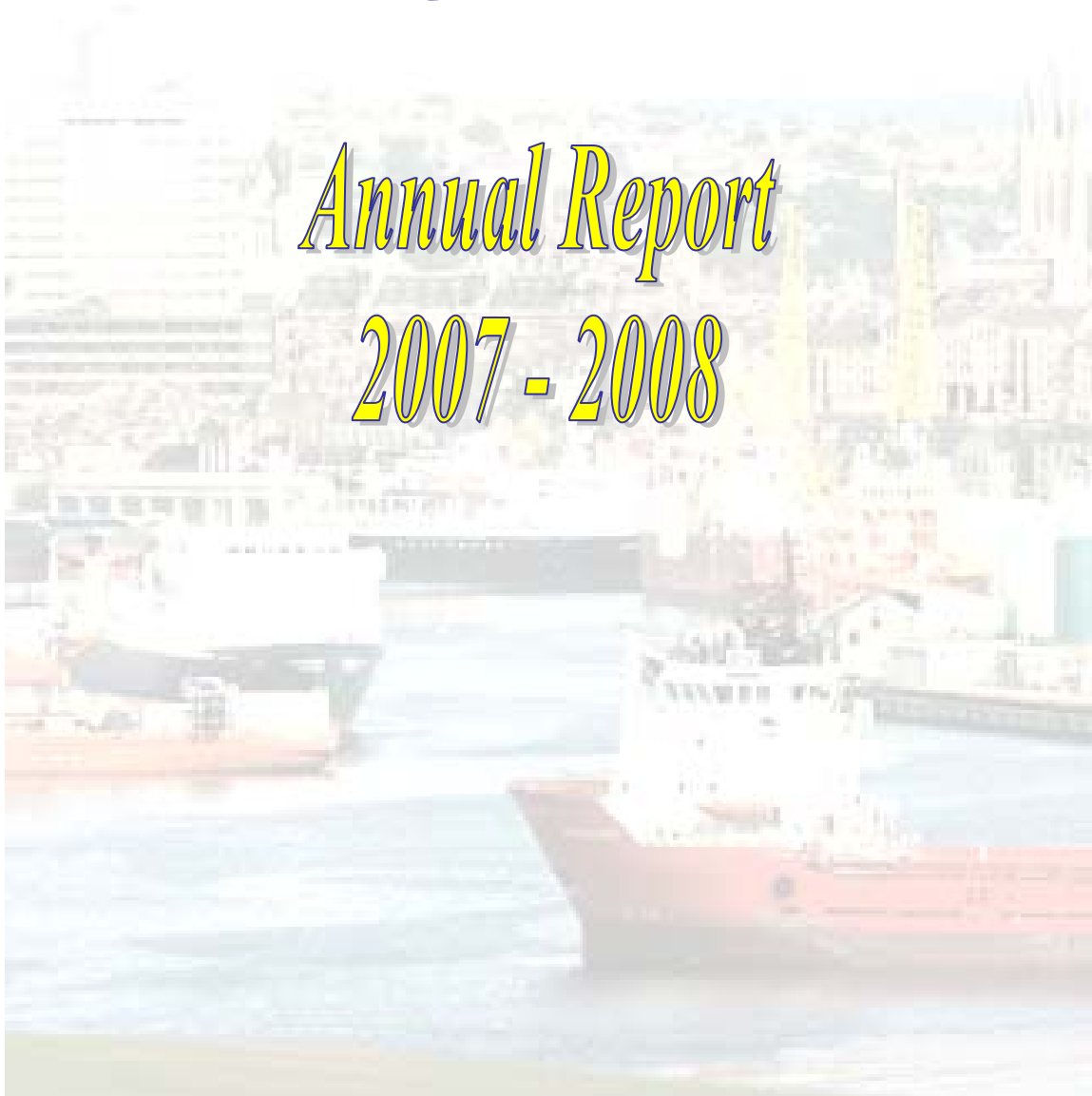




Drugs Action

Annual Report
2007 - 2008



Drugs Action's Mission Statement

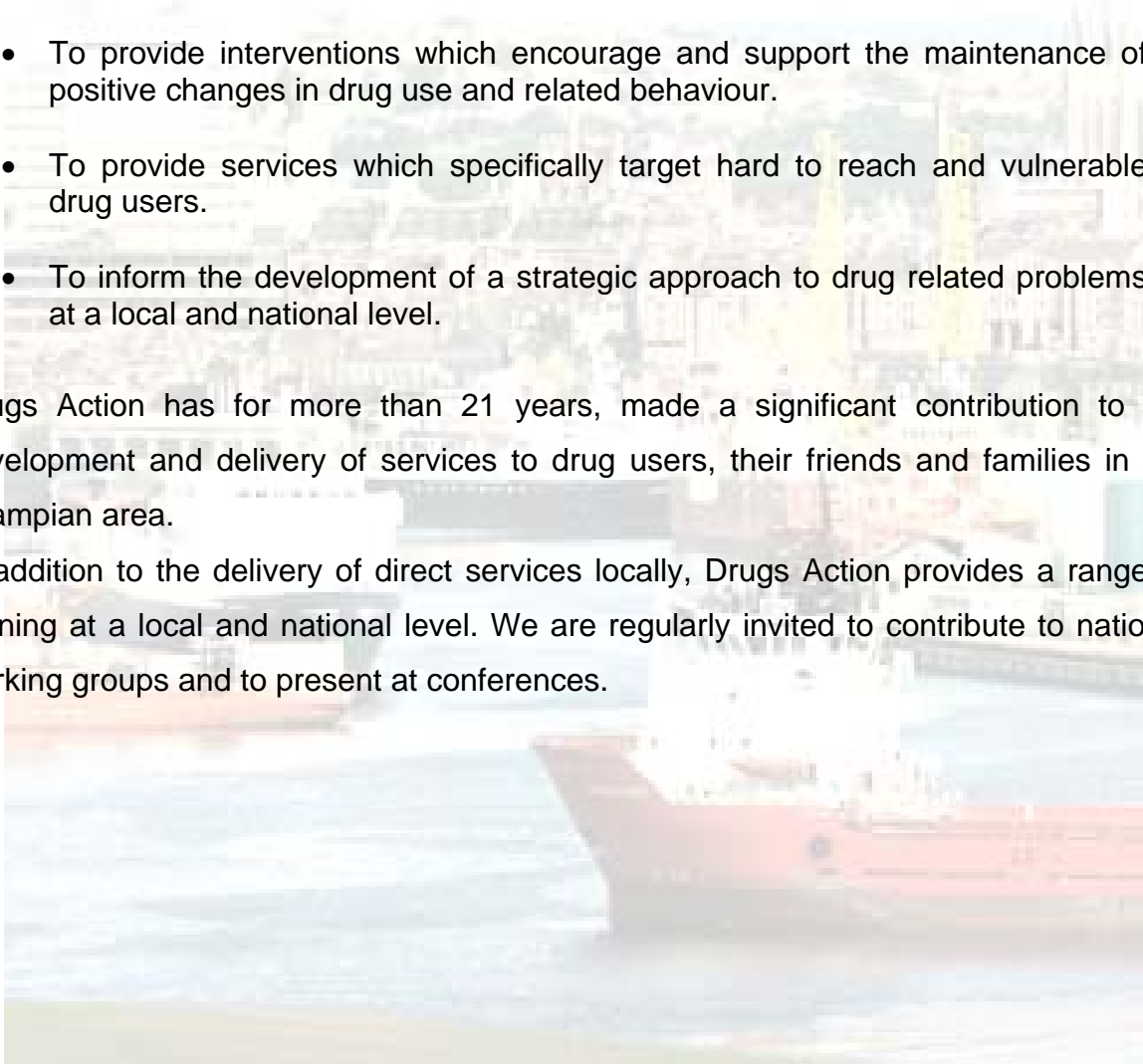
To improve the quality of life of individuals, families and communities by helping people reduce the harms associated with drug use and make positive changes.

