



the Difference

Working with the Family to Achieve Recovery



The European Association for the Treatment of Addictions is proud to announce our new bimonthly publication, '*the Difference*'. This e-bulletin demonstrates how eATA member organisations are exhibiting best practice and achieving successful treatment outcomes. Our first issue entitled, 'Working with the Family to Achieve Recovery' aims to demonstrate the importance of familial support in the recovery process. The following submissions are examples of success stories and case studies in which the family played a vital role in patient recovery.

If your organisation wishes to contribute to our next publication or has suggestions for subsequent issue titles and themes, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Addaction: 'Breaking the Cycle'

The 2003 Hidden Harm report recognised the impact parental drug or alcohol problems had on the life chances of children. It also recognised how a parent's own difficulties could hinder the success of interventions provided for those children.

The recommendations of this report emphasised the need for services to develop timely, co-ordinated and effective support for the whole family.

In partnership with Zurich Community Trust, Addaction established the 'Breaking the Cycle' project; three pilot services providing holistic treatment to families affected by drugs and alcohol in Cumbria, Derby and Tower Hamlets. Many of these families exhibited a range of complex problems - all allied to serious substance misuse problems.

Since its inception, the project has helped ensure the children of these families don't go on to become the next generation of substance misusers. The project works for three simple reasons:

Each family receives individually designed packages of care, taking into account all of their needs; they have a 'safety net' of support. This means they feel secure and they trust the help Addaction offers, which is essential if they are going to engage.

The Addaction workers who help the families are fully qualified specialists, adept at using CBT and motivational interviewing techniques, as well as dedicated family interventions such as Systemic Family Therapy.

The project's foundations lie in multi-agency working, but with those same Addaction workers co-ordinating the range of help on offer, Breaking the Cycle delivers complex help efficiently.

One worker can help a family with all kinds of problems, and they do all of it in the family home.

To put one family through a seven month programme of intensive support costs £1,700. Using NHS and government predictions, this investment could save society up to £20,000 over the same period. In the long term, these savings could reach as high as £880,000.

This success has ensured commitment from the Zurich Community Trust to provide a further £600,000 of matched funding to Breaking the Cycle over the next 3 years. This commitment will enable Addaction to work closely with statutory commissioners to scale up the number of Breaking the Cycle sites

Addaction has now prioritised a family-centred approach across all of its services. To find out more please contact Tim Vanstone on 07734277073.

Breaking the Cycle delivered extremely positive outcomes. An independent evaluation by Bath University found that 81% of parents stabilised, reduced or stop highly problematic substance use. 81.7% reduced their involvement in harmful behaviours such as domestic violence or criminal behaviour. 84% sought to use time more constructively and 87% of prioritised the healthy development of their children.

The Nelson Trust

Family Focus: A Case Study

The team has tracked one case through treatment to illustrate the range of treatment modalities offered and used by family members and the benefits to the adolescent involved. The adolescent (J) is 16 years old and was experiencing panic attacks in school and falling behind in school work in her GCSE year. She was binge-drinking and putting herself in risky situations. Her mother is single, pregnant and a service user in the adult substance misuse service. She is on a long-term methadone script. Maternal grandparents are concerned for (J) and had previously looked after her when her mother was absent.

Following assessment the family made full use of the multi-dimensional family therapy programme and accessed a number of interventions from the MDFT treatment modalities (more details on each dimension of support given below).

- Individual outreach sessions for 'J'
- Family Enrichment
- Play therapy- with younger sibling
- Family therapy sessions
- Carer Group Weekend Seminar
- Parent support group

Outcomes

- The young person, 'J', reported that she no longer had panic attacks and that the atmosphere at home had improved. She was attending school again and more focused on her school work.
- Her mother was more hopeful and positive about her relationship with her daughter. She also felt more confident as a parent.
- The grandmother reported feeling that a weight had been lifted and she did not have to look after everyone by herself.

