

Crime and Community

The Drug Intervention Programme is a large scale CRIME REDUCTION initiative. Problematic drug users commit a significant amount of acquisitive crime but through the provision of drug treatment and other specific interventions such as the sports programme levels of offending are significantly reduced.

The offence rates of 22 service users from one programme area were evaluated.

Overall, the group had a reduction of 26.52% in their rate of offending during and after attending the scheme.

Those attending every coaching session reduced their offending by 42.85%.

Those who attended only some of the sessions reduced their offending by 17.23%.

“I was quite moved and indeed inspired by this group of young men whom we tend to associate with drug taking and crime. In this environment I saw them in a very positive way, working together, striving to achieve something and conforming to society’s expectations. Surely this must be evidence of the need not only to address their substance misuse issues but also to find ways of integrating people back into the community. I think it is an outstanding success and one that should be repeated, not as ‘one offs’ but more a rolling programme.”
Inspector, Cleveland Police

One of the key aims of the programme is to improve the provision of THROUGH CARE AND AFTER CARE for drug using offenders. DIP builds on the progress made in custody whilst assisting integration back into the wider community through programmes of support and help.

A number of prisoners acquire accredited sports qualifications whilst serving custodial sentences. Evidence suggests that most of the qualifications are not utilised when they go back into the community. As a result, many return to drug misuse and criminal behaviour.

“We need to give offenders the chance to turn their lives around. This is the central aim of our strategy, because it will mean fewer crimes and fewer victims.” 5 Year Strategy for Reducing Re-offending, National Offender Management Service.

Pilot sports programmes are currently being established within two local prisons. Universities, DIP and NOMS are working together to build on the qualifications gained in prison and to help move the offenders into voluntary work and paid employment.

“With sports though it gives you something to do, it keeps you off the streets instead of robbing places or taking drugs or anything like that. It’s interactive, and it gives you more opportunity to do things in the future.” Service User, Durham

An individual's drug use can have a detrimental impact on the health, financial circumstances and relationships of FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.

Families are often the first people to experience the detrimental effects of drug misuse. If it becomes a significant problem, the police, the courts, the probation service and prison can all become a part of family life.

"This day is just brilliant. All I feel is joy. It just proves that it can be done, you can get off drugs and that's why we wanted to do the campaign with the Chronicle." Carer, Newcastle.

Improvements in personal relationships were emphasised by service users as one of the most important benefits of the programme. Families could observe their children or partners participate in a positive activity.

"It got to the point with me, that I'm sick of having to phone the kids and explain I'm in prison again. It's not fair on them. Now they're noticing how much I've changed because they say "oh she's not poorly now anymore" – because before I used to wake up rattling and that. This whole programme is just brilliant." Service Users, Darlington

Drug misuse has a damaging effect on LOCAL COMMUNITIES as a result of burglary, robbery and other associated crimes, the impact of drug dealing and the activities of those under the influence of drugs.

Following the first coaching programme in Newcastle, a DIP client was awarded £2000 from the Scarman Trust to commence football coaching sessions which incorporate drugs awareness training. The programme is specifically aimed at young offenders and is delivered in collaboration with the local youth and community department.

"It was an opportunity where we saw plaques up on walls of other leagues that are going on and when we asked the coaches and workers and that if we could get involved in other teams the answer was "course you can, get yourself a team and of course you can." They knew 'what we were like' and even the place knew – they still said 'you can get a team together – you're committed to playing – you can come.'" Service User, Teesside

Sunderland DIP have a full time sports development post funded by the Home Office as a DIP pilot. The post is located within the Local Authority sports department which has allowed a greater diversity of sports and health activities to be offered and developed in the area.

"The DIP sports development post has enabled us to work with residents who would not normally use sport and leisure facilities, by transferring the good practice developed through our positive futures programme and adapting it for adult users...we have had over 100 clients engaged in the project in the first 6 months and have a group of female sex workers who are now integrating with the public in a number of their sessions." Sports Services Manager, Sunderland