

## **Policy Briefing**

**22 February – 5 March 2010**

*Update on key Parliamentary and sector developments relevant to Family Support, including new data, policy direction and debate, and interest in the drugs field.*

### **Contents**

1. Parliamentary roundup
2. Bills and legislation - (no new information)
3. Consultations
4. Reports and announcements
5. Featured issue – Around Arrest, Beyond Release

## Parliamentary Roundup

### Estimates of the annual cost of alcohol misuse to the NHS in England - Hospital in-patient and day visits

	<i>£ million</i>
Directly attributable to alcohol misuse	167.6
Partly attributable to alcohol misuse	1,022.7
Hospital out-patient visits	272.4
Accident and emergency visits	645.7
Ambulance services	372.4
NHS GP consultations	102.1
Practice nurse consultations	9.5
Laboratory tests	n/a
Dependency prescribed drugs	2.1
Specialist treatment services	55.3
Other health care costs	54.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,704.1</b>

### Number of persons aged 10 to 17 arrested for drug offences, England and Wales 2003-04 to 2007-08

2003-04	18,100
2004-05	14,600
2005-06	14,400
2006-07	12,800
2007-08	15,018

### Drug treatment and testing order (DTTO)/drug rehabilitation requirement (DRR) completion rate

2004-05	36%
2005-06	40%
2006-07	44%
2007-08	43%
2008-09	47%

### Number of adults in treatment in 2008-09 in top 10 most deprived partnerships

Birmingham	6,894
Hackney	1,704
Islington	1,739
Kingston upon Hull	2,249
Knowsley	1,109
Liverpool	4,510
Manchester	3,671
Middlesbrough	1,812
Newham	1,307
Tower Hamlets	1,709
<b>Average</b>	<b>2,670</b>

### Number of adults in treatment in 2008-09 in top 10 least deprived partnerships

Bracknell Forest	236
Buckinghamshire	947
Richmond upon Thames	598
Rutland	22
South Gloucestershire	786
Surrey	1,955
West Berkshire	282
Wiltshire	741
Windsor and Maidenhead	317
Wokingham	202
<b>Average</b>	<b>609</b>

**NB:** The above figures are absolute numbers and therefore can be open to misinterpretation – it is no surprise, for example, that Birmingham has more people in treatment than the much smaller Windsor and Maidenhead. However, some of less deprived areas are still very large and the figures provide a useful point of comparison.

### The average cost to the public of a child contact case heard in the last five years

	£
2004-05	2,532
2005-06	2,769
2006-07	3,229
2007-08	3,437
2008-09	3,176

### New Sure Start Children's Centres opened in England since 2005

2005	254
2006	603
2007	836
2008	1,029
2009	471

At the end of December 2009 there were a total of 3,381 designated Sure Start Children's Centres.

### Problem drug users and state benefits

Benefit type	Number of claimants
Jobseekers' allowance	66,000
Incapacity benefit	87,000
Income support	146,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>267,000</b>

These figures are from **2006** but are the most recent available. The government estimates that there are roughly 330,000 problematic drug users in the UK.

Other useful information revealed in Parliament includes:

- The level of drug misuse in prisons as measured by mandatory drug testing has declined by 68 per cent since 1996-97.
- In 2008-09, there were 241,090 **drug seizures** by police, an increase of 6% on the previous year
- In 2008-09 there were **66,000** CARATs triage assessments in prisons

## Consultations

No new consultations of note have been released recently. However the latest DCSF consultation on families, introduced in the last briefing, is of particular interest and is still open for comment.

### **Support for all: the families and relationships green paper**

This broad-ranging paper outlines the DCSF's plans for supporting families, and has the potential for real impact in the drug and alcohol sector. Adfam attended a consultation event in London on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March to ensure that the impact of drug and alcohol use on families was kept on a crowded agenda which also covers areas such as generic relationship support, employment rules and rights for disabled people.

Consultation questions include:

- What more can we do to help create a culture in which seeking help for relationship or parenting problems is considered socially acceptable?
- Which issues should be prioritised by Government in seeking to strengthen families and support family relationships?
- Which services need the most urgent development to make them truly family-friendly?

We would encourage all stakeholders to contribute to this consultation, which can be filled in online at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1685&external=no&menu=1>. The consultation closes on the 21<sup>st</sup> April.

## Reports and Announcements

### Alcohol Interventions Guidance - NOMS

The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has developed new guidance which covers best practice for probation staff working with those who use substances. It covers the effective commissioning, management and delivery of alcohol interventions and is especially appropriate for Assistant Chief Officers (ACOs), Senior Probation Officers (SPOs) and Offender Managers (OMs).

The guidance can be viewed at: <http://www.alcoholpolicy.net/2010/02/noms-alcohol-interventions-guidance-.html>

### Adult Social Care: Consultation Phase – The Law Commission

The Law Commission has published a consultation paper on adult social care which details their proposals for law reforms. Adult social care is the support offered by social services to adults who need additional support in their lives – for instance older people, people with learning disabilities, physically disabled people, people with mental health problems, substance users and carers. The legislation around adult social care is varied and lacks a single coherent statute covering its implementation and as a result it can be confusing to service users. This consultation looks to the clarification of this situation.

