

*This briefing is a fortnightly update on important policy developments relevant to family support and the drug and alcohol sector. It includes comment, data, reports, parliamentary news, policy directions and debate.*

## **POLICY BRIEFING**

---

**30 April – 11 May 2012**

### **Contents**

<a href="#">Editorial</a> .....	2
<a href="#">Parliamentary roundup</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Consultations</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Reports and announcements</a> .....	6
<b>FEATURED ISSUE</b>	
<a href="#">The Troubled Families agenda – what does it all mean?</a> .....	12

# Editorial

---

Adfam has delivered services for families within prisons for many years now, and I know that a number of family support groups are also involved in supporting offenders' families in their local areas? Our experience suggests that many families living with problematic drug users are likely, at some point, to come into contact with the prison system. This can prove to be a very confusing and distressing time for them; having to cope with the temporary loss of their loved one, sometimes taking on extra childcare responsibilities, financial and housing difficulties and navigating a new and confusing visits system can all their toll. However the removal of the drug user into custody, even for a short time, can also provide a period of much needed relief for everyone involved.

In the latest issue of [Drink and Drug News](#), John Podmore explains that one of the most vital parts of the criminal justice system is the transition from prison to the community. He states that reconviction rates remain very high and the system continues to fail to support prisoners to re-integrate successfully back into their communities. Adfam would argue that a crucial part of this puzzle is the engagement of families at the start of the process so that by the time a release date is set, both the family and prisoner feel prepared and safe to make positive changes. Many family members express both excitement and anxiety as the release date approaches and worry about how best to support their loved one. By working with both the offender and their family to consider the impact of their drug use and offence whilst they are in custody, appropriate strategies could be put in place to make positive changes upon release.

Our own experience suggests that the provision of a family support worker in prisons can transform the ability of a parent or partner to function whilst their loved one is in custody, promoting better outcomes. It would also be positive if sentencers were aware of the impact the sentence plan may have on the wider family, so appropriate support could be put in place to minimise harms to the family and children of the offender.

In policy terms, as well as media and public opinion, there appears to be a continuous appetite for a punitive approach to crime. However there is also a parallel argument that prison and punishment just isn't enough when it comes to preventing re-offending, and repeatedly incarcerating people costs a lot of public money. The system needs something more to keep ex-offenders out of prison and making positive changes in their lives; as John Podmore argues, 'prison is really only a deterrent for those who have something to lose'. We suggest that a family-focused lens for the criminal justice system would enable whole families to invest in their future and support the efforts of their loved ones towards positive re-integration and recovery.



**Joss Smith**

Head of Policy and Regional Development

## Parliamentary roundup

---

The Queen's Speech was delivered on Wednesday 9 May, and set out the Government's legislative agenda for the coming year. Measures in the Queen's speech do not tend to be surprises or entirely new initiatives, but give a hint as to the more pressing priorities of the Government.

- The [Children and Families Bill](#) contains a variety of measures relating to family law, Special Educational Needs (SEN), shared parenting and the Office of the Children's Commissioner. These include imposing a 6-month limit on care proceedings, speeding up adoption by stopping local authorities waiting for a 'perfect match' (particularly in terms of ethnicity) and granting the Children's Commissioner 6-year terms in future.
- The [Small Donations Bill](#) removes the need for charities to collect Gift Aid declarations for donations under £20. Instead of Gift Aid, they will receive a comparable 25p 'top-up' payment, up to donations of £5,000 (i.e. an extra £1,250). Charities will need to have a 3-year track record of collecting Gift Aid to qualify for the new scheme.
- Legislation to introduce a specific [drug-driving offence](#) was also announced. At present, police have to demonstrate that someone's driving has been impaired by drug use in order to prosecute, but the new law will mean that a driver with drugs in their system above a specified limit is guilty of an offence in itself.

Debates and questions have also revealed:

- The average weekly alcohol consumption in the UK was 11.9 units per person in 2011, and 11.5 units in 2010, according to the Office for National Statistics. However, this data is based on self-reporting surveys and is therefore thought to be an underestimate, and is not in line with data on alcohol sales from HM Revenue and Customs.
- Between 2007 and 2010 there were 5,518 offenders with 50-99 previous convictions and 257 with 100 or more; the most prolific offender has 567 convictions.
- At 31 March 2012, there were 568 prisoners enrolled on accredited substance misuse programmes.
- In 2010-11, 61,109 prisoners received a clinical drug intervention. There was a 50-50 split between maintenance prescriptions (methadone and buprenorphine) and detoxification.

