

# Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Treatment Needs Assessment 2012/13

## Executive Summary

### Key Findings

- The national drug strategy was launched in December 2010 and the national alcohol strategy in March 2012 (which is currently out for consultation until February 2013). Both strategies signal changes to government policy and sets out a fundamentally different approach to preventing alcohol and drug use in our communities, and in supporting recovery from drug and alcohol dependence. The Recovery Partnership has been in place for 13 months (at the time of writing) and is striving to implement the recovery agenda across the County.
- In 2011/12, there were 917 clients in treatment in Warwickshire where alcohol was their primary drug. This is down from 1,131 clients for the equivalent 2010/11 period, a reduction of 17.7%. There were 656 new presentations to treatment during the year, which represents 72% of the total treatment population.
- In the period April 2011 to March 2012, there were 994 recorded Opiate and/or Crack Cocaine Users (OCUs) in effective treatment in Warwickshire and a total of 1,062 adults in effective treatment in the County. The 994 OCUs recorded in the latest period is down 9.9% or

109 clients from the previous year, mirroring the trend seen both regionally and nationally.

- Cannabis remains the most popular drug at the 2012 Global Gathering festival in Stratford-on-Avon District, with 127 people listing this as their drug of choice in 2012. Cocaine and MDMA/Ecstasy are also high on the list (104 individuals highlighted cocaine and 75 individuals mentioned MDMA/Ecstasy). Use of both amphetamine and ketamine has fallen from peaks in 2009. The prevalence of cocaine at the festival has increased dramatically over the last year, from 11 individuals in 2011 to 104 in 2012 (although this is worth bearing in mind in the context of increased numbers generally at this year's festival). Many more drug variations have been discovered at the festival in 2012 with those asked admitting to using legal highs and methamphetamine.
- The headline indicator used to assess performance in reducing alcohol related harm is alcohol related hospital admissions. The County has seen a 1% fall in admissions in 2011/12 and within the County, Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick Districts have seen considerable falls from 2010/11 (7% and 3% reductions respectively). Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough continues to have the highest rate of alcohol related hospital admissions in the County and has seen a percentage increase over the past year in line with the regional and national averages.
- Mosaic is a customer insight tool which gives a comprehensive view of consumer demographic data. Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team can use the findings from the Mosaic analysis to effectively target messages in relation to alcohol and drug use and also use it to help raise awareness of The Recovery Partnership's services. A common feature of the households identified is the increased risk experienced by young



people generally. Moreover, this risk appears evident among groups with different income levels. This would suggest that a more general message emerging from this analysis is the involvement of young people in the sort of behaviours which place them at greater risk from issues relating to drugs and alcohol.

- Consultation with treatment providers revealed that alcohol and drug treatment service users face barriers to successful recovery, with the highest concerns being the lack of affordable accommodation and the lack of suitable employment opportunities.
- Consultation with practitioners revealed a number of emerging issues relating to drug and alcohol misuse in the county. Significant areas of concern include alcohol pre-loading, increased methadone dependence, a significant rise in anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse caused by substance misuse and linking the increase in substance misuse to licensing times. However, these may have been as a result of the timing of the survey, as it was within six months of the new service commencing. These concerns will be monitored and the consultation should be re-run annually to see if attitudes and opinions have changed as the service has embedded. This will also allow subsequent issues (if applicable) to be raised.
- The needs assessment considered the asset based approach for the first time to explore recovery assets and capital with service users. The group suggested that in order to increase recovery capital and assets within the community, more people need to be encouraged to have some sort of peer relationship particularly in the early stages of recovery. Education and knowledge regarding relapse, triggers and cravings was viewed as essential but more importantly, increased self

awareness was seen as paramount in a successful recovery journey. Practical issues such as 'keeping themselves busy' and motivated with work, voluntary placements, groups, meetings etc was an important element of recovery capital.