Western Region Drugs Task Force

The Western Region Drugs Task Force (WRDTF) has funded projects that support and assist in the implementation of the new WRDTF strategic plan ‘The Way Forward’ 2011-2014. Each project is employed by a Project Promoter and works within the ethos of that organisation. Two of the funded projects are the posts of Community Liaison Worker for Mayo/North Roscommon and Drug Education Support Worker for Mayo/Roscommon which are hosted by South West Mayo Development Company.

The aim of both roles is as follows:

**Education Support Worker**

1. To develop greater awareness of substance use and related harms/issues in individuals and communities
2. To up-skill and build capacity of professionals working directly with young people, to deliver drug education programmes
3. To support the delivery of drug education to all sectors of society, specifically focusing on high-risk and National Drugs Strategy (NDS) specified groups

**Community Liaison Worker**

1. To assist and support communities develop their own individual response to substance misuse
2. To develop and support targeted initiatives in relation to substance misuse
3. To assist in drug and alcohol policy development
4. To assist groups apply for WRDTF grants

**Some of the work carried out in 2012**

**Education Support Worker**

1. Continued to increase individual and community awareness of substance use and related harms/issues through various drug education and training initiatives and community projects and campaigns. Inclusive of Parents drug education programmes, Professional staff training for a wide variety of organisations, community harm reduction initiatives, Youth worker training, direct work with very high-risk groups of young people, Castlerea Prison Pre-release programme, Mayo Junior Cert Results Night Project and WRDTF Drug and Alcohol Awareness week events
2. On-going up-skilling and capacity building of professionals working directly with young people, to deliver drug education programmes as above.
3. Continued support of the delivery of drug education to all sectors of society, specifically focusing on high-risk and NDS specified groups- Prison, VEC, Youthreach, Technological Institutes (third level), Travellers, Homeless, New Communities, Young People, Community groups.

**Community Liaison Worker**

1. Development and launch of (CHRI) Community Harm Reduction Initiative, a tool kit that brings together local agencies, community organisations and also individual citizens to address concerns about drug and alcohol misuse in communities.

2. Assisted and supported communities in Ballinrobe, Co Mayo and Elphin Co Roscommon in developing their own individual response to drug and alcohol issues in their own area through the (CHRI) Community Harm Reduction Initiative.

3. Developed and support targeted initiatives such as Supportme.ie website providing info on support services in the western region.


5. Sozzled: Rethinking Drinking Social Marketing Campaign at GMIT, Castlebar, Co Mayo. The main aim is to promote the idea that a majority of students who do drink are responsible, thereby correcting misconceptions and promoting responsible behaviour around alcohol use.

6. Mayo Junior Cert Results Night Group aiming to reduce the overall harm caused by alcohol on Junior Cert Results Night.

7. Policy Seminar Introducing the importance of having a substance use policy, the stages involved in policy development, and useful templates and resources.

8. Development of the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Awareness Week 2012. 53 events in the region with 25 in Co Mayo. The events highlighted drug and alcohol issues and raised awareness of support services in the area.