



Reducing Harm, Support Recovery (2017-2025)

Updates Feb 2019

The National Drugs' Strategy '**Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery; a health led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025**' launched in July 2017. As we pass the 18-month mark since its launch, we explore the progress of key actions which are particularly relevant to family members affected by substance misuse. Actions progressed by NSFN are stated in **bold** to differentiate actions tasked to other agencies.

The National Family Support Network (NFSN) advocated consistently for families during the consultation phase of the strategy and are now represented on the Standing Sub Committee (which meets every month) and the National Oversight Committee (which meets four times a year). These committees monitor the progress and implementation of the National Drugs' Strategy. Below we will outline updates under each of the 5 goals and the relevant actions regarding families

Goal 1; Promote and protect health and wellbeing

This goal is focussed on prevention and education and recognises the role of families within this, alongside maintaining a strong focus on hidden harm. This goal also recognises the importance of evidence-based family support programmes and includes the 5-step method in listing examples of good practice interventions.

Action	Lead/Partner Agencies	Updates
<p>1.1.2</p> <p>Improve the delivery of substance use education across all sectors in Ireland, including youth groups, people using substances and other relevant sectors</p>	<p>HRB DOH</p> <p><i>HSE/DCYA/DES</i></p>	<p>HRB organised National Drugs Forum with DOH in Q4, Scope extended to cover themes of good practice in prevention, harm reduction, dual diagnosis and social reintegration- NFSN presented in a workshop on the theme of Drug Related Intimidation.</p> <p>Health Research Board action to develop a guidance document to ensure substance use education is delivered in accordance with quality standards (deferred to 2020 due to resourcing)</p>
<p>1.3.9 (a)</p> <p>Developing and adopting evidence-based family and parenting skills programmes for services engaging with high risk families impacted by problematic substance use</p>	<p>HSE/Tusla</p> <p><i>NFSN, C+V Sectors</i></p>	<p>Tusla has adopted the Signs of Safety Framework to enable it to work with families to build on their resilience and strength.</p> <p>NFSN continue to promote 5-Step training at a national level and this training has been successfully funded in many taskforce areas including North Eastern Regional Taskforce, Dublin North East Taskforce, Northwest Regional Taskforce, South East Taskforce.</p>
<p>1.3.9 (b)</p> <p>Building awareness of the hidden harm of parental substance misuse with the aim of increasing responsiveness to affected children.</p>	<p>HSE/HSE</p>	<p>Hidden Harm launched by Minister for Children Jan 25th (Tusla)</p> <p>NFSN will advocate that this training is extended to family support workers. Hidden Harm features as a core principle in NFSN's Quality Standards in Family Support Framework</p>

<p>1.3.9 (c)</p> <p>Developing links between addiction services, maternity services and children's health and social care services that will facilitate them to respond in a coordinated way to the needs of the children of problem alcohol and substance users. This should include protocols that set out arrangements between drug and alcohol services and child protection services in line with the NDRF.</p>	<p>HSE/Tusla</p>	<p>National Practice Guide on Hidden Harm references these messages on a conjoint agency basis</p>
<p>1.3.9. (D)</p> <p>Ensure adult substance use services identify clients who have dependent children and contribute actively to meeting their needs either directly or through referral to or liaison with other appropriate services, including those in the non-statutory sector</p>	<p>HSE/Tusla</p>	<p>HSE amended NDTRS form to capture data in relation to children of adults attending services</p> <p>Promotion of referral and response pathways between agencies contained in Practice guide on HH</p> <p>Six Young Person's Support Programmes developed by NFSN were hosted in youth services in 2018. NFSN have commissioned an evaluation of the programme (supported by HSE) in 2019</p>

Goal 2: Minimise the harms caused by the use and misuse of substances and promote rehabilitation and recovery

This goal is focussed on rehabilitation and recovery and recognises the importance of family support within this. The goal text also highlights the 'recovery capital' of families in the role of rehabilitation, the need to support kinship carers and the need to reduce drug related deaths.

Action	Lead Partner Agencies	Update
<p>2.1.12</p> <p>Strengthen the implementation of the National Drugs Rehabilitation Framework</p>	HSE	<p>Tender has been awarded to develop a competency framework and to undertake a training needs analysis and that this is underway. This training will include training on each of the protocols.</p> <p>-NFSN and HSE are currently piloting a Family Needs Assessment which was tendered out because of NFSN advocacy at the NDRIC committee, this pilot will finish in the 1st quarter of 2019 and NFSN will advocate that this needs assessment for families is rolled out nationally and on a consistent basis.</p>
<p>2.1.16</p> <p>Develop and broaden the range of peer-led, family and mutual aid programmes in accordance with best practice to improve relapse prevention and aftercare services</p>	<p>HSE</p> <p><i>NFSN/C+V Sectors/UISCE</i></p>	<p>NFSN met with HSE in April 2018 and presented to the National Alcohol and Addiction Governance group in May 2018 on our model for the progression of family support (Dedicated worker roles to nurture peer-led groups and provide evidence based one to one assessment with families) NFSN continue to work with taskforces to develop family support Coordinator roles (Ex Blanchardstown DATF)</p>
<p>2.1.17</p> <p>Further strengthen family support services by</p> <p>a) developing addiction specific bereavement support programmes and support the provision of respite for family members as per DATFs area;</p>	<p>Tusla</p> <p><i>HSE/NFSN</i></p>	<p>NFSN have progressed on all three actions;</p> <p>a) Addiction specific Bereavement Support Service opened in the North Inner City (Funded by Archbishop).</p> <p>-Tusla continue to resource NFSN to host addiction specific</p>

