

Gloucestershire CDP- Annual Report 2022- 2023

This report sets out the progress that has been made by Gloucestershire Combating Drugs Partnership during the first year of delivery of the national drugs strategy, 'From Harm to Hope', following the end of the first year of Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG) funding in 2022/23.

Background

In June 2022 the national Joint Combating Drugs Unit issued guidance to local areas on measures that they could put in place to ensure that the ambitions of the National Drugs Strategy could be met. They recommended that we convene a local partnership board (a 'Combating Drugs Partnership, CDP), carry out a needs assessment and develop a delivery plan and they set out an ambitious timetable for implementation.

Working Together to Achieve Positive Outcomes

Gloucestershire is committed to combating illegal drugs and the harm they cause, and this is an issue which needs action from a range of local partners. The Gloucestershire Combating Drugs Partnership (GCDP) is a multi-agency structure which covers the whole of Gloucestershire. The partnership is chaired by Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Nick Evans who is also Chair of the county-wide community safety partnership, Safer Gloucestershire.

Gloucestershire held its first CDP meeting in August 2022 and has engagement from partners across health, criminal justice, local authority, and voluntary and community sectors. There are a number of subgroups in the partnership structure which are driving delivery of the different areas of our local plan. Partners are working together to understand our population and how drugs are causing harm in Gloucestershire, to identify any challenges in our local system and to make the changes that are needed to address them.

The CDP Board meets on a quarterly basis with sub-groups meeting more regularly as need dictates. The Board feeds up to Safer Gloucestershire

and has a dotted line across to the Integrated Care Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board (see Appendix 1 for structure chart).

Drug and Alcohol Needs Assessment 2022

The Gloucestershire Drug and Alcohol Needs Assessment was developed in response to Dame Carol Black's recommendation that there is a single, agreed picture of local need in relation to drugs across the priorities, ambitions, and outcomes in the National Drugs Strategy that allows the Combating Drugs Partnership to fully understand the issues and plan joint activity to address them. It forms the basis of an ongoing process of assessment and analysis.

Recommendations were made under the following key areas and were drawn from the quantitative analysis, stakeholder review and current national strategy guidance and have informed the Gloucestershire CDP Action Plan as well as the recommissioning processes for the adult drug and alcohol treatment service.

1. Delivering world-class treatment and recovery services and improving pathways into services
2. Strengthening the professional workforce
3. Ensuring better integration of services
4. Improving access to accommodation alongside treatment
5. Improving employment opportunities
6. Increasing referrals into treatment in the criminal justice system
7. Keeping people engaged in treatment after release from prison.

Gloucestershire CDP Action Plan

The Combating Drugs Action Plan outlines the partnership's approach to delivering commitments across three key priority areas:

- Breaking Drug Supply Chains
- Delivering a World Class Treatment and Recovery System
- Achieving a Generational Shift in the Demand for Drugs and Alcohol

Actions under each of our priority areas can be seen below:

Breaking Drug Supply Chains	Delivering a world-class treatment and recovery system	Achieving a generational shift in the demand for drugs and alcohol
Gloucestershire Constabulary will set a target for a 10% year on year increase of drugs seizures alongside an increase in cash seizures within the applicable period of this plan.	To give service users past and present an organisation that can provide support to them and represent their voice to the local partnership and commissioners (LERO).	Explore and scope the use of high-quality Theatre in Education for drug use prevention and education in schools across the county.
Gloucestershire Constabulary will understand the intelligence that relates to County Lines and undertake targeted, proactive work to disrupt these networks.	Prioritise recruitment and retention of the specialist workforce to reduce individual worker caseloads and increase treatment quality. Implement a local Workforce Development scheme to train and mentor people and build capacity into the specialist workforce.	Develop a coordinated communications plan for schools through Education channels to help schools navigate what primary and preventative resources are available to them to assist – and what resources are available to help them work with parents to build their knowledge and skills in supporting young people to make good choices.
Gloucestershire Constabulary will work with Partners to understand intelligence and disrupt activity around drugs supply in communities and undertake initiatives (for example Clear, Hold and Build) to reduce the impact of this activity within these communities.	Improve the pathway between prisons and community-based treatment and grow the community 'pick-up' to 75% by end-March 2025.	Undertake an assessment to better understand the level of need in relation to Tier 2 drug and alcohol interventions for young people.