Objectives

- To provide and develop an easily accessible range of counselling, information and advice services to drug users, ex-users, their families and friends.
- To provide targeted drugs education, interventions, training, and consultancy to other professionals and agencies.
- To provide appropriately targeted interventions to prevent and reduce drug related harm at all stages, levels and patterns of drug using behaviour.
- To provide interventions which encourage and support the maintenance of positive changes in drug use and related behaviour.
- To provide services which specifically target hard to reach and vulnerable drug users.
- To inform the development of a strategic approach to drug related problems at a local and national level.

Drugs Action has for more than 21 years, made a significant contribution to the development and delivery of services to drug users, their friends and families in the Grampian area.

In addition to the delivery of direct services locally, Drugs Action provides a range of training at a local and national level. We are regularly invited to contribute to national working groups and to present at conferences.



Forward

This has been another busy year at Drugs Action with the continuation and development of existing work as well as the introduction and evaluation of new programmes; the details of which are set out in this report. Since taking over as Chairman earlier this year I have undertaken some shadowing of staff to improve my understanding of the challenges we face as an organisation in this vital field of work in today's society. I have also met with many of the organisations and individuals who interface with the work of Drugs Action. I hope to continue this programme in the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow board members for their support and commitment to the work of Drugs Action and to the General Manager and her staff for their continued high level of dedication to providing a high quality, innovative and sensitive service to our clients.

I commend this Annual Report to you.

Wilma R. MacPerson CBE
Chairman

Board of Directors

A Robb (resigned as Chair 29/01/08)

W Macpherson (Chair appointed 29/01/08)

D Campbell (Vice Chair appointed 01/04/8)

W Taylor (Secretary appointed 29/01/08)

W Jamieson (Treasurer)

R J D Williamson (resigned 29/01/08)

R Allan

L Buchan

L Mutch

R Stark

General Manager's Introduction

Drugs Action enjoyed another successful year with a significant number of individuals from across the north east benefiting from our services.

The highlights of the year have included development of our work in communities across Aberdeen, developing our work with women involved in street prostitution and sustaining contact with this hard to reach group, despite the end of the management zone and introduction of a more punitive approach which has made the women less visible on the street. Within the city, we have developed an innovative project to discourage initiation into injecting. This has been recognised by a range of drugs services across the country. In Aberdeenshire we have become more actively involved in the Alcohol and Drug Action Team and Drug, Alcohol and Blood Borne Virus Forums. In addition, our direct work with stimulant users and interagency work have developed positively and demonstrated effective outcomes with this target group. Training provision has also been an area of growth during this period. This has extended beyond the Grampian area to other parts of Scotland and England.

We are proud that our values of honesty, respect for individual difference, personal choice, the right to privacy and equality of opportunity are at the core of our business. This is reflected in feedback from service users and staff whose experience of the strong value base is consistently described as unique. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their contribution to the success of Drugs Action over the past year and for their contribution to the work of the organisation and commitment to helping some of the most

excluded and vulnerable individuals in our community.

Drugs Action benefits from a diverse and committed Board of Directors who have given willingly of their time and provided essential support to the management team. On a personal note, I would like to thank our outgoing Chairman, Archie Robb, who has had a long association with Drugs Action. Archie's contribution is impossible to quantify and I am extremely grateful to him for his support and guidance during his time as Chairman and look forward to his continued involvement as a Director.

We are fortunate to welcome Wilma Macpherson as the new Chair of the Board. Wilma brings with her significant skill and expertise and, in partnership with our new Depute Chair, Doris Campbell, it would be safe to say we have a strong leadership within the Board.

In January, Gordon Williamson resigned. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his contribution as Secretary and in progressing work relating to property, Health & Safety, pensions and numerous other activities.

