



Substance

Wolverhampton's Drug Users Lifestyle Magazine

Issue No 2 August - October 07

FREE

Local Drug News

Needle Exchange Update

Harm Reduction Information

Welcome from the Editor



Service User Involvement Team's Open Day and Launch event held on 2nd May 2007.

Its issue two all ready, time fly's when your having fun. For those of you who got to see the first issue we hope you found it useful and interesting to read.

Thanks to all the readers who gave us feed back, which gave us some great ideas of what you want to see in your magazine.

We have selected a winner Jon-Paul who came up with the name for the magazine which as you can see is Substance. We felt the name sums up the magazine in a single word, (well almost) Jon-Paul very kindly told us to keep the

competition prize and put the money towards the magazine fund, which we have done.

We have managed to increase the amount of pages and also requested 500 copies this time as last issue we were limited to only 200 as we have to stick to a tight budget as we make no money from the magazine. I would also like to thank Service Users at Base 25 for their contributions to this issue, keep them coming in. I know it seems a long time ago but I would also like to thank everyone who came to our Open Day and Launch event in May.

As you can see from the picture it was a very successful event and was well attend by both Service Users and Staff from the Treatment Agencies.

I hope you enjoy this issue and please don't forget we need your input as this magazine is nothing without you, and I hope to meet as many of you as possible at our Open Forums being held on 28th August and 25th September.



The first signs of growth at our Allotment - This was taken on Wednesday 18th July 2007.

Whilst every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this work, no responsibility for loss or damage occasioned to any person acting or refraining from action as a result of any statement in it, can be accepted by the editor or by Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council Service User Involvement Team, as publishers. We would also like to thank all those that have contributed to this edition of the magazine.

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DON'T FORGET

This magazine is run and put together by ex and current users of Wolverhampton Drug Treatment Services. Anyone can contribute an article, poem, story, question etc. Send your stuff to: SUIT c/o WVSC, 16 Temple Street, Wolverhampton, WV2 4AN.

Free Training Courses

- NCFE Level 1 Drug Awareness Certificate
- Referring Substance Misusers
- Drug Use Screening Tool Training

For more details on any of the above courses contact

Wolverhampton Drug Action

Team Training Unit

10/11 The Haymarket

Pendeford

Wolverhampton

WV8 1XE

Tel: 01902 747529

3

Fax: 01902 747451

**TACKLING
DRUGS
CHANGING
LIVES**

News - News - News - News -

City Centre Needle Exchange to close

Open Door Needle Exchange (formally Front Door) is due to be closing down in the next few months with the sad loss of this City Centre based service.

However all is not lost as the local treatment providers have been searching for new premises and exploring alternatives. As the search for a city centre location was proving difficult the idea of buying a mobile unit that can travel around the city was being discussed. These discussions were taking place amongst the managers of the treatment providers so the Service User Involvement Team decided it was time to seek the views of the people that actually use the current exchange.

They spent all week speaking to service users at Open Door asking them what their feelings about the proposed ideas were and had they got any suggestions. They then produced a full report that was sent to all the local Service Managers and the Commissioner.

A full copy of the report is available to anyone interested and can be obtained direct from the Service User Involvement Team, however the main points from the report highlighted the need to keep a City Centre based service and also look at increasing the contents of the packs given out at local chemists, as currently some of these do not include Citric or Sterile Cooking Pots.

As a result Managers have now renewed efforts to find a City Centre property and also are planning to include both Citric and the Pots in packs given out at all Chemist's. We will keep you informed of developments, but the exercise does prove that our voices are being listened to, so if you have something to say don't forget to come along to an Open Forum held on the last Tuesday of every month at Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council opposite the Casino on Temple Street from 3pm, or contact the Service User Involvement Team on 07748 598892.



War on Slugs

Breaking news reached our news desk just days before this edition went to the printers, that had a devastating effect on our team. It seems that the Allotment Project is under attack. Lettuces and Beetroot plants are all being eaten by a wild army of Slugs. As you can see from the picture work is progressing well but these little invaders are threatening the crop. Any information to help fight these slimy gits would be most welcome.

See page 10 for more info.

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Needles, needles everywhere!

By Tony Mercer

The title probably is a bit dramatic but we do have a problem with discarded needles both in the city centre and out in different neighbourhoods. It does make it more difficult to win local public and political support for drugs services (particularly important with the end of the National Drug Strategy next year) and does reinforce a lot of the negative stereotyping and discrimination faced by drug users.

I'm hoping to meet with the User Involvement Project to look at ways to reduce the number of discarded needles in the city so if you have any good ideas please talk to one of your service user reps in the next few weeks



Staff at Horizon House will be hosting The Worlds Biggest Coffee Morning to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support on **Friday 28th September 2007** Every cup sold will help improve the lives of people affected by cancer.

DRR'S - The low, medium and highs!