	<p>Review the referral pathways from healthcare into drug and alcohol treatment to support continued improvement in the numbers of people accessing treatment.</p>	
	<p>Individual Placement Support Service: Using the IPS Section 31 Grant from DHSC/OHID we will employ a Senior Employment Specialist and two Employment Specialists to offer intensive employment support provided as part of our multi-disciplinary clinical services, rather than separately through mainstream employment support services. Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum 25 clients receiving pre-employment support for an Employment Specialist • Up to XX (tba) clients receiving pre-employment support for a Senior Employment Specialist. <p>Services are expected to reach full capacity within 3 months of commencing delivery of IPS.</p>	

The CDP subgroups are driving delivery of the actions under each of their areas.

Progress on Local Delivery

Momentum has been building since the Partnership was formed in August 2022 and both the Board and the sub-groups have had strong interest and commitment from partners. Having worked through our needs assessment the sub-groups have spent the past few months identifying the key areas of focus for their group and building relationships between partners to enable them to deliver effectively against their self- identified actions. We have included a short summary from each of the sub-groups below.

Data subgroup

The Data sub-group was formed to provide information and analyse data to support the CDP's understanding of the achievement of these against the main strategic priorities. The sub-group is a partnership between the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and supported by information supplied by the local constabulary, drug and alcohol treatment providers and national sources such as Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).

The data subgroup has developed a dashboard for the CDP's monitoring and insight capability based on the initial outcome framework proposed within the guidance for setting up Combating Drugs Partnerships. This dashboard is comprised of a series of measures to support our understanding of the key national priorities:

- Reducing Drug Use
- Reducing Drug Related Crime
- Reducing Drug Related Harm
- Reducing Supply
- Increase Engagement in Treatment

- Improve Recovery Outcomes

Other indicators, including housing and employment outcomes are being added and the sub-group are reviewing and amending the performance reports as the dashboard develops. Performance is reviewed at the quarterly Board meetings. Data on some of the measures can be seen below:

- In 2022-23 there were 2,853 adults in treatment, a slight increase on the previous year and a total of 87 young people (<18yrs) in treatment in the same year which represents an increase of 28 young people (<18yrs) compared to the previous year.
- The treatment effectiveness rate for opiate users in 2022-2023 was 94.7% which is similar to the national average of 95.3% but is a slight reduction on the previous year.
- The rate of substance misuse deaths in Gloucestershire for 2019-21 is 5.3 per 100,000 population which is similar to both the England (5.1) and South West (5.8) rates.
- From March 2022 to the end of Feb 2023 the rate of hospital admissions for drug poisoning in Gloucestershire was 16.24 per 100,000 of the population, significantly lower than the England (33.71 per 100,000 population) and South West (38.6 per 100,000 population) rates.
- Drug related homicides have been sporadic since 2016, while 2022 data is not available in full there has been a decline in recent years in comparison to 2016-2018 for both volume and percentage of homicides which are drugs related.

Looking towards the future, the Data Subgroup will be looking at how the new Combating Drug Partnership's strategic outcomes and metrics can be integrated into the local dashboard and working closely with the other sub-groups to further develop our understanding and reporting.

Enforcement subgroup

The enforcement sub-group is led by Gloucestershire Constabulary and its aim is to break drug supply chains by:

- Targeting and disrupting those involved in the supply of illegal drugs.
- Tackling Organised Crime Groups involved in exploitative drug supply and County Lines.

Drugs intelligence gathering and enforcement activity continues to be led by neighbourhood, Vanguard, and specialist covert teams involved in targeted stop/ search and use of warrants at premises identified as being used and/or involved in the supply of controlled drugs.

Drug supply related arrests and seizures can often fluctuate in volume and can reflect periods of police led targeted activity or trends in the availability/popularity of certain drugs.

Cocaine has typically been the most commonly seized drug in Gloucestershire, followed by cannabis and heroin. However, in the first half of 2023 cannabis seizures have outpaced cocaine seizures. This is likely to be due to Operation Mille; a nationwide operation targeting and disrupting individuals coordinating large scale cannabis cultivation.

This targeted work across the South West resulted in the seizure of:

- 13,522 cannabis plants
- 164,11 kilos of cannabis
- Estimated total value: £3,786,160 – £12,999,580.

- Cocaine 1.35 kilos
- Estimated value: £93,200 – £233,000

Class A drug types (cocaine/ heroin) are more frequently the focus of intelligence reports within Gloucestershire and these reports inform tactical operations which naturally means that there are more seizures of these types of drug. Class A drug supply carries with it significant community harm, particularly when vulnerable juveniles are exploited. Organised crime groups operating within Gloucestershire are predominantly involved in the supply of Class A and Class B drugs and enforcement activity in this area continues to disrupt their activities and protect the community from harm. Furthermore, most organised crime groups, county lines and exploitative drugs networks in the county favour the supply of Class A due to its profitability and ease of distribution.