We are pleased to welcome Bill Taylor as the new Secretary. Since becoming a Director, Bill has made a significant contribution to Drugs Action and in particular in assisting me with the development of our Policies and Procedures and support on all matters relating to staffing.

Finally, I would like to thank our partners and funders for their continued support.

Senga MacDonald

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

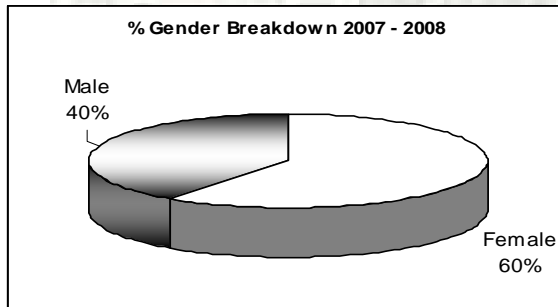
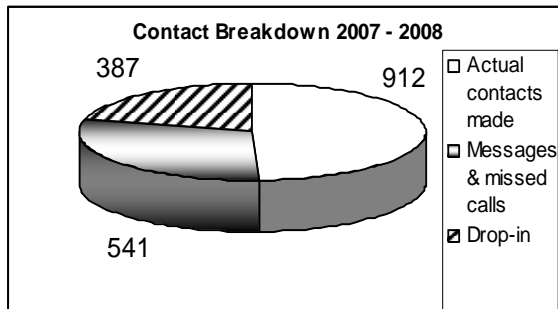
The year 2007 – 2008 has been an important year for Drugs Action in progressing in a number of areas including the following:

- The development of systems to support more effective monitoring and analysis of service user information, service activity and most importantly, outcome measures. A review of requirements for data collection, identification of outcome measures and related paperwork has taken place with a view to a phased implementation of electronic reporting systems during 2008 – 2009.
- There have been important developments in Community Outreach Services due to Community Regeneration Funding which has supported dedicated services to three areas of Aberdeen, thus enhancing existing outreach services and counselling in regeneration areas.
- Quay Services have continued to engage effectively with women involved in prostitution and to develop follow-up services in partnership with other organisations. Activity for the year has shown an overall increase and we are delighted that the Scottish Government has made a commitment to support the drop-in and follow-up support service for a further three years from the Violence Against Women Fund.
- This has been an important year in relation to the development of a new and innovative project to prevent initiation of new injectors into injecting drug use (Breaking the Cycle). This work attracted considerable interest from across the country following the National Drug Treatment Conference where the Project Worker led a workshop. A number of drug services are now using tools developed by Drugs Action to support this intervention and it is anticipated that feedback from these services will enhance our evaluation. This project is supported by funding provided to NHS Grampian to implement Scotland's Action Plan for Hepatitis C, Phase 1.
- The Incite service for stimulant drug users is one of only two specialist stimulant services in Scotland. This service has continued to develop in Aberdeenshire on an outreach basis. Due to the high level of crack use by opiate users in Aberdeenshire, an important focus for the service has been to develop partnership working with Substance Misuse clinical and non clinical services. The service continues to attract primary stimulant users. This service user group continues to have a different profile to the opiate or co-user group and whilst there are specific needs in relation to mental health problems, the need for multiple services and social supports is less. We are pleased that Aberdeenshire Alcohol and Drug Action Team (AADAT) has made a commitment to support this specialist service.
- During the year, Drugs Action introduced provision of Citric Acid in the context of our enhanced Needle Exchange Service. This has been seen as a service priority for a number of years. Financial support was provided by the Joint Drug & Alcohol Action Team (JADAT) to provide one month's supply of Citric Acid to kick start provision on a cost recovery basis. Drugs Action has raised funds to meet the cost of this provision,.

SUMMARY OF SERVICE ACTIVITY

Telephone Helpline is often the first point of contact for drug users, and their families and friends. This is an important gateway service accessed by drug users, ex users, families, the general public and a wide range of professionals and organisations who have contact with drug users.

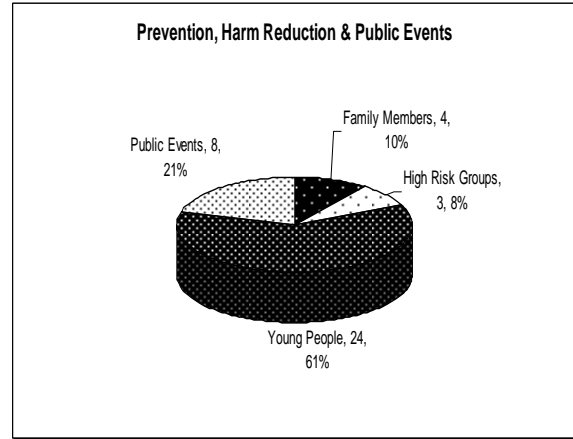
The following provides a breakdown of calls made to the Helpline and information / advice provided through brief drop-in contacts.



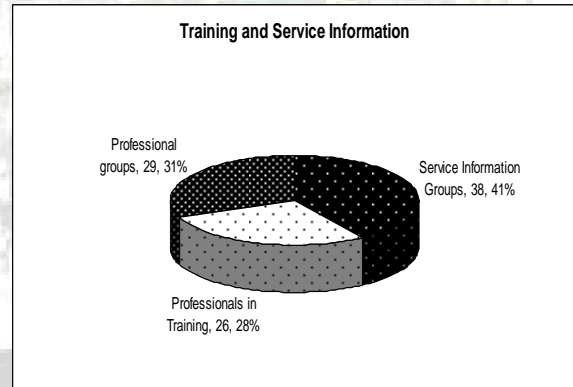
- 60% of calls are made by females thus underlining the importance of the Helpline Service in reducing barriers to accessing information and advice for women.
- 29% of all calls made to the helpline are missed, thus demonstrating a need for extended Helpline opening hours.

Education / Training & Information
Drugs Action delivers training and information to a range of groups in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. This

complements other training available and is provided in the context of both Alcohol & Drug Action Team's developing strategies.



The above shows the number of group sessions and events which took place during the year. This represents contact with 800 – 1,000 individuals.



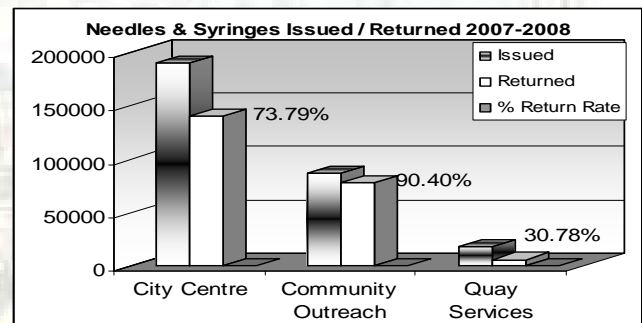
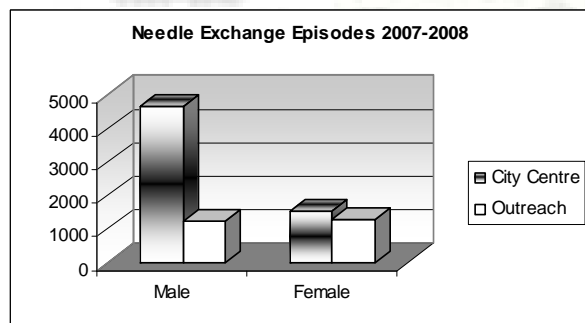
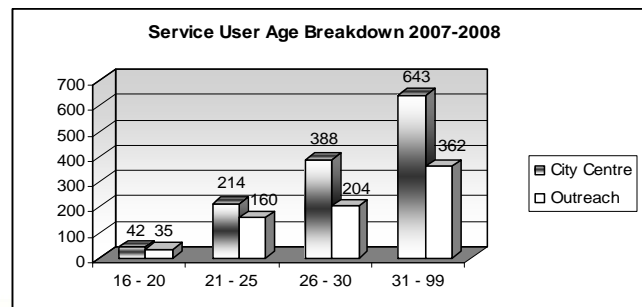
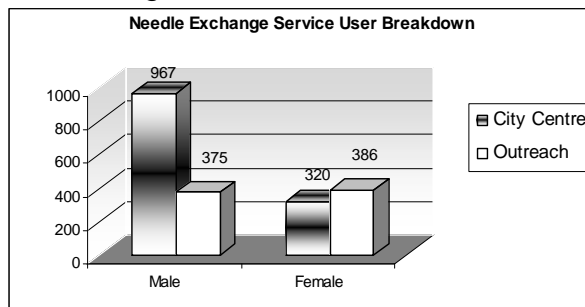
The above represents 600 – 800 participants.

In addition to the above training and service information, Drugs Action provided specialist input on psychostimulants to the SACDM working group, in addition to delivering specialist training for Brent ADAT and Perth and Kinross ADAT. Two members of staff also provided workshops at the National Drug Treatment Conference.

Enhanced Needle Exchange

Designed to target hard to reach injecting drug users this service is provided from the city centre base and a range of outreach locations. The main aims of the service are :

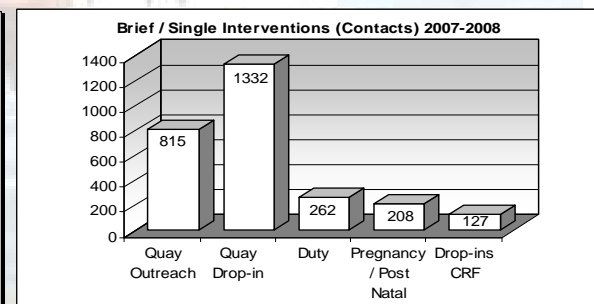
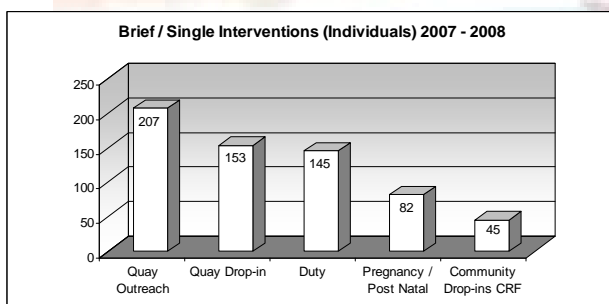
- To prevent the spread of blood borne viruses and sexually transmitted infection.
- To reduce harm related to injecting practice.
- To provide specialist advice, information and support to those affected by Hepatitis B & C and HIV.
- To provide a gateway service for individuals who are ready to make positive changes in their lives.



The above data highlights:

- The importance of outreach services in attracting female drug users. This relates both to community outreach and Quay Services, the latter being of particular importance for this vulnerable group of women.
- High number of service users in the higher age range and therefore need to target younger age range
- The importance of community outreach service in ensuring high levels of returns.

Brief Interventions - A number of services provide a range of brief / single interventions as follows:

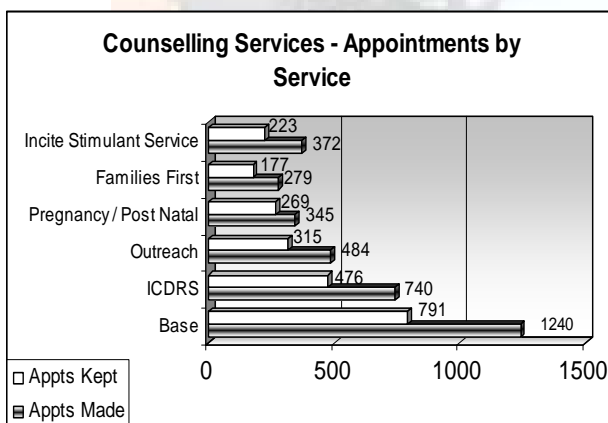
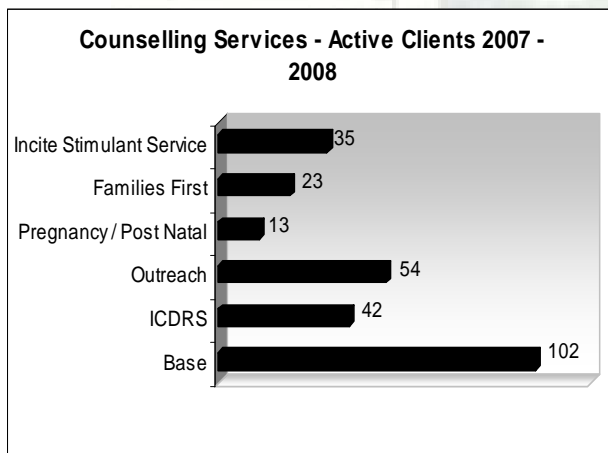


COUNSELLING: ALL SERVICES

Specialist drugs counselling, which is available to drug users, and family members, is central to the overall aims and objectives of Drugs Action, and has a pivotal role in assisting individuals to reduce drug related harm and move towards positive changes in their lives.

This service is enhanced by provision of additional support such as access to the family support group, complementary therapies, and groupwork to enhance lifeskills. Details of the work carried out through counselling are contained in separate project reports.

The charts below provide a breakdown of counselling activity by service. For some services, this represents only an element of the work and for others, the entire activity.



PILOT PROJECTS

Hepatitis C Action Plan

1. Breaking the Cycle is funded to September 2009. Any ongoing work beyond that time will depend on outcomes and evidenced need for development of the project beyond its original objectives.

2. The Sunday needle exchange service is funded to September 2009. The need for this service will be reviewed on an ongoing basis along with other needle exchange sessions and continuation will be dependent on evidence of need and Blood Borne Virus funding criteria and priorities at the end of the funded period.

Mandatory Drug Testing

Incite Specialist Stimulant Service for those testing positively for Cocaine through the Mandatory Drug Testing Project. This service has been funded for one year from Aberdeen City Council Criminal Justice Social Work Service.

In view of the fact that there is not currently a specialist stimulant service for Aberdeen City residents and factors relating to the nature of this user group, it is unlikely that this service will be extended beyond the funded period.

Incite Stimulant Service Aberdeenshire

This service continues to be supported by the Aberdeenshire Alcohol and Drug Action Team (ADAT) and funded by Aberdeenshire Council. There continues to be an unmet need for a similar service in Aberdeen City evidenced though referrals from other services including statutory drug services. At present this is not supported by the statutory services in Aberdeen City.

Quay Services Drop-in Centre

This service has now attracted a further three years funding from the Scottish Government's Violence Against Women Fund and continues to be supported by Aberdeenshire Council. Unfortunately, it is not known at this time whether support will continue beyond September 2008 from NHS Grampian Blood Borne Virus funding. This area of work has been identified as a strategic priority for Aberdeen City Council and as such may attract alternative sources of funding.

Community Outreach

Drugs Action's Community Outreach Service has been enhanced greatly as a result of resources provided by the Community Regeneration Fund. These services have been funded until 30th September 2008 pending evaluation and reassessment against new Scottish Government criteria. It is hoped that ongoing funding will be provided to continue and develop these services in local communities.

In addition, dedicated counselling time for residents in the regeneration areas in Aberdeen is funded through the Community Health Partnership. This work was developed with local communities and was identified by Aberdeen City Council as one of five priority projects to be mainstreamed. Unfortunately, a source of mainstream funding has not yet been identified.