July 18th saw the second DRR Development Day hosted by the YMCA Bridge Project. These events are attended by staff from Probation, Horizon House and YMCA with the aim of improving communication between the various organisations involved in the running and management of Drug Rehab Requirements issued by the Courts are part of a Community Sentence.

There are many issues that affect service users on a DRR that sometimes can be no fault of their own, but have a knock on effect on their lives. These issues range from lack of communication between organisations, to key workers missing appointments.

Organisations involved with DRR's can be very focused on meeting National and Local Targets and sometimes this can be a distraction from the aim of helping individuals reduce their criminal activity and drug use and deliver a quality service and not a service based on numbers.

We at the Service User Involvement Team feel Service User's on DRR's need to have their voices heard to ensure that not only are the organisations delivering on their targets but delivering a quality service too. So if you are on a DRR, please come along to our Open Forum on 28th August and tell us your views on how the system is working for you and how it could be improved. (see page 23 for more details).

News - News - News - News -

Improvement Review By Tony Mercer

Two words guaranteed to strike terror in any NHS manager are “Healthcare Commission”. As the NHS “watchdog” the healthcare commission is responsible for checking, inspecting, monitoring and auditing the quality of healthcare in England. Two years ago the Healthcare Commission joined together with the National Treatment Agency to begin an annual “Improvement Review” of all drugs services in England and the results feed into each PCT’s annual performance rating. All partnerships have to produce and implement an action plan to put right any problems highlighted and the worst performing 10% of local drugs services are quite literally taken over by Healthcare Commission officers until things are put right. The reviews begin in autumn each year and the results come out sometime in June/July the following year. This was quite an achievement by the NTA and means that drugs treatment services will remain high profile whatever happens following the end of the National Drugs Strategy as they contribute to PCT’s overall performance rating.

Last years Improvement Review focussed on “harm reduction” and “commissioning”. Most Commissioning Managers feel that even low ratings for harm reduction services may bring some benefits by helping to raise the profile of harm reduction services in each locality-though we’re also worried about what could happen (to us) if we score low for “commissioning”! The results should be published anytime soon and can be seen in the magazine’s next issue.

The 2007/8 Improvement review will begin in October and will focus on “tier 4” (ie. Residential rehab and hospital based detoxification) and “Diversity”. We are intending to audit our treatment providers before October with the NTA Diversity Audit Tool. I feel that we have made a real effort to consider ethnicity and gender issues in our treatment planning in the last two years but haven’t even begun to look at whether disability and sexuality have any impact on drug use, accessibility of services, retention in treatment etc (even though we are required to do so by law) and will need to include this when we start our annual needs assessment in the autumn.

Staff complete Race for Life

A number of staff from across Wolverhampton Drug Service have taken part in recent Race for Life events. They were all raising money for Cancer Research. So a big congratulations to Annmarie Smyth From YMCA Bridge, Melaine Broadbent from Service User involvement Team and all the staff that took part at Horizon

**Don’t forget this is your magazine it could not be put together without your input and the best contributions will receive a prize.
So if you have any news stories send them into us before 10th October 2007.**

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New Face's

Since our last issue a number of new staff have joined the teams at both Horizon House and YMCA Bridge.

Nicky and Debbie have started at the YMCA Bridge as a Community Integration Worker and Complimentary Therapist.

Mark, Emily, Debbie, Craig and Vicki have all began work within Horizon House. Best wishes to all of them and welcome to the team.

Turning Point make their mark in Wolverhampton

Progress to Work has now been with Turning Point in Wolverhampton now for just over 3 months. We have spent the last few months raising awareness of the service and of course building up the caseload, so that we can help as many people as we can progress into the area that they want to.

We have made some good links with the services and employers in the area and found some great training that can be accessed by people. We also went to the Routes into Work event in Bilston a few weeks ago, to raise the profile. It was a very rainy day and we nearly all got blown away by the storms!, but managed to hand out some leaflets and goodies, and locals were very receptive to the programme and felt that that work that we do is of enormous value.

A number of Progress to Work clients had been out of work for some time and have now gone into training; one individual has successfully managed to secure a place on a welding course after deciding that he wanted to retrain in a new area. P2W helped support and encourage him, whilst finding the training that they wanted to do

Many clients find having that extra support with job hunting makes all the difference. We can spend time helping with CV'S, job searching, interview skills, telephone skills and writing letters to employers, whilst being there to motivate and encourage individuals. It also means that we can be there every step of the way, and be the first to congratulate people when they are successful. If you haven't been in training or employment for some time, it can all be a bit daunting, but hopefully we can make those steps a lot easier and help you get to where you want to be.

Once again the referral process is very straight forward. You can either tell your drugs worker, your probation officer or Jobcentre advisor that you would like to access the programme. You can also refer yourself and simply pick up the phone and then we can arrange an appointment. You need to be in receipt of benefits and had either a past drug issue, or are currently in treatment, stable and keen to progress.

