

## ADP March 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to the second edition of the North Ayrshire Alcohol & Drug Partnership's newsletter. The ADP Support Team will produce 4 newsletters per year highlighting positive recovery stories, what is going on in our communities, and sharing information about local services. If you would like to get involved in helping to produce the newsletter or have a positive story we can highlight, get in touch by emailing: [adp@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:adp@north-ayrshire.gov.uk).

## ADP Funding

North Ayrshire Alcohol & Drug Partnership facilitated a grant funding process to enable services, charities, and community groups could apply for funds of up to £10,000. We are pleased to the report that our funding panel have now completed the process of reviewing and approving applications for funding. The ADP have been able to support recovery groups with running costs, help to provide support to children and families, help our third sector partners develop a new recovery space, and give people the opportunity to take part in physical activity. The ADP would hope to give organisations and community groups the opportunity to apply for funding again, so watch this space!

## College Course

Our exciting North Ayrshire Pathways to Progress will offer individuals in recovery the opportunity to develop new skills, take part in volunteering and work-based placements, and work towards accredited qualifications. The 6-month course will be delivered by West College Scotland (Kilwinning Campus) and supported by

Turning Point Scotland PEAR Service. The course will help people develop their employability and self-management skills to help participants prepare for the workplace. Participants will be fully supported throughout the programme. Interested? Contact TPS PEAR on 01294 447 40 for more information.

## Garnock Valley Support

Harbour Ayrshire have secured funding to continue providing 1-1 support in the Garnock Valley by their Recovery Practitioner - Robert. Currently, there is a MOT group [Men Only group] running in Bridgend Community Centre in Kilbirnie on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm - 8pm which is delivered by Harbour. MINDS of Recovery are also providing support in Bridgend Community Centre on Tuesday's from 12pm – 2pm.

If you would like 1-1 support for substance related issues, Harbour Ayrshire can be contacted on 01292 623016 or [info@harbourayrshire.co.uk](mailto:info@harbourayrshire.co.uk).

TPS PEAR also provide 1-1 support to individuals affected by substance use, including family members. For more information contact 01294 447 407 or email [info@turningpointscotland.com](mailto:info@turningpointscotland.com).

## Lived Experience Panel

The Lived Experience Panel provides an opportunity for individuals with lived and living experience of substance use to come along and share their stories and experiences to help shape and inform support and services within North Ayrshire.

The LEP's will now be meeting monthly, come along to have your say and help shape recovery in North Ayrshire on the following dates:

- Wednesday 24th April from 12pm-2pm, Bridgend Community Centre, Kilbirnie
- Thursday 30th May from 2pm-4pm, Kilwinning Library, Kilwinning
- Tuesday 25th June from 1pm – 3pm, Ardrossan Civic Centre, Ardrossan
- Wednesday 31st July from 1.30pm-3.30pm, Fullarton Connexions, Irvine



## Naloxone

Naloxone can reverse an opiate overdose and could save someone's life. If you or someone you know is looking for naloxone, please contact NADARS on 01294 476 000.

# How to save a life

Emergency response to a drug overdose

Overdose signs can vary but might include:

- unresponsive
- blue lips or skin
- snoring
- seizures or fits

In an emergency, call 999 and ask for an ambulance.

## Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Standards

In our newsletters we will try to include some information about services and what is happening nationally. Over the course of the upcoming editions, we will be highlighting the MAT Standards.

### **MAT 4 (Harm Reduction for Everyone):**

While a person is in treatment and prescribed medication, they are still able to access harm reduction services, e.g. Needles and syringes, testing for blood-borne viruses, injecting risk assessments, wound care, and naloxone. Accessing this will not affect their treatment or prescription.

### **MAT 5 (Staying in Treatment)**

People are to be given support to stay in treatment for as long as they like and especially at times when things are difficult for them. All discharges from services should be planned with the person to ensure this is managed safely.

### **MAT 6 (Improving Mental Wellbeing)**

We know that for many people, substances are used as a way to cope with difficult emotions and issues from the past. Services will focus on supporting people to develop positive relationships and new ways of coping as these are just as important as medication.

If you have any questions in relation to MAT, please contact NADARS: 01294 476000.

## Prevention and Education Event

On Friday 23rd February, at Ardeer Community Centre, we welcomed seventy young person's from across our secondary schools in North Ayrshire to take part in the first ADP Young Person's event. The events aim was to engage young people and listen

to them about their experience of alcohol and drugs education and how it can be improved. The event was facilitated by multi-agency partners and included speakers with lived experience and active workshops for young people to develop knowledge and capture their views and voice.