Adult Treatment Subgroup (ATG)

The Adult Treatment subgroup (ATG) was formed following the publication of the 2021 National Drug strategy with the strategic aims of the national Strategy guiding development of local actions. Membership includes Local Authority and NHS/ICB commissioners, Adult Safeguarding, Housing and 3rd Sector providers, Criminal Justice partners and experts by experience.

The ATG works in partnership to develop and help monitor drug and alcohol treatment within Gloucestershire by:

- Identifying access and barriers to treatment
- Making recovery a priority
- Identify appropriate measures of and means to address treatment issues.
- Strengthening the professional workforce

The group has also worked to prioritise spend of the Universal (2021) and subsequent Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grants (2022 – 2025) alongside other OHID/Joint Combating Drugs Unit requirements such as the Commissioning Quality Standards. Meetings have been online and in person at the adult drug provider, CGL's, Gloucester premises to accommodate optimal involvement and are now held quarterly.

SSMTRG

The Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG) was launched in April 2022 to give additional funding to local authorities to support improvements in the quality and capacity of drug and alcohol treatment over a three-year period between 2022 and 2025. This funding is in addition to the money local authorities (LAs) already spend on substance misuse from the public health grant and it is a condition of the funding that local areas maintain their current level of spend on drug and alcohol services. Funding is confirmed annually, and the amounts allocated to Gloucestershire over the three years are as follows:

- Financial year 2022 – 2023 £619,405
- Financial year 2023 – 2024 £631,573
- Financial year 2024 – 2025 £1,130,000

Local Authority Commissioners engaged with individual partners across the system and through the Gloucestershire Drug and Alcohol Working Group (GDAWG) to agree the focus of our investment. The findings from our recent Strategic Review of Drugs and Alcohol in the County informed the decision-making process. Based on this intelligence, the options which we selected from the Menu of Interventions to focus on include:

- Increasing treatment capacity and quality through recruitment to additional posts within treatment services which helps reduce caseloads and increase the quality/intensity of engagement for service users.
- A Buvidal Pilot. Buvidal is a relatively new but important harm reduction initiative. It is a form of opioid substitution therapy (OST) that offers people who are dependent on opioids (such as heroin) an alternative, prescribed medicine. Buvidal's long-acting, injectable formulation means that it can be administered to patients monthly rather than daily, which other forms of OST (such as methadone) require.
- Harm reduction initiatives including purchase and distribution of additional naloxone which is a medication used to reverse or reduce the effects of opioids.
- Workforce Development Initiative to help increase the available local workforce for drug and alcohol treatment.
- Improving continuity of care for prison leavers – a continuation of a project started under the 2020-2021 Universal Drug Grant.
- Increasing capacity on mental health and assertive outreach services. This includes embedding a mental health nurse into our provider's service and running co-existing conditions training (mental health and substance misuse) for staff as well as employing additional outreach workers.
- Part payment of staff costs in relation to engagement with Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) stakeholders (including service users and carers) during the period December 2022 – June 2023.

- Additional recruitment into the Youth Support Team and to 'InfoBuzz' and 'The Door' to enable an increase in young people's treatment places, mentoring and support.

The final year's funding of the SSMTRG is yet to be confirmed but the CDP will play a role in decisions around allocation of the Grant and discussions will be taking place in the Autumn before the final plan gets signed off by the Director of Public Health.

Children and Young People (CYP) Subgroup

The Children and Young People's (CYP) subgroup was convened to provide information and drive forward activity focused on the needs of Gloucestershire's children and young people. It supports coordinated engagement with both those impacted and expert services, in understanding the range and complexity of needs and will agree and implement a local Children and young people's drug and alcohol strategy and action plan.

Members include representatives from Early years, Commissioning, Education, the Police, criminal justice, NHS/ICB and community youth services. The group meets once a month.

It holds an overview of and will influence the development and implementation of strategies and commissioning intentions of partnership members that impact the Drugs Strategy relating to children and young people and works in partnership to ensure a joined-up approach to addressing drug and alcohol harm.

The group is also responsible for overseeing the CYP commissioning activity in relation to the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG) 2022 – 2025 and have commenced a

mapping exercise to identify the services available in the county for children and young people in relation Tier 2 substance misuse support.

Looking Forward

With partners now fully engaged, a needs assessment carried out and the Action Plan agreed the next few months will be focussed on driving progress to meet the aims of the Partnership.

Mindful that our needs assessment is not a finished document but an ongoing process, we want to deepen our understanding of the drug and alcohol issues affecting our residents and communities and will do this both by building and enhancing our data dashboard and by strengthening our mechanisms for involving and listening to those with lived experience.

Appendix 1: Gloucestershire Combating Drugs Partnership

