



West Lothian Drug Action Team

NEWS RELEASE

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New targets in sight for Drug Action Team

A fresh approach aims to improve services for smokers and people with alcohol problems in West Lothian.

The West Lothian Drug Action Team (WLDAT) have committed to targeting services at the most needy groups, following the results of two major research studies to investigate the needs of tobacco, alcohol and drug users living in the area.

A launch event held on Tuesday, 29 May, in Strathbrock Partnership Centre, with members of the WLDAT being joined by representatives from Lothian and Borders Police, West Lothian Council, NHS Lothian and the voluntary sector.

Currently, the majority of funding for substance misuse is spent on problem drug users who make up just over 3 per cent of the general population.

Far fewer resources are targeted to smokers and people with alcohol problems despite the fact that 32 per cent of people living in West Lothian smoke and 29 per cent of men and 17 per cent of women exceed weekly recommended drinking limits.

Moreover, alcohol-related deaths are increasing, particularly amongst women and within younger age groups.



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These concerning statistics have led WLDAT to look for ways to redirect some of their funding from substance misuse to the most needy and poorly serviced communities.

David Kelly, director of the West Lothian Community Health & Care Partnership, commented: “ In terms of substance use in West Lothian, tobacco and alcohol are the most popular drugs of choice.

“ It is vital that our service provision reflects this and offers appropriate help to the communities in most need.”

Young people and people living in the most deprived areas in West Lothian also emerged as a key priority from the commissioned research, and WLDAT will ensure that services provided by NHS Lothian, West Lothian Council, Lothian & Borders Police and the voluntary sector keep the needs of these groups at the fore-front of service delivery.

West Lothian is one of the first areas in Scotland to commission such research and commit to re-focusing money to priority groups, which will make sure appropriate services are given to the right people at the right time.

If you or someone you know would like help with tobacco, alcohol or drug use, please visit www.thetroublewith.com.

Issued by West Lothian Council media and communications officer, Ewen McNamee on behalf of the Drug Action Team. Tel: 01506 777125. Media@westlothian.gov.uk



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