

REPORT TO: CRIME SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE: 10th January 2019

REPORT TITLE: Tackling Illegal Drugs
REPORT AUTHOR/S: Andrea Clemons
Andrea.clemons@enfield.gov.uk

PURPOSE OF REPORT: National and local issues requested by the Scrutiny Board

SUMMARY

Report to Scrutiny

The following report is requested to provide information in relation to national and local approaches to tackle illegal drugs. It includes a summary of the Metropolitan Police Service drugs plan, the Public Health England approaches and developing local work to better understand drugs markets and reduce the harms caused.

1. BACKGROUND

Police Drugs Plan 2017-21

This plan aims to deal with the impact of drugs on communities and confidence in the police actions.

It refers to the links between drugs and other issues (especially gang culture) and additionally the overlap with organised crime.

The definitions of a drug are drawn from the following legislation;

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

The Human Medicines Regulations 2012

The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016

The aims of the plan are;

To reduce the uptake in the numbers of children and young people who become involved with drugs.

To facilitate working in partnership; utilising a crime prevention and harm reduction approach to reduce the social and criminal cost of illicit drugs to London communities whilst enforcing the law intelligently against those who seek to profit from the drugs trade.

There are 3 strands

- Reduce demand
- Reduce supply

- Reduce harm

They aim to do this by;

- Problem solving and education
- Disruption and enforcement
- Improved community contact and intelligence

Replicating the 3 Ps approach the Prevention strand, most relevant to work with Children and Young people sets out an intention to;

Work closely with partners to prioritise early intervention, education and community engagement at all tiers of schooling, from primary to university to promote abstinence.

Work with partners to address our most vulnerable, marginalised and disaffected people who are often affected by complex issues including mental health, drugs and alcohol and may be either victims or offenders.

This is of interest as the Substance Misuse Partnership Board (formally DAAT Board) are compiling an Action Plan at the Sept meeting which will include young people. The suggested areas for discussion are;

Prevention –

- Raise awareness of substance misuse in schools to support school staff in recognising the issue, offer early interventions and refer into treatment where required.
- Support to young people affected by parental substance misuse through joint work with partners including Children's Social Care, Young Carers, Schools, Youth Mental Health Support.
- Improve online information for substance misuse.
- Explore the impact mental health and well-being has on substance misuse amongst young people and our local offer.
- Develop community support and responses to substance misuse – linking in with the Voluntary Sector and youth organisations.

Treatment –

- Ongoing work with children's social care to promote pathways into the substance misuse treatment system for both treatment for the parent, support for the children or family members affected by, and access to parental support.
- Review pathways and engagement with the SPOE.
- Review referrals pathways and joint working with mental health and well-being services including CAMHS/SAFE but also targeted support.

Aftercare –

- Evaluate pathways out of treatment to identify gaps and explore how this can be addressed.
- Build support with the Young Carers Service.
- Identify whole family approaches and how we might be able to build recovery networks for young people and parents with substance misuse needs.

What works: (Information provided by the Commissioner for Young Peoples Substance Misuse Services in Enfield)

- Integrated case work- plan multi-agency approaches to tackling substance misuse and offending behaviour.
- Treatment outcomes are successful with most young people leaving Sort It! in a planned way.
- Numbers engaged in treatment are high compared to a national decline.
- Referral pathways between schools and YOS are in place and effective – these two areas account for approximately 90% of referrals to young people's treatment.
- Joint working with the PRU – a process is in place where the person who leads on the referrals into the PRU requires all PRU referrals for substance misuse related issues to demonstrate that they have already tried to get the young person into treatment
- The parental substance misuse service element is very successful.
- Improving joint working with the adult treatment service in relation to young adults with an adult substance misuse practitioner able to work in a more young- people orientated way to encourage service uptake for young adults aged 18-24.
- Improving joint working with the adult services around parental substance misuse and ensuring a joined up multi-agency approach.
- Joint working with North Middlesex Hospital Midwifery Service for pregnant women who are using substances or whose partner uses substances.
- Hidden Harm involved in Child Protection Conferences and CIN meetings where appropriate.

2. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Pressure points for the service:

Funding – MOPAC funding accounts for 16% of the contractual funding for the Young People's Substance Misuse Service and funds much of the bespoke support we are able to offer to young people. This funding has been retained in the proposal for spend of MOPAC funding from 2019.

- Adult treatment has been reduced in order to use funding to increase allocation for work with young people to tackle violence.
- Patient complexity – In the last 2-3 years we are seeing increasingly complex patients presenting to the service, in particular in relation to

County Lines and patients using Xanax.

- Patients often require more resource intensive and longer-term treatment packages. This is impacting on practitioner case load capacity and requiring the staff at Sort It! to learn new skill sets and working practices to offer the support these young people require which differs from the more traditional cannabis or alcohol user we have been used to treating in the past. Patient complexity is also reliant on early intervention support services being available to achieve the best outcomes.
- Reduced aftercare support – the range of support that is available to young people post treatment has reduced which has posed some challenges around referring young people out of treatment and back into targeted or universal support services.
- Parental Substance Misuse – Enfield offer a parental substance misuse service as part of the Young People’s Substance Misuse Treatment System that supports parents in recognising and reducing the impact their substance misuse has on their children. This offer consists of 1.4 FTE posts. (some mitigating actions are being taken to help address this and access other local support offers).
- Both Adult and Young service users are likely to be a gross underrepresentation of actual treatment needs in the borough and there is an information gap about links with organised crime and other signal crimes such as prostitution and ASB.

Public Health England have suggested that the following actions would assist in working with families and children affected by substance misuse.

- Strategic and operational alignment between children’s services and substance misuse services; including data sharing protocols
- Improvements in data collection
- Integration of substance misuse services into safeguarding and MASH arrangements
- Support for co-training opportunities between substance misuse and children’s and family’s services
- Appropriate identification and early intervention for children impacted by parental substance misuse.

Suggested further partnership working;

- Information and information sharing.
What do we know about the drugs market, costs, trends, effects etc.
- Problem solving.
Spatial hotspots and key groups where we might have the most impact.

- Training for professionals on signs of substance misuse and where to get help.
- Integrating drugs issues better into a wide number of appropriate plans.
- Improve early intervention referral pathways in and out of YPSMS
- Review and promote services to increase early take up.
- Collectively sustain funding for YPSMS
- New Public Space Protection Orders are also being targeted in certain areas to increase the tools available to police to deter drugs use and dealing.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Crime Scrutiny Panel is asked to note the report and receive future updates on progress against suggested actions above.

4. NEXT STEPS

Agree work as part of Problem Solving Group.