Welcome to the second edition of TDTF's newsletter!

In this edition, we highlight the achievements of TDTF and their projects throughout 2011. The newsletter includes information on new and ongoing programmes and events across the National Drugs Strategy pillars, and also lists some new and important national help lines.

We hope the newsletter will provide an opportunity to reflect on all the changes that have happened this year. TDTF projects are making great progress, in spite of the difficult times we are facing. Well done Task Force projects!

www.tallaghtdtf.ie – TDTF’s website

The website is updated regularly and provides a wealth of information about project programmes, upcoming events, training opportunities, and newsworthy items about addiction and substance misuse. The Directory of Services was updated in 2011; this is where you can find contact information and details about drug and alcohol-related projects and services in Tallaght, and around the country.

Please keep sending us your good news stories and information on events and project progress so that we can post them onto the website, and spread the news. Contact Grace Hill, TDTF Co-ordinator 01 466 4243 or e mail: grace.hill@doddervalley.ie

Volunteers and clients of Swan Family Support attend the Family Support Network Conference
Service users

The Tallaght Service Users Forum (TSUF) is going from strength to strength, with representatives on TDTF’s Treatment & Rehabilitation sub group, the Health Promotion sub group and TDTF Board.

TSUF ran an eight-week training programme this year, supported by clinical supervision and mentoring. It also runs a drop-in for tea, lunch and chat every Wednesday, 3-5pm at the Killinarden Enterprise Centre. One of TSUF’s main roles is to support service users with referral and advocacy where appropriate. For more information, contact: 087 612 2098.

Sue Irving Ltd reviewed TSUF in 2011 to measure its impact in the Tallaght community. For more info see www.tallaghtdtf.ie

The Supporting the Voice of the Service User Seminar took place in January. Organised by TDTF’s rehabilitation worker, the seminar opened a dialogue between service providers and service users and began to identify strategies to address the challenges that were identified during the meeting. Over seventy service users and fifty service providers attended. Big thanks to the community rehabilitation projects in Tallaght which gave great support on the day.

Rehabilitation

Tallaght Rehabilitation Project maintained momentum in 2011 with its programmes for recovering drug users. TRP delivered a successful four day residential module in June based on the theme, ‘Emotional self-care and Acceptance’. This proved to be a great source of learning for the nine participants and staff. As a result of the good work from all, the residential enhanced individual focus, motivation, and encouraged peer support and bonding. Some acquired drug free status, and others embarked on detoxification for the first time.

A female participant wrote, “I have been on two residential weekends during my time at TRP. I found them to be really helpful. It is a safe environment where I looked at a lot of the issues that have been affecting me and been with me for a long time. It is different from being on the day programme as there is more time allocated, and you don’t have to go home after looking at issues. I have found the residential combined with the day program has helped me move forward in my recovery.”

As part of the Tallaght-wide Aftercare Service, TRP introduced social nights, which included “Unplugged Music Sessions” consisting of local musicians who came to Kiltalown House for evenings of song and music in a drug and alcohol-free environment.

TRP and St Dominics continued their partnership with their weekly pre-entry support and advice group, held every Monday, 2-3pm at St Dominics. Service users can just turn up or be referred from a project. This group aims to support individuals wanting to access residential / detox / day programmes and helps with different treatment options and how to be referred. Contact 01 462 0624 or 083 337 7129.

JADD now runs a drug free aftercare programme. In 2011, six of the twelve participants progressed to further education. Well done service users! Two are doing an art portfolio course; one client doing a computer networking course. One is doing Introduction to Psychology, and two have started Addiction Studies.
The Tallaght Cocaine Project is open every Wednesday in St. Dominic’s Contact Centre from 5–8pm. The project offers one-to-one support, crisis intervention, harm reduction, information, advocacy, massage, acupuncture and Hopi candling. Anyone who is using cocaine (nasal, IV or smoking) and looking for support is welcome to drop in. No appointment is necessary as anyone who arrives at the door will be supported. Urinalysis can also be organised. Contact: 01 462 0624 or 083 3377129.

As part of the TDTF Prison Network, St Dominics ran a four-week focus group in September to support individuals who have just been released from prison or have a long history of prison. If you know of anyone who could benefit from this support, please refer or ask them to call in. Contact 01 462 0624 / 085 760 7731 or email: jdoran@dominics.ie.

