

Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery

National Oversight Committee (NOC) Draft Minutes of the meeting of the 18th January 2019

Attendance:

Minister Catherine Byrne	Department of Health
Íde Delargy	Irish College of General Practitioners
Enda Kelly	Irish Prison Service
Caroline Jordan	TUSLA
Aine Hall	International Nurses Society on Addiction
Aoife Frances	National Family Support Network,
Paul Geraghty	Department of Rural and Community Development
Ben Ryan	Department of Justice and Equality
Brian Woods	An Garda Síochána
Devesh Singh	Department of Employment and Social Protection
Eamon Keenan	HSE
Fergus McCabe	Community Sector
Hamish Sinclair	Health Research Board
Jim Walsh	Department of Health
Margaret Nash	Voluntary Drug Treatment Network
Paul Wynne	Revenue Commissioners
Michael Lacey	Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force Chairs Network
Bríd Walsh	Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force Coordinators Network
Neville Kenny	Department of Education and Skills
Nicola Clavin	Department of Health
Pauline McKeown	Voluntary Drug Treatment Network
Peter Hogan	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
William Flannery	Irish College of Psychiatrists
Hugh Greaves	Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force Coordinators Network
Lucy Dillon	Presenter, Health Research Board
Sarah Waters	Department of Health Secretariat
Brian Dowling	Department of Health Secretariat
Anne Corr	Department of Health Secretariat

Apologies:

Siobhan O'Halloran	Department of Health
Bairbre Nic Aongusa	Dept of Rural & Community Development, represented by Paul Geraghty
Vivian Geiran	The Probation Service
Alan Wall	Dept of Education and Skills, represented by Neville Kenny
Bairbre Nic Aongusa	Dept of Rural & Community Development, represented by Paul Geraghty
Ken Spratt	Dept of Transport, Tourism and Sport, represented by Peter Hogan
Pat Carey	Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force Chairs Network
Clare McNamara	Department of Children & Youth Affairs
Mary Hurley	Dept of Housing, Planning & Local Government represented by Paul Wynne
Marie-Clare Maney	Revenue Commissioners, represented by Paul Wynne
Patrick Benson	Community Sector
John O'Driscoll	An Garda Síochána
Catherine Comiskey	Academic Expert
Kate O'Flaherty	Department of Health

1. Minutes

The minutes from 14 September 2018 were agreed without amendment.

2. Updates

a) Standing Sub-Committee

DPU provided an update on the November 2018 RHSR Standing Sub-Committee meeting. The two themes discussed were Drug Related Intimidation (DRI) and preventing the use of drugs and alcohol at a young age.

Following on from the evaluation of the DRI Programme by the NFSN and AGS, they have developed a work plan which will continue in 2019. Minister Byrne acknowledged the significance of the work the AGS and NFSN are engaged in with regard to the DRI Programme and how important it is that the final report of the review is issued as soon as possible.

DES introduced their Wellbeing Framework document which links in with task forces. It was felt that the structure between the DES and the RDATEFs is unclear. DES advised that a meeting is in the process of being organised with the RDATEF Coordinators.

Some members of the Committee requested more frequent SSC meetings in order for adequate discussion time to work through relevant issues, preferably ten to twelve meetings per annum with meeting dates set in advance and adhered to. DPU advised that they are working on the SSC work plan for 2019 and this will be circulated to the NOC members.

The HRB gave an update on the National Drug Forum (NDF) which was held in November 2018. The HRB is preparing a report on the NDF. The Minister thanked all those involved in the NDF, both organisers and participants and requested that it would be an annual event.

b) Working Group on the alternative approaches to the possession of drugs for personal use

DPU advised the Committee that the report of the Working Group is in the process of being drafted. In order to provide the most comprehensive report to assess all the alternative approaches and policy options, the timeframe for presentation of the report to Minister Byrne has been extended to end of Q1 2019.

Minister Byrne acknowledged the tremendous amount of work carried out by the Working Group. LDATF Coordinators Network enquired about the present situation in relation to spent convictions. The Department of Justice and Equality representative will revert with an update.

