

ALCOHOL AND DRUG RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION - NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Research into options for national commissioning of services

The Scottish Government has commissioned Scotland Excel to undertake research and development work on a national approach to commissioning and procurement of alcohol and drug residential rehabilitation services.

This work is part of a national programme of work involving a range of statutory and non-statutory partners.

We are seeking information from current providers of residential rehabilitation services and those who may be interested in providing services in the future to help inform the appraisal of options for national commissioning, contracting and purchasing arrangements.

Background

In January 2021, the First Minister announced a National Mission to reduce drug-related deaths and harms through improvements to treatment, recovery and other support services. One of the five priorities set out by the First Minister was increasing capacity and improving access to residential rehabilitation.

The Residential Rehabilitation Working Group (RRWG) recommendations in December 2020 (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/residential-rehabilitation-working-group-preliminary-recommendations-drug-alcohol-residential-treatment-services/>) set out immediate work required on improving access to treatment and utilisation of existing residential rehabilitation capacity. The Scottish Government has initiated a programme of work to implement these recommendations,

There are three parts to the national approach:

- improving pathways into and from residential rehabilitation, in particular for those with multiple and complex needs;
- investing in a significant increase in the capacity of residential rehabilitation; and
- developing a standardised approach to commissioning residential services.

National service and capacity mapping in 2020 and 2021, and subsequent pathways surveys of current services and Alcohol and Drug Partnerships (ADPs), have indicated considerable diversity in services. The report on pathways published by the Scottish Government in November 2021 (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/pathways-through-out-residential-rehabilitation-scotland/>) included the following points:

- **Funding of Placements** –ADP and other statutory funding contributes a relatively small proportion of placements. Providers reported that around one in seven placements were ADP funded, with more than twice as many placements self-funded.
- **Programme Costs** –Placement costs ranged from £6,504 to £27,500 (£350 to £5,540 per week) making the average cost of a placement in a core programme in rehab in Scotland £18,112. Average costs for an ADP-funded placement were significantly lower due to the tendency to use NHS and third sector providers.

- **Lack of Consistent Approach to Monitoring of Statutory Funded Placements**– A number of ADPs reported that they were unable to provide data on the number of placements which they or partner statutory organisations had funded.
- **Disparity in funding arrangements** – Both ADPs and providers reported an array of different funding arrangements. Six ADPs, and five providers, reported holding block-contracts or framework agreements with each other, while others described spot-purchasing placements.
- **Range of provision**– Both surveys highlighted wide variation in terms of the programmes, models and core programme lengths (5 to 156 weeks) across Scotland's residential rehabilitation facilities. Variation in the arrangements for accessing detox services and preparatory work, were also reported, as well as variation in waiting times and service capacity.
- **Aftercare** – Both reports highlighted the lack of standardisation of aftercare, and the need to improve provision.

Scotland Excel's role

Scotland Excel is the Centre of Procurement Expertise for the local government sector (www.scotland-excel.org.uk). Scotland Excel has been commissioned by the Scottish Government to take forward the following work strand:

Exploring and developing a national approach to commissioning residential services

Objective: A more effective and efficient mechanism for referral and procurement will lead to delivering better health and wellbeing outcomes for people. Alongside this, essential standards will guarantee quality of care and evidence-based practice in residential rehabilitation.

In the research phase of this work, we will investigate how national commissioning arrangements may be able to help improve access, capacity and standards of services available to people who require residential rehabilitation, and will set out options for development of a national approach.

Research process

Research will involve questionnaires to existing and potential service providers and to ADPs and partner commissioning organisations. The research will result in an options paper to be presented to the Scottish Government in autumn 2022.

Information sought includes:

- Current contracting/commissioning/purchasing arrangements
- Funding arrangements
- Types and locations of services
- Wider interest in future provision
- Views on the benefits of a national approach to commissioning

Further work on developing national arrangements to support commissioning is anticipated during 2023 depending on the option or options agreed and approval from the Minister for Drugs Policy

We would welcome input from both current providers and potential providers/interested parties. **To register your interest/contribute, please complete the questionnaire at**

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MTQ4AA-SXL-ResidentialRehab-Services/> **by 5 August 2022.**

Your input during this research phase will help inform an options report to the Scottish Government, and results may be shared with national partner organisations and Alcohol and Drug Partnerships. The Scottish Government, Scotland Excel and statutory organisations commissioning services are not bound to accept any views stated.

Please note that this exercise is not a tender for services and any subsequent invitation to tender for any future procurement will be issued by public notice via Public Contracts Scotland (<https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/>).