



What's the story?

Soilse News

Volume 1, Issue 3

August 2010

Methadone review

The Methadone Treatment Review group has asked for formal input from Soilse following the two submissions we sent in, one from the staff and the other from participants. These dealt with care planning, drug trends and rehabilitation.

It is clear that the current economic situation is having a bad effect on the development and delivery of addiction services. However, Professor Joe Barry, who chairs the review group, was very interested in your proposals for supporting methadone clients in Garda stations by providing a key worker and prescribing options.

Thanks to all of you who gave your views and opinions for the submission.

Gerry McAleenan
Head of Services

Talk to us!

Give your news, views, gripes, cartoons, stories, poems, whatever, to any member of staff and say they're for the newsletter.

Remember,
Soilse News is for
you!

Jokes still needed!

Newsletter time again. Apparently, 'jokes are needed urgently'. They must be depressed in the office. Probably the lack of oxygen, very stuffy in there, it is. It is either that or the *Socialist Monthly* is late again.

Apart from all the excellent staff, I'm now the longest-serving member in the building. Here since last September, I am. I've heard of shorter prison sentences. Not sure what I did to deserve it. Ah yeah, now I remember - 'twas the drugs, wasn't it!

Hand in glove we were for many a long year. But in the end we had a terrible falling out. I kept my part of the deal, but sure didn't the drugs turn and try to kill me. The height of bad manners altogether - betrayed I was! I gave them time and plenty of opportunities to change their ways but their mind was made up. Die I must.

Under these very difficult circumstances I made a few decisions of my own and ended the most promising relationship. It was time to move on to greener pastures and all that.

I'm not really sure how the drugs are doing without me, but I'm getting on very well without them. Long may it last! Onwards and upwards, one step after the other.

Paul

Soilse Sports Day - a cracking success

The sports day (16th July) was a great day, the atmosphere was brilliant and everyone really seemed to enjoy themselves.

We started the day with a relay race. We had a good laugh doing this. The fact that we had to pass a carrot around to each member on the team made it all the more fun.

After the relay races we did a sprint and then a penalty shoot out. Congratulations to Caroline McElroy, who was the only female who made it to the winner's wall at the penalty shoot out!

We then had a tug of war and it was very good to see both buildings working together. After this there was a 5-a-side tournament which went very well

- for the men! The girls got pushed aside for this one for the simple reason that we would have got trampled on on the pitch. All the men got very competitive on the pitch which wasn't surprising but it was interesting to watch to say the least! Men transformed into children (again!).

Just want to say a big congratulations to Seánny for winning 'man of the day'. He really got stuck in and added to the atmosphere. Well done, Seánny. Also, a special thanks to Lindsay for the great job she did. And we'd like to thank Jed for his amazing video footage on the day and all the staff from Soilse who helped make the day great.

Louise
Soilse Sports Reporter

And more on Sports Day

We had a lot of fun. I enjoyed being part of the special day and loved the commentary with Jed. It was great to see others have loads of fun and it was so good to see people's families there to support them and to see us working well together.



Lynsday done a great job organizing the day and I was glad to be able to help out by doing the referee and cleaning up the bins and empty bottles. Everybody got involved and done a great job especially the women. It was a credit to them for taking part. We all had a great time and helped each other out. Seán



2010 - European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

So what? Well, think about it. Heroin is the drug of the poor. Addiction to heroin means a life of drug use and - usually - jail time. Social exclusion means not having the money to enjoy basic amenities that others take for granted. It means poor literacy, no job skills and no employment future. It also means having few, if any, friends outside the drug culture and living in communities that are cut adrift from the rest of society.

Sound familiar? This is the future your children face. People are trapped in addiction because of poverty and social exclusion. Ireland is one of the most unequal states in Europe with a huge gap between rich and poor.

Soilse works to combat poverty and social exclusion by addressing addiction. We look at your financial issues, housing and any outstanding charges. We provide

skills to help you progress into college or work. Where we can, we'll encourage you to make better food choices, manage your stress and choose a healthy lifestyle. At Soilse, you'll experience new peer networks. You already know about Soilse's trips and events such as the sports day or football competitions.

We want all participants to reach their potential. That's why we explore the issues which create poverty and social exclusion and why we provide you with the skills and knowledge to combat social exclusion and to empower yourself and your community.

Addressing addiction through adult education is a way of challenging inequality. We believe Soilse participants have the right to be respected, to receive support and to live a life of dignity outside poverty.

2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

The European Union has named 2010 as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The aim is to:

- ✓ raise public awareness about poverty
- ✓ challenge stereotypes about poverty
- ✓ give voice to the concerns of people living in poverty, and
- ✓ inspire us all to tackle the causes of poverty so that everyone can live in dignity and play a full and active role in society.

You can read more about Ireland's programme at www.welfare.ie/en/eu2010. Let us know what you think of it for the next issue of *Soilse News*.

Never give up on yourself!

The support I've got from the team in Soilse has been really important to my recovery. Even when I was still using and lost and feeling really low and like I had nobody and just wanted a way out, the staff never gave up on me. Darren used to get me to drop in and he listened to me and told me it was going to be ok. I'll always be grateful to the staff and participants for never giving up on me.

It's so different now. I've come a long way. I feel a lot stronger and much more content in myself. I'm still on my methadone but I've made a lot of progress. I've dropped from 90 mls to 55 mls and have been able to maintain my stability through working with Soilse and going to NA meetings.

I'm trying to be honest and open-minded. I have started lots of hobbies like going out walking with a group of friends. We go out for the day to walk

in the mountains and it helps me think about how I'm doing. I love nature and wildlife. I get a great sense of freedom and joy when I get to the top of the mountain.

I also play football three times a week and find it helps me de-stress and get rid of all my excess negative energy. I get a break from my head.

I have found a group of great friends and I feel worthwhile. I feel that I belong to something. I'm starting to find a balance. I still have my bad days but I no longer let my feelings dictate how I'm doing. I keep doing the stuff that's really important for me and so long as I keep doing that, I'll continue to get through the hard times.



Seán

In brief...

Service User Reps

Paul Rodgers (Henrietta Place) and Mark Kavanagh (North Frederick St) are the service user reps on the Soilse Management Committee.

Paul and Mark will represent your views at the Management Committee meetings and will feed back to Community Meetings on how Soilse is addressing your issues and concerns.

You can also express your views one-to-one with staff, in wind-downs, group evaluations and suggestion boxes, and at Community Meetings. Keep an eye on the newsletter for developments.

Crime is up

The April-June crime statistics which were released in early August showed a clear increase in violent crime. Interestingly, one of our staff spoke with a local Garda who said he had seen a huge increase in theft, especially people stealing food which he found 'heartbreaking'.