You can call **Clare on 01384250824, or 07976201133.**



Harm Reduction

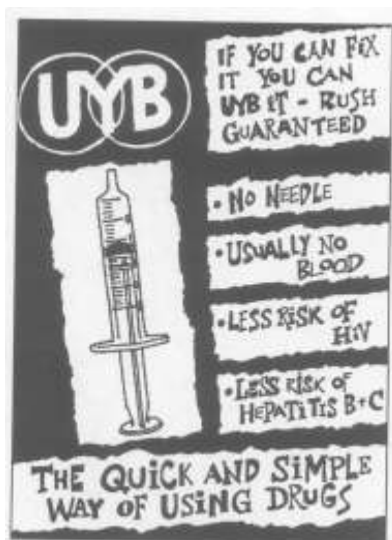
Squirting Up Your Bum (UYB)



Ok to most of you this may sound like some sort of joke but UYB is becoming more widely spoken about and tested within the drug community. So if you have been thinking about it or are just curious then here are some safe ways in which it can be done.

Sticking drugs UYB has been done for many years although it's rarely spoken about mainly due to people feeling uncomfortable speaking about the experience.

Squirting UYB can be safe alternative to Injecting where you can't convert back to smoking or snorting. How many times have you almost lost your hit by clogging the syringe full of blood or not being able to find a vein left in your body? Well rather than battering your body with a needle there is an alternative.



Some advantages of UYB

- No needles = less risk
- You don't use any type of needle, you only use the barrel
- No needle means no blood; no blood means no HIV or hepatitis infections!
- No track marks or bruising
- No missed hits / no wasted gear
- Your bum deals with bacteria all the time so inserting drugs will not cause problems to your insides
- UYB there are many blood cells which absorb any drugs which are inserted. So you get the same buzz as you would injecting
- The anus has two muscles which act like a seal which stops leaks
- No needles = less risk

Warning to non injectors

There are many positives for current injectors to use the UYB method, but for users who do not inject this method of administration is not advised as it carries greater risks than smoking, swallowing or snorting. This is because any drugs taken UYB have a stronger effect so it is recommended you stay with what you know.

Remember when trying something new make sure you know the risks! And try to be as safe as possible to avoid overdose

How to do it

If you feel the need, then go to the toilet
Wash your hands
Cook up as you normally would
Never share any equipment
Draw up the drugs into the barrel trying not to use more than 1.5ml of water
The next step is to lubricate the anus to help ease the barrel up
If you make a farting motion this will open the anus, push the barrel up 1cm no further or the drugs won't come on as quick
What ever position you are in release the farting motion and gently squirt in the liquid
That's it now dispose of all the equipment in a sharps bin and wash your hands.
You should feel the hit within 30 seconds.

**Be careful**

Be careful not to cut or tear the inside of your rectum
Do not share your barrel as this can still increase the risk of blood borne viruses
The risk of overdose is the same UTB as is injecting
When you squirt the drugs up your bum you may feel the need to squirt them back out again. This is rare but don't panic as you only have to hold it in for 30 seconds for the drugs to be fully absorbed
Try not to over use this method as too much UYB can limit the blood flow to the rectum and cause serious damage. It's best to take breaks or switch between different ways of using.

How it works

Inside the rectum there is a rich supply of blood, the bottom third of the rectum has many blood vessels which lead directly to the heart.

Have you got any issues you would like to see featured on these pages? If so contact us on 07748 598892.

As with all methods of administration caution should be taken when trying something new.

Please discuss any change in your method of administration with your key worker or GP.



Allotment Project Update

By Rob Jones



Above - pictures of our new Allotment Plot just before we began work.

Any readers of issue one will know that things were still very much up in the air as far as an allotment plot was concerned. Things were tentative at the very best and if the truth was told I wasn't too sure I would have anything to write about for issue two. As you can see from the photos, the good news is that, I have.

Although allotment sites are in high demand the nice man from the Council came up trumps informing us of a plot at Heath Town / Park Village Allotments, which at the time of going to print we have rented for the past couple of months.

Having never even set foot on an allotment before, I did not realise how big they are, this coupled with the fact that it was covered in weeds three foot tall making it look more like a meadow than a vegetable garden.

Upon seeing it for the first time, the four of us stood around in a kind of stunned silence each knowing what the other was thinking, I think we all felt a bit daunted at the work that was involved.

Undeterred however much hard work was put in during the following weeks mainly clearing weeds and slowly but surely a small area has been created which contains neat rows of Strawberries, Spring Onions, Broad Beans and Beetroot (yuk).

Much work still needs to be done but the only incentive we need is to look at what's been accomplished so far, besides which we can take our time about things, its not a race after all.

Anyone whose interested in joining in the fun, please feel free to get in touch with me through the Service User Involvement Team.



Its amazing when you see what a difference just one days work can do.



Service User Involvement Team

Common Questions



What is all this about?

We are an independent project that aims to ensure people who use, Horizon House, YMCA Bridge etc have their voice heard and are involved in the planning and running of all the local Drug Treatment Services.

Why?

We want to ensure everybody has equal treatment and the best service available, and if not have a simple way of saying so.

