Midlothian and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership (MELDAP) Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2010-13

Working with the people and communities of East Lothian and Midlothian to deal with the problems arising from the misuse of alcohol and drugs.
March 2010 (Draft)

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Table of contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Foreword by Chair of MELDAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Background to MELDAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Our aims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>East Lothian and Midlothian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>The Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>What we will do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>Our Strategic Priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>What we plan to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Midlothian and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership

Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2010-2013

Foreword

Drug and alcohol misuse are associated with a wide range of problems for individuals, families and local communities. These include crime, anti-social behaviour, physical and mental health problems, death and a wide range of social problems.

The cost to the nation is significant. It is currently estimated that the wider economic and social costs of drug and alcohol misuse in Scotland are almost £5 billion a year.

The cost to individuals and families is just as significant. Large numbers of our children’s lives are affected by parental substance misuse. While levels of drug and alcohol misuse in East Lothian and Midlothian are lower than the Scotland averages drug deaths continue to rise as do the levels of alcohol consumption across the whole population.

The Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2010-2013 provides an opportunity for MELDAP to describe what we intend to do and how we will respond to the challenges posed by the misuse of drugs and alcohol. No single organisation, can on its own address these problems, hence the need to develop and sustain effective partnerships including the views of service users at all levels of service design, delivery and evaluation.

Although this is the strategy document there will be an implementation plan which will map out the delivery of the strategy. This will be developed through the MELDAP Implementation Group and agreed by strategic partners.

Alan Forsyth
MELDAP Chair
Background to MELDAP

Midlothian and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership (MELDAP) was formed in November 2008. It brought together the two Drug and Alcohol Actions Teams into a new partnership with high level representation from East Lothian and Midlothian Councils, NHS Lothian, Lothian and Borders Police and the voluntary sector.

Our aims

MELDAP’s primary aim is to co-ordinate the design and delivery of alcohol and drug services across East Lothian and Midlothian and to ensure that these services are needs led, based on evidence of what makes a difference and are delivered in an effective, efficient way. A key component in the achievement of this aim will be that services are designed around the needs of service users and that they play an integral part in their evaluation.

Such an approach will entail engaging with service users in the design of services and will ensure that service delivery provides what clients say the need and want rather than around what they might be assumed to need.

MELDAP is committed to the principle of recovery with the aim of moving people on from where they are when they first engage with services, to where they want to or can go next, whether that be towards employment, self-development or stability.

MELDAP also has an essential role to play in ensuring that drug and alcohol issues are recognised as high priority in the East Lothian and Midlothian Community Plans and that partner agencies within Community Planning structures which includes Lothian and Borders Community Justice Authority embrace and promote the importance of recovery through their own plans.

A new structure (see Fig 1) was established with representatives from a wide range of services and partner agencies to deliver these aims.

Fig 1

The MELDAP, its structure and membership reflected a number of the key recommendations made in the final report of the Delivery Reform Group. These included a need for:

- greater clarity and consistency in the role, responsibilities and purpose of the new partnerships
- membership of the new partnerships to be at a senior level
the new partnerships to be able to demonstrate robust approaches to assessing needs, develop clear strategies, ensure services are in place and effective, and are able to demonstrate the impact these services have made.

MELDAP also recognises the harm caused through smoking and will work closely with relevant partners to develop a more integrated approach to alcohol, drugs and tobacco.

**East Lothian and Midlothian**

MELDAP now serves a combined population of nearly 185,000 covering an area of some 950 square miles stretching from Dunbar in the East to Penicuik in the West. More than half the population of East Lothian live in the western sector with the main towns being Musselburgh, Prestonpans, Tranent and Cockenzie. In Midlothian Penicuik, Dalkeith, Bonnyrigg and Loanhead are the largest towns.

East Lothian and Midlothian are fortunate not to have the same scale of deprivation and poverty of aspiration that exists in many communities across Scotland. However, there are a number of challenges MELDAP and its partners must respond to including alcohol and drug misuse that affects the lives of individuals, families and communities. While the levels of drug and alcohol misuse are lower than the Scotland averages there are according to the most recent data an estimated total of 1543 problematic drug users of which some 750 are known to services and 381 drug injectors. From 2005 to 2008 there was a total of 37 drug related deaths with many of these as a result of poly-drug use including alcohol.

While there is not a single drinking culture in Scotland we are as a nation drinking too much with 50% of men and 30% of women regularly drinking over the sensible drinking guidelines.*

*Men: 3-4 units per day, but not every day

*Women: 2-3 units per day, but not every day

In East Lothian and Midlothian 29% men consumed more than 21 units per week. 18% of women consumed more than 14 units per week. Both these figures were higher than the Scottish average.
In the year 2004-05 there was a total of 1001 alcohol related discharges from hospitals with 30% for harmful use and 17% for alcoholic liver disease. From 2003-2008 there was a total of 188 alcohol deaths.

As with drugs, alcohol affects our most deprived communities disproportionately as Figure 2 showing acute hospital discharges illustrates.

**Fig 2**

![Acute Hospital Discharges](image)

**The challenges**

There are a number of challenges that MELDAP will have to address. The two main challenges are set out in two national reports. These are:

**The Road to Recovery** (2008)

The national drug strategy emphasised a new approach with a clear emphasis on recovery with a move to a person centred approach which places recovery for the individual as the goal of all service provision. Recovery being defined as a process through which an individual is enabled to move on from their problem drug use towards a drug free life and become an active and contributing member of society. The recovery approach will be integrated into all aspects of tackling drug problems.

*The Road to Recovery* has 5 strands. These are:

- better treatment to promote recovery
- better drugs education and information
- more choices and chances for young people
- better outcomes for children affected by family substance misuse
- better enforcement.