# Consultations

---

## [Sexual Violence, Survivors' Substance Use and Capacity to Consent: A Survey for Professionals](#)

This survey from Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) is aimed at any professional who has worked with survivors of drug-facilitated sexual assault (DFSA). As well as covering experiences of working with this group of people the survey also covers how this type of assault relates to domestic violence and practitioners' own understanding of how drugs and/or alcohol affect a person's capacity to consent.

The survey is running until the beginning of **July 2012**.

## [Sexual Violence, Survivors' Substance Use and Capacity to Consent: A Survey for Survivors](#)

This AVA survey is for survivors of sexual violence. The findings, as well as a literature review and a survey with practitioners, will be used to produce a report looking at how the law and the criminal justice system in England and Wales interpret the effects of alcohol and/or drugs on an individual's ability to agree to sexual activity by choice ('capacity to consent'). All responses will be treated with total anonymity.

The survey is running until the beginning of **July 2012**.

## [Multiple needs and exclusions and the work of Making Every Adult Matter \(MEAM\)](#)

MEAM has been running since 2008 and is a partnership of CLINKS, DrugScope, Homeless Link and Mind. The aim of the coalition is to change policy and practice to benefit people facing multiple needs and exclusions. This short (five minute) survey is for anyone who has had any involvement with MEAM and will form part of the evaluation of the project's success and future direction.

## [Family Support and Joint Strategic Needs Assessments](#) – Adfam

Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) will be one of the main guiding documents used by new Health and Wellbeing Boards to decide on local public health priorities and make commissioning decisions. Adfam would like to understand more about how family support services will be affected by JSNAs to ensure the needs of drug and alcohol users and their families are fully recognised. This questionnaire can be filled in even if you do not have any direct experiences of JSNAs - we appreciate anyone completing it to give us as comprehensive a picture as possible.

[Punishment and Reform: effective community sentences](#) – Ministry of Justice

This consultation seeks opinions on proposals for radical reforms to the way in which sentences are served in the community. ‘Ultimately our goal must be to reduce crime and see fewer victims’, the document states: areas for comment include new plans for Intensive Community Punishment, which includes a significant restriction of liberty backed by electronic monitoring and effective financial penalties; and proposals for every community order to include a punitive element.

The survey is running until **22 July 2012**.

[Punishment and reform: effective probation services](#) – Ministry of Justice

This wide-ranging consultation is aimed at probation professionals, victims, the judiciary, service providers, users and other stakeholders and presents the Government’s suggestions for reforming the probation service. It wants to ‘ensure probation services are better able to achieve the outcomes in justice that matter to victims and communities: protecting the public, reducing reoffending and ensuring that offenders are properly punished’ and invites comment on these proposals.

The survey is running until **22 July 2012**.

[Social and emotional wellbeing – early years: consultation on the draft guidance](#) – NICE

This draft guidance is aimed at anyone responsible for the social and emotional wellbeing of children under five, including those planning, commissioning and delivering services for these children. It covers areas including the identification of vulnerable children – for example those whose parents have substance use or mental health problems, or who live in households affected by domestic violence – early education and pre- and post-natal home visiting. The draft guidance consists of a set of recommendations regarding the importance of identifying the strengths within a family as well as weaknesses; discussing substance use, mental health and support network issues in pre-natal settings; and establishing agreed pathways and referral routes which define how different services will work together.

The guidance is open for comments until **18 June 2012**. (*Note that only [registered stakeholders](#) can respond to this consultation.*)

# Reports and announcements

---

*Click on the report titles to access the documents.*

## Drugs, alcohol & families

[Recovery partnership bulletin](#) – Recovery Partnership

This briefing summarises the work to date of the Recovery Partnership, which is formed of the [Substance Misuse Skills Consortium](#), the [Recovery Group UK](#) and [DrugScope](#) and aims to provide a collective voice to Government on the delivery of the ambitions of the Drug Strategy. The partnership has created an expert group on residential rehabilitation, which will agree a working definition of 'residential rehabilitation', map service provision and establish a quality framework. The partnership has also provided Government with a number of research and discussion papers on issues affecting the sector, including Payment by Results, housing and recovery. There is also an overall 'statement of intent' on the aims, objectives and working practices of the group.