How do you do that?

We hold Open Forums where anybody can come along and discuss issues they have or you can call / text us. (see posters for when we are having the next Open Forum).

What is an Open Forum?

A relaxed informal meeting where you can discuss any issue with our volunteers who will then assist in taking the issue to the relevant people. Free refreshments are also available.

What else do you do?

We support people to set up their own projects, user groups or campaigns. For example we are supporting the Drug Users Magazine, Allotment Project and a Women's Group.

Where can I get more information?

The best way is to pop along to an Open Forum, a Drop-in Session or Call / Text us on 07748 598892 or keep an eye out for posters advertising dates and times.

The Service User Involvement Team is run by Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council

Constipation - How to let it flow!



Some say it's a pain in the ass others say only going twice a month saves loads of money on toilet roll!!

A major problem for us ex / current drug user especially those of us on methadone is constipation. When we want to go we cant and when were out and about it comes on so strong we search for the nearest loo or occasionally a bush to relive ourselves. How many times have you been in this position? There are many ways in which you can help your digestive system, which in turn will help you go to the toilet more often.

Some users can go weeks without a visit to the loo and when they eventually get the urge the process can be very pain full. Some report the pain being equal to giving birth! This can be one of the reasons you find it hard to go as you can worry too much about the pain, putting it off for as long as possible.

What can help?

An anonymous heroin user reported visiting his doctor and being prescribed "movicol" he can now go to the toilet twice a day and cant describe how normal he feels after many years of the drugs controlling his digestive system.

Movicol is a powder which is mixed with water and taken orally before you go to sleep

- Drink lots of water, warm is best, every morning before eating anything
- High fibre foods such as bran flakes, weetabix, brown rice, wholemeal bread, shredded wheat
- Yoghurt the best is live yoghurt which is full of bacteria
- Potassium which can be found in almonds, fruit, green leaf vegetables. If you suffer from DVT then consult your doctor before consuming more potassium
- Carrots are really good, chop them up into strips and eat as much as you can. Make sure you drink plenty of water too.

Finally when you feel the need to visit the loo try leaning as far back as possible, this helps the stools on their way, and if you need fresh veg why not join our Allotment Project?



A Radiograph picture of someone with severe constipation

Real Stories - Slippery Slope Part 2



I opened my eyes and before I could move two coppers jumped on top of me so hard it broke the bed in half! My girlfriend was screaming and I didn't realise what had happened, all the shouting had confused me, it was like I had woke up in the middle of a nightmare.

Within seconds I was told to kneel down on the floor, at this point I had no clothes on. I felt so useless as my hands were handcuffed and I had to face away from the police while one of them had their knee restraining me from moving.

All I could hear were voices and police dogs barking like crazy. They then took my girlfriend into the bathroom and asked me if there were anything in the flat which shouldn't be, such as drugs. I smiled and sarcastically replied no, but this didn't stop them from searching the place from top to bottom with not a care in the world for my belongings or my privacy! I felt so angry that I was so helpless and couldn't do a thing about it. They found several bits of cling film in the bottom of the bin and that's all they were going to find because I knew that just the night before I'd stopped my mate from keeping his drugs in my flat.

Call it a sign or what ever you may think. I was so lucky to have done that, if I had left it only one day longer then the outcome of the situation would have been me in prison. I just sat there in a day dream thinking what could have been. What would have happened if I hadn't told him he couldn't use my place as a storage room for his drugs. I'll never forget hearing one of the coppers sounding so disappointed as they had found jack shit, I felt so happy I burst out laughing which pissed them off even more I'm sure.

Six years have passed now and I chose to stop drugs all together. I went onto a methadone script and moved out of the flat which held so many bad memories for me. Me and my girlfriend well more of a drug partner than a girlfriend decided to split up and go our own ways. I now live with my new fiancée and two year old baby who I love to bits. Each night I pray and thank who ever looked down on me and helped me onto a better way of life rather than the chaotic one I almost slipped into!





**Service User
Involvement Team**
'bringing the pieces together'



What are the issues
surrounding women
using Wolverhampton's
Drug Treatment Services?

Come along to our open forum &
let us know your views.

Next Meeting

Thursday 16th August 2007
@ 2.00pm

WVSC Ground Floor Meeting Room
16 Temple Street, Wolverhampton

To find out more information, or to get directions call / text us on
07748 598892

Service User Involvement Team is run by Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council

Safe Disposal of your 'Pins' and Sharps

The name "sharps" refers to needles, syringes, scalpel blades, lancets, disposable medical instruments, broken glass and similar materials with the possibility to cut or pierce an individual

Needles, Syringes and Other Sharps

Used needles, syringes and other sharps must be disposed of in the correct place, this will be a plastic sharps container. Needles should not be removed from the syringe. Do not cut, bend or recap needles. Sharps containers can be found at most needle exchanges, they usually come with the needles. When the container is full, secure the lid. Containers must be disposed of as medical waste whether



contaminated or not and never placed in the regular trash. The best place to dispose of your sharps bin is at the place where you obtained your needles. Make sure the bin is tightly shut, place it in a carrier, see through is ideal as the counter assistant at the needle exchange can see what they are disposing of without having to put there hand in. Which a lot of assistants seem hesitant to do this speaking from my own experiences and others.

