

Improving Access to Contraception for Women experiencing Drug Addiction

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Aim of project

We planned to develop a network of stakeholders who worked with **women with drug addiction** issues, who also required **contraception**.

These included professionals working in **sexual health services**, professionals and charities working in **drug addiction services**, and **community pharmacists**.

Objectives

Objective 1. To hold discussions with stakeholders to learn their opinions on the importance of research into developing better access to contraception for women with drug addiction problems.

(This is a pre-requisite for grant applications)

Objective 2. To listen to and learn from their experiences to help us understand the shape and nature of the problems faced by women with addiction problems in accessing contraception, and on how these could be addressed.

Objective 3. To invite key stakeholders to form a prototype PPI group, with a view to writing a bid for funding to a national funder in the future.

Stakeholders Consulted

Essex & Thurrock Sexual Health Service (Provide)



Terence Higgins Trust (Sexual health services/HIV prevention)



Community Pharmacy Essex



Drug Addiction Charity - Open Road



West Suffolk Hospital Maternity Service



East Suffolk & North Essex Foundation Trust Maternity Service



Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust



Conference Workshop

We led a workshop for practitioners at East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) Equity & Equality conference

This presentation allowed further discussion with interested stakeholders and we gained expressions of interest for becoming part of a PPI group in the event of a future research project.

Outcomes

- The criterion of ensuring that stakeholders feel the issue is an important one for research has been met.
- All of our stakeholders agreed that the issue of access to contraceptive services was an important one for women with drug addiction problems.
- We have a clearer overview of the services provided to women with drug addiction problems, and how the links between them could be improved.
- We have developed a network of contacts and future PPI partners, sufficient to enable a substantial bid for future funding to be made.

Future Plans

- Our conversations with Open Road have resulted in a suggested way of allowing contraceptive services to be included in their already existing outreach, which we will explore further when preparing and developing our research funding bid.
- We would like to include the views of more service users in any future application, and feel we have made the links to approach service users sensitively in the future.

Next Steps

- Bid for VC studentship (with potential matched funding) to create doctoral project on the theme of improving contraceptive and reproductive access for drug addicted women.
- Bid to MRC/Nuffield trust/Wellbeing of Women to improve the experience of drug addicted women requiring contraceptive advice