

Slough Borough Council

Report To: Health & Wellbeing Board

Date: 23/11/23

Subject: Substance use rapid needs assessment

Chief Officer: Kelly Evans, Deputy Director of Public Health

Contact Officer: Dr Leidon Shapo, PH lead (Adults)

Ward(s): All

Exempt: No

Appendices: Appendix A – SUD Rapid HNA Summit Presentation

[Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2026](#)

[From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

1. Summary and Recommendations

1.1 This report sets out to provide an overview of the drug and alcohol substance use rapid needs assessment. The main aim of the work was to

- improve our understanding on the burden of drug and alcohol substance use in Slough, and
- engage more effectively with our key partners to support our preventative approach as well as improve the current healthcare model locally.

Recommendations:

1.2 Committee is recommended to:

- Note the key findings and endorse the recommendations and next steps within the substance misuse needs assessment.
- Support and contribute on behalf of your organisations represented on the Board phase 2 of the work to develop a system wide action plan.

Reason:

1.3 The reason for the above recommendation is based on:

- (i) the work completed as part of the 1st phase covering the prevalence, treatment and the evidence around enforced actions; and
- (ii) our close collaboration with all key partners and stakeholders involved in developing this rapid need assessment and action plan.

2. Report

Introductory paragraph

- 2.1 The key findings from this work, will support the Health and Wellbeing Board implement its overarching priority of improving the health and wellbeing of residents in the borough.¹
- 2.2 Following the key findings and the guidance from the National Combating Drugs Outcome framework ('From harm to hope strategy', 2021)², this rapid need assessment represents an initial assessment of evidence and data to better understand the unmet needs and main local issues of drug and alcohol-related harm.

Background

- 2.3 Substance misuse has devastating impact in lives of individuals, families and communities in Slough. The rapid needs assessment was conducted to get a better understanding of the unmet need and potential causes of substance misuse.
 - 2.4 Slough has a younger population (with a high % of under 18), a large proportion of people with an ethnic minority background and high levels of deprivation. There is evidence to suggest that all these socio-demographic factors should be taken into consideration when we look at the substance use picture locally now and in the future.
 - 2.5 The rate of overall OCU, opiates and crack usage all appear to be significantly higher in Slough compared to the South-East (SE) and England rates.
 - 2.6 Prevalence of drug use varies significantly by age in Slough. The data show that for multiple reasons, the drugs affect more our younger population.
 - 2.7 The rate of overall unmet need for OCU usage, opiates, crack and alcohol use appears to be significantly higher in Slough across the board when compared to regional and national proportions of unmet need.
 - 2.8 The directly standardised rate of hospital admissions attributable to alcohol related conditions is also the highest in Slough compared to its other neighbouring boroughs.
 - 2.9 The number of drug-related deaths locally are very low and comparable to BFC and RBWM, and, significantly lower compared to SE & England.
 - 2.10 The most common source of treatment referral in Slough is self, family and friends. Slough appears to have a higher proportion of referrals from the criminal justice system compared to the SE and England, but first-time entrants into youth justice system has been progressively decreasing over the years (also following the national trend).
 - 2.11 The proportion of adults with substance misuse treatment need who successfully engage in community based structured treatment following
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release from prison is the lowest in Slough compared to other neighbouring authorities, and significantly lower than the SE and England.

- 2.12 The successful completion of drug treatment for opiates in Slough is comparable to SE and England; while we have the highest proportion of treatment completions for non-opiates compared to our neighbouring authorities.
- 2.13 Change is needed to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the residents of Slough and the impact drugs and alcohol has on individuals, their families, and our communities. The needs assessment has provided details on the current prevalence of drug & alcohol substance use locally including the trends over the last ten years and comparisons with neighbouring boroughs as well as South-East and England; what are the gaps in terms of gender, age groups and ethnicity, those in treatment and success rate and crime-related data.
- 2.14 The directly standardised rate of hospital admissions attributable to alcohol use in Slough is highest in the wards of Chalvey, Britwell and Northborough and Foxborough, where they fall in the top 20% within the borough.
- 2.15 The proportion of those accessing alcohol use treatment has historically been low in Slough compared to both regional and national rates.
- 2.16 The percentage of clients entering drug treatment who were also identified with a mental health condition who received support for their mental health was the lowest in Slough compared to its neighbouring boroughs and significantly lower than both regional and national rates.
- 2.17 The needs assessment includes the views of key stakeholders fully engaged as part of this work: Substance use partnership commissioning team, the Safer Slough Partnership, Public health, Adult and Social Care (Safeguarding). As part of discussing this needs assessment at the HWBB meeting we will have the opportunity to share the key findings of this work with a wider audience.

4. Background Papers

None