[Building Voluntary and Community Sector Involvement in Integrated Offender Management](#) – Clinks

This set of resources, published jointly by the Home Office and Clinks, are primarily intended to help key stakeholders involved in local Integrated Offender Management (IOM) arrangements review the role of Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners, but may also help VCS organisations think about the range of roles they could undertake in this area of work. Seven resources and four supplements cover a wide variety of topics, including 'the added value of VCS partners in IOM arrangements', 'mapping and engaging with potential local VCS partners' and 'how VCS organisations can engage with local IOM arrangements and other Criminal Justice System (CJS) structures'.

[Delivering drugs and alcohol recovery bulletin](#) – Department of Health

This web resource collects and presents information on the pilot programme for Payment by Results in the drug sector. It will be updated over time, and at present includes some details of the pilots taking place in Bracknell Forest and Wigan. The outcomes being paid for are listed as abstinence, 'successful completions', not re-presenting to services within six months of such a completion; to encourage services to take on new clients, a payment for new presentations will also be made. These payments will be made relative to outcomes for three 'complexity groups', and will increase in line with the proportion of people achieving them.

## [Transforming Public Health Bulletin Vol. 8](#) – Department of Health

This bulletin, assembled by the Department of Health but including material sourced from elsewhere, intends to keep organisations up to date on public health matters and help improve their practice. It is a useful resource in the run-up to the establishment of Public Health England (PHE) in April 2013, with section dedicated to how this new body will operate, and how commissioning might work in the future. There are also columns or updates from the transitional Managing Director and Chief Executive Designate of PHE.

## [Presentation to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Complex Needs and Dual Diagnosis, 25th April – ‘Transition to public health’](#) – DrugScope

This presentation sets out some of the key impacts that changes in the health service will have on drugs and alcohol recovery provision. Concerns include the removal of the funding ring-fence from drug and alcohol services, meaning that they will have to compete against a variety of other public health indicators at the local level and may lose funding; the role of the voluntary and community sector in the new environment, and the need to support these organisations through the transition; and what the official role of Public Health England will be, especially relating to quality assurance in a more devolved system.

## [The ethics and effectiveness of coerced treatment of people who use drugs](#) (pdf) – Alex Stevens

This academic paper considers the morality of compulsory forms of treatment for drug users. It argues that compulsory treatment is not ethical for any group, as it breaches the standard of informed consent. Quasi-compulsory treatment (i.e. treatment that is offered as an alternative to a punishment that is itself ethically justified) may be ethical, under specified conditions, for drug-dependent offenders who are facing a more restrictive penal sanction, but is judged not ethical for other people who use drugs.

## [Community Reinforcement Approach and Family Training \(CRAFT\): Evaluation briefing](#) (pdf) – PROPS/Barefoot Research

This evaluation looks at the CRAFT intervention (an 8-week behavioural skills programme) delivered by [PROPS](#), a family support service in North Tyneside. For families and carers, the programme resulted in improved confidence, self-esteem, communication skills, self-reliance and general health and wellbeing. More substance users whose families took part in the programme reduced their substance use or entered treatment compared to those whose carers were not involved in CRAFT. For the organisations delivering the programme the benefits were also evident, as they became more effective at achieving their aims, more progressive in their relationships with service users and helped provide cost savings to the public purse.

[Building recovery in communities: the transition to the new public health system - Action plan for the NTA](#) – Department of Health

With the NTA's operations due to cease by the end of March 2013, this action plan for 2012/13 outlines working priorities for the organisation until then. It breaks up its actions into a number of sections, each headed by a statement such as 'recovery is an individual, person-centred journey' and 'keeping children safe and rebuilding families'. The action plan sets out an ambitious amount of activities, including working with others organisations such as the Recovery Partnership or the Skills Consortium, and skilling-up and supporting the workforce.

[Statistics on alcohol](#) (pdf) – House of Commons Library

This briefing is aimed at MPs but is useful to anyone with an interest in alcohol policy and the nation's drinking habits. Though it does not contain up-to-date information on the new Alcohol Strategy, it does lay out some policy developments which preceded it, including the original Coalition Agreement. It goes on to illustrate some key facts and figures about alcohol use in the UK, including breakdowns of use by age, gender, profession and location, figures on alcohol-related ill health and deaths (69,000 hospital admissions due to alcohol in 2009-10, and a rise of 24% in deaths from 2001-08), and drink-drive statistics (9,700 casualties in 2010).