The paper can be viewed at: <http://www.lawcom.gov.uk/docs/cp192.pdf>

### Young People and Alcohol Guidance - DCSF

The DCSF has published a summary of responses from its consultation on children, young people and alcohol. This was a three month consultation that ran from January 2009 and asked eight key questions covering the General Medical Officer's guidance on drinking and its effective communication. It was targeted at the people who might be affected by, or have influence over, children and young people's drinking, such as parents, carers, teachers, youth workers, GPs and children and young people themselves. Online surveys and forum discussions were used as well as a main consultation process.

The guidance can be viewed at:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=conResults&external=no&consultationId=1579&menu=1>

### Young people's drug and alcohol treatment at the crossroads – DrugScope

Several key concerns stimulated the production of this new investigation into young people's treatment - including the negative media reporting of treatment as a whole, the different nature of what constitutes 'problematic' drug use in young people, and the gap between children's and adults' services into which many young people fall. Produced after widespread consultation with frontline workers, the report makes several key recommendations such as a review of how the drug treatment framework is

equipped to take account of changing patterns of substance misuse and polydrug use; the production of a national plan for young adult services; and the creation of a national 'radar' service to alert service providers and policymakers to new drug trends.

The full report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.drugscope.org.uk/Resources/Drugscope/Documents/PDF/Publications/YoungPeopleCrossroadsReport.pdf>.

### **Powder cocaine: how the treatment system is responding to a growing problem** – National Treatment Agency

As referenced in the DrugScope report on young people (see above), the nature of 'problem' drug use is changing and practitioners and policymakers must look beyond heroin and crack cocaine use. This document examines the rise in cocaine use over the past decade and how it is being dealt with by the treatment system. The report also includes detailed information on geography, referral procedures, treatment outcomes and the socioeconomic status of cocaine users compared to other drug users in treatment. For example the highest numbers of cocaine users as a percentage of the overall treatment population were seen in Havering (London) and Knowsley (Merseyside), where it was as high as 34%; over a third of those presenting for cocaine treatment were aged 18-24; both self-referral and family referral were more common for powder cocaine than for other drug users; and many more cocaine users are in paid employment (47%) compared to other drug users (17%).

The report is available at

<http://www.nta.nhs.uk/publications/documents/ntapowdercocaine1march2010d.pdf>.

### **Guide to implementing family skills training programmes for drug abuse prevention** – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The family unit – though it is defined differently by different people and cultures - is a proven a protective factor in preventing drug and alcohol use, and different models of family skills training (which can provide, for example, exercises on better communications and conflict resolution) aim to harness this influence. This extensive review aims to evaluate the effectiveness of various models of family skills training and also examines how to choose suitable training models and implement them successfully. The study is thorough and based on evidence gathered from various UN states.

For the full study view

[http://www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/family%20based/FINAL\\_ENGLISH\\_version%20for%20PRINTING%20received%20120209.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/family%20based/FINAL_ENGLISH_version%20for%20PRINTING%20received%20120209.pdf), or for a briefer review go to [http://findings.org.uk/count/downloads/download.php?file=Kumpfer\\_KL\\_13.txt](http://findings.org.uk/count/downloads/download.php?file=Kumpfer_KL_13.txt).

## **Featured Issue - Around Arrest, Beyond Release**

Around Arrest, Beyond Release was produced by the Home Office in 2007 to explore the experiences and needs of families of drug-using offenders around arrest and release. The document estimates that at least 532,000 people in the UK (many of whom are children and young people) are negatively affected by the drug use of a family member. Around Arrest, Beyond Release explores ways in which harm to families can be minimised during the arrest and subsequent release of a loved-one and ways to maximise the involvement of families in the process. Evidence shows that having families involved in the treatment process increases its effectiveness.

**Family experiences around arrest** are detailed through personal accounts from family members consulted. Arrest of a loved-one can be extremely stressful for family members, with the possibility of the arrest being made at any time when family members - including small children - may be in the home. Police raids may also happen at any time. There are also surrounding issues such as the disposal of drug paraphernalia left behind by the arrested person.

**Family experiences around release** bring a different set of problems. Unresolved family conflicts, the worry of future arrests or drug use and financial problems were all cited as key worries by families. The period directly after release can be particularly risky as drug users may accidentally take a dangerous amount of drugs, having had their tolerance lowered by the time in prison. This is a worry felt by families, as is the possibility that services will not be there to fully support the newly released person.

**Future practice** suggestions are made, which cover practical ways of working to minimise the stress to families during the arrest and release process. This section suggests that families should be kept informed throughout the process and clearly signposted to sources of support, that agencies should be encouraged to think of the family that exists behind the individual, that those commissioning services should be aware of the diverse needs of families and more.

**Around Arrest, Beyond Release 2: Moving forward** was released two years later in 2009. It has information from fieldwork visits to projects and two national seminars. The document reports that there is a lack of common understanding on exactly what support for families consists of and still insufficient help for the families which drug users return to after serving sentences.

**Around Arrest, Beyond Release 3: One year on...** was released later in 2009 and is the final part of the resource series. It looks at any positive change that might have occurred since the start of the project. It has a lot of practical information for those commissioning, funding or delivering support services for families of drug using offenders.

The documents are available at:

- 1 - [http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/publication-search/dip/AC\\_DIP\\_FAMILIES\\_around\\_arrest.html](http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/publication-search/dip/AC_DIP_FAMILIES_around_arrest.html)
- 2 - <http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/publication-search/dip/around-arrest-beyond-release-2/>
- 3 - <http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/publication-search/dip/ac-families-aabr3a50b.html?view=Standard&pubID=677479>