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre has established outreach services in Coolock, the Dochas Women’s Prison and Tallaght. The number of appointments in Tallaght and adjoining areas has trebled since the service opened in 2007.

St. Dominic’s set up a garden allotment in Bohernabreena. The stabilisation group prepared and planted the plot as part of their FETAC L3 in Horticulture. St Dominics also designated some of the plot to their family support ladies as there were several keen gardeners in the group.

Twin Peaks Challenge

The Twin Peaks Challenge was a hill walking event that was held in the Glendalough/ Glenmalure/Glen Immaal area of the Wicklow mountains on 12/13 November 2011, to raise much needed funds for Suicide Awareness. The event came about after the tragic loss of a student from the HSE Diploma in Drug and Alcohol Studies Class of 2011, who previously worked in the Tallaght LDTF area. It was felt that greater emphasis needed to be on the issues of suicide and that we in conjunction could do something positive to raise awareness and much needed funds. Therefore the idea of a challenge which was both physically and mentally tough was decided as the way to go. Hence the idea of ascending two mountains in 2 days came into being. The challenge team consisted of 24 intrepid hikers drawn from the diploma class, Ballyfermot Star and friends. The group were supported by 4 members of the Defence Forces, without whom the challenge would not have succeeded.

The team commenced their challenge in McKee Barracks, Dublin, where equipment was checked and food rations issued. From there they travelled to Glendalough, where participants started day 1, this consisted of a hard climb up Poulanass waterfall followed by a forest trek and tough climb over the Spink and a trek around the upper lake. Day one finished with an overnight stay beside the glendalough hotel and much need food and rest. On Day 2 they headed for Glenmalure and commenced our climb up the valley from the youth hostel, and over Table mountain into Glen Imaal. The group who ranged in age from 23 to 69 showed a steady determination and made the event an overwhelming success. It is hoped that this small gesture and the funds it has raised will go some small way to help raise awareness and enable Pieta house, The Samaritans and The Defence Forces Benevolent Fund to continue the excellent work they already do.

Well done to all who participated!

Capacity building - Education and

2011 saw TDTF continue its strategic theme of capacity building by supporting education and training for project workers, service users and their families. €45,000 was spent on the TDTF Education Bursary Fund to provide further training opportunities for twenty-three past or present service users and twelve drug workers.

After many years of discussion, HSE Addiction Services agreed that TDTF can roll-out harm reduction training, which is delivered by the HSE Outreach Team South West Area. The training, which is Bord Altranais approved, aims to contribute to the development of best practice. It is for frontline project workers.

Putting the Pieces Together Training was held at TRP in October. This training is a drug and alcohol resource for trainers, facilitators and youth workers to enable staff and volunteers to run drug and alcohol programmes with young people, parents or other community members. The manual includes a wide range of activities and information that can be tailored to suit any target group. The two-day training aims to:

• Enhance participants knowledge and understanding of substance use
• Explore how drugs affect the brain and elicit their effects
• Develop an understanding of best practice in substance use education
• To give an introduction to the use of brief interventions

Approximately eighty people have availed of this training to date.

TDTF collaborated with the Threshold Training Network to run a series of self-care workshops in October and November. Take Time Tuesday was a two-part workshop that provided a calm space for project workers to meet and assess what is needed to restore and maintain their well being. The aim was to nurture personal awareness and self-care, while providing an opportunity for networking and peer support. The workshops were funded through the TDTF budget allocated to the Drug Workers Forum. Feedback from the workshops was very positive. Participants found the space to seek support and network which they described as most useful. They called for more opportunities of this kind to help safeguard their well-being on an ongoing basis.

JADD offered a FETAC L3 computer training course for service users. Everyone who attended received their certificates.
Supply & Justice

The Tallaght Local Policing Forum (LPF) was established in early 2010, with Brookfield and Fettercairn prioritised as pilot areas. In 2011, the LPF was extended to include Jobstown. The aim of the forum is to build community capability, develop links and further enhance communication between the residents of Brookfield/Fettercairn, South Dublin County Council, TDTF, An Garda Síochána and other state agencies.

The LPF is a good example of interagency work. The TDTF Coordinator and TDTF community representatives participate. TDTF’s presence at public meetings means that emerging drug issues can be referred immediately. Residents who prefer not to speak out are urged to use the Dial to Stop Drug Dealing confidential line: 1800 220 220.