[Briefing paper – The Government's Alcohol Strategy](#) – Alcohol concern

This briefing paper from Alcohol Concern addresses the Government's alcohol strategy point by point and calls clearly for minimum pricing to be implemented. It offers some basic sums to show how minimum pricing might affect the cost of alcohol: a two litre bottle of cider and a bottle of own-brand vodka are used as the starkest examples, as they are currently amongst the cheapest drinks and would up to double in price. The paper also gives a few broad facts explaining why measures must be taken to discourage drinking: 200,000 people go to work hung-over every day, over a million people are admitted to hospital with alcohol related illnesses each year, and a quarter of adults drink more than is recommended.

[Rehabilitating drug policy](#) (pdf) – Civitas

This report, subtitled *what can we do better to reduce reoffending by drug addicts?*, looks at which drug interventions (both pharmacological and psychosocial) are effective and how they should be delivered, with a particular focus on the criminal justice system. In terms of families, the report does reference family relationships as a motivator for, and contributor to, change. The report's conclusion is that rather than the evidence siding with one particular treatment (e.g. methadone maintenance or abstinence), it shows a variety of high-quality interventions are required. The report also expresses concerns that the Government is embarking on major activity and commissioning in drug

treatment without truly knowing ‘what works’, and where evidence is available, it tends to be of the clinical or medical kind rather than focus on alternative therapeutic interventions. The report concludes with a note of caution that ‘policy can only support those who are also willing to help themselves’.

#### [Response to Government priorities 2012](#) – Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

This letter from Professor Les Iverson to Home Secretary Teresa May provides the official response from the ACMD to the Government’s policy aims and identifies the advisory body’s areas of focus. It welcomes the governmental stress on recovery, and states that the ACMD will continue to work on new psychoactive substances, with advice to be provided in November 2012. It confirms that the ACMD is also looking into khat, cocaine, ketamine, naloxone and tramadol.

#### [Estimating the crime reduction benefits of drug treatment and recovery](#) (pdf) – National Treatment Agency

The Home Office estimates that drug-related crime costs £13.9bn per year and that between a third and a half of all acquisitive crime (i.e. stealing) is committed by offenders who use heroin, cocaine or crack cocaine; this is a key focus of the Government’s Drug Strategy. Headline figures from the report include that drug treatment may have prevented 4.9m crimes in 2010-11 at a cost saving to society of £960m, and that every £1m removed from the drug treatment budget could result in 10,000 more crimes per year. The report does acknowledge, however, that many of the figures are estimates, the available evidence to support them is not always complete, and some assumptions have been made.

#### [Consideration of Naloxone](#) – Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

The ACMD has been looking into naloxone since 2009 and this document reports on their findings. Naloxone is a safe ‘antidote’ to heroin overdoses, of which there are a few hundred fatal ones every year. With sufficient training, peers and family members could administer it easily to negate the effects of overdose. The report stresses three recommendations: firstly that naloxone should be made more widely available in order to tackle the high numbers of fatal opioid overdoses in the UK; second, that the Government should ease the restrictions on who can be supplied with naloxone (so families can possess it, for instance); and thirdly, that the Government should investigate suitable methods of how people can be supplied with naloxone.

## Your organisation

### [Getting started with social media](#) – Family Strategic Partnership

This booklet aims to offer an ‘easy to understand guide to social media for voluntary and community sector organisations working with families’. It sets out what social media is, explains how and why organisations use it, gives glossaries of key terms and provides a wealth of hints and tips to make the most of the various social media tools out there, including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and blogging websites, as well as those which can publish photos, video, audio files and other media. The guide also contains practical information on privacy and confidentiality, evaluating success and creating a social media strategy.

### [Cutting costs and protecting quality](#) – Guardian Voluntary Sector Network

This online resource is drawn from a live webchat which asked experts from the sector to provide tips and insight into how cuts can be made without affecting quality of service. Much of the advice is regarding general good practice, with the importance of consulting and working with the board stressed, alongside more creative options and lateral thinking. Partnerships are understandably identified as essential.

