

[Inquiry into alcohol and substance misuse](#) / [Ymchwiliad i gamddefnyddio alcohol a sylweddau](#)

Evidence from Rhondda Cynon Taf Integrated Substance Misuse Service – ASM(Q) 01 / Tystiolaeth gan Gwasanaeth Integredig Camddefnyddio Sylweddau Rhondda – ASM(Q) 01

Inquiry into alcohol and substance misuse

Survey Consultation Response

Organisation/Respondent: Sian Prior, Rhondda Cynon Taf Integrated Substance Misuse Service (RISMS)

Questionnaire

01. Which client group(s) do you work with? (For example, under 18s, older persons, homeless, or female only)

All adults from 18yrs and over who are affected by substance misuse. In particular, those who need a multi-agency approach.

02. What are the main reasons why your clients take drugs or drink excessively? Please tick all that apply.

If you work with more than one client group or you feel that there are other reasons as to why your clients take drugs or drink excessively, please comment in the box below.

- *A way to deal with stress;*
- *Mental health;*
- *Relieve social anxiety;*
- *Environmental factors (for example – excessive drinking and/or drugs normalised in the home/community)*
- *Relationship problems;*
- *Financial concerns;*
- *Self-medication;*
- *Escapism.*



03. Are there certain groups of people who are more likely to be affected by drugs and excessive drinking? If so, which groups might they be?

Our main client profile is single white welsh male between 30 and 45 yrs.

04. Does a particular stage of your clients' lives influence their likelihood of taking drugs or drinking excessively? If so, what stage might that be? (i.e. age, relationship breakdown, unemployment etc.)

Those who are isolated from positive influences such as healthy happy relationships, daily structure through lack of employment and training, or who have poor physical or mental health.

05. What barriers exist for your client(s) when trying to access support and services?

Lack of confidence about accessing services for the first time. There are also transport issues with heavy reliance on a half hour bus service for many clients.

06. What barriers exist for services when trying to access support for client(s)?

Meeting the criteria for access to mental health service assessment and treatment.

We are often informed when trying to refer, that our service user group cannot be accepted for assessment for mental health services as their substance misuse is the sole cause of their poor mental health. We are asked to re-refer when the person is substance free which is quite often impossible and is also an inappropriate request. This opinion is prejudicial and is a large and risky assumption to make. In recent years we have had a small number of adults diagnosed for the first time with ADHD. Our Consultant regularly pushes requests forward with the mental health Consultant.

More Co-occurring or Dual diagnosis posts need to be recruited to address this misunderstanding.

07. What do you consider to be barriers for staff and frontline services in working with your client group(s), or substance misuse generally?

As Q7, mental health services is the main issue. Other than that the only other issue is information sharing from an ICT perspective.



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For the exchange of client information, each service provider tends to use their own software for recording client activity or patient notes and so easy access to client notes can be problematic. We rely on good working practices such as excellent communication between staff and collaborative care planning to ensure that all relevant client information is shared amongst us. It would be great if there was one All Wales client record system, like NWIS, but to include client notes, care plans etc.

- o8. Where do you think efforts should be targeted to address the issue of alcohol and substance misuse in Wales?

Certainly alcohol issues far outweigh substance issues for our service.

Campaigns to address harmful and hazardous alcohol use need to be ongoing throughout Wales. There needs to be a higher profile given to excessive alcohol use before sport events.

I would also suggest that the licensing laws for supermarkets are adjusted to address bulk purchases of alcohol, with some supermarkets having reduced licencing times - no sales from 8pm to 8am.

- o9. In which local authority area do you work? If you work outside of Wales, please write your local authority area below.

Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Contact Details

Sian Prior

Rhondda Integrated Substance Misuses Service (RISMS)



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