



New appointments strengthen DrugScope's focus on membership and influencing policy

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DrugScope is delighted to announce two new appointments this month. Dr Marcus Roberts, formerly Head of Policy at Mind, the mental health charity, is joining DrugScope as Director of Policy. Carlita McKnight, formerly a Development Worker at Voluntary Action Camden, has been appointed as Membership Development Officer.

Dr Marcus Roberts brings a wealth of experience to his new role, having worked in the mental health, criminal justice and drug sectors. Previously, he has worked as Policy Manager at crime reduction charity Nacro. He also taught at the University of Brighton, the University of Essex and the Open University. As Head of Policy at Mind, he has established a number of exciting projects bringing consultation with mental health service users to the heart of policy development.

Prior to working at Mind, Marcus held the role of Head of Policy at DrugScope (2003–2006). He made an outstanding contribution to the drug policy field, contributing to key reports for the Beckley Foundation Drug Policy Programme, recognised as work of international standing. Marcus authored the report of the Independent Inquiry into Drug Testing at Work and was a member of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Drugs and Alcohol Research Committee. Marcus will be developing and leading the policy programme at DrugScope.

Carlita McKnight, joins DrugScope from Voluntary Action Camden, where she was a Development Worker. In her post she coordinated and established various networks, fostering links between statutory and voluntary sector homelessness professionals and service users. She also has experience of working in supported housing provision, with a range of client groups including active drug users, former alcohol users and ex-rough sleepers.

The Membership Development Officer role has been created to further strengthen and develop DrugScope as the membership organisation for the drugs field. DrugScope members include organisations and individuals working across the substance misuse and related fields, including education and prevention, criminal justice and healthcare.

Martin Barnes, chief executive of DrugScope, said:

We are delighted that Marcus is joining the DrugScope staff team once again. His broad policy perspective and insight into the intersections between drug use, mental health and criminal justice issues will be invaluable. Working with our members, Marcus will bring an intellectually rigorous approach to the development and expansion of DrugScope's policy work.

The new Membership Development Officer post at DrugScope will further strengthen our role as the membership organisation for the drugs field as well as our ability to inform and influence delivery of the new drug strategy. Carlita brings excellent experience of developing and facilitating professional networks and we look forward to developing and expanding the membership with her on board.

Paul Farmer, chief executive of Mind, said of Dr Roberts:

"Marcus has made an invaluable contribution in his time at Mind. He has been committed to re-focusing the mental health agenda, taking our policy work in new and progressive directions. Through his leadership, he ensured that Mind's position is always robust, thoughtful, and has maximum impact. Marcus has worked with passion, tenacity, and shrewd judgement. He will be missed by all at Mind, and we wish him all the best at DrugScope."

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