

The National Assembly for Wales' Health and Social Care Committee is a group of ten Assembly Members from across Wales who represent the four political parties who make up the Assembly. The Committee's job is to hold the Welsh Government to account on health and social care within Wales, including finance, administration, policy and legislation.

The National Assembly for Wales's Health and Social Care Committee is currently looking into the issue of alcohol and substance misuse in Wales.

We have recently been doing some work on new psychoactive substances which are sometimes called "legal highs" - our report will be out in the New Year. We want to build on that work, and so we are now looking into issues of alcohol and substance misuse. As part of our inquiry we want to know about the effect that alcohol and substance misuse has on people in Wales, how well these issues are currently being tackled, and whether the right local services are in place across Wales to help people and make sure that they know about the possible harms.

Giving us your views will help us make sure that we can take into account how alcohol and substance misuse affects real people in Wales on a daily basis.

We will consider all of the written responses that we receive, as well as taking oral evidence from key organisations, and from the Welsh Government. We will then write and publish a report which makes recommendations to the Welsh Government. You will be able to find the report on the **Committee's website**.

If you or somebody you know has been affected by alcohol or substance misuse, or if you would like more information about them you can contact DAN 24/7 for advice. DAN 24/7 is a free and confidential helpline for anyone in Wales wanting further information or help relating to drugs and or alcohol. You can find more information here:

Freephone: 0808 808 2234

or text DAN to: 81066

www.dan247.org.uk



The National Assembly for Wales Commission is the data controller of the personal information you provide. Personal information will be processed in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your response will be stored on Assembly ICT equipment and in Survey Monkey, and deleted at the end of the inquiry, and any paper copies destroyed. Survey Monkey use servers outside the European Union.

Please contact us for further information about how Survey Monkey handles information:

outreachteam@wales.gov.uk

- 01** Do you currently work for an organisation which works with people who misuse alcohol or other substances? If so, please state which organisation and whether we should treat your response as being on behalf of that organisation, or as a personal response from you.

I CURRENTLY WORK FOR DRUGAID AT THE PHOENIX CENTRE IN CAERPHILLY, SUPPORTING PEOPLE BOTH WITH ALCOHOL AND OTHER SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUES. ALTHOUGH REPRESENTING DRUGAID SOME OF THESE RESPONSES SHOULD BE TREATED AS PERSONAL.

- 02.** Which client group(s) do you work with? (For example, under 18s, older persons, homeless, or female only)

THE PHOENIX CENTRE ENGAGES WITH ANYONE OVER THE AGE OF 18 AFFECTED BY DRUGS OR ALCOHOL AND IS ATTENDED BY THOSE STILL USING CHAOTICALLY THOSE MAKING THEIR FIRST STEPS IN RECOVERY, AND SOME THAT ARE ABSTINENT. THE SERVICE ENGAGES THE HOMELESS, PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, LEARNING AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES. WE WILL ALSO WORK WITH CONCERNED OTHERS.



03. What are the main reasons why your clients take drugs or drink excessively? Please tick all that apply.

If you work with more than one client group or you feel that there are other reasons as to why your clients take drugs or drink excessively, please comment in the box below.

- Peer pressure
- A way to deal with stress
- Client(s) already substance reliant
- Mental health
- Boost confidence
- Relieve social anxiety
- Environmental factors (for example - excessive drinking and/or drugs normalised in the home/community)
- Relationship problems
- Financial concerns
- Self-medication
- Escapism
- Other (please comment)

Comments

FOR MANY PEOPLE EXCESSIVE DRINKING IS A SOCIAL NORM, PARTICULARLY AT WEEKENDS OR WHEN THERE ARE MAJOR EVENTS (SPORTING, CONCERTS ETC) WHERE EXCESSIVE DRINKING IS OFTEN EXPECTED BY PEER GROUPS.
IN MORE RECENT YEARS BENEFIT SANCTIONS, ARE BECOMING A GREATER PART AS WELL AS HOMELESSNESS.



04. Are there certain groups of people who are more likely to be affected by drugs and excessive drinking? If so, which groups might they be?

ALTHOUGH THERE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE A PARTICULAR SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC THAT IS AFFECTED MANY OF THOSE THAT ATTEND THE PHOENIX CENTRE ARE UNEMPLOYED. THIS MAY BE DUE TO OPENING TIMES OF SERVICES.

05. Does a particular stage of your clients' lives influence their likelihood of taking drugs or drinking excessively? If so, what stage might that be? (i.e. age, relationship breakdown, unemployment etc.)

MANY CLIENTS STARTED TAKING SUBSTANCE RECREATIONALLY BUT THEIR USE GRADUALLY INCREASED UNTIL IT BECAME PROBLEMATIC. CATASTROPHIC LIFE EVENTS, (ALTHOUGH IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES MAY HAVE BEEN THE INITIAL REASON) OFTEN EXACERBATE AN EXISTING SUBSTANCE MISUSE PROBLEM. IT IS ALSO OFTEN A CAUSE FOR RELAPSE.



06. What barriers exist for your client(s) when trying to access support and services?

WORKING IN THE SOUTH WALES VALLEYS
GEOGRAPHY AND TRANSPORT LINKS ARE A
MAJOR BARRIER.
ALSO LACK OF HOUSING (HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION).

07. What barriers exist for services when trying to access support for client(s)?

HOUSING AND LACK OF HOSTEL PROVISION IN THE
CABERPHILLY BOROUGH.
SOME SERVICE USER "FALL THROUGH THE NET"
DUE TO HAVING COMPLEX NEEDS WHICH DON'T FIT
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ONE PERSON WITH SOME
SERVICES NOT WANTING TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
THIS IS USUALLY IF THERE IS A COEXISTING
MENTAL HEALTH / SUBSTANCE MISUSE ISSUE.
SOMETIMES THE LACK OF A SINGLE CARE COORDINATOR
CAN BE A CONCERN.

08. What do you consider to be barriers for staff and frontline services in working with
your client group(s), or substance misuse generally?

HIGH CASE LOADS.
TRYING TO ENGAGE CLIENTS FROM RURAL AREAS.
LACK OF INFORMATION PARTICULARLY REGARDING
NPS'S.



09 Where do you think efforts should be targeted to address the issue of alcohol and substance misuse in Wales?

TOO MANY TO MENTION I WOULD LIKE TO SEE
MORE RESIDENTIAL SERVICES (SUPPORTED HOUSING)
MORE NEX SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS.
OPEN ACCESS (DROP IN PROVISION) IN RURAL
IN NORTH GWENT.
EDUCATION.

10 In which local authority area do you work? If you work outside of Wales, please write your local authority area below.

CAERPHILLY.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blaenau Gwent | <input type="checkbox"/> Merthyr Tydfil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bridgend | <input type="checkbox"/> Monmouthshire |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caerphilly | <input type="checkbox"/> Neath Port Talbot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiff | <input type="checkbox"/> Newport |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carmarthenshire | <input type="checkbox"/> Pembrokeshire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ceredigion | <input type="checkbox"/> Powys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conwy | <input type="checkbox"/> Rhondda Cynon Taf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Denbighshire | <input type="checkbox"/> Swansea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flintshire | <input type="checkbox"/> Torfaen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gwynedd | <input type="checkbox"/> Vale of Glamorgan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Isle of Anglesey | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrexham |

If you would like to be kept updated about the progress of the Committee's inquiry into alcohol and substance misuse in Wales, please leave your name and e-mail address below:

NATHAN DAVID

