Tackling problem drug use

New group to build on success of Road to Recovery strategy.

A new group, Partnership for Action on Drugs in Scotland (PADS), has been set up to reduce problem drug use and complement the work of the established Road to Recovery strategy.

The group will help lead and focus the sector on three priorities:

- building communities focused on recovery and tackling stigma
- quality and consistency of service planning and delivery
- harm reduction and reducing drug-related deaths

Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs Paul Wheelhouse, who will chair the new group, said:

“We have already made great progress in tackling problem drug use through the Road to Recovery. The number of Scots reporting drug use is continuing to fall amongst the general adult population while drug taking among young people is at its lowest level in a decade.

“Although these trends are extremely encouraging we are not complacent, which is why we have created the Partnership for Action on Drugs in Scotland. The group will continue to build on these achievements as well as oversee the three sub-groups focusing on particular priorities related to problem drug use.

“I look forward to working with PADS to continue to build on the good progress already made while looking for ways to improve how we tackle the damaging impact of drugs in Scotland.”

Dr Marsha Scott, Chief Executive at Women’s Aid Scotland said: “I was delighted to be asked to join this group, as problematic drug and alcohol use are, in my mind, critical indicators of the seriousness with which we address poverty and inequality in Scotland.

“As CEO of Scottish Women’s Aid I am only too aware of how the intersection of inequality, particularly women’s inequality, with domestic abuse and problematic substance use create a perfect storm for women and children and for the services trying to support them. I accepted the invitation with the expectation that the Partnership will be bold, will be visionary, and will change the landscape and Scotland as a result.”

Roy Robertson, Professor of Addiction Medicine at the University of Edinburgh and GP at Muirhouse Medical Group added: “In the past a sense of hopelessness pervaded many of the reactions to drug problems. This has been replaced with a recognition that death from drug use need not be inevitable, recovery from addiction is common, and that, rather than expecting specialist services to respond in this complicated area, drug problems are a responsibility for all.

“The Partnership for Action on Drugs, and its supporting groups, have a mandate to energise the sector and to visualise a framework which might consolidate the many innovative projects under current discussion and to build an inclusive response to a problem which has always had the status of an outsider from mainstream care.”

Notes to Editors:
The Drugs Strategy Delivery Commission (DSDC) was established in 2009 to monitor and assess the delivery of the Road to Recovery.

A joint decision was taken in November 2014 by the Scottish Government, members of the Drugs Strategy Delivery Commission (DSDC) and relevant stakeholders that the original work of the DSDC had been concluded.

Since then the Scottish Government has worked closely with key stakeholders to develop the new Partnership for Action on Drugs in Scotland (PADS) group which was officially launched at its first meeting on Tuesday 19th January 2016.

For more information contact:

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