

The Blue Light Project

Responding to high risk dependent drinkers and substance misusers who are change resistant

Alcohol Change UK estimate that at any one time the majority of problem drinkers are not engaged in services, and of those who do engage approximately 50% will quickly drop out.

The perception still exists that if a problem drinker/drug user does not want to change, nothing can be done to help until the person discovers some motivation.

This message has been repeated many times over the years and is still heard frequently:

“If the substance abuser does not wish to change or does not believe that change is possible, no treatment programme, no matter how complete or excellent, is likely to yield positive results”

“If a client is in denial there is little we can do to help them”

Even Alcoholics Anonymous’s preamble states that:

“The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking”

Blue Light Project challenges this approach. It shows that positive strategies and alternative approaches can be used with this client group.

More importantly using Blue Light will target some of the most risky, vulnerable and costly individuals in society.

WHY BOTHER?

Many of these difficult to engage clients will be the focus of concern in other parts of the health, social care and criminal justice system. They will be the frequent attender in the hospital system, the perpetrator of anti-social behaviour, the nuisance 999 caller and the repeated arrestee. They may also be perpetrators of Domestic Abuse.

Since 2011, local authorities have been required to undertake a Domestic Homicide Review after local homicides related to domestic abuse. Since their inception approximately 100 of these reviews have been undertaken nationally.

Alcohol Concern examined 24 of these reports.

In this randomly chosen sample, alcohol played a significant contributory role in 75% and in most of these cases perpetrators and, sometimes victims, were treatment resistant drinkers.

Blue Light aims give community teams strategies to work more effectively with change resistant drinkers

Criteria for Blue Light

- Substance misuse issues – particularly alcohol
- **Resistance** to treatment for substance misuse problem
- Additional complex need i.e. Mental Health, Criminal Justice, Housing
- Burden on Public Services



REFERRALS

Thurrock is developing a multi-agency operational group to ensure a joint identification and ownership of the highest impact clients and ensuring a consistent and persistent focus on these individuals

In Thurrock it has been agreed that referrals will be made through Local Area Groups (LAG) East and West.

'Blue Light Project' has been added to the LAG referral form and should be ticked accordingly

To discuss potential referrals please contact:
Richard Jacklin – Inclusion Visions
01375 374411