MELDAP recognises that moving to and promoting a more responsive recovery culture will not be a straightforward process. MELDAP endorses the view that there needs to be a willingness to change amongst those working in the drugs and alcohol field regarding the importance of all services to embrace a recovery philosophy. This in turn will require a culture change in terms of integration and partnership working across services. If substance users are to access a full treatment and care package then service provision must be inclusive and integrated.

*Changing Scotland’s Relationship with Alcohol: A Framework for Action (2009)*

Increasing trends in alcohol consumption mean that many of us are now drinking above sensible guidelines. Over recent years, increased consumption has been influenced by factors such as the decline in the relative cost of alcohol; increased availability and changing cultural attitudes. It is clear that alcohol is no longer a marginal problem. Nor is it one that affects only binge drinkers or those who are dependent on alcohol. There is a need to develop an approach which will focus on the needs of the whole population and have both a protective effect on vulnerable groups and reduce the overall level of alcohol problems.

Based on knowledge and understanding of alcohol misuse, its drivers and evidence based interventions, sustained action is required in four broad areas. These are:

- reduced alcohol consumption
- supporting families and communities
- positive public attitudes towards alcohol and individuals better placed to make positive choices about the role of alcohol in their lives
- improved support and treatment for those who require it.
What we will do

In order to fulfil its key strategic, management and coordinating roles MELDAP will:

- develop and coordinate the implementation of the strategy in accordance with national policy and evidence based practice
- promote assessments of needs and involve service users in the planning and delivery of services
- ensure effective and efficient joint working among key agencies
- assess the quality and range of services against identified need and initiate and plan improvements accordingly
- ensure regular evaluation of services and activities of all agencies working in the substance misuse field
- influence other key strategies and services with the recovery approach
- respond to recommendations of the Delivery Reform Group and amend practices accordingly
- implement a quality assurance cycle based on the National Quality Standards for Substance Misuse Services
- monitor our own performance and ensure we deliver value for money services.

Our strategic priorities

MELDAP in consultation with its partners has identified 6 key priorities. These are:

**MELDAP Priority 1:** We will enable more people living in East Lothian and Midlothian to adopt a more responsible approach to alcohol by:

- Promoting the safe and sensible use of alcohol
- Working with the licensing forum, GP’s and Pharmacists
- Supporting individuals make a positive contribution to their community
- Changing the culture of how we drink
- Delivering Brief Interventions to people at risk of developing alcohol problems (HEAT)
**MELDAP Priority 2:** We will enable people with drug and alcohol problems to recover from them and live healthy crime free lives by:

- Providing flexible and accessible services across a continuum of need (PATHWAYS) including for people with mental health, learning and/or physical disability issues.
- Adopting a person centred approach for service users, their families and carers
- Providing services that are sensitive to age, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, religious belief and disability
- Supporting service users to take control of their lives
- Providing information & support to service users about the options available
- Fast access to services at the point of need (HEAT)
- Promoting the importance of education training and employment

**MELDAP Priority 3:** We will reduce the harm to children and young people affected by parental substance misuse by:

- Effective prevention and early intervention
- Improving the identification, assessment, recording and planning for children at risk
- Building the capacity, availability and quality of support services for children and families affected by parental substance misuse
- Strengthening the consistency and effectiveness on the management of those children known to be at risk
- Supporting communities to report concerns about children
- Building parenting skills and family capacity to support children

**MELDAP Priority 4:** We will reduce the harm related to young people’s drug and alcohol use by:

- Supporting communities that promote the positive development of young people
- Delivering integrated services which meet the needs of young people
- Providing effective inter agency substance misuse education for children and young people
- Providing targeted support to young people most at risk because of their substance use
- Ensuring services are designed around the needs of young people
**MELDAP Priority 5:** We will protect communities from the harmful effects of alcohol and drug use by:

- Providing services for offenders with individual criminal justice pathways to ensure a route out of offending.
- Addressing drink and drug driving
- Supporting effective enforcement
- Providing effective diversionary activities
- Working with others in Community Planning Partnerships and Lothian and Borders Community Justice Authority to deal with the consequences of substance
- Working closely with the police to target young people’s drinking.

**MELDAP Priority 6:** We will develop services for young people, adults and families that are equitable, readily accessible and designed around client needs by:

- Involving young people, families and service users in the design of new and evaluation of existing services
- Providing services that reflect the range of needs of a diverse client group
- Offering service users tailored packages of treatment and care that meet their needs and aspirations
- Undertaking a full Needs Assessment to ensure that services are based on accurate information and we have the right services to meet local needs
- Developing a culture of continuing service improvement.

**Some of our successes**

- Establishing the new MELDAP structure and the work of its three subgroups
- The commitment by a wide range of organisations and services to the new MELDAP structure
- Conducting a full Needs Assessment to establish a sound evidence base for future planning
- Establishing a single MELDAP support team within new team base in East Lothian
- Developing stronger links with tobacco initiatives to ensure a more coherent and co-ordinated approach to substance use
- Continuing to develop and improve a wide range of drug and alcohol services.
**What we plan to do**

The MELDAP Drug and Alcohol Strategy for 2010-2013 was based on the following processes:

- Build an evidence base through collecting information and data of local drug, alcohol and tobacco use
- Conduct a full Needs Assessment to ensure services match the needs of people with drug and alcohol problems in East Lothian and Midlothian and to identify gaps in service provision
- Involve a wide range of partners in the drafting of the strategy and its associated action plans
- Write the strategy in clear unambiguous language
- Work in partnership to implement what has been set out in the action plan
- Monitor and evaluate the progress of the plans to ensure its outcomes are achieved
- Review how well services are performing in delivering key outcomes
- Place the needs of service users at the heart of what we do.