Needle stick injuries

- Used needles and syringes must always be treated as being potentially contaminated Should the skin be punctured or broken by a needle through careless handling or accidental contact, there is the potential for infection to occur, e.g. HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B. contact your doctor or Accident and Emergency department for immediate advice
- squeeze the wound to make it bleed
- do not suck the wound
- wash the wound with soap and water

Remember that early treatment can prevent infections.

Discarded needles and syringes can be a danger to everyone. To help us reduce the risk caused by needles you can be more aware of your surroundings

Where are needles commonly found?

Parks, Public Buildings, Playgrounds, Recreation areas, In litter, Litter bins, Sink U-bends, Bags of rubbish, Hedgerows,. Public toilets, Drains, Letter box baskets, Ducting, Lift shafts.

They have also been found concealed in:

- Cigarette packets.
- Toilet cisterns.
- Sweet papers.
- Bedding and clothing.
- Drinks cans.
- Undergrowth.
- Car seats.



The council are working towards reducing the risk from discarded needles by undertaking joint projects with other professional groups and increasing the number of public sharps bins available around Wolverhampton.

Do not put yourself or others at risk, be needle wise.

If you need to dispose of needles:

- contact your doctor's surgery or local health centre for advice
- use one of the public sharps bins.
- If you feel you need to do something yourself then:
- find a suitable container to put it in e.g. drinks can, take the container to the syringe/needle handle the syringe carefully and do not touch the needle put the sharp end into the container first, take it somewhere safe to await collection wash your hands thoroughly afterwards

If you find a needle, do not:



- hide it
- separate the needle from the syringe
- put the cap back on the needle
- play with the needle or syringe
- put in a dustbin, down a drain, down the loo or in a litter bin



The Women's Pages

The service user's women's group- a bit about us

We are an organisation that has been set up so that service users of Wolverhampton drug services can have their say. There are a few different projects going on at the moment one of them being a women's group. The group offers women the opportunity to have their say about any issues they have with the treatment they are receiving, and any issues they may have concerning accessing treatment.

We hold regular open forums to give women a chance to talk to us about what is bothering them and to come up with practical, workable solutions. The dates for the women's group are displayed at all the treatment services in Wolverhampton so keep a look out for our posters which will give the time and date of our next meeting.



I would like to thank everyone who attended our first ever women's group. Thank you for coming and giving us your valuable input and suggestions. Many issues were raised at the meeting the most common being about pregnancy and child care whilst in treatment. I am looking into this as it is also an issue I face being in treatment myself, so I will get back to you on this matter hopefully with some input from the managers and key workers at horizon house and the YMCA.

Why don't women access treatment

On average men drink more and use more illegal drugs than women, but there is growing concern that women are catching up fast. There are also worries that women don't seek treatment as readily as men do, because they face a greater stigma, and because mothers fear that admitting they have a problem could jeopardise their relationship with their children.

Because of these fears, confidentiality is very important for women who want help with a drug or alcohol problem. This doesn't only apply if you already have children but if you are pregnant or planning to have a baby in the future.

Do not be afraid to come forward there is a lot of help available and the treatment services have to keep everything confidential unless there is a concern that someone in your care is suffering from neglect, violence or abuse.

Diary of a detox

How will detoxing off methadone affect me and my baby?

I have been using heroin and have been on methadone for about 5 years now. I have been in treatment twice before but relapsed due to differing factors in my life. I started using heroin at the age of 16 at which time I was doing my GCSE,s it started as just experimentation but quickly changed and I became addicted. I some how managed to pass my GCSE,s and get quite good grades. I went into treatment the first time as I was referred by the youth offending team and the courts, I went on to a methadone programme and became drug free.



I started using again the second time when I was doing my A' levels and living on my own and again I went into treatment which I completed successfully. Once again I managed to do my A' levels and get half descent grades. After I finished my A' levels I became bored and started using again. I went back into treatment and whilst I was in treatment I got pregnant and now have a gorgeous 7 month old baby boy.

I have now been stable on 30mls of methadone for one and a half years and have decided that I am now at a point in my life where I needed to put my drug use behind me and start fresh. The main reasons for this are my baby and that I am hopefully going to university in September, so I have decided to do a home detox. I will be keeping a daily diary of how I feel and how the medication I am using is affecting me. I will also keep a note of how I am coping with looking after my baby whilst detoxing.

My detox has already started and I am rapidly reducing my methadone by 3mls per week until the 6th of august by which time I will be on 12mls. My methadone will then be completely stopped and I will be put on medication to help reduce the withdrawal symptoms. The main thing that I will be taking is Britlofex (chemical name Lofexidine). Britlofex is a tablet that reduces the symptoms you can get with opiate withdrawal such as chills, sweating, stomach cramps, diarrhoea, muscle pains, runny nose and watery eyes. I will take this for around 14 days after this time I will be prescription drug free.