In June, the South Dublin Community Platform (network of social inclusion organisations in South Dublin) held a seminar on community safety. The aim of the seminar was to:

- Inform frontline workers of the existing community safety infrastructure
- Identify ways to increase participation, especially from marginalised groups
- Identify ways to make the existing infrastructure more effective
- Identify new and emerging issues in the county with a view to influencing the work of the Joint Policing Committee (JPC) and LPF.

The seminar had four themes:

- Intimidation: where do we start
- Improving the effectiveness of JPCs and LPFs
- Emerging safety issues in the county
- Engaging local communities in safety issues

The recommendations arising from the conference report were fed back to the JPC. For more information, contact Sarah O’Gorman in South Dublin County Council: Tel: 01 414 2679 or email: sogorman@sdublincoco.ie.

TDTF continued to promote the DIAL TO STOP DEALING campaign in 2011. Over the last three years, the Tallaght campaign has received more than 550 calls, resulting in over 200 reports of drug dealing in the area. Nationally, the line has received over 6000 calls with over 1700 reports to the Gardai.

TDTF Co-ordinator Grace Hill said recently:

“The statistics speak for themselves, this has proved to be a successful local campaign for Tallaght. We are delighted to be given the opportunity and support of the Office of the Minister for Drugs to continue with the lines existence. The added benefit we have seen in Tallaght is the confidence that the campaign has instilled in local residents. The outdoor poster campaign has helped to create awareness about drug dealing but additionally, it has reassured local people that while drug dealing is still an issue, it will not be tolerated. This initiative is a great example of a partnership approach to a community issue: The Local Drugs Task Force working with the Gardai to eliminate drug dealing in communities.”

Young People

De Shak Cafe is located in Mountain Park (Off Old Bawn). The Cafe opens on a Wednesday night 7-9pm open to all young people aged 14-18. It is open Thursday night 7-10pm for 16-18 year olds and is open Friday night 7-10pm for 14-18 year olds.

The cafe is run by the young people with the help from staff and volunteers. Activities that take place include pool competitions, cooking, match nights, XBox competitions and much more. It is also a place for young people to come to hang out with their peers and participation in the activities are optional.

The Café in Mountain Park can be contact at: (01) 463 2070

Drama

Many of the TDTF rehabilitation projects promote activities around the arts and creativity. One very talented female client from St. Dominic’s Community Response project performed at the annual Hope and Remembrance Service this year. In addition, there are some keen actors within the projects too. In the autumn, 3 participants from St. Dominic’s Stabilisation Project auditioned to be part of a drama piece being organised as part of the SDCC Social Inclusion Week in November. The three potential “Oscar winners” were selected as part of the final 12 drama groups who performed in the Civic Theatre during Social Inclusion Week. Building on their recent success, St. Dominic’s organised their own Christmas themed drama which was performed in Rua Red in December. Well done to all, bravo!
Research

In February, TDTF launched the Review of Service Provision for Women involved in Prostitution in Dublin 24. This TDTF-funded study, undertaken by HSE Outreach workers/Counsellors is one of the first pieces of research in Ireland that has focused on the prevalence of sex working in a specified area, and assessed the need for service provision.

The research showed that, at the time of the research, there were at least 106 women working in prostitution in Dublin 24, or they were from Dublin 24 and worked elsewhere. The majority were in their early thirties, and the average length of time women had worked in this area was 9½ years. Four women had started working in prostitution before the age of eighteen, or were under eighteen at the time of the interview. However, there were reports from the Community Garda and other service providers of at least twelve young people being groomed for sexual exploitation in the area.

Fifty two women of the cohort of 106 were drug users. Forty seven were in drug treatment; forty-five were intravenous heroin users (IVDU), and forty-two were on methadone treatment programmes. Two women were cocaine users who had started using at the age of sixteen.

The research concluded that local service provision is needed to support women vulnerable to prostitution. It was recommended that key stakeholders collaborate to identify a location for service delivery, and develop an outreach programme. In the longer term, a strategy is required to bring about a reduction in demand, and address risk factors that make women and girls vulnerable.

Since publication of the report, JADD, on behalf of TDTF and in partnership with the Women’s Health Service, the HSE Addiction Service and Ruhama, ran a six-week pilot programme to support women working in prostitution.

Family Support

TDTF supported several family support groups this year.

