

## **Third Sector Substance Use Network**

### **Terms of reference**

(updated July 2017)

#### **1. Purpose**

The Wales Third Sector Substance Misuse Network is established to:

- 1.1. Act as a forum for policy influencing on substance misuse and general addiction, with a particular focus on prevention (including whole population prevention) and treatment; and where appropriate, agree and present a common policy position to the Welsh Government and other relevant bodies;
- 1.2. Provide a focus for exchange of information and experience between third sector organisations focusing on treatment and prevention, and to generally provide a supportive forum for organisations working in the substance misuse and behavioural addiction field;
- 1.3. Provide opportunities for network members to hear from external experts;
- 1.4. Provide opportunities for others working in the substance misuse field to gain third sector feedback on new initiatives and proposals, with space set aside for detailed discussion and working at meetings;
- 1.5. Provide representation of a range of members' views to Welsh Government and other relevant committees, working parties and groups, and feedback the results of discussions and future plans to network members;
- 1.6. Facilitate third sector representation;
- 1.7. Represent third sector substance misuse interests and concerns in relation to policy / legislation, or relating to the Welsh Government's Third Sector Scheme (or future, updated schemes), substance misuse policy, ACEs agenda, Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act, Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act, including the identification of issues and representatives for the twice yearly meetings with Welsh Government Ministers (primary link to health policy);
- 1.8. Act as a link with other networks and associations, such as those for local authorities and local health boards, other third sector networks, including the Community Justice Network, and professional or research organisations at the Wales level.

#### **2. General principles of operation**

- 2.1. The membership and conduct of the Network should reflect and respect the diverse nature of the constituencies it seeks to represent, and to this end should strive for a membership that reflects equal opportunities, values and principles.
- 2.2. At times, the third sector members of the Network will discuss confidential matters; members are asked to respect confidentiality when it is required.
- 2.3. The work of the Third Sector Substance Misuse Network will complement and not duplicate the work of its individual members.
- 2.4. Although the Network may from time to time lobby on behalf of its members on issues of common concern, it cannot take up the concerns of individual organisations or groups.

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1. Membership of the Network is open to third sector organisations whose primary purpose is work in the field of substance misuse and wider addiction in Wales; and to representatives of dedicated substance misuse services provided by third sector organisations in Wales as part of a wider range of services.
- 3.2. Member organisations are entitled to have two representatives at meetings, which should be the nominated individual and a deputy. Each member organisation holds one vote.
- 3.3. Applications for membership will be ratified at meetings of the Network. The Network has the option to co-opt members.
- 3.4. The Network has an important role in promoting and building relationships with key statutory sector partners, including Welsh Government, Local Health Boards and other relevant agencies and will seek to engage third parties to promote better working relationships and to share good practice.
- 3.5. Observer status for third sector organisations with an interest in the work of the Network, but whose primary role is outside the substance misuse field, or for organisations not in the third sector, may be agreed from time to time. Those organisations and networks with observer status will be able to attend and contribute to Network meetings and give and receive information.

### **4. Meetings**

- 4.1. The Network normally meets four times a year.

### **5. Representation**

- 5.1. Requests for third sector representation on working groups, committees etc. concerned with substance misuse will be offered to all Network members. Anyone interested will be asked to complete a short form stating their interest, explaining why and what skills they would bring to the role. Nominations will then go to the members for a vote.
- 5.2. Representatives fulfilling this role will seek to gather the views of Network members before attending meetings etc, and reflect the views of diversity of views expressed as well as a common Network stance where this exists. Views will be gathered through a variety of means including meetings, e-mails and other manageable means. Feedback to Network members via meetings and /or e-mail would also be expected.
- 5.3. It may be appropriate for Network members to attend an initial meeting on a one-off basis to establish whether future representation is appropriate, or to gather information to feedback to Network members.

### **6. Decisions**

- 6.1. Decisions will be made at network meetings through discussion and consensus. It is expected that all members will work towards this. Members reserve the right to record disagreement with any views expressed or majority decisions reached in the minutes. Decisions will be reached by those who attend the meeting, but with an expectation that controversial positions will be widely communicated across the network.

### **7. Administration**

- 7.1. In order to facilitate arrangements for meetings, members should confirm their attendance, giving as much notice as possible. The secretariat for the network is provided by Cymorth Cymru.