

## TALLAGHT DRUGS TASK FORCE ANNUAL REPORT 2004

### INTRODUCTION

Changes in membership during 2003 made apparent levels of confusion regarding the role and responsibilities of the Task Force, and the internal structures and organisation including the sub-groups.

Several facilitated workshops were organised and the following areas were prioritised.

- Evaluating the way the Task Force worked
- Additional supports for the Task Force and local projects
- Ensuring that any unspent funding was re-allocated to maximise services in Tallaght.

Decisions regarding the operational mechanisms of the Task Force were made; most notably the workload of the Task Force was examined and it was decided that the sub-group structure needed to be developed. Encouraging these groups of experts to oversee much of the 'project' focussed work, and develop an advisory role to the main Task Force on sub-group specific issues was the main objective.

The improved sub-group structure has worked well; emerging needs were identified and proposals developed to address them, many of which were approved, and will be implemented in early 2005.

Due to the growing complex needs of the large number of initiatives/groups that have been developed in Tallaght the Task Force felt it was essential to develop its capacity to respond. A request to re-allocate funding to employ a development worker was approved and it is hoped this person will be in post early 2005.

Other areas of development are briefly outlined below, using the format of the "four pillars" from the National Drug Strategy.

### EDUCATION/PREVENTION

An art competition within the schools was run and an awards ceremony was held in April 2004. Due to its success the competition is to be held annually and will now include the non-formal education sector also.

A second intake of 25 students was recruited for the Community Drug Workers course, which commenced in February 2004, and the Tallaght Drugs Education Initiative was so successful in working with young people and their families, it will need to recruit a second worker in order to manage the expanding workload. It is hoped that this position will be filled during the early part of 2005.

A company has been commissioned to design and build a website for the Task Force and it is intended that they will then help to develop a communication strategy ensuring that the work of the Task Force is well publicised through various fora.

### **SUPPLY REDUCTION**

Whilst Tallaght has had no specific developments in this area over the last year the subgroup of the Task Force continues to meet monthly.

### **TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION**

Needle exchange services increased, and are now provided from three community treatment centres in Tallaght. Ongoing negotiations continue with the SWAHB to develop the service further.

New premises for JADD are close to completion and services are due to be expanded. Proposals to re-allocate funding to employ two additional workers have been submitted, and it is hoped they will be in place early 2005.

A proposal for the employment of an Integration Worker has been approved and it is hoped that this person will be in post early 2005. The remit of this worker will be to map the myriad of existing treatment and rehabilitation services in Tallaght and develop shared protocols.

### **RESEARCH:**

An emerging need arose in the form of increased levels of cocaine use in the Tallaght area. CARP Killinarden, undertook some local research, which resulted in the approval of funding from the cocaine sub-group of the NDST to run a joint pilot project with St Dominic's. This pilot is due to commence early 2005.