TRP recruited a family support therapist in 2011 who will help them achieve their long standing goal of providing a family support service to family members and significant others of all TRP participants. A facilitated fourteen-week support group got under way. TRP’s vision for the future is to have an ongoing peer-led support group weekly at Kiltalown House. TRP also offered play therapy for children of participants, who described the therapy as providing much needed support for their children and enhanced child-parent relationships.

SWAN ran an eight-week drug awareness group for Travellers (Building Capacity of Families). This was well attended, and included participants from the settled community to foster an atmosphere that supports Traveller integration.

KDPPG/WRENS delivered ten facilitated workshops to develop a peer-led family support group.
St Dominics developed its allotment programme for family support group members.

MATES (Men Advancing Through Education & Support) is a new men’s family support group, which meets in Kilnamanagh Community Centre. Contact: 085 724 8306. In November, MATES ran a workshop called The Hidden Epidemic which explored suicide among men.

SWAN set up a new family support group and participants have named themselves “Ealai Beag” (little Swans).

Training

The fourteen-week Strengthening Families Programme was hosted by JADD again this year. Strengthening Families has been run as an interagency initiative over the last number of years between TYS, Barnardos, JADD, YODA and YPP. New agencies are being trained and referring families each year.

The Tallaght Drugs Education Initiative (TDEI) ran free, short-term drug awareness courses for parents in 2011. Parents or guardians who want to learn more about drug misuse and what they can do to help prevent their children from getting involved in drugs, can avail of these courses for free. Courses range from three-weeks to a single-day programme, usually on a Saturday from 10am to 4pm with lunch provided. Contact 086-7969726 or email slindsay@foroige.ie.

In November, 480 people attended the national Family Support Network conference, which was held at the Green Isle hotel in Dublin 22. Minister Shortall gave the morning address. This annual event provides family support groups with the opportunity to discuss national policy developments and participate in training. There was a large representation from Tallaght projects, including forty staff and participants from SWAN Family Support.

NADA standards have arrived in Ireland, and a training programme is being planned. Congratulations to Tommy Kielthy, formerly from SWAN, who is working with Dr Smith, the founder of NADA, to introduce the NADA standards around the country.

Hope and Remembrance

The Tallaght Hope and Remembrance service was hosted by TRP in October. It was based on the theme “love and belonging” because these are needs of everyone, not just those affected by substance misuse. This was the eighth annual service of Hope and Remembrance and the “best yet” according to Minister and local TD, Pat Rabbitte. The service was a special event. TRP did an excellent job to create a beautiful, idyllic space for reflection and remembrance. Father Val Martin acted as MC for the service, which was fitting as Val, a long-term friend and supporter of TRP, is due to retire very soon. Other speakers included Bishop Eamonn Walsh, Mayor of South Dublin County, Caitríona Jones, Grace Hill and Carla Gunnery (TRP). The organisation of the service was a huge team effort on the part of TRP, their volunteers, TDTF and other family support groups in Tallaght. Uplifting music was provided by Blush Choir.

Family support groups in Tallaght

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<th>Group</th>
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<td>SWAN</td>
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<td>MATES</td>
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<td>St Dominics</td>
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<td>JADD</td>
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<td>St Dominic’s cancer support group</td>
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<td>TRP</td>
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<td>MATES</td>
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Raising Awareness

The Tallaght Travellers CDP ran a Travellers drug awareness campaign to raise awareness of drug use among Travellers, highlighting the stigma that is associated with drug and alcohol misuse. This campaign, “Kill the Drug, not Yourself” was developed by the TDTF Traveller Focus Group, which started in June 2010 to address issues relating to drug use / drug dealing in Traveller communities in the Task Force area. Contact: 087 264 6094.

TDTF, in partnership with the Public Health Nurse team, Tallaght Travellers Primary Health Care Team and TDTF Service Users Forum, developed a series of posters to raise awareness and encourage pregnant women to disclose their use of prescribed and un-prescribed substances, and seek relevant support.

Interagency Initiatives

TDTF has continued its strategic themes of consolidation and co-ordination throughout 2011, with several ongoing or new initiatives.

In 2011, the TDTF Community and Voluntary Network finalised its terms of reference and nominated community and voluntary representatives to the TDTF Board. The Chair and Vice Chairperson positions were confirmed and the network met regularly. The Community and Voluntary Network was set up in 2009 to progress the objectives of TDTF’s strategic plan. It is guided by the values of community work, namely:

• Collective Action
• Empowerment
• Social Justice
• Equality and anti-discrimination
• Participation

The Tallaght Dual Diagnosis Network has facilitated a series of relevant information workshops on criminal justice, addiction, mental health, housing and homelessness for service users and practitioners in Tallaght. The network has also developed an interagency model of care to provide multi-disciplinary support for the most vulnerable.