Contact: **Family Focus** 01452 397692
www.family-focus.org.uk

Dimension of support

Outreach	Child 1 has had several individual sessions with the Outreach Practitioner looking at information about drugs and alcohol in order to support her understanding and reduce further anxieties. Time has been spent on supporting and preparing her for the struggles she faces when trying to talk about her feelings with family members. M and GM have received several supporting phone calls where engagement has been difficult.
Family Enrichment	All family members attended an Art session together to produce a family picture to keep in their house as a reminder of time spent together.
Play Therapy	Child (1) reported feeling very excluded from her fathers family and so her half sister was invited to attend with her to build on their relationship. Child (1) and (2) enjoyed some quality play time together. Child (2) drew a picture of his family with sad faces.
Family Therapy	The family have had 5 sessions and these have all involved different combinations of family members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just GM and GP • All family members • The three generations of women GM, M and Child (1) • M and boyfriend father to child (2) • Child (1) with M. These sessions have all been helpful in developing appreciation of the strengths and resources in the family as well as explored roles and relationships within the family.
Carers Seminars	GM and GP attended a family weekend seminar for support had the opportunity to learn about what addiction is and some of the theories about its contributing factors. This in turn has supported the development of empathy and understanding within the family and helped to relieve the embedded ideas of personal blame, secrecy and shame, supporting the development of interpersonal relationships.
Parent Support Group	M attended several parenting sessions and developed a support network of other parents, whilst building on self esteem and ideas about competency.

Brynawel Family Centre

In January 2008, the Brynawel Alcohol Treatment Services piloted the Brynawel Family Centre to help local families and communities cope with alcohol-related problems. The aim of this centre was to address the specific problems faced by families within isolated Welsh communities.

Consequently, they devised a programme of individualised family therapy and group-based life-skills sessions. The aim of this service was to explore the specific issues behind a family's alcohol misuse whilst also encouraging the development of social networks to combat the isolation inherent to this problem.

Due to the overwhelming success of this pilot, Brynawel Alcohol Treatment Services has recently been awarded substantial funding from the Big Lottery Fund to launch The Brynawel Outreach. This will incorporate many of the Brynawel Family Centre services and build on its success throughout the UK.

The Brynawel Family Centre was underpinned by a firm belief in both evidence-based practice and the placement of the client at the centre of the counselling process. Thus they designed a service measurement tool that was scored against the needs of each client.

When a new family entered the Brynawel Family Centre they negotiated individualised goals that progress was checked against. According to this reporting system, 68 percent of client families reported a 'significant change' in circumstances with the other 32 percent reporting 'total achievement' of goals. This incredible result is testament to the psychotherapy team within the Brynawel Family Unit and was supported by a 100 percent recommendation rate from client families.

However, statistical information only paints a small part of the picture. Below are two testimonials completed by Jenny and Sean upon completion of the family treatment programme. Names have been changed to protect anonymity.

"Nobody seemed to understand how difficult and miserable Jim's drinking was making life for me and the kids. I had tried again and again to stop his drinking, but he just wouldn't listen. In fact, my attempts to help him just seemed to make the situation worse. I contacted the Brynawel Family Centre and they invited the whole family in for an Introduction Meeting. After this session, we were offered six weekly counselling sessions and invited to join the Skills and Information programme. I not only learned a hell of a lot about Jim but also my own insecurities. By understanding ourselves better we were able to work together to address Jim's drinking. We were also able to put the coping skills we learned into practice – Jim has been dry for four months now and I feel like we're finally living again. The kids are still a nightmare mind you!"

"I was resident in Brynawel House to address my alcohol dependency and wanted to reconnect with my family. I asked the Brynawel Family Centre if they could help me to re-establish these links and they offered us a course of Family Counselling and their Skills and Information Programme. I knew that my family had been hurt by my drinking but I was unaware of how angry we were at each other! Although the sessions weren't easy, it was only by working through these emotions that we were able to start afresh and make a new start together. I now volunteer and tell my story in schools on the Sober and Safe Programme. My Mum and sister often come and present with me – though some of their tales about my exploits can be a bit toe-curling! I have been sober for seven months and seventeen days now."

