



LDAN
UPDATE

By chief executive Shona Beaton

Models of Care for Alcohol (MoCAM) is out finally. You may have missed it but that's because it's hardly been greeted with the fanfare you'd expect of a ninety odd page document outlining best practice in alcohol treatment. The reason? The continued lack of adequate funding for alcohol services over two years after the publication of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England. Despite MoCAM's arrival then, without more funding, alcohol interventions at local level are likely to remain focused on street drinking and binge drinking, and to do little to get the much wider number of people misusing alcohol into treatment.

A new London tier 4 forum has been set up to discuss some of the most pressing issues around residential and detox care. At the first meeting of the forum, which is facilitated by LDAN, these were identified as purchasing/commissioning, capital spending, different models of tier 4, and harm reduction work in tiers 3 and 4. The forum will also be seeking to build stronger relationships between tier 4 providers in order to promote best practice and influence strategy. We will keep people informed of the discussions at future meetings.

Another group to have recently held its inaugural meeting is GLADA's Women's Expert Advisory Group. This is a group supported by LDAN and the Stella Project which brings together female service users and ex users to discuss drug and alcohol policy, specifically relating to women. It is an important initiative which came out of the Improving Options for Women conference held last year, as it should increase the input of a group of service users with a lot to contribute, to treatment strategies and service development.

Models of Care for Alcohol Gets Mixed Verdict

Models of Care for Alcohol was finally published at the end of June. The document, which sets out guidelines on providing an integrated treatment system for alcohol misusers, has undergone some changes since the draft stage, most obviously to include information from the Alcohol Needs Assessment Research Project (ANARP) and Programme of Improvement for PCTs. It was also changed to give more guidance on service provision for family members, and women experiencing domestic violence, two of the main points to come out of the consultation, the NTA's senior alcohol policy officer, Trevor McCarthy, told **LDAN News**. He said the large numbers who took part in the consultation demonstrate the degree of interest there is in alcohol treatment, despite the funding issue. But how has MoCAM gone down in the field?

Don Shenker - Alcohol Concern

"We welcome it as it has positive and useful guidelines particularly around screening, ensuring all tiers of interventions are commissioned, and setting out criteria for commissioning standards. It sets out clearly for example that commissioners must meet the Department of Health's core standards and "enable all members of the population to access alcohol services equally and to offer choice in access to services and treatment equitably". We're disappointed though with what's missing. There is not enough guidance around setting up services for women experiencing domestic violence, BME groups and particularly families. It's not strong on developing local monitoring systems or carrying out a population needs assessment, or on where to obtain alcohol related information. It also says very little about service user or provider involvement at commissioning level. Overall, it's possibly a useful information document for commissioners new to the field, but a missed opportunity for assisting commissioners to increase

resources for treatment."

Sandra Machado - EACH

EACH took part in the consultation when we said the guidance needed to take more account of diversity, and of the needs of BME groups and other hard to reach groups. Some of that has been picked up on and there are references to these issues in the published document but I think it falls short on detail about how to go about providing services for these groups. There is also too much focus on the alcohol misuser and not enough on interventions for family members. In the Asian community where there is a lot of stigma and shame around alcohol use, you need to take not just the individual but the whole family into treatment.

Karen Bailey - Stella Project

We welcome the fact that there are a number of references to domestic violence throughout the document particularly in relation to risk assessment and the need to develop integrated care pathways for people experiencing domestic violence. There is also recognition that DV organisations can provide tier one service

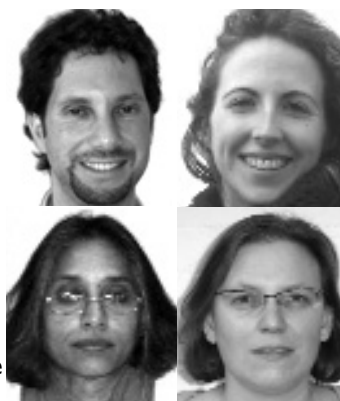
provision. The challenge for substance misuse services is to use the commissioning criteria around equal access to alcohol treatment, to push for services which cater for domestic violence survivors.

Libby Ranzetta - consultant

Will MOCAM make a difference to alcohol treatment? The Department of Health's needs assessment showed that only five and a half per cent of the in need alcohol dependent population are accessing treatment. That low figure is to do with poor levels of identification and referral, but also lack of availability of treatment. Without additional funding from central government or performance targets, that situation is likely to continue.

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WORTH THE WAIT ?



(from top left clockwise)
Don Shenker, Karen Bailey,
Libby Ranzetta and Sandra
Machado give their views on
MoCAM