This year, the TDTF Rehabilitation Worker Gráinne O’Kane commissioned the development of the SPEAK and Client Information System database to support project planning, evaluation and evidence based reporting systems. Three projects were involved in their design and pilot study. The database aims to create a Tallaght-wide picture of emerging needs and issues, project integration, cohesion, barriers and outputs. Next year, TDTF looks forward to inviting all interested drug-specific projects to participate.

The collaboration of prison-related services in Tallaght has led to the TDTF Prison Network, which provides multi-disciplinary support to individuals when they are released from prison.

Fun events this year

TRP held their annual family day in August, with a big focus on sports. Service users, parents, grandparents, staff and children all joined the fun. There were lots of different races and activities. The day was rounded off with a soccer skills session facilitated by Shamrock Rovers coaching staff. A live DJ played music throughout the day, and all the children were presented with medals, certificates and other goodies. The day was a great success.

In October, TRP held their annual art exhibition to showcase participants’ work. It was a terrific opportunity for the group to show some of their fantastic talent. As part of the Tallaght Social Inclusion even organised by South Dublin County Council, the exhibition was displayed in the SDCC foyer for five days in November. TRP held their Christmas fun day in the middle of December for participants and their children, which is always a great success.

In June, seventeen TRP staff, service users and family members participated in the women’s mini marathon. It was a great day, and the weather was good for a change! The great atmosphere kept everyone going all the way to the finish line. More than €1000 was raised for TRP programmes.

In July, St Dominics hosted a Boxing Charity Night. It was hugely successful in the way family support groups, service users and staff integrated together.

As part of this strategy, St. Dominics Community Response has developed a prison peer support group (see under Treatment).

The Child Welfare Network has been active throughout 2011. The network is a practice development and networking forum open to services involved with children and their families in Tallaght. TDTF, JADD, the HSE Children and Families department, the Children’s Services Committee and the County Childcare Committee sit on the Board. The network runs a series of lunchtime seminars. At the steering group meeting in November, it was agreed that the following topics would be covered: youth and adolescent mental health, including suicide; domestic violence and children; sand therapy; diet and activity.
Acknowledgements

SWAN requested that a tribute be made to Jim Burn, who is sadly missed. Jim brought the NADA protocol to Ireland, which is an international standard for auricular acupuncture (ACU). ACU is one of the most popular therapies for service users and their families, and the training Jim Burn provided is used in projects throughout Tallaght.

- In 2011 Tallaght LDTF regretfully saw an increase in drug related deaths as well as deaths by suicide. In 2012, we aim to scope the level of these issues further and gauge the contribution substance abuse is having on such tragic incidences. Our work is attributed to individuals who are struggling with addiction, their families and communities within the TDTF area (Tallaght and Whitechurch).

Support for Addictions
For printed copies of these pocket sized 10 page listings, please contact: Grace Hill Coordinator
ph. 01 466 4243 or by email grace.hill@doddervalley.ie

Tallaght Drugs Task Force
2011 has been a challenging year for all those people and organisations who are working with great commitment and skill to progress the vision and work of Tallaght Drugs Task Force. Programmes and services have seen reductions in budgets and more difficult working environments. It is a tribute to all involved that the quality of work has been maintained and deepened and that projects have committed to increased joint working with a view to further service improvement.

In the current economic situation the Task Force has taken the view that further budget reductions are likely in 2012. In anticipation of this the Task Force contracted Sue Irving Limited to carry out an evaluation of both mainstream and interim funded projects. This evaluation, which was made possible because of the commitment and engagement of all projects, will advise the Task Force’s decisions re interim funding in 2012. I am very pleased that the evaluators are highly complementary about the quality of service provision in the Task Force area and regret that this may not translate into adequate funding for projects in the coming year.

The Task Force would not work without the contribution of the large number of people who participate in its structures and initiatives and the quality of service in Tallaght would not be possible without the contribution of the people who work in, manage, and volunteer with local projects. On behalf of the Tallaght Drugs Task Force I want to congratulate them and to thank them for their contribution throughout 2011 and I look forward to it continuing in the difficult times ahead.

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