going forward