



# Home Office

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Date 19 December 2011

Dear Martin, Noreen and William, on behalf of the Recovery Partnership,

I am writing on behalf of the Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) on Drugs, chaired by the Home Office Minister of State, Lord Henley, to thank you for your presentation to the last meeting of the IMG in November. I also want to take this opportunity to record the IMG's appreciation for your contribution to IMG discussions following your formation in May.

As agreed at the meeting I want to provide you with some feedback on the impact of the Recovery Partnership's input to Ministerial discussions and decisions. IMG discussions are restricted so I cannot repeat these in great detail. I have however, outlined key points of the discussions and summarised outcomes to ensure that those that are helping you with your work get a sense of the collective Ministerial ambition and direction of travel.

### 'Housing and Recovery: Meeting the Challenge'

You submitted this paper for consideration at the July IMG meeting. Ministers are clear that housing is pivotal to achieving full recovery; they welcomed and noted this paper and wanted to record their thanks to all who contributed to the survey.

A number of points emerged from the discussions that have been followed up in policy discussions at an official level. In addition to this, Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Ministers are taking forward provisions in the Localism Act to introduce major reforms to social housing. This will enable greater flexibility in the way people access social housing, the types of tenancies which are provided and the way the homelessness duty is discharged. The Act presents opportunities to integrate housing into the local frameworks for supporting drug and alcohol recovery programmes.

You (Martin) also took part in the DCLG and Home Office led roundtable discussion on 15 December looking at key housing and recovery challenges and solutions in light of the new housing reforms. There was a broad range of attendees from the housing sector; Drug Action Teams; local commissioners; the National Treatment Agency and



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the Local Government Association. The outcome of these discussions will feed into an IMG housing update paper in the New Year.

#### 'Payment by Results and Recovery'

This paper was submitted to the September IMG meeting. You will recall that in this paper the Partnership welcomed the payment by results (PbR) approach and identified a number of key issues in terms of: the practice and quality of commissioning; the impact of PbR on cash-flow; and the lack of nationally approved recovery outcomes.

Ministers held a lengthy discussion on PbR during the meeting. The focus of the discussion was incentivising payment using a weighting mechanism to encourage full recovery. Ministers made clear their desire that at least 80% of the money within the 'freedom from drugs of dependence' domain be paid on the two measures that require the cessation of dependence on drugs (including substitute prescriptions). Ministers also considered wider outcomes in terms of, for example, 'work programme ready'.

Ministers maintain a keen interest in the pilots. They visited Oxfordshire on 15 December and plan to visit Enfield in January.

#### November IMG meeting

You gave a helpful insight to the work of the Partnership and the issues the sector highlights as areas for improving drug treatment outcomes and supporting recovery. IMG in particular noted the opportunities and challenges you outlined on the establishment of Public Health England, and the impact this will have on monitoring and tracking funding and driving the innovative commissioning of services. The Department of Health are taking forward the transition of the National Treatment Agency into Public Health England and will keep IMG updated.

Ministers stressed the importance of the Public Health Outcomes Framework in keeping local areas focussed on the issues around drugs and alcohol dependence and of local areas' Strategic Needs Assessments to reflect the needs of the local drug and alcohol population. Overall, the IMG was grateful for the input of the Partnership and noted the challenges, concerns and opportunities you raised.

#### 'Employment, Education and Training and Recovery'

This paper was submitted to the November meeting. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) updated Ministers on the Work Programme. As background, the Work Programme went live nationwide in June 2011. It operates across 18 contract areas where prime providers are engaging with approximately 850 subcontractors. Work Programme prime providers and sub-contractors are working closely with drugs PbR sites on providing employment support. This partnership working, which has been welcomed by all partners, will help clients of drug PbR providers get access to employment support from the Work Programme.

Ministers are clear on the importance of the PbR pilots in driving forward the recovery agenda and noted that the work being done to link these with the Work Programme was encouraging.

The drug strategy is the most ambitious to date with a clear focus on achieving full recovery. The formation of the Recovery Partnership and the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs Recovery Committee are positive steps towards achieving this.



The government has implemented new policies and are now starting to see a new landscape emerge to enable local services to be tailored to the needs of individuals. Ministers want to continue to build on the progress made since the publication of the strategy 12 months ago. Examples of work during the first year of the drug strategy include:

- Structural reform: Royal Assent for Police and Crime Commissioners, design and implementation of the Work Programme, establishing the National Crime Agency and developing proposals for Public Health England.
- Funding: Putting in place plans for greater local ability to address local needs through un-ring-fencing budgets. Introduced community budgets to enable greater local influence and accountability for the way in which public money is spent. Established a £2.2bn Early Intervention Grant paid to local authorities for children, young people and family services, including targeted support for young people at risk of poor outcomes such as substance misuse.
- Policy: Publication of strategies on homelessness, organised crime and a UK Threat Assessment. We have also re-launched the FRANK website ( [://www.talktofrank.com/](http://www.talktofrank.com/) ).
- Implementation: Co-design of eight drug recovery Payment by Results pilots areas and agreement for outcome domains and 10 Supporting People housing pilots. Established a Forensic Early Warning System to identify new psychoactive substances.

Looking ahead there are still challenges and opportunities that we are working to address. Amongst these will be work on early education and intervention; troubled families; single, co-dependency and polysubstance dependency; and stigma around drug users.

The Recovery Partnership's contribution to achieving full recovery is a key part of ensuring that the sector engages directly with Ministers. IMG are particularly interested in receiving reports that reflect the honest views and opinions of those working on the 'front line'.

We look forward to continue to work with you to ensure we achieve effective implementation of the Drug Strategy; enabling people to achieve full recovery.

Yours sincerely,



Gus Jaspert  
Head of Drugs and Alcohol