

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Background

1. The updated Plan for Action on Alcohol – due to be published later this year – commits the Scottish Executive to the development of a co-ordinated national drugs and alcohol training strategy. In addition, the Review of Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services, published in October 2004, committed the Scottish Executive to providing better training opportunities for practitioners at both generalist and specialist levels in order to help retain staff, improve service quality and aid professional development.

2. It has been recognised for sometime among the drugs and alcohol field that there is a lack of application of any clear professional competence and development structure for staff working in front-line drug and alcohol services in Scotland. There is also a need for an effective framework for use by service providers to demonstrate competence in service delivery and in turn support those responsible for the commissioning of services in determining local provision.

Aim

3. To develop a co-ordinated national alcohol and drugs workforce development strategy which supports a competent, confident, valued and responsive workforce in addressing the health and social support needs of individuals, families, carers and communities affected by alcohol and drug related harm.

4. The development of a workforce strategy will link into wider ongoing work such as the implementation of the quality standards, the ADAT stocktaking exercise and Hidden Harm Action Plan.

Approach

5. It is proposed that the drugs and alcohol workforce strategy will be driven forward by a high level Strategy Group, chaired by NHS Scotland, comprising of key stakeholders, detailed in paragraph 6. The Alcohol and Drugs Workforce Development Strategy Group will actively engage with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that all interests, including the police, local government, nursing, GPs and unions etc are represented.

Membership of the Alcohol and Drugs Workforce Development Strategy Group

6. The proposed membership of the Strategy Group is as follows:

- NHS Health Scotland (Chair)
- Addiction Education Scotland (AES)
- Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS), including a service user representative
- Scottish Drugs Forum (SDF), including a service user representative
- NHS Education Scotland
- NHS Quality Improvement Scotland
- Scottish Association of Alcohol and Drug Action Teams (SAADAT)

Scottish Executive
Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)
Scottish Social Work Inspection Agency (SSWIA)
Scottish Training on Drugs and Alcohol (STRADA)

Specific objectives

7. It is proposed that specific objectives include:
 - Developing an alcohol and drugs workforce development strategy and to prepare an action plan to ensure its effective implementation.
 - Identifying the wider workforce who have a role to play in addressing the impact of alcohol and drug related harm on individuals, organisations and communities, ensuring they have the opportunity to develop appropriate competencies to support their role.
 - Identifying and developing, where appropriate, the key competencies required by people who make an active contribution to the effective delivery of alcohol and drugs strategy, nationally and locally, ensuring the wider workforce has the skills necessary to address the health, life circumstances, social support and criminal justice needs of those affected by alcohol and drug related harm, reducing inequalities.
 - Devising an agreed tiered approach which reflects the roles of the wider alcohol and drugs workforce.
 - Ensuring the adoption of consistent and relevant competencies across the 4 tiers of alcohol and drugs wider workforce so that service users, individuals, families and carers, organisations, communities and training providers know what can be expected of people providing the service and that those people are able to demonstrate their competencies.
 - Developing and driving forward an implementation framework so that agreed standards can be delivered effectively and integrated into the drugs and alcohol wider workforce.

Timescale

8. It is proposed that a detailed workplan will be developed by March 2007 and the strategy will be published by Autumn 2008.
9. The terms of reference, including the timetable are subject to Ministerial approval.

Conclusion

- 10. Members are asked for comments or views on the above proposals for a drug and alcohol workforce development strategy.**

JD- Safer Communities Division
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