**Watch out for my detox diary in the next
edition of substance!!**

Your questions answered

Q - Me and my partner smoke cannabis £60-80 a week, we are having our first baby in 6 months. I have cut right down and only smoke a couple of joints a day, but my partner has made no effort at all and smokes it in the house. I am worried what harm it is doing to our baby.

Emily, Tettenhall

A - There is no current research that clearly defines the effects of cannabis on the unborn baby. However there is plenty on normal cigarettes. When smoking cannabis you will be introducing further toxins into your body which will effect baby. We are aware of the dangers of passive smoking too. Toxins also have been linked with an increased risk of cot death. When seeing your midwife please mention your cannabis use and that of your partner and she will be able to refer you to the specialist midwife (for drugs) who can arrange to meet you both.

Marie Davies – Specialist Midwife.

Q - I have been on a script for some time now , but im going to be made homeless soon, will I still get my script if I don't have a fixed abode.

Paul, Wolverhampton

A - Being homeless does not mean your script will be stopped. Some people's drug use, when homeless, may become more chaotic. If this happens there is a possibility changes in the script may occur ie becoming supervised.

Allison Stuchfield - Head Nurse,

Q - I want to detox from my methadone but I have heard some bad stories about coming off methadone. Can you explain the truths about detoxing off methadone and any help to do so.

Mark, Penn

A - Hi my answer to that is, Detox from methadone is not easy, nor is it hard, the stories what you have heard may be bad, because they had no real support. However have you spoken to anyone who has done it successfully and can tell you the good things, they had experience with the right support and adequate medication, you could detox from methadone within 14 days with full support from the community team. I have done many community detox myself and have had a high success rate, with no complaints at all. Each client has commented on how comfortable they felt and, how they had very little withdrawals, in fact it was not what they expected at all. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

Diane Smith RMN - Horizon House

If you have any questions you want answers to send them to us before 10th October 2007.

Q - I think my 15 year old son is taking drugs. I was cleaning his room when I found some foil with dark brown lines on it, im not sure what it is to be honest im not drug aware at all. I don't know how to approach him and I don't know where to turn for help can you please advise me.

Jane, Wolverhampton

A - You can ring the SUBS team, part of addiction services but specific to young people. Number is 01902 572041. Alternatively you could request some written information from them specific to parents. With your son's consent you could contact SUBS for a young person specific assessment. This could take place at Base 25 or at Home. Any Home Visits will take place with 2 members of the team. Following the assessment all parties will work together to form an agreed care plan.

Joanne Flannagan Manager for Young People's Service – SUBS

Q - Why is it so hard to get into rehab

Anonymous

A - Funding for rehab is complicated and involves community care funding (which also pays for services for older people, people with disabilities etc) and treatment funding. You can ask your key-worker to refer you for a Community Care Assessment if you meet the criteria and applications are then considered by a panel. However, the number of rehab places available for Wolverhampton is limited by the amount of community care funding available and currently we only have enough for 6 drugs and 6 alcohol rehab places each year.

We are intending to create a formal "pooled budget" which would give us about 2 more drugs and 2 more alcohol placements each year. While many people have benefited from rehab it is an expensive treatment option at around £10,000 per placement and we need to develop effective community based alternatives to rehab.

We do have a Community Rehabilitation Service in Wolverhampton but need to do a lot more work around housing and housing support for drug/alcohol mis-users first.

**Tony Mercer - Commissioning Manager
(Substance Misuse)**

Q - I used to have a really bad drug and drink problem, but I managed to sort myself out. I have been clean for 18 months, but my wife thinks I might be using drugs again. Is there any way of getting a drug test kit? So she can test me when she feels the need to.

Matt, West Park

A - Dear Matt, Well done on stopping your problematic drug use. I am sorry that your wife is not convinced, but it is not unusual for partners and other family members to feel like this, and I am sure that you know and understand this yourself. I have dealt with a similar situation with one of my own patients and I ordered some of the appropriate testing kits for him and he paid the Practice when they arrived. I can't remember the price, but they weren't very expensive and he felt it was money well spent. If it strengthens and supports your relationship, that can only be a good thing and it will be a wise and worthwhile investment. Best wishes to you and your wife for a happy future together.

Dr George Ryan

Q - I am a heroin user on benefits, most of my money goes on drugs and I don't have any food. Is there any where I can get free food vouchers or food parcels from?

Adam, Wolverhampton

A - Hi Adam, At present there are 2 emergency food services in Wolverhampton, Little Brothers of The Good Shepherd, Darlington Street Church, Darlington Street.
OPENING HOURS AND DAYS ARE: MON, TUE, THUR – 2.00pm – 4.00pm.

Or

All Nations Christian Centre, Temple Street.

