

# Harm reduction in the community



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withyou

Innovative Practice Showcase  
2024: Dundee

# Agenda

- **WithYou in Scotland**
- **WithYou in Dundee**
- **Community Hub overview**
- **Good practice & insights**
  - Approach
  - Improvement
  - Impact
- **Learning & reflection**

# WithYou in Scotland



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# Overview

- WithYou Scotland is a drug, alcohol and mental health charity
- Every year we help more than 14,000 people
- Delivering evidence based interventions to reduce drug and alcohol related harms and support recovery

*“We are working towards a future free from harm caused by alcohol, drug and mental health challenges where anyone seeking help feels welcomed and not judged”*

**Drug &  
Alcohol  
services**

**Our services provide a variety of wraparound support for people looking for help with their alcohol and/or drug use, including:**  
harm reduction, IEP, assertive outreach, residential rehabilitation pathways, young people, family support

**We provide person-centred support through GP practices in several areas to people experiencing health inequalities due to poverty and deprivation, including:**  
social prescribing and mental health interventions

**Community  
Links**

**Digital  
services**

**We provide support online and on the phone, offering free, confidential advice to people who are worried about their drug or alcohol use as well as their family and friends, including:**  
Webchat support, Know the Score website and DrinkLine helpline

# With You in Dundee

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# Service overview

Want to cut back on drugs? we are  
**WithYou**

Worried about your drinking? we are  
**WithYou**

Concerned about a friend or family  
member? we are **WithYou**

*“What matters to us all is the person in front of us and what they want to achieve – so we tailor our support to every person, standing alongside them and working together in equal partnership”*

# What we offer

The needs are as varied as the people we work with. For this reason we have chosen to offer a variety of programs hoping to fit the needs of the individual. Within our service we offer a range of interventions:

- **Structured interventions:** psychosocial intervention through 1:1 or group work sessions
- **Brief interventions:** 20–30 min sessions in the hub and access to group work programmes
- **Pathways 2 Recovery programme:** Pre and post residential and community rehabilitation support
- **Concerned Other support:** 1:1 and group work sessions for family members and concerned others





your local



pharmacy

Stop Smoking  
12 weeks

Get your  
allergies  
checked  
and you  
will feel  
the difference

Your  
prescriptions  
made easy

- All prescriptions are checked by a pharmacist
- We offer a range of services to help you with your prescriptions
- We have a dedicated area for your prescriptions
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Community hub  
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# History of the hub

**2014**

Hub opened, supported by ADP

- One stop shop with a range of services/interventions
- Pharmacy location picked to engage complex/high risk clients
- Range of specialist substance use and generic services involved
- Drop-in support (no referral or appointment needed)
- Engagement with pharmacy staff was a critical component

**2015**

Recruitment of a hub coordinator

**2021**

Review of support offered- focus on more harm reduction interventions

# What is the hub?

- **Conveniently located** within a local pharmacy
- A **safe and friendly space** for people to meet
- Somewhere to get **alcohol and drug** support and access to **community resources**
- **Flexible appointments and drop-in sessions** to maximise engagement with the most vulnerable people at risk of harm.

Through **collaboration** with the pharmacy and the dedication from our staff, we have created a safe and trauma-informed environment that is easily accessible to the community.

# What does the hub offer?

## Components

- 1 **Psychosocial and harm reduction interventions** such as overdose awareness, dry blood spot testing and naloxone distribution. The hub acts as a resource for people at different stages of their journey.
- 2 **Access and engagement** point for people looking to access medically assisted treatment or psychosocial support through our Recovery service
- 3 **Community space** that people can easily access wider support services, like employability, welfare or housing support

**What is new about our approach?**

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# Changing need

**Dundee drug deaths** – Dundee has seen high levels of drug-related deaths

**Dundee Drugs Commission** – many issues raised to improve access to treatment and reduce drug related harms

**Deprivation** – we are located in an area of deprivation in Dundee with a higher need of support

**National Mission** – focus on decreasing drug-related deaths and supporting people into treatment

**Drug trends** – Increasing levels of cocaine, benzodiazepine and poly drug use

# Meeting the need

Harm Reduction	Access to Support	Community
Psychosocial interventions Dry Blood spot testing Naloxone Overdose Awareness	Medically Assisted Treatment Assertive outreach Residential rehab Recovery support	Health Inclusion Nursing team Employability Welfare rights Food bank
Increases engagement	Access to treatment	Reduces stigma
Reduces drug harms	Start recovery	Improves collaboration
Improves outcomes and experience		

**What makes this better than previous practice?**

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# Improvements in practice

**Previous practice** focused on social activity & food banks

- Feedback confirmed a **lack of clarity** of purpose
- Staff spending time delivering activity that could be done by externally

**Improved practice** is providing more focussed harm reduction interventions

- Interventions now meeting the needs of the clients
- Reintroducing structured group work
- Refreshed drop-in service now engaging with those most of at risk

**Successfully applied** for funding to introduce the SAFER scheme

- Reducing drug related harms and HEP c transmission

# Further improvements

Hub was **isolated** from our main service and from other services

- More integrated with our own service with clearer pathways
- Range of external services providing specific support has increased

**Perceptions and engagement** with local services has improved.

- We now have the NHS treatment service better engaged with our work – MAT standards

Previously the community hub was **not a welcoming space** and confusing for people

- **Successfully applied** for funding to redecorate the space which made this more welcoming and trauma informed

**What difference is it making?**

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# Client impact

50%  
Increase in  
referrals

252 harm  
reduction  
kits

Increased  
engagement

82  
Brief  
interventions

70  
referrals  
for MAT

Improved  
collaboration



Does me wonders, great staff. The people, they are always there for me always!

— WithYou client

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# Staff impact



- **Increased staff development** and improved working practices
- **Increased joint working**- near fatal overdose pathway and awareness sessions (Police Scotland)



- **Awareness** about hub increased recognition of the work
- **Recognition of work** increased- spoke to Parliament about joint working



- **Sharing our expertise**- meeting local journalist sharing our work and providing naloxone training to journalist

**What is our learning?**

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## Learning

- Harm reduction **increases engagement**
- **Improved access** to support
- Community based **removes barriers** to support
- **Greater collaboration** and joint working
- **Increases** awareness and knowledge

To summarise the review and changes made have made a huge difference to the people in Dundee providing an easily accessible space to seek out advice, information, support and treatment.



# Thank you

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