

# NEWSLETTER

SPODA is a registered charity that works to help families and carers of substance users within Derbyshire.

## Congratulations!

Thank you for all your lovely poems and articles the judges were struggling to choose a winner of the Pat Russ Award, as the standard was so high. But we would like to congratulate Angela Moore whose short story came 1st. Angela, pictured right, was presented with her award and prize money at Spoda Christmas Buffet evening. Angela was delighted and gave us a few comments:

**"I want to thank you all at Spoda for giving me the chance to be myself, If only for a few hours. I only wish that 'thank you' conveyed just how grateful I am for the Spoda team for being the people they all are".**

Please keep your articles and poems coming into us for the Pat Russ Award 2010, every thing submitted will be entered and judged at the end of the year.

Also we would like to congratulate Maureen Booth who won joint second prize.

(Maureen pictured right with Barry Russ presenting the award).



Angela's winning article was called "One Foot Out of Bed" and can be seen on the back page of this January newsletter.



### Home Office Award for Steve Holme

You may remember in our last newsletter an article informing you that Spoda and Laurens Link (family support service in Derby city) in partnership with Derbyshire constabulary had nominated Steve Holme for the Home Office Tackling Drugs Changing Lives Award. The category for his award was drug worker of the year, he was up against some of England's most prestigious workers but I am proud to say that Steve won and we at Spoda are all delighted for Steve and for the honour of him working within Derbyshire. Steve has dedicated thirty years of his life to tackling drugs from tackling the supply to supporting families. Steve received £10,000 from the Home Office he wants the money to be spent on developing something that will benefit families and reduce the harm that substance misuse can cause within our local communities.

### Well Done Steve!



Steve Holme receiving his award from Mandie Campbell of the Governments Drugs, Alcohol and Partnerships Directorate.

## SAVING LIVES, WORKING TOGETHER

### Naloxone and Overdose Management

Naloxone is a drug that is given by paramedics and doctors when someone has overdosed through taking possible fatal amounts of heroin or methadone. It works immediately to reverse the effects of the overdose, though admission to Accident and Emergency is still necessary.

When someone calls an ambulance to report an overdose often valuable time can be lost from the call being made to the arrival of the ambulance.

When someone has been abstinent from heroin use either through being in prison, rehab or post detox they are more at risk of overdose as their tolerance is often lost.

Some people may overdose by taking more of the drug than they usually do, or they may be an older drug user whose health may have deteriorated with age increasing their risk of overdose.

Many heroin users past and present take risks at times regarding overdose.

The National Addictions Unit in partnership with SPODA want to train Derbyshire carers and family members of people who have a loved one who is or has been a heroin user to be trained to administer naloxone in the event of a possible overdose situation.

Administering this medication is not a difficult process, full training will be given on how to deal effectively with an overdose situation as well as being trained to give the medication. Plus a voucher will be paid for giving your time to be trained to save lives.

If you are interested then give the Spoda team a ring on 0800 068 5718 or call Dot Inger on 07736 973076

## New Dual Diagnosis Strategy for Derbyshire Mental Health Trust

### Q. What is dual diagnosis?

#### A. It's a person with co existing mental health and substance misuse difficulties.

The Derbyshire Mental Health Trust became aware that the services they were providing for people with this diagnosis needed to be improved. Many people as some of our carers know only too well were often passed between the mental health team and the drug treatment services, when services are not joined up to work effectively together, users often drop out of services, leaving the families and carers to try pick up the pieces.

The new strategy will ensure that users, their families and carers will receive appropriate and effective services equipped to meet their needs. It will see development and training across services and enhance a joined up service delivery model. The training has already started to professionals from across agencies and I am very grateful to Janet and Sharon two of Spoda's clients for assisting to deliver this training by telling the workers the problems that they as family members have faced for many years trying to care for a child with a possible undiagnosed Dual Diagnosis.

The training for the Mental Health staff will be ongoing. Spoda will continue to work in partnership with the Trust by assisting to provide carers and families to participate. Should you as a carer or family member have a child or family member with Mental Health and substance misuse difficulties and would like to assist with the training then please call Dot Inger on 01246 224832 or 07736 973076.

## Haddon Hall A Festive Day Out

A wonderful time was had by all on the trip to Haddon Hall, despite the rain! The hall was festively decorated in everything Christmassy from holly to oranges stuffed with cloves! There was also a chance to light a candle in the church vestibule and hang a wish on the wish tree. The clients also enjoyed a lovely hot meal in the halls restaurant.



Here are some of the comment made from clients who attended the day: -

**"It was very cold but enjoyed meeting new and old friends. It was lovely to see and smell all the Christmas decorations."**

**"It looked great with Christmas decorations, I always enjoy going somewhere I've not been before."**

**"I cant describe how very beneficial this particular event was for me. A day to give me the opportunity to give my attention to something apart from my problems."**

**UKDPC United Kingdom Drug Policy Commission**

The UKDPC have recently conducted a study and have produced a research paper called:

**“Supporting The Supporters”**

The study has estimated that in the UK at the very least :

- ⇒ Nearly 1.5 million adults will be significantly affected by a relatives drug use.
- ⇒ The cost of the harms they experience as a result amounts to £1.8 billion per year.
- ⇒ The support they provide would cost the NHS or the Local Authorities about £750 million per year to provide if families did not provide this care.

Within these estimates there is no cost included for kin carers caring for children affected by drug use, it is solely for drug using children and relatives.

These figures are minimum estimates which mean that the figures are probably much greater, but never the less demonstrates the enormous impact of drug use on adult family members.

