

## Get involved

### Projects, research and volunteering in the drugs field

This page lists projects and activities that are looking for assistance. Please contact the project involved if you are interested in helping. If your organisation would like to advertise a project here please email the [website manager](#). If you would like to become a volunteer in the drugs field please see the section on [volunteering](#) below.

### Projects, activities and opportunities

#### Griffins Society Visiting Research Fellowship Programme

Would you like to contribute to practice and policy debates about women offenders by undertaking pioneering research?

The Griffins Society Visiting Research Fellowship Programme offers a unique opportunity to explore your own interests or concerns about the treatment of women in the criminal justice system. Candidates must have inquiring minds but previous research experience is not necessary as the Programme supervisors provide comprehensive supervision and support. We are looking for research proposals that explore the resettlement needs of women at any stage of the justice system or related fields (e.g. housing or drug and alcohol support). We welcome community-based proposals and prison-based research that has a resettlement focus.

Find out more here - <http://www.thegriffinsociety.org/fell.html>

#### University of Bath seeking examples of service user evaluation

Jenny Scott, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice and Medicines Use at the University of Bath, has been commissioned to evaluate service user views of a local shared care scheme. She would like to know whether any DrugScope members who have previously developed evaluation questionnaires for their service users would be willing to share them with her team. She is also interested to know what sort of response rate was received. If you have information that you think may be helpful to Jenny, please contact her by email at [j.a.scott@bath.ac.uk](mailto:j.a.scott@bath.ac.uk)

#### Can you help DrugScope to improve access to psychological therapies?

DrugScope is working to improve links between the drug treatment sector and the Government's 200 million programme Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (or IAPT). We know that a high proportion of people in drug and alcohol services experience depression or anxiety, but are they accessing IAPT therapists who can help them with these issues?

We are interested in hearing about your experience with IAPT – including any experiences of working with the IAPT programme to facilitate effective working arrangements between drug and alcohol, IAPT services and other local stakeholders. Potentially, these could be showcased nationally by IAPT in supporting the development of best practice.

If you have experience of working with a local IAPT initiative, or any other comments on the IAPT programme we would be interested in hearing from you. Please contact Carlita McKnight on 020 7520 7558 or alternatively email at [carlitam@drugscope.org.uk](mailto:carlitam@drugscope.org.uk)

For further information on the IAPT programme, including pathfinder projects in your area, please go to the IAPT website at [www.iapt.nhs.uk](http://www.iapt.nhs.uk)

#### Thesis – How alcohol-dependent adults respond to their partner's drinking

Amy Fisher is a third year clinical psychology trainee at Lancaster University doing a thesis on how partners of alcohol-dependent adults respond to their partner's drinking. The thesis is likely to be published and it is therefore hoped that it will inform professionals and services on how treatment can be best developed to involve both people in a relationship.

Amy is looking to get in touch with people who:

- have been in a relationship with their partner for six months or longer;
- are over 18 years old (and their partner is too), and;
- consider their partner to be currently alcohol-dependent.

For more info or to take part, please click on the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/yzygbd8>

Alternatively contact Amy directly at [a.fisher1@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:a.fisher1@lancaster.ac.uk) or call 01524 593 378.

The deadline for questionnaires is Fri 26th February 2010.

### **Cannabis classification thesis**

Jenepher Parry Davies invites feedback on her thesis on cannabis classification, completed as part of a Master's degree in Law at Southampton Solent University in November 2008. The paper focuses on the classification of cannabis, fitness for purpose of the Misuse of Drugs Act and criminal justice and public health response to drugs-related offending in England and Wales. It is based on the hypothesis that a strong positive correlation is found between the status/classification of cannabis and the level of harm to both a problem drug user and the hidden victims of their use. The dissertation also explores treatment modalities available to courts when sentencing an offender convicted of a drugs-related offence, identifies gaps in regulation and treatment provisions, draws conclusions and makes recommendations accordingly. The research was undertaken in light of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) review of cannabis last year.

You can download a copy of the thesis [here](#): (PDF 1.4MB)

You can get in touch with any comments on the work to by emailing Jenepher Parry Davies at: [sineadnicdaithi@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sineadnicdaithi@yahoo.co.uk)

### **DrugScope needs your help to bring good practice to light**

The achievements of drug services and projects are rarely reported in the mainstream media and unfortunately bad press can have a negative impact both on those who may need to access services and those who work in the sector. But there is good practice going on across the country that makes a positive difference to users, families and local communities. Unfortunately, we don't often get the opportunity to share what we are doing or learn from one another's successes.

DrugScope is working with the Home Office to highlight good practice. We are building up a collection of case studies that will provide an information-sharing resource for the sector. We're interested to know about the things that worked or are working - but we'd also like to hear about the learning experiences.

We are especially interested in projects working in the following areas:

- providing assistance to drug misusing parents and their children;
- family-based interventions (i.e. 'whole family' approaches, support for those affected by a family member's drug misuse; drug prevention work involving families);
- providing measures to support social reintegration (i.e. access to jobs, training, housing);
- supporting drug misusing offenders (for those currently in the criminal justice system or in the community);
- community engagement (i.e. communicating and engaging the local community around your work).

If you would like to submit any case studies, please email Harry Shapiro at [harrys@drugscope.org.uk](mailto:harrys@drugscope.org.uk) with brief details of the project you are putting forward and we will be in touch.