### [Big Society Audit](#) (pdf) – Civil Exchange

The Big Society, the authors note, is one of the Coalition Government’s ‘flagship’ policies, but not one without precedent: successive Prime Ministers have had one version of it or another, and ‘opening up public services’ and ‘empowering local communities’ have been governmental themes for some time. Though the report is quite positive about the potential for growth in social action, noting for example the relatively high levels of donations and volunteering for charities compared to membership of the main political parties, there are serious concerns elsewhere. The Government, ironically, lacks the capacity to lead a growth in local civil society engagement, which by definition is outside its sphere of influence; again somewhat paradoxically, there has been insufficient buy-in from the voluntary sector itself, which struggles to present a united voice and lacks meaningful influence commensurate to its size; and funding for the voluntary sector is falling.

Another finding of the research is what is termed a ‘Big Society gap’ in levels of civil society participation and community relations between younger and older people, rich and poor communities, rural and urban areas and white and minority ethnic people.

### [Families with complex problems: a guide for funders](#) (pdf) – New Philanthropy Capital

This guide is designed for anyone involved in funding services which support troubled families, or

families with complex issues. The first section describes what troubled families are, the scale of the problem and the costs involved; the second looks at how statutory services and charities provide support; section three identifies effective projects and priorities for independent funding; and the last section considers the role of independent funding in supporting families in trouble. The guide uses case studies throughout to illustrate the issues and processes involved.

#### [Human Resources 'how to' guides](#) – NCVO

This resource bank for charities contains a number of guides for voluntary sector organisations on human resources and governance. Guides include [How to successfully recruit to your organisation](#), which has information on areas such as job descriptions, person specifications and shortlisting candidates; [Surviving the recession: alternatives to redundancy](#); [How to train and develop your workforce on a tight budget](#) (for example through mentoring schemes, shared knowledge and online learning); and [How to conduct 360 degree feedback](#), which is a method of performance management which gathers information from a variety of colleagues and service users or customers, rather than being traditionally manager-led.

#### [Sustainable Funding: Across the Income Spectrum](#)

This resource takes the form of a single page which visually displays the options third sector organisations have for funding. The role of donor, funder, purchaser and commissioner are all displayed on a sliding scale of giving, with donors giving out of philanthropic desire, funders providing money perhaps from charitable foundations, purchasers buying products and commissioners buying entire services.

## Featured issue

---

### [The Troubled Families agenda – what does it all mean? \(pdf\) – Adfam/DrugScope](#)

Adfam, in partnership with Drugscope, has recently released a briefing paper exploring the Government's troubled families agenda. David Cameron has spoken of 120,000 troubled families which have multiple disadvantages, face challenges and cost the public purse a large amount in service provision. The Government has pledged to 'turn around' the lives of these families.

#### **What is a 'troubled family'?**

Crime and anti-social behaviour, truancy and unemployment are identified as the three main characteristics of troubled families, the report states. The onus is on local authorities to identify the troubled families they wish to work with in their area; the DCLG expects them to have identified around one-third of their families in 2012/13, and the majority in 2013/14.

#### **Haven't we been here before?**

Yes, in some ways, the briefing states - previous initiatives have focused on chaotic families, families at risk, families with multiple problems and families with complex needs, with the Family Intervention Programme (or FIP) a recent forerunner.

#### **Where is the money coming from?**

The briefing outlines where funds have come from - Government has pledged £448 million, to be contributed to by a number of Whitehall departments. This £448 million is judged to be 40% of the total money needed to work successfully with the target of 120,000 troubled families and will be made available to local authorities partly through a Payment by Results (PbR) scheme; the remaining 60% will have to be found by local authorities from the existing budgets of local bodies.

#### **Who's going to do the work?**

A new Troubled Families Team led by Louise Casey has been created within the DCLG to provide national leadership around this agenda. It started work on 1 November 2011 and coordinates the troubled families programme from Whitehall. Local authorities are required to appoint a 'trouble-shooter' who will be the strategic coordinator of all the work, organising effective partnership working between the various agencies which support the families.

#### **What does it mean for the voluntary and community sector?**

It isn't clear yet, the report states: there is a lack of detail on the actual delivery and commissioning opportunities for VCS organisations. Community sector organisations have a strong track record of reaching out to and engaging the most marginalised people in society, including individuals and families who may initially be reluctant to make contact with statutory services; therefore the expertise of the voluntary sector should be consulted in the identification of troubled families at a local level, and the planning and evaluation of the programme in general.