We in Derbyshire are lucky that our Local Authority recognise the importance of providing support to families by them part funding Spoda, however in some areas of the UK many families suffer alone and in silence as they don't have specialist services.

With the current financial climate and anticipated government cuts even we at Spoda don't know our future beyond 2010/11, we hope that this UKDPC report will make all government parties aware of the support that we as families of drug users provide or have provided and the savings that services like Spoda and families like yourselves give to government.

I was proud to be part of the working group to develop this report and I would like to thank Dorothy and her daughter for sharing their stories to one of the researchers from UKDPC to allow a case study of their circumstances to be produced within the briefing paper to support the research.

To read the full report visit [www.ukdpc.org.uk/reports.shtml](http://www.ukdpc.org.uk/reports.shtml)

By Project Co-ordinator—Dot Inger

**Rise in Cases of Anthrax Infections in Heroin Injecting Users**

As some of you may have read in the recent press there have been cases of anthrax used as a cutting agent and mixed with heroin in Scotland. Unfortunately there have been 6 deaths recorded due to the anthrax. Investigations are continuing into the cause of these cases and into the heroin supply routes that may be affected.

However we urge you to encourage your substance user to be vigilant and if they notice or are made aware of any of the following signs or symptoms encourage

them to contact their GP or A&E department immediately:

- \* **Fever / High temperature**
- \* **Soft tissue infection**
- \* **Any signs of possible infection**
- \* **Respiratory problems**

**GRANDPARENT / KINSHIP CARERS**

There are an estimated 200,000 grandparents in Britain taking on the role of full time carers for their grandchildren. They are the forgotten families of government family policies.



Between July and September 2009 Grandparents Plus conducted a survey of 100 kin carers to establish the financial, emotional and practical challenges that these carer's and the children they care for face.

**Carer's said what they would like is:**

- **4 out of 5 carer's are under 65**
- **3 out of 5 carer's gave up work or reduced their working hours.**
- **1 in 3 carer's are not claiming child benefit**
- **1 in 4 carer's also care for an elderly relative**
- **4 out of 10 carer families live on an income of £10,000 or less**
- **More financial support.**
- **Information about support groups.**
- **Access to emotional support and respite care.**
- **Tailored help and support for families with disabled children.**

**SPODA joins Grandparents Plus in wanting change for grandparents and family carer's because we believe they deserve:**

- Recognition for the vital role that they play.
- Respect from other service providers, including access to information and advice about the support available.
- Improved access to benefits and a new national allowance if they care for a child full time.
- To increase national data collected on families in this situation.
- Better services including access to family group conferences, respite care and support groups.

**Spoda have been able to access funding for the past 5 years to support grandparents and kinship carers, However support is not available to all families at a national level. To read the full report go to [www.grandparentsplus.org.uk](http://www.grandparentsplus.org.uk)**

## Your Articles , Your Voice

### One Foot Out of Bed!

Sleeping with one foot out the bed, wasn't something I realised I was doing. when that all too familiar fear stirred; an ambulance with its sirens going, laying down with bated breath, waiting for that "phone call" or the policeman's knock. "Not this time" I think to myself.

I have 2 brothers that are heroin addicts..they've been addicted to many a substance all their adult lives..why is their addiction different this time..? Its robbed me of the brothers I used to know, This breaks my heart and my very being to see how enslaved they have become to the DEVIL.

I also have a drunk for a husband, I find with both my brothers and husband I'm waiting for those moments of sobriety.. if only to have them all back as they were if only for a few moments..How I pray for those moments.

I'd like to say life is about choices I'm not so sure, maybe it's because I so want to blame the social aspects of life, that my husband and brothers are in this sorry state.

Recently I had to attend court with one of my brothers as he was facing eviction, due to a ASBO order that the local council had placed on him.. of course it was drug related. To have to stand in a witness box and face people that didn't know my brother and address him as some sort of low life was harsh. I did say to the court " maybe my brother has addiction problems but it don't make him any less human !!!" on reflection though, the truth of the matter is they aren't, they are walking zombies.

I also have a granddaughter (who's children I have residency over )

who is on the same downward spiral,

What my family have taught me is you can't help them till they are ready to be helped

Maybe I now know why... I sleep with one foot out of the bed!

Article written by Angela Moore.



## **New Alcohol Service to be Launched**

From the 1st February the provision of specialist adult alcohol treatment in Derbyshire is changing. Our new treatment provider will be Add action they will provide a countywide specialist service that is flexible accessible and responsive to need.

They will work alongside Derbyshire's alcohol advise service, for a single point of contact for all alcohol services in Derbyshire call: **0845 308 4010**



## **Support Groups**

### CHESTERFIELD GROUP DATES 2010

Wednesday Evenings 6.30pm - 8pm

JANUARY 20th      FEBRUARY 3rd & 17th

MARCH 3rd, & 31st

MARCH 17th

(Drugs Awareness Evening with Steve Holme  
held at Labour Club opposite Spoda Office)

APRIL 14th & 28th

### SWADLINCOTE GROUP DATES 2010

Monday Evenings 7.00pm - 8.30pm  
(First Monday of every month)

FEBRUARY 1st      MARCH 1st      APRIL 12th

### GRANDPARENT/KINCARER GROUP DATES 2010

Held on a Wednesday Afternoon on a  
quarterly basis 12pm—2.00pm

Next Group 20th JANUARY

### BELPER GROUP MEETING DATES 2010

Thursday Afternoons 1pm—2.30pm  
(First Thursday of every month)

FEBRUARY 4th      MARCH 4th      APRIL 8th

If you have not attended one of our session before and would be interested in meeting other people in the same situation as yourself for informal chats and discussions, please call us for more information on:

**FREEPHONE: 0800 068 5718**