



**Internet Approaches to Treatment and Support
Special meeting of the DAT Association Remote and Rural Sub-
Group**

Tuesday 28th September, Stirling

1.15-4.30 pm

Council Chambers, New Viewforth, Pitt Terrace, Stirling

Background

Following on from the last DAT Association Remote and Rural sub-group meeting, it was agreed to explore the opportunities that currently exist in the use of internet approaches to treatment and support. Following discussions with 'Wired', we have organised a special focused meeting to explore this topic further.

The session is aimed to be fairly informal and is open to all Action Team support officers; however places are limited and in the first instance priority will be given to members of the Remote and Rural sub-group. A small number of invites have also been extended to partner agencies.

A light buffet lunch will be served from 12.45 onwards.

Seminar Programme

- 1.15 Using the internet to tackle substance misuse problems
Professor David Clark (Director of WIRED and
Dept. Psychology, University of Wales Swansea)
- 1.50 Demonstration of a unique internet-based communications tool to support
remote assessment, counselling and support
Ian Semel (Distance Therapy and Gordon House Association)
- 2.30 Coffee

- 2.45 The value of web communities for peer support: Example of a community for families and carers of people with a substance misuse problem
Anni Stonebridge (Aberdeenshire ADAT and WIRED)
- 3.15 Open Panel Discussion: Improving standards, challenges and linking with other frameworks (i.e. integrated care) through internet-based communications
- 4.00 General open discussion – way forward
- 4.30 Close

Presentation summaries

In his presentation, David Clark will describe how the internet can be used for outreach support and advice, assessment, treatment (e.g. counselling), aftercare and peer support. He will emphasise that the internet complements, rather than replaces, services already offered. It helps agencies gain access to a population of hard-to-reach clients, in particular those who cannot readily access services due to distance, or who wish to maintain anonymity.

In his presentation, Ian Semel will demonstrate a new integrated online tool for counsellors which provides outreach support. This unique tool, developed by Datasmith in collaboration with Gordon House Association (Distance Therapy), provides an internet-based “counselling” room (with video and voice links) that meets strict confidentiality and security requirements, thereby ensuring client anonymity. The tool can also be used for assessment, the provision of advice and support, as well as aftercare.

[Distance Therapy, in association with WIRED and the Federation of Drug and Alcohol Professionals (FDAP), will be selling a version of this online communication system for substance misuse practitioners].

Anni Stonebridge will describe how a successful web community can become a powerful tool to help tackle substance misuse problems. It can provide an environment in which good peer support flourishes, and in which information, advice, training and education are provided. Anni will refer specifically to a web community being developed by WIRED for the families and carers of people with a substance misuse problem.