### **Call for evidence - project on women offenders**

The Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Task Force and Ministry of Justice are undertaking a short study on women offenders. The overall aim of the project is to optimise the use of diversion - both prevention and alternatives to custody - in order to improve the life chances of women offenders and their families, whilst meeting the needs of communities through harm reduction and the effective delivery of justice. The project is split into two streams and will look at how to effectively identify and prevent women at risk from offending, and explore effective and appropriate alternatives to custody.

As part of the research and analysis phase, we are inviting your input in a Call for Evidence around key themes of the Women Offenders project. We are targeting this Call for Evidence at academics, practitioners and leadership of relevant third sector organisations; all of whom we know have a keen interest in improving the life chances of vulnerable women, their families and communities in which they live. Your input will feed directly into the analytical phase of the project, and will complement an intensive programme of desk-based research, field visits, and interviews. We intend findings from the project to be published in some form later this year.

We would be grateful if you could provide specific references or attach any reports where relevant. Please send your response to [womenoffendersproject@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:womenoffendersproject@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk)

If you have any questions, please call Atif Rafique, Policy Advisor, Social Exclusion Task Force on 0207-276-0628

## **The use of drugs in older adults and the implications for clinical management and service development - PhD study**

Over the past 15 years there has been a progressive increase in the proportion of older adults using illicit drugs and entering drug treatment. However research in the area of old age and drug use has tended to concentrate on drug users who cease using drugs as they age (essentially maturing out of drug use) with little work considering those that continue to take drugs as the age. With this in mind I have developed a study which aims to explore the lifestyles of drug users over 50 persevering in drug use; and describe the processes that explain how and why they continue using drugs as they age.

I would like interview anyone over the age of 50 who has used an illegal drug in the last year. Interviews would be at a place where the volunteers feel comfortable and should last no longer than two hours at the very most (the longest interview I've done so far is 90 minutes) and be tape recorded. Volunteers would be allowed to stop the interview whenever they wished or skip over any questions they didn't want to answer. The interviews would be about the volunteer as a person, their current living circumstances and their drug use.

Anyone interested in helping can get in touch with me either at [markbmason@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:markbmason@brookes.ac.uk) or on my mobile phone which is 07766 916354. I would be more than happy to provide any further information about the study, or talk any potential volunteers about issues or concerns they might have.

## **Problem drinking survey**

The University of Melbourne is developing guidelines about helping people with drinking problems. They are currently recruiting consumers and carers to complete a number of online surveys. To find out more and participate please see their website: [http://www.mhfa.com.au/surveymonkey/Problem\\_drinking\\_info\\_sheet.html](http://www.mhfa.com.au/surveymonkey/Problem_drinking_info_sheet.html)

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)**

Earlier this year the CSCI were asked by the Government to look at how the system for deciding who qualifies for support from local councils could be improved. To this end, CSCI is now carrying out a major review of the eligibility criteria that councils use to decide whether or not a person receives help from the council with social care services.

You can read more about this review on the CSCI website here:

[http://www.csci.org.uk/about\\_us/news/review\\_of\\_eligibility\\_criteria.aspx](http://www.csci.org.uk/about_us/news/review_of_eligibility_criteria.aspx)

And you can take part in their online survey here:

<http://www.csci.org.uk/SelectSurveyASP/TakeSurvey.asp?SurveyID=3KJm732JI771K>

## **Adfam survey into support for families affected by substance misuse**

Adfam is conducting a new study into the number of relatives of substance misusers accessing support networks in their own right. In trying to find these figures, Adfam is contacting as many family support services as possible no matter how large or small, and throughout the UK. The information desired is very simple just the number of families and/or family members that each service has engaged over the past 12 months or during 2007 (or calls taken for a helpline). If you work in the family support sector and your service has not yet been contacted, please email [o.french@adfam.org.uk](mailto:o.french@adfam.org.uk) to help the study, or for further information.

## **Volunteering in the drugs field.**

Voluntary work in a practice setting is a useful starting point for any career working with drug users and is a good way of gaining experience and testing your ability and motivation for the work. To get a voluntary position you can either contact individual drugs projects in your locality directly, or contact a national umbrella organisation such as the National Centre for Volunteering.

Telephone numbers for local treatment centers can be found in our [Helpfinder](#) Database. Helpfinder is DrugScope's database of drug treatment services and provides contact information and basic service provision details for drug treatment and care services in England. It can be used to search for organisations in your area.

## **Other useful organisations:**

### [Vinspired](#)

Vinspired aims to make it easy for young people (16-25 yr olds) to find volunteering opportunities in their area.

### [National Centre for Volunteering](#)

Volunteering England works to support and increase in the quality, quantity, impact and accessibility of volunteering throughout England.

### [Do It](#)

This site provides details of volunteering opportunities throughout the UK and is powered by a large on-line database of current vacancies. Do-It allows users to search by postcode, type of organisation and type of work. The site has a section on volunteering in the drugs field.

### [Timebank](#)

This BBC supported campaign gives you the opportunity to share your time and skills with your community. The site allows you to register your details in order to receive a list of organisations in your area that need help, and which match your interests.

### [National Association of Voluntary Service Managers](#)

NAVSM is the national association for Voluntary Service Managers in the fields of health and social care. It has a section on opportunities for volunteers.

### [Society Guardian](#) [Volunteering section](#)

Up to date news coverage on volunteering issues from the on-line version of The Guardian newspaper.

Do you have a project or activity you'd like help with? Contact [Jackie Buckle](#) to advertise it here.