

# ISDD and SCODA merge

What many people have thought should happen for the past 20 years or so is come to pass – the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence (ISDD) and the Standing Conference on Drug Abuse (SCODA) are merging.

The board of trustