

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

15 December 2015

Report of the Director of Public Health

SUBSTANCE MISUSE S256 BUDGET EXPENDITURE

1. Purpose of the report:

To propose a time-limited project to improve understanding of the use of image and performance enhancing drugs (IPEDs) in Derbyshire, to improve the delivery of harm reduction interventions.

2. Information and analysis:

Needle and syringe programmes (NSPs) were introduced in the UK in the 1980's in response to the threat of HIV. While originally aimed at injectors of psychoactive drugs, NSPs have been utilised by IPED injectors since their inception. The most commonly injected IPEDs are anabolic steroids, used by recreational bodybuilders to increase muscle mass. The same population are also known to inject other substances, including human growth hormone and insulin.

Over recent years, many NSP services in the North of England have seen IPED users become the dominant client type. In some areas, in excess of 80% of NSP attendees are IPED injectors.

In Derbyshire, little is known about the IPED injecting population. NSP provision is primarily delivered by community pharmacists, but also at four sites by the drug treatment service. Historically, no data has been collected on NSP attendees. However, with the introduction of PharmOutcomes (a web-based monitoring system) in September of this year, we are beginning to receive some useful data. Since the beginning of September, 1219 individuals have used the pharmacy NSP service and the primary substance injected has been recorded for approximately 80% of attendees. Approximately 20% of these reported IPEDs as the primary substance injected.

While the levels of harm associated with IPED injecting are much less than those associated with injecting heroin and other psychoactive drugs, there remains concern in regard to the transmission of blood-borne viruses and bacterial infection. A 2011 cross-sectional survey of 395 IPED injectors attending 19 NSPs in England and Wales found, after

excluding those reporting male sexual partners or injecting psychoactive drugs, 0.8% of participants were positive for HIV and 5% were hepatitis C antibody positive. The latest report of an annual unlinked anonymous survey of people who inject drugs showed 0.9% of participants were positive for HIV and 3.6% had antibodies for hepatitis C. In the same survey, 16% of IPED injectors reported having an abscess, sore or open wound as a result of injecting in the previous twelve months.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends that NSP facilities are provided which meet the needs of IPED users and that specialist advice is available. A briefing by Public Health England has highlighted the need for local authorities to commission harm reduction services which are appropriate to IPED users, including outreach services.

The aims of the proposed project are:

- To gain a better understanding of the IPED using population in Derbyshire
- To raise awareness of harm reduction strategies and services among the IPED using population

The objectives are:

- Identify a IPED 'champion' among the existing drug treatment workforce
- Improve their specialist knowledge around IPEDs
- To identify 'hard-core' gyms (those associated primarily with free weight bodybuilding)
- To make contact with, and develop relationships with, the owners of those gyms
- Make contact with IPED users, through gyms and NSPs
- Pass harm reduction information into the IPED using networks
- Provide training to appropriate workers within the drug treatment system

A worker within the drug treatment services, who has a particular interest in this issue and is familiar with gym culture, has been provisionally identified.

It is proposed to second this worker from his usual role for two days per week for six months and backfill his post with a sessional worker.

3. Financial Considerations:

It is proposed to allocate £5,000 to this project. This would breakdown as:

Funding of sessional worker to backfill drug treatment worker, seconded to the project: £3,600

Travel expenses (including visits to specialist IPED services in North of England): £700

Harm reduction materials: £300

Contingency: £400

There remains sufficient resource within the S256 budget for this expenditure.

4. HR Considerations

Drug Treatment Services are provided by an external organisation who will be arranging and managing the secondment of the Drug Treatment Worker. There are therefore no HR considerations for the County Council.

5. Other Considerations:

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

6. Background Papers:

15 July 2014: Report of the Strategic Director, Health and Communities: Substance Misuse S256 Budget Expenditure (Health and Communities)

7. Key Decision:

No

8. Call-in:

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? No

9. Officer's Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member approves the allocation of a budget of £5,000 from the S256 budget to fund a time-limited project to improve our understanding of the IPED using population in Derbyshire and to improve the delivery of harm reduction interventions to this population.

Elaine Michel
Director of Public Health