

DAT ASSOCIATION REMOTE & RURAL COMMUNITIES SUB-GROUP

Monday 26th April 2004, 1300

held at DAT Association offices, within ASH Scotland
8 Frederick Street, Edinburgh

Present:

Liam Wells, DAT Association Co-ordinator [Chair]
Davie McCue, Effective Interventions Unit, Scottish Executive
Maureen Woods, A73 Project, Lanarkshire
Anni Stonebridge, Aberdeenshire ADAT
Maurice Kilday, Borders DAAT
Dawn Redpath, Dumfries & Galloway ADAT
Hannah Muldoon, East Lothian DAAT
Hilary Smith, West Lothian DAT
Linda Bates, DAT Association Administrator [minutes]

Apologies:

Kay Geddes; Grahame Cronkshaw; Grace Ball; Maggie Jamieson; Iain Turnbull; Donna Reid; Stevie Lydon; Ruth Shepherd; Julie Murray; Jackie Davies, Steven Dalton; Hazell Morrell; Ray de Souza; Maggie Murray; Christopher Denmark; Patricia Russell; Rita Keyte; Joni McArthur; Eric Corstorphine; Marion Logan; Leona Paget; Gordon Coster; Mike McCarron; Gail Robertson; Elaine Fetherston; Brian Gardner; Suzy Calder; Catriona Rasdale; Mark Connelly; Marie Hayes; Liz Coates; Nicole Sturla; Karyn Tait; Ian Smillie; Fiona McKay; Pat Greenhough; Catriona Oxley; Margaret Birrell; Angus Mackay; Gordon Miller

1. Welcome and Introductions

Liam welcomed all to the meeting; each attendee then briefly introduced themselves. Liam reminded the meeting that Justine Walker will be back in post as DAT Association Co-ordinator from 5th May 2004, although Liam shall continue as Chair of the Remote & Rural sub-group.

2. Apologies

As listed above.

3. Role and Remit of Remote and Rural sub-group

A general discussion was held about the role and remit of the DAT Association Remote & Rural Group [DARRG], which had originally been suggested as being an information-sharing group amongst its members. However, it was felt that something more formal was now required, that would feed into the national DAT Association quarterly meetings, and have its own work plan and terms of reference.

It was agreed that membership of the group be open to all DATs across Scotland, irrespective of location [i.e. both remote/rural and urban]. It was also agreed that DATs could ask an external representative to attend meetings and report back to them, if desired.

It was suggested that the group's remit should expand to look at potential cross-DAT initiatives [eg Aberdeenshire's internet site, which is about to launch, aimed at supporting families and carers], and put them forward as proposals for good practice at a national level.

It was noted that several members of more outlying DATs had requested video conferencing as a means of being 'present' at and contributing to meetings; it was agreed that where possible, this method would be used for future meetings.

Several members emphasised the need of the group to focus on issues which may be specific to remote and/or rural areas. Such issues included:

- access to services for large geographical areas;
- the lack of a range of services for clients – often there is only one service available;
- issues of anonymity and stigmatisation in small communities, where clients may feel more 'exposed' in their use of services;
- local sensitivity to issues surrounding drug use, such as GPs in certain areas not prescribing methadone for fear of attracting 'outside' users into their area;
- the blurring of boundaries, where professionals are well-known locally and thus often approached or contacted outside of usual working hours;
- the unavailability of certain types of technology, specifically regarding mobile phones and internet access.

Liam shall draw up a suggested work plan and terms of reference document, incorporating these issues, to distribute to the group for approval. Once approved, these would be forwarded to national level. **Action: LW**

4. Integrated Care in Rural/Remote Communities

speaker: Davie McCue, Effective Intervention Unit, Scottish Executive

Davie McCue gave a presentation about the Effective Intervention Unit's work and its work programme for 2004/05. Following stakeholder demand and the publication of Integrated Care: Principles and Practice (EIU, 2002), the EIU is due to publish a document by December 2004 on ***Rural and Remote areas: effective approaches to commissioning, managing and delivering, integrated drug services*** (draft title only). This reference guide aims to support policy and practice development and service improvement thus promoting opportunities for better client outcomes for this client group. Davie is keen to remain involved in the DAT Association's Remote & Rural Group for two main reasons: firstly, due to the correlation and similarities of the work of both the EIU and Association on rural and remote areas, whilst accepting discrete differences in remit; and secondly, to get feedback from local DATs about issues affecting them under this broad theme. The group agreed that Davie should become a permanent member of the DARRG. Equally, Davie invited DARRG to select a suitable representative to sit on the EIU working group to ensure that broad DAAT views are represented. Davie will seek DAT views through formal engagement (which may include a questionnaire) with the Association and the DARRG. **Action: DMcC**

5. Any Other Business

Hannah Muldoon raised several issues which are affecting East Lothian DAT, in particular regarding service integration in the Lothians area as a whole. A sub-group has been recently set

up [Drug Officers Group], comprising of the Co-ordinators and/or Development Officers of each DAT in Edinburgh, West-, Mid-, and East Lothian, which aims to meet monthly at Lothian NHS. It is hoped that this will help establish where in the Joint Futures initiative each DAT is, and will encourage close working relationships.

Liam Wells stated that the DAT Association is looking into piloting a web forum on its website, which would enable 'live' chat and would be password-protected. This would enable members to discuss topics without having to travel to meetings. **Action: LW**

It is intended to post minutes of all DAT Association meetings [including sub-groups] on the Association's website [<http://www.drugmisuse.isdscotland.org/dat/datassoc/datassoc.htm>]. We shall endeavour to do this within the next quarter. **Action: DAT Assoc.**

For the next Remote and Rural sub-group, Anni Stonebridge offered to give a short talk about internet and web initiatives for DATs. **Action: AS**

All attendees were asked to investigate the availability of video conferencing in their area. **Action: all**

Davie McCue requested that each member produce a short note highlighting current concerns, issues, responses, initiatives etc. in their DAT area, to be forwarded to Linda. This would then be circulated to all members prior to the next meeting for background information. **Action: all**

It was agreed that a report from the Remote and Rural sub-group be a 'rolling' agenda item for the national quarterly meetings; Liam [as Chair of the sub-group] shall present the report to the national meeting. **Action: LW**

6. Date of next meeting

It was proposed that the Remote and Rural sub-group hold its meetings on the same day as the DAT Association's national quarterly meetings. However, as the next quarterly meeting is due in May, it was felt that this was too soon to be practical; as a result, the date of the next meeting of the Remote and Rural sub-group was proposed as **Tuesday 29th June 2004 at 1pm**, possibly to be held again in Edinburgh. Location to be advised, subject to the availability of video conferencing equipment. Thereafter, future meetings should fall into line with quarterly meetings, starting in September 2004 [date, time and venue to be advised].

Association of Drug Action Teams

14 May 2004