3. Drug related expenditure – an EU perspective – Presentation

The HRB was invited to present on drug related expenditure, including an explanation of labelled and unlabelled drug related expenditure and challenges to the collection of the data. The HRB is the Focal Point in Ireland for the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). The HRB informed the Committee their role is to request data, not to collect it and to report it back to the EMCDDA. The Committee discussed whether there are difficulties for Departments / Agencies to collect the data and how there are variations in the way different EU countries collect and report the data.

DPU advised that over the next three NOC meetings, the Committee will invite the various agencies involved in drug treatment to present their drug-related expenditure and what they define as expenditure for the purposes of the annual estimate to EMCDDA.

The proposed groupings for the meetings are:

- 07 June – Department of Health – Health Service Executive – Health Research Board
- 13 September - Department of Justice & Equality – An Garda Síochána – Irish Prison Service - The Probation Service – Revenue Commissioners.
- 06 December - Departments of Education & Science –Social Protection – Rural & Community Development – Housing, Planning & Local Government – Children & Youth Affairs/TUSLA

4. Priorities for service delivery for 2019 – Inclusion health priorities

DPU provided an update on the four strategic priorities from the 2019 HSE National Service Plan.

1. Mental health and addiction – explore new model of integrated service delivery for co-morbid mental health and addiction.
2. Addiction and homelessness – prioritise national initiative for wrap-around housing
3. Addiction services – improve inequalities of access to addiction services in different parts of the country
4. North East Inner City initiative – there is a major push to improve addiction and homelessness, a number of initiatives have been identified and a case management approach is being developed. If initiatives work they can be transferred to other areas with the same concentration of issues.

DPU advised that these 4 priorities were developed to:

- Align with the strategic actions in *Reducing Harm Supporting Recovery*
- Maximise limited resources – new way of working
- Cross-cutting issues
- Delivered through CHOs
- Evaluation to learn lessons
- Link with Sláintecare and inclusion health policy

IPS advised that the prison service has people leaving prison with complex issues and often end up in single-night accommodation which is a huge risk factor. DPU stated that a meeting was held recently with the Prison Service regarding Housing First tenancies for this cohort. DPU will bring a recommendation to NEIC committee re linking up with prisons in the area.

The psychiatric clinical expert notified the Committee that he has been stood down from his post as Clinical Lead of Dual Diagnosis Programme HSE. The College of Psychiatrists understood the term was two years but it has been cut by six months. It was noted that the College of Psychiatrists is concerned that the post of chair of the Dual Diagnosis Programme has ended. It is believed that the HSE will re-advertise the post. DPU advised they will follow up with HSE Mental Health.

IntNSA requested an update on the status of Nurse Prescribing. DPU will follow this up. There was also a query on alcohol misuse. The HSE advised there is an Alcohol Liaison Nurse in mental health in Beaumont Hospital and are looking to place an ALN in each CHO area.

5. RHSR Progress Plan 2018 & Planned Activity 2019

DPU stated that all agencies were requested to provide updates on the progress that took place in 2018 and the planned activity for 2019 for the fifty strategic actions in the strategy. DPU collated the responses received and circulated the updated document to the Committee members.

Some members requested that time be allocated to discuss the report in full. DPU will revert with how NOC or SSC will discuss progress of actions.

The Chair expressed concerns about progression from CE Schemes for older people. She advised that she has been pursuing this issue with Minister Doherty.

6. AOB

1) The NFSN enquired whether the NOC would be in a position to advance the position of the Supervised Injection Facility (SIF). Minister Byrne stated that as the planning issue is an independent process that cannot be influenced by exterior factors. DPU advised that the SIF is a huge priority for the Department and are endeavouring to support and help as much as possible. Meetings have been held with local schools.

The CS requested an update on the Task Force Hand Book. DPU advised that the Working group will have at least two more meetings and the areas of Task Force governance and charity status will be discussed.

2) The CS stated that the Inter Departmental Group on CE schemes should have included representation from NGO from drugs background.

3) The VDTN queried the status of pay restoration for voluntary workers in the drugs treatment sector.

4) Community sector requested the NOC be updated on points raised during the meeting.

Due to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) ministerial segment in March 2019 the NOC meeting scheduled to take place on 08 March 2019 is cancelled.

September 27th meeting **changed to 13th September**

Date of next meeting 07th June 2019