

Southend Partnerships

Report of the **Drug & Alcohol Commissioning Team**
to the

Health & Wellbeing Board

on

8th March 2021

Report prepared by: **Jamie Pennycott**

DACT Management Report

Report Status: for decision / note

**Agenda
item:**



1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the Board of the latest available performance of commissioned services.
- 1.2 To inform the Board of the latest available financial performance.
- 1.3 To apprise the Board of work undertaken using the additional funding made available by Public Health England in January 2021
- 1.4 To alert the Board of additional funding being made available from Public Health England to enhance the interface between criminal justice and drug and alcohol treatment services

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board:

- 2.1 Take note of current performance and endorse management actions in place.

3. Treatment System Performance

- 3.1 The Performance Spine Chart (Appendix 1) has been revised with the latest data available, showing performance as at the end of November 2020.
The rate of opiate users in treatment per 1,000 population and that of alcohol users in treatment has risen slightly since the last report, with the rates of non-opiate users remaining static. Despite a slight decrease, the rate of non-opiate users in treatment remains higher than the national average and slightly above that seen among our statistical neighbours.
The rate of successful exits (lines 4, 5 and 6 in the spinechart) have continued to decrease, dropping below the rate seen among our statistical neighbours for the first time in over a year. The rate of non-opiate exits is now the worst among our statistical neighbours. Reports suggest that almost every partnership in the country has seen falls in their rates of successful exits among opiate users, as services have moved towards more of a stabilisation- rather than exit-focused model due to the concerns about the risks of COVID on substance using populations. Both the national and statistical neighbour averages have dropped significantly, but Southend appears to have dropped at a faster rate, suggesting

that we have probably adopted more of a cautious and risk-averse approach than some other areas. This appears to have been beneficial in the sense that, unlike some other areas which are reported to have seen some significant increases in deaths among their opiate users and homeless populations, Southend has had just three substance-related deaths since the lockdown started, only the latest of which appear to have been opiate-related.

Nonetheless, concerns about the continuing decline in exit performance were raised with STARS at the last performance review meeting in early February 2021. At this meeting STARS were able to provide the December and January data, both of which highlighted a gradual return to form in opiate and alcohol completions in particular. It was agreed that the service cannot expect to keep service users on a stabilisation and maintenance regime indefinitely, and the management team felt that there was now a growing confidence of how successful exits can be effectively managed even while still restricted by lockdown limitations.

There has been a slight downward trend in the performance of re-presentations to service among opiate users and alcohol users (i.e. we have seen more individuals re-presenting to treatment within six months of their successful treatment exit). Although this might ordinarily be a cause for concern, as the re-presentation period measured for this report runs from 1st June to 30th November 2020, covering part of the first lockdown and its easing, the fact that many individuals have chosen to re-engage with treatment can be seen as a very positive development.

3.2 Appendix 2 provides a summary of key performance areas of the young people treatment system. Key points of note in the latest data (up to 30th September 2020) are that:

- There has been quite a drop in the number and rate of young people (under 18) accessing treatment since the last report. This is also likely to have been a lockdown impact as schools in particular would not have been referring during this period. Although not quite the highest among our statistical neighbours, Southend's rate remains far higher than the national average;
- The rate of successful exits from treatment in YPDAT (100%) is currently in line with the national average, and higher than all our statistical neighbours
- At 5% the rate of re-presentation within six months following successful completion is still higher than the national average (currently at 4%)

4. Budget

4.1 The full DACT Management Statement (Appendix 3) reconciled to Period 10 currently suggests a significant total underspend of £185,078.

4.2 The majority of this underspend (£150,000) had been allocated to develop the complex needs and Housing First offer, but it has been agreed that this will go back into the Public Health reserves for use in Housing First approaches across the next financial year.

4.3 The remaining underspend is derived from:

- £10,000 underspend from funding for additional staffing for the Severe & Multiple Disadvantage Service, accrued due to delays in recruitment
- £3,285 which had been retained as payment for an unclaimed invoice from Surrey & Borders detox unit – as this had sat as an unclaimed and unpaid cost on the budget for four years, it has been agreed by Accounting that this can be disregarded

- £12,650, which had been wrongly charged to the STARS contract rather than the Rough Sleeper Initiative, has now been credited back
- Underspend against the commissioning staff budget, particularly from the Finance Officer role which is shared between DACT and Housing. As a large amount of overtime payments accumulated during the early lockdown when there were efforts to rapidly accommodate the homeless, these overtime payments have been transferred to the Corporate COVID pot.

5. Additional funding from Public Health England

- 5.1 As one of 43 “taskforce areas” identified by Public Health England (PHE) as having high rates of substance misuse among a higher than average cohort of rough sleepers, Southend was awarded around £313k in mid-January to develop approaches to better engage the treatment-naïve and often treatment-resistant individuals among the homeless population
- 5.2 Around £24k of the £313k has been designated by PHE for use in securing residential detox and rehab placements where needed, and the rest has been allocated to the following roles:
 - 2 x Outreach Recovery Workers
 - 1 x Hospital In-reach worker
 - 1 x Clinical psychologist
 - 1 x Team Leader
 - 1 x Team Administrator
- 5.3 Recruitment has begun and it is hoped that the new staff will be in post within the next month
- 5.4 The activities of these workers will be co-ordinated through the twice monthly task & targeting meetings that are in place between drug and alcohol commissioning, mental health commissioning, the Rough Sleeper Initiative and the homeless healthcare project developed by Dr. Siddique.

6. Additional funding to improve the drug & alcohol / criminal justice interface

- 6.1 In mid-January the government announced that an additional £80m was being made available nationally for one year to develop approaches to improve the uptake of drug and alcohol support from criminal justice services
- 6.2 The funding to be allocated to each partnership area will be decided according to a formula developed between Public Health England and the Department for Health & Social Care
- 6.3 Around £35m of the total is to be ringfenced specifically to increase the opportunities for those in contact with criminal justice services to access in-patient detoxification, and it has been stipulated that partnerships will be expected to develop sub-regional collaborative commissioning approaches. Following discussions among the drug and alcohol commissioners across the Eastern Region, it has been agreed that the most sensible collaborative arrangement for Southend will be to partner with Essex and Thurrock to arrange detox placements

- 6.4 Although the area allocations have yet to be confirmed, it is likely that Southend will probably receive somewhere in the region of £80k this year, £35k of which will be ringfenced for residential detox
- 6.5 A meeting has been requested with key partners from the Community Safety Priority Leadership Group to explore views on how best to utilise the remaining funding across the coming year to maximise drug and alcohol treatment opportunities for those in the criminal justice system

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Southend Drug & Alcohol Treatment Performance Spine Chart

Appendix 2: Southend YP Exec Summary– Q2 20_21

Appendix 3: DACT Management Statement_Period 10

8. Report history

- 7.1 The content of this report has been reviewed by the Director of Commissioning