<p>b) supporting families with non-violent resistance training to address child to parent violence; and</p> <p>c) Supporting those caring for children/young people in their family because of substance misuse to access relevant information, supports and services</p>		<p>bereavement support programmes in NFSN office Dublin 1. -NFSN in partnership with Dr Sharon Lambert (UCC) conducted a research report on the impact of a drug related death on family members (Launched Sept 2018)</p> <p>B) NFSN has hosted two NVR sessions in 2018/2019 and are planning on having a member of staff trained as a trainer in NVR in 2019</p> <p>C)NFSN made submission to review of Childcare Act (Feb 2018) -NFSN convened 'World Café' on the topic of Kinship Care at 2017 Annual Work Conference and two kinship care focus groups in 2018. -NFSN are supporting a new initiative (Kinship Care Ireland) and have met with Tusla and hosted an interagency meeting with the aim of developing an alliance/network to call for changes to current policy/service.</p>
<p>2.2.30 Continue to target a reduction in drug related deaths and non-fatal overdoses.</p> <p>-Finalising HSE-led Overdose Prevention Strategy with a particular focus on implementing preventative measures to target high-risk cohorts of the drug-using population and known overdose risk periods;</p> <p>-Expanding the availability of Naloxone to people who use drugs, their peers, and family members.</p>	<p>HSE</p>	<p>-Overdose Prevention strategy was reviewed and needs updating in light of naloxone developments over the last 2 years</p> <p>-Naloxone Training to HSE staff (14 CHO 7, 3 CHO 3), Homeless Services (19 CHO 7), Voluntary Section 39 and LDATF (50 CHO 7 (5 Peer workers)).</p> <p>Two staff in NFSN Completed Train the trainer and will be rolling out training to family members in 2019</p> <p>International Overdose Awareness Day 2018 co-organised by NFSN; Naloxone training for people who use drugs held in Cork. Dublin and Limerick.</p>

Goal 3: Address the harmful effects of illegal drug markets and reduce access to drugs for harmful use.

This goal refers to supply reduction, illegal drug markets, new psychoactive substances and penal policy.

Action	Lead/Partner Agencies	Updates
3.1.35 To establish a Working Group to consider the approaches taken in other jurisdictions to the possession of small quantities of drugs for personal use in light of the Report of the Joint Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality on a Harm Reducing and Rehabilitative approach to possession of small amounts of illegal drugs to examine:	DOH/DJE	Research completed, and report submitted to group, public consultation Completed Report presentation to National Oversight Committee delayed until March 2019. -NFSN continue to advocate for a health led approach to drug use and the decriminalisation of drugs in the context of personal possession and have participated in events and outreach organised by Ana Liffey.

Goal 4: Support participation of individuals, families and communities

This goal acknowledges the importance of supporting communities and families to build resilience to respond to drug related issues, including drug related intimidation and crime and, in the importance of the participation of families and service users in the planning, design and delivery of services. It acknowledges the Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme, developed by NFSN and An Garda Síochána and explicitly states that; *'The term 'service user' includes people who use health and social care services and their families.'*

Action	Lead/Partner Agency	Updates
4.2.44 Promote the participation of people who use drugs or alcohol, including those in recovery, and service users and their families, in local, regional and national decision-making structures and	DOH	Annual Drugs Forum held 2018 focused on communities of practice/evidence-based research interventions.

<p>networks through capacity building measures using evidence-based models of participation in line with best practice.</p>		<p>The Drug and Alcohol taskforce handbook last updated in 2011 is being updated again, NFSN's input to the review is represented through Citywide on the sub group and NFSN have convened several meetings of Family Reps to gain insight and feedback.</p>
<p>4.1.42 An Garda Síochána and the National Family Support Network will each carry out its own evaluation of the Drug-Related Intimidation Reporting Programme to strengthen its effectiveness and, if appropriate, develop measures to raise public awareness of the programme</p>	<p>NFSN/Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau</p>	<p>Seminar held with NFSN and Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau Feb 2018, with all 28 Nominated Inspectors of DRIRP and garda taskforce reps. NFSN gave presentation on training, programme and drugs strategy.</p> <p>Technical meeting held on March & May 2018 with Health Research Board, European monitoring centre for drugs and drug addiction re progressing research on developing a social indicator for drug related intimidation with NFSN participation.</p> <p>NFSN (with funding from DOH) completed external evaluation of the Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme with Department of Applied Psychology (UCC). National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau</p>

		<p>have also completed an evaluation of the programme. NFSN and NDOCB are developing an action plan on review of these evaluations to include improvements in training and public awareness measures.</p>
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Goal 5: Support high quality research, monitoring and evaluation in order to provide sound and comprehensive evidence-informed policies and actions

This goal acknowledges the importance of research, monitoring and evaluation in the development of effective and evidence-based policies, services and supports.

Action	Lead/Partner Agency	Updates
<p>5.1.47 Require all publicly funded drug and alcohol services to complete the NDTRS for all people who use services under service level agreement with funding agency</p>	DOH	<p>NTDRS forms should be filled out by all relevant services (compliance is monitored)</p> <p>Meeting held with HRB and NFSN re 'Concerned Persons' stats collected by NDTRS. Future possibilities of recording this data to advocate for services.</p>
<p>5.1.49 Undertake a study on rehabilitation outcomes, which takes into account the experience of service users and their families</p>	Department of Health/Health Research Board	HRB is carrying out a scoping exercise for this research at present.