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Chief Executive's Update

With this Bulletin is news that the European Federation of Therapeutic Communities conference is in the UK this year and hosted by 2 eATA members, the Ley Community and Phoenix Futures. Therapeutic Communities (TCs) have been one of the longest running and most successful services in the UK treatment system and it is splendid to see that being recognised by the Conference being hosted in Oxford.

I was lucky enough to attend the World Federation of TCs Conference a few years ago and what impressed me most was the diverse way in which different countries and organisations had taken the model and made it work for their own system and culture, while leaving the theoretical base intact. I talked to people from TCs in the USA, Australia, Hungary and many other places – all of whom had a slightly different approach.

The lesson that I came away with was the similarity of the experiences of service users. Whether in Prison in New York State, in downtown Melbourne or rural England, people were coming to TCs with the same problems. While one common factor was addiction, there were many others – like poverty, familial abuse and a lack of self value.

The effectiveness of the TC model was clear in dealing with similar issues in subtly different ways in a myriad of settings.

Sometimes we forget, amongst the continual pressure to demonstrate our worth as professionals and services that there are a host of people in recovery, all over the world, who are the most significant testament to the plain fact that rehabilitative treatment works.

NEW MEMBERS UPDATE

eATA would like to welcome the following members to the Association:

Eden Recovery and Treatment Centre
The Sanctum Personal Development Centre
Bespoke Therapism Ltd
KCA (UK)

The Drug Sector Partnership – Update from Adfam

Adfam, along with [The Alliance](#), [DrugScope](#) and [eATA](#), form the [Drug Sector Partnership](#) which is funded by the Department of Health. The Partnership brings together organisations in the drug and alcohol sector to spread a common message and improve work with Government. The Partnership has released a [Consensus Statement](#) with signatories from many other organisations on the current state of drug and alcohol treatment services for substance users and their families.

Over the past year Adfam has carried out the workforce development strand of the Partnership's work. They have looked at ways to support the practitioners around the country working hard to improve the lives of families affected by drug and alcohol use.

After research and consultation with the sector in 2010 Adfam has developed role profiles which you can find attached. They are based on National Occupational Standards and have been designed for use by any organisations (statutory, private or voluntary sector) whose staff, (paid or voluntary) work with affected families. Also attached is a guidance briefing which provides some background information on the role profiles and how they can be used. We encourage all interested organisations to use the role profiles in their recruitment, supervision and management processes and look forward to hearing any comments, thoughts and feedback on them.

You can read more about Adfam's [workforce development project](#).

Adfam also offer a range of training to help meet the workforce development needs of your staff. If you are interested in the training please see Adfam's [training page](#).

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The Substance Misuse Skills Consortium

The Skills Consortium (SMSC) has been working hard to put together an offer to the treatment field this year and held a stakeholders' event on the 23rd May to bring together some of the larger organisations in the field (NHS and 3rd Sector providers) in an attempt to produce consensus about the way forward.

The Consortium was officially launched last November and is mentioned in the Drug Strategy as having a key role in delivering a skilful, recovery oriented workforce. The initial, considerable investment has been from the NTA, who are now looking to withdraw from the project so that the SMRC can become an independent entity.

eATA has been involved in the Consortium since its inception and has a seat on the main board of the project.

The scale of the work already done can be seen by looking at the Skills Hub that has been built up on the SMSC website (<http://www.skillsconsortium.org.uk/skillshub.aspx>).

The SMSC has a membership that have signed up through the website and have elected an independent Chair (William Butler) and Vice Chair (Jason Gough). The current work streams are "evidence and research", "qualifications and training" and The Skills Hub. Each has its own group of members working to establish the programme and desired outcomes.

The questions addressed at the event on the 23rd May split down roughly into 3 kinds "what will the SMSC do?", "how will it be structured and accountable?" and "who will pay for it?"