The four workshops focused on the key areas of lived experience by Recovery Development Workers, stigma and language by Turning Point PEAR service, myth busting facilitated by KA Leisure and Prevention and Service Support Team (PSST) and future learning from Barnardo's. Lunch was provided by the fantastic volunteers at Cafe Solace.

The teachers and campus officers also took part in a session to build confidence in having difficult conversations with young people and families around alcohol and drug use as well as developing professional curiosity to safeguard children and young people.

This event builds on consultation and engagement that has already taken place with school staff and partners. The team plan to develop an action plan based on the views of young people at this event to shape what that work looks like moving forward to help tackle problematic alcohol and drug issues in North Ayrshire.

This plan consists of exploring the involvement of people with lived experience within schools or different settings, developing the support services directory for teachers, parents and carers, and encourage attendance at our subgroups.

Feedback from the young people on the day:

“Was interesting and was good to hear from people with experience”.

“It was really good experience, and I got a better understanding of drugs and alcohol”.

“It was really fun!”

Some of the key themes emerging from the event include Input from people with lived experience was highly impactful with young people. There was sufficient evidence to suggest that a lot of young people have impacted by other people's substance use. Engagement and education on alcohol and drugs needs to be more innovative and hard hitting. Young people have knowledge of alcohol and drugs but are not always aware of the risks.





## Recovery Story – Laura’s Story

“I first tried heroin when I was sixteen years old. I got into other drugs, including Valium and crack cocaine, and pretty much anything else I was able to get my hands on. This cycle of chasing drugs turned into 27 years of addiction for me. I didn’t understand back then I was trying to cope with traumatic events & blocking them out. In the early 2000s, I wanted help, realising I didn’t want to remain trapped in this version of myself. I was prescribed methadone, which became a crutch for the next two decades, dominating my life possibly more than the drugs. Each day was a monotonous repeat of every other day and I was still within the drug using community, leaving me feeling lost, alone, hopeless and without direction.

Then one Friday, my friend was going along to the Recovery Hub in Irvine, and she asked me to go along with her. I had never heard of this Hub, so as you can imagine,

chances of me attending were slim. However, my friend kept encouraging me to go, so reluctantly and filled with anxiety, I managed to walk through the doors and sat at a large round table inside the Hub.

Looking back, this day was the turning point for me, it was as if a light switch had turned on inside of myself and something had changed. As I sat at that table alongside my friend and strangers I had never met before, I broke down crying as I felt completely lost. At that time of my life, I was still using heroin on top of a methadone prescription, and all I wanted was to get as far away from that reality as possible. Even though I was upset, the people in the Recovery Hub, listened to me, showed compassion, never judged me, and were there for me. I felt welcome and encouraged. There were no expectations placed on me but I knew the hub was now there if I needed it.

The Recovery Hub was so accepting that I kept going back and still do to this day as a volunteer. As a result of being in the hub, I have built relationships with amazing people who have now become my friends. Attending the hub has opened so many more doors of support and opportunity for me. I have had to put a lot of effort in, but I have been supported & encouraged every step of the way.

After struggling with addiction for over two decades, I recently transitioned from methadone to espranor and I'm now prescribed buvidal. This is why the MAT standards are so important in giving people a choice, as this is a huge step forward for me, I can now focus completely on my recovery journey and not think about having to be at the chemist at a certain time every day and run the risk bumping into people who will try to offer me drugs.

Through the Recovery Hub and Café Solace, I have volunteered at events, I am filling my week with positive activities, I'm attending a computing course and Steps to Excellence course. I volunteer at Café Solace and love the activity group on a Thursday as I can try new things and I'm involved with the Lived Experience Panel.

I now have goals of achieving a lot in my future. I never had hope before and now I can honestly see good things in my life and it's all thanks to the caring, compassionate, nurturing environment of the Recovery Hub and the continued support from everyone involved in my recovery journey. I finally feel positive and proud of myself with a productive future ahead."

## Do you or someone you know need support?

If you are concerned about your own or someone else's alcohol or drug use, support is available Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. North Ayrshire Alcohol & Drug Recovery Service (NADARS): 01294 476 000 Turning Point Scotland PEAR Service: 01294 447 407 Outside of these times please contact NHS24 on 111 for advice.

Harbour Ayrshire provide Out of Hours Support Mon-Fri: 5pm-10pm & Sat-Sun: 10am-10pm: 01292 623 016.