

# Substance Misuse Recovery Day Programme Feedback



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# Project Aim

**To gain the views of those living with a substance use disorder, find out their barriers to accessing health care and what would help them access a day service. To share our findings with the Public Health (PH) Substance Misuse team within Swindon Borough Council (SBC).**

Healthwatch can help through its statutory role in representing the patient's voice to local decision-makers, gaining valuable insight to help ensure services are designed and implemented with their users in mind. We have worked with local organisations and individuals living with addiction to provide this report.

## Why?

SBC have been awarded additional funding through the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG) to create a day service programme to help support individuals living with addiction and enable them to actively engage in the community.

Healthwatch Swindon are using their independent position to work with service users to ensure the new day service is reflective of their needs.

In the Swindon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2017 report ([Bulletin\\_Substance\\_Misuse\\_JSNA\\_Final.pdf \(swindonjsna.co.uk\)](#)), it estimated there were 1147 opiate and/or crack users in Swindon, of which 525 were estimated to be intravenous users. This is above the rate recorded in the South West.

The government reported in 2018 that harm from illicit drug use had a social and economic cost of £10.7bn and £21.5bn from alcohol related harm ([Alcohol and drug prevention, treatment and recovery: why invest? - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)). It also showed that by investing in drug and alcohol treatment a combined saving of £2.4billion a year, could be

made to quality-adjusted life years, improvements in health and social care along with reductions in crime.

With a reported 1.1 million alcohol-related admissions to hospital a year, 20% of children 'in need' affected by drug use and 18% by alcohol misuse, providing a day programme to help adults with their recovery, benefits not only them but their families and the wider community.

## How?

Our aim was to build trust within the community and listen to their needs. This was achieved through one to one interviews, group discussions and feedback from recovery coordinators. Our key topics included:

- What barriers have you faced trying to access services?
- What would you like to see in a day service programme?
- What could have been offered to help your recovery?

### **In addition, SBC also produced the below questionnaire:**

1. In what way do you feel accessing a recovery day programme will help you achieve this?
2. What would a day programme look like for you?
3. Are there any specific elements you would like to see included in the day programme, for example activities, acupuncture, mindfulness etc?
4. What times and days of the week would be your preference for a day programme to operate?
5. Do you think the day programme would be best served operating from a central location away from the Turning point hub? Yes/No
6. If yes do you have any suggestions on where the location may be?
7. If you had a choice would you prefer to pick and mix what activities of the day programme you attend when and where?
8. What would be your preferred choice of referral in to the day programme and what would this look like? For example, discussion with your recovery worker and

a small referral form/or an expression of interest to the facilitators of the day programme by yourself?

9. Do you feel this day programme would be better delivered by external partners?

Yes/No

10.If yes do you have any suggestions on who may deliver this element of the recovery experience?

11.Do you have any further comments to add?

## Who we worked with

To successfully gain as much insight as possible, we worked with 3 key providers in Swindon. Each with a connection to adults in recovery from substance misuse.

**Hope Street** - A peer support group for adults in recovery (hopestreet22@gmail.com).

**The Nelson Trust** - A women's centre, empowering women to make positive choices, seek advice and support ([Home - Nelson Trust](#)).

**Turning Point** - Drug and alcohol treatment service ([IMPACT Swindon & Wiltshire \(turning-point.co.uk\)](#)).

## What we heard

We spoke to adults in recovery, only one of which chose to complete the questionnaire with most finding it confusing and instead preferring a more informal discussion. Upon further discussion, one key theme emerged that the majority would find the programme beneficial and that it must be a service separate from Turning Point. However, we also sought the advice and experiences of drug and alcohol support workers.

### Long Term Goals?

Most objected to being asked about their long-term goals, but a few stated it was to give up drinking and to remain in recovery.

### How would accessing a recovery day programme help?

It would give structure, focus and purpose, helping to reduce boredom. Group would help maintain recovery and allow people to move forward.

### **What would a day programme look like?**

Similar to Hope Street, with access to other organisations allowing people to trial different services without jumping through the administrative hoops. Possibly a recovery café, for people to attend.

### **What specific elements would be desirable to be included?**

- Mindfulness
- Day trips
- Peer support
- Debt advice
- Support completing forms
- Police representatives to help build 'their' new community
- Once service users are fully invested, to have the option to request a guest presenter/service provider to join.
- Counselling
- Taster events and courses
- Allotment sessions
- Creative writing
- Guest slots from different organisations

### **Key days and times?**

Key days identified were Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Ideally 9am - 5pm, but with the caveat you don't have to attend the whole day. Allowing for personal appointments and visitation with their families.

### **Would a central location away from Turning Point be preferred?**

This was a unanimous yes. With some feeling it would become an extension of Turning Point, preventing the day service being for recovering addicts along with fear of punishment if they didn't attend. Only one person had praise for the service they received at Turning Point, with most feeling it took too long to access, too much paper work and that beyond treatment they all preferred previous provider CGL.

### **Preferred location?**

Central location would be most ideal, so long as it's not associated with Turning Point.

### **Would you like to pick and mix activities?**

Yes - but if not in a central location could transport be provided.

**Preferred route of referral?**

Self-referral, with no referral forms.









**Would it be better for the programme to be delivered by external partners?**

Yes.

**Who could deliver the recovery day programme?**

This was mixed, whilst some valued the service they have received from Turning Point. Most would rather an independent provider.

**What barriers have you faced accessing health and care services?**

	After going in to recovery, unable to find a dentist.	
	No respect from medical staff because I was homeless and an addict, I nearly died of blood loss.	
	when using you don't realise if you are ill and don't use dr's.	
	Unable to call a Dr surgery at 8.30, either no phone or been working all night.	

## Additional comments and observations:



Using used to help me be in the oblivion, I used until it was unattainable to get that high.



Being labelled as undesirable made me feel like I wasn't a person.



Going in to recovery is scary and you have to find your new home.



It was observed through my time with these service providers, that a trauma informed approach to the day service programme would be beneficial. Along with courses to help those in recovery understand their addiction and who they are 'now'. Learning what their triggers are, could help prevent them from misusing substances again.

The support workers from each service all suggested counselling, as from their experience there is a high volume of addicts using to cope with trauma or poor mental health.

Those who felt a day service would not be beneficial, were reluctant to share further. But one individual did mention they are so busy begging they wouldn't have time.

It was also observed that the offer of food would help ensure people attended and reduce any scepticism at the start of the service.

Finally, it was also established that they would like SBC to become more visible. Allowing the day service programme to evolve and improve communications.

## What happens next

We are committed to continue working with drug and alcohol services, to break down any perceived barriers and allow people to be heard. Working with both Hope Street and The Nelson Trust to establish on-going engagement.

To publish our findings and share them with SBC, supporting Public Health in the commissioning of a day service programme.



## Key Findings

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- More joint working, improving communication between services.
- Continue working with adults in recovery to ensure the day service programme can evolve.
- Day service programme is welcomed, with support from other services.




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