Activity

The activities of the SMSC are centred on the work streams above. The objective of the activity is a more skilled workforce with better capacity to support recovery within drug/alcohol services.

How this is to be carried out remains to be decided. Certainly the Hub, if maintained, is a significant resource. The evidence and research work stream will add value to those resources already available if it produces guidance on how to use the evidence in constructing and providing services.

The qualifications and training work stream offers a number of opportunities, including the new capacity for the field to coordinate on what standard vocational qualifications and training will actually be beneficial and to communicate this forcibly to the Sector Skills Councils and similar bodies.

It seemed clear that the agencies present on the 23rd May were looking for clearer and more detailed information about the activities of the SMSC. On the other hand the Consortium was careful not to be too prescriptive as the eventual organisation needs to reflect the needs and wishes of its members.

Structure and accountability

The SMSC is currently not incorporated in any way and exists as a grouping of interested parties supported by the NTA. The members have signed up via the website. There are full members who are employers and second tier bodies and associate members who are a mixture of statutory observers (e.g. DAATs) and others who clearly wish to follow the progress of the project.

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As I mentioned previously the Board has been in place for some time and we have a place on it (as do most other second tier bodies in our field). The only provider currently represented is Lifeline and their CE, Ian Wardle has been energetic in supporting the development of the SMSC.

Those present on the 23rd May expressed a concern that the SMSC would represent yet another second tier agency in the field and that it may be that some of the functions suggested could be taken on by the current agencies.

The discussions within the SMSC have been about making sure that the organisation remains as lean as it can be with, possibly, the Chair and Vice Chair as governors and representatives and a small secretariat to carry out the work. The development of the strategy and work plan would be carried out by the Board and Committees.

There was also some discussion about whether contributing to the SMSC would mean a loss of competitive advantage for members if their unique work force development could be adopted by potential competitors. This was a minority view. Most present felt that the advantage for the service users of an increase in staff skills outweighed this consideration.

Paying for it

The model that is currently being suggested for paying for the SMSC is members' subscription with, possibly, the size of the subscription being determined by the size of the workforce of the member.

There was not a full consensus on the 23rd May that members would support this way forward but all were prepared to consider it. In the end it is likely that better information about outputs and outcomes will make this clearer. It may also be that some consideration of the specific benefits of membership will help.

What you can do:

While some of the larger eATA members have been involved in the development of the SMSC, most members have not. We would suggest that members do the following, especially if they are employers:

- Look at the information on the SMSC website – www.skillsconsortium.org.uk
- Consider registering as a member or associate member
- Send us any thoughts that you have about the SMSC so that we can feed your view into the consultation.

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And finally...

Reintegration

the Difference, gives you the opportunity to show-case your service to commissioners. The theme this month is reintegration. The first 2 editions have been posted on our website to increase wider public awareness on the difference that member services are making – to view the documents see our website: <http://www.eata.org.uk/publications/>

Submit your article by June 15th (roughly 1 page) to be included in the July 1st issue. Post to volunteer1@eata.org.uk or call 020 7820 8130 for further details.

Event:

Please see attached flyer for the next European Federation Therapeutic Communities Conference.

Members News:

Congratulations to [Broadreach House](#) who have achieved eATA Accredited Provider Status. For details on our accreditation scheme please contact louise.walsh@eata.org.uk or see our website [here](#).

Fundraising:

Just Text is a new service launched jointly by Vodafone and Just Giving which gives all UK charities the opportunity to sign up to a donation service via text messages. You do not need to have a vodafone to take part, there are no fees and Vodapone will send all donations raised to your charity via a monthly BACS payment and will also supply you with a support pack to help market your vodafone individual code. For more info see www.justtextgiving.co.uk or call 0800 052 1081.

The monthly e-bulletin from the European Association for the Treatment of Addiction (eATA) to keep our members up to date on the latest developments and news in the drug and alcohol treatment and aftercare sector. If you have any comments or questions about our articles, don't hesitate to get in touch.

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