OPENING HOURS AND DAYS: WED, SUN – 7.00pm.

Hope this is useful, if you need any further information or help please feel free to contact me on the following number 07973436491.

Take care and stay safe

Wendy Askey, Hostel Outreach Support Worker YMCA The Bridge

**If you have any questions you want answers to send them to us before
10th October 2007.**

All questions will be entered into a Prize Draw to win a voucher.

Real Stories - Base 25 and Me.



I first attended Base 25 in Aug 2006. I was 5 months pregnant and smoking £10-15 of heroin a day, sometimes more if I got paid. I met my partner in Oct 2004; he hadn't long come out of prison for theft. He was living at my mums at the time as he knew her from selling things to her for heroin. He came out of prison clean and stayed clean for 8 months. Once we moved to his parent's house in Bradmore he bumped into one of his old mates who were still on the gear. As you can guess it wasn't long before he was using again. He always smoked it on the foil as he was very scared of needles. He'd been on the gear for about 2 weeks before I tried it and he wasn't too pleased.

The first experience I had was in a spliff and I passed out. When I woke up my partner was holding me on the floor, crying, I couldn't stop vomiting. That didn't stop me though, I started smoking more and more and from smoking in a spliff it went to smoking on the foil.

My partner would never let me go out and earn my own money. He used to get up about 7 and go shoplifting for things he could sell to get our money, it was really hard.

A few months on I depended on heroin, I had to take it or I was in pain. My partner did warn me but I didn't listen. March 2006 we were kicked out of his moms and we moved to his friend's house in Low Hill. I know it may sound stupid but we had been trying for a baby for 2 years, and just after my birthday I found out I was pregnant. I knew things had to change but didn't know what to do about it. We moved into homeless accommodation as we had been sleeping in a tent and I was scared of losing my baby. We were placed in a hostel which we fine until they found foil in our room and kicked us out. I was 4 months pregnant, my partners mom decided to take us back in. My partner said that if I didn't stop smoking I would lose him and the baby so I made an appointment at Base 25. They were very polite and helpful, I had appointments every week and my key worker stuck by me through thick and thin. I started on 15mls of methadone and was increased until stable. 3 months later I stopped smoking altogether and everyone was proud. I was introduced to the Teenage Pregnancy Unit and put on a waiting list for a flat. Finally things were looking up for us. I decided to stay at moms till I had the baby as my partner wasn't in treatment and I didn't want to be tempted, it was a hard decision but I didn't want to lose my baby.

6th December I had my little girl, 6lbs 1oz and beautiful. I was warned she may withdraw from the methadone, luckily she had none. I had to stay in hospital for 5 days just in case. My daughter turned 7 weeks and my key worker at Base 25 picked up that she wasn't well. We found out she had hydrocephalus (fluid on the brain). We were in Birmingham Children's Hospital for 10 days, it was awful, and it seemed the world was caving in around us. She had an operation and had a shunt fitted to drain the fluid from her brain. It went well and we were allowed home. My partner was now in treatment as well.

I was offered a flat and finally we could move on. If it wasn't for my key workers help and support I don't think I would have got through it, I have got so much respect for her, she's fantastic! I never felt judged, she always believed in me that meant everything. Everyone in Base 25 is polite and helpful, they make you feel welcome, and they don't make you feel like a child, it's like a friendship.



Service User Involvement Team

'bringing the pieces together'



Do Drug Treatment Services provide the service you need?
Join our group and let us know what you want.

OPEN FORUM

WVSC Ground Floor Meeting Room
16 Temple Street, Wolverhampton

Next Meeting

Tuesday 28 August 2007

3pm till 4.30pm

Open to all (strictly no door policy)

Refreshments provided

To find out more information, or to get directions call / text us on
07748 598892

Service User Involvement Teams is run by Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council

What are Complimentary Therapies?

Complementary Medicine (CM) includes many different techniques of treating a patient. These are based on systems practised thousands of years ago and can in fact be considered to be of the original forms of medicine.

They all have one aspect in common which is that they treat the patient as a whole person rather than treating a specific symptom or symptoms. It does this by treating the life force of the patient at their physical, mental and emotional levels.



Some people used to refer to CM as "Fringe" or "Alternative" because they consider it to be alternative to the "Allopathic Medicine" that is practised by the General Medical Practitioners.

But CM complements the needs of the patient and is a more accurate description as this term describes the methods of healing that treat the complete or whole person. Hence "Complementary Medicine" is the most appropriate title.

Two methods of complementary therapies (on offer at YMCA Bridge)



Hopi Ear Candles

Ear candling is an ancient technique which is helpful for treating problems associated with the ear, nose and throat. By using ear candles made using traditional Hopi Indians methods.

The candles comprise hollow tubes, approximately 8" long, of bleached natural linen. These are impregnated with healing ingredients, such as honey, beeswax, St. John's Wort and other beneficial natural substances.

How does it work?

Particularly helpful in the treatment of glue ear, excessive/compacted wax, sinusitis, hay fever, migraine, headaches, tinnitus, snoring and facial neuralgia. Ear candling is also helpful in cases of hyperactivity.



Acupuncture - What is it?

Acupuncture is an ancient system of healing developed over thousands of years as part of the traditional medicine of China, Japan and other eastern countries.

The practice began with the discovery that the stimulation of specific areas on the skin affects the functioning of certain organs in the body. It has developed into a system of medicine that restores and maintains health by the insertion of fine needles into acupuncture points just beneath the skin. The points are at very specific locations and lie along channels of energy known as Qi.

Qi flows throughout the body but is concentrated in the channels known as meridians. The state and balance of flow of Qi has implications for our mental and emotional health as well as our physical condition.

The aim of acupuncture treatment is to restore the balance between the equal and yet opposite qualities of Qi, namely the Yin and the Yang.

Auricular Acupuncture

The use of acupuncture in treating substance misuse was pioneered in the 1970's in the USA.

The system of auricular acupuncture (using acupuncture in the ear), is where five very fine needles are inserted into the points on the ear which energise organ and body functions concerned with cleaning the body such as the liver, kidney and lung and into points that calm the spirit and settle the sympathetic nervous system.

Response to Treatment

The effects of acupuncture treatment are experienced by each person differently. Some people notice the effects immediately, while for others the changes may be more subtle. The effectiveness usually depends on age, general health and substance abuse history.

We use acupuncture treatment to help our clients reduce their withdrawal symptoms and to intensify the detoxification process, to help reduce craving and to strengthen their mental and emotional energy.

The symptoms for which acupuncture treatment may be helpful include:

Insomnia, Agitation, Apathy, Mood swings, Tension, Irritability, Low energy, Low spirit, Excess perspiration, Poor circulation, Cramps and Lower backache.

Overall, acupuncture can provide a person with a chance to break free from a life pattern or habit.

Readers Poems - by service users at Base 25

Song Of The Sleeping

Wake up you lazy girl
For the day is calling
Spring just born
And you mature
Birds singing
Flowers blooming
And you sleep against nature's law

Wake up you lazy girl
For the wind is whistling
The wild hearts beating
Put rhythm in your step
As life beats in jest
Bang bang bang
Boom boom boom
What can I hear?

Get lost and leave me alone!
Just a minute away from total
harmony
Resting with the contempt only
the dead could describe
I hear the beautiful chorus of na-
ture's hymn
Peer through the blades of green
Life seems dim

Put me to sleep oh loved one
Let me be at peace
Like the weeping willows sigh

RECOVERY

I used to run to outsiders
For both pleasure and pain
Those evil devil minders
Brought me greed and fame

Living in a dream
Failing in a team
My future became dull
And my presence fake but full


Now with my fresh eyes
I see no disguise
I live true life
And FEEL

The people outside
Punished
They hide
Have nothing but shame to feel

Dying inside
Feeling alive
They continue to lie and deal
No more crime
No cries
No more confusion
For me to have and heal

If you want your poems featured in the next issue send them to us before 10th October 2007


Local Service Directory

Wolverhampton City 
Primary Care Trust

Full Address: Wolverhampton PCT Tel No:01902 444030
 Addiction Services
Horizon House
 Pitt Street
 Wolverhampton
 WV3 0NF

Alcohol Drop-In Monday to Thursday, 9.00am to 12.00pm
 Drug Drop-In Mon, Wed, Thurs and Fri – 2.00pm to 3.30pm

Service is shut on a Tuesday afternoon and the afternoon of every third Thursday in the month



Full Address:
 29/31 Temple
 Street
 Wolverhampton
 WV2 4AN

Telephone Number: 01902 371582
 Open Monday to Friday 9 till 5
 Closed daily between 12.30 and 1pm

Offers: Group Programme,
 Counselling, Housing / Benefit advice
 Complimentary Therapies, Relaxation
 and the REWIND Service.




**Service User
 Involvement Team**

Full Address:
 c/o WVSC
 16 Temple Street
 Wolverhampton
 WV2 4AN

Tel No:07748 598892


Open Forum's
 Held on last
 Tuesday of
 every month
 3pm till 4.30



**TURNING
 POINT**
 turning lives around

**Progress
 2
 Work**

Contact Clare on 07976 201133 or
 ask your key worker or Jobcentre
 Advisor to be referred.



Subs @ Base25,
 Castle House,
 Wheelers Fold,
 Wolverhampton,
 WV1 1ST
 Telephone Number:
 01902 572041

Opening Hours:
 Monday to Thursday - 9am - 6pm
 Friday - 9am - 5pm

Offers; Group Work, Key Work, Harm
 Reduction, Substitute Prescribing,
 Acupuncture, Family Therapy, General
 Drug Information.



Service User Involvement Team

'bringing the pieces together'

**Now is your chance to
have your say**

'the easy way'



**Come along to an
Open Forum**

Contact us for more information or watch for posters
advertising times and dates