Pregnancy & Post Natal Service

Drugs Action has been involved in this multi-agency service for pregnant drug users and in providing post natal support for approximately 12 years. Initially

funded by NHS Grampian and Comic Relief, and later by Aberdeen City Council and the Health Improvement Fund, elements of the funding for this service have been short term for a number of years. Statutory organisations involved in the service have been able to sustain increases in costs and growth of the service. However, the cumulative effect of complex funding arrangements and frozen funding from the Health Improvement Fund has resulted in a budget shortfall. This has been raised with service commissioners.

Internal Priority Developments

- Internal information systems
- Practice development in Child Protection
- Service outcomes
- Service User Involvement
- Work in regeneration areas
- Partnership working in ICDRS, Families First, Pregnancy & Post Natal Service, Quay Services, Community Outreach, Core Counselling Service and Incite Stimulant Users Service.
- Extending priorities for BBV prevention services in line with the Hepatitis C Action Plan and a local Needle Exchange service user preference study.

Membership of Working Groups and Other Forums

Aberdeen City

- Criminal Justice and Community Safety Aberdeen City JADAT
- Joint Chair of Aberdeen City Drugs, Alcohol and BBV Forum and in this capacity, membership of the JADAT.
- Substance Misuse in Pregnancy Working Group
- Domestic Abuse Partnership.
- Community partnerships and networks.

Due to changes in the structure of the City JADAT, three of the four sub groups have not met. Whilst they have not been formally disbanded, they have not been included in the list of memberships for this period. This also applies to the Sex Industry Forum which has not met during the course of the year.

Aberdeenshire

- Treatment and Care ADAT Sub Group
- Integrated Care Management Team
- North, Central and South Drugs Alcohol and BBV Forums.
- Chair of Central Drugs Alcohol and BBV Forum and in this capacity, membership of Aberdeenshire ADAT.

Grampian

- Blood Borne Virus Strategy Group
- Needle Exchange Sub Group
- Sexual Health Strategy Group

Scottish Government

- Member of SACDM Working Group on Psychostimulants - final report published May 2008
- Member of Needle Exchange Guidelines Development Group. As part of the Hepatitis C Action Plan Phase II – to report in 2009

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds	
	2008	2007
	£	£
Incoming resources		
Voluntary income	172,033	175,901
Activities for generating funds	8,529	3,532
Investment income	16,588	10,833
Incoming resources from charitable activities	569,301	499,863
Total incoming resources	<u>766,451</u>	<u>690,129</u>
Resources expended		
Charitable activities	748,919	726,076
Governance costs	4,454	5,260
Total resources expended	<u>753,373</u>	<u>731,336</u>
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	13,078	(41,207)
Transfer to designated funds	-	-
Transfer from designated funds	-	-
Total funds brought forward	48,520	89,727
Total funds at 31 March 2008	<u>61,598</u>	<u>48,520</u>

BALANCE SHEET

	£	2008	£	2007
		£		£
FIXED ASSETS				
Tangible assets		137,221		135,985
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	8,503		63,218	
Cash at bank and in hand	276,310		232,795	
	<u>284,813</u>		<u>296,013</u>	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	(122,357)		(139,623)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>162,456</u>		<u>156,390</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>299,677</u>		<u>292,375</u>
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due after more than one year		(22,365)		(28,141)
		<u>277,312</u>		<u>264,234</u>
FUNDS				
Designated funds		215,714		215,714
Income and expenditure account - unrestricted fund		61,598		48,520
MEMBERS' FUNDS		<u>277,312</u>		<u>264,234</u>

The operating deficit for the year, of £12,748 has been offset by investment income, training & teaching income and donations totaling £25,826 resulting in an overall surplus of £13,078.



Drugs Action
7 Hadden Street
Aberdeen AB11 6NU

Administration: 01224 577120
Helpline: 01224 594700
Fax: 01224 592295

www.drugsaction.co.uk

Drugs Action is Aberdeen's main independent drugs agency funded by NHS Grampian, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, the Scottish Government, and donations.
Drugs action is a registered charity, Number SC 013582