Brynawel services are available via direct or third-party referral and funding routes are clearly signposted by the admissions team. To enquire about The Brynawel Outreach or other services, please feel free to contact the team on 01443 226864 or email admin@brynawelhouse.org

Alternatively, you can visit <http://www.brynawel.net/>

Westminster Drug Project

Lily's alcohol use was a key factor in the near-collapse of her family. This is the story of how she turned her life around with the help of her daughter, partner, and WDP 'CoreKids' service.

"We were approached by Sarah, 16, who wanted to find help for her mother, Lily, although it was evident that Sarah could also benefit from some support. Lily is married to John, who is Sarah's stepfather.

Lily's alcohol use had escalated in the last year, getting to a point where she was able to work anymore. Her marriage was breaking down and Sarah would stay at her father's home to escape.



Westminster Drug Project works with families affected by drug and alcohol use. CoreKids is the name given to their family focused services. HertSpeak is a CoreKids project funded by Comic Relief specifically for children, parents and families where problematic alcohol use may be an issue.

Lily was reluctant to be involved with the service, but attended an appointment with her daughter Sarah, at Sarah's request. At this point we made a referral to Westminster Drug Project service so that Lily would also receive alcohol counseling.

Lily and Sarah were offered six sessions of family therapy with HertSpeak. John attended the first session. This family therapy focused on Lily's relationships with John and Sarah, communication between all three, and the place alcohol use has in their lives.

The family engaged in all six sessions. Lily reported that she found it difficult to hear about the effect that her drinking had on Sarah and John, and this ultimately made a real difference to her own attitude to drinking.

She has now stopped drinking completely and has returned to her previous employment. Lily and John are able to communicate better and this has improved their relationship. Sarah is now living back with her mother and stepfather and reports feeling much happier about life and more positive about her and her family's future.'

Contact: **Westminster Drugs Project**

<http://www.wdp-drugs.org.uk/> Tel: 020 7421 3100

Littledale Hall

Littledale Hall is a therapeutic community providing services to people over 18 whose lives have been adversely affected by substance misuse.

Since opening in 2006, the staff team at Littledale Hall has strongly supported a family inclusive approach to treatment and in the past year Littledale has put considerable resource into further developing an family focused approach.

It has long been established that the destructive and negative consequences of addiction and substance misuse are felt not only by the individual, but by their family and the wider communities in which they live. Drug and alcohol treatment in the past has often focused primarily on the individual but it is now universally accepted that the wider family network also needs to be considered as part of the individual's recovery from addiction.

“When our daughter developed alcohol problems our once close family was turned upside down. We stood and watched helplessly as our once beautiful and loving daughter turned her back on her two young children and began her journey into addiction and self-destruction. We can only describe this as the most difficult and emotional experience of our life, we felt so helpless, full of self-blame and despair.

“The day she entered rehab at Littledale was such a big relief, we knew she was in a safe and supportive environment. From day one we were made to feel welcome and part of the treatment programme. We felt at last we were being heard and understood but most importantly, we were given hope.

“Throughout the treatment programme we were encouraged and supported to be open and honest about how addiction had affected the family. We were able to work through issues and anxieties in a supportive and empowering way at a comfortable pace. We were also involved in family training and awareness days which we found very beneficial and gave us the opportunities to share and learn from the experiences of other families.

“For us the most important aspect of the family work was the preparation for our daughters' completion and return home, helping us to rebuild a positive relationship based around mutual trust, respect and honesty.

“Our biggest reassurance is the amazing aftercare offered by Littledale. If we encounter any problems or have concerns we can contact the staff to discuss with them at any time. Our daughter has now returned home and is still in the early stages of recovery but is a much stronger, mature and independent woman with a wide range of life skills to help her face and cope with the world.

“As a family we cannot thank the fellow residents and staff enough for their commitment, motivation and support in helping our daughter through the nightmare of addiction.

As described by my daughter “Littledale is a truly special and magical place and without it I would not be in the place I am today and reunited with my two precious children.”

Contact: **Littledale Hall**

<http://www.littledalehalltc.co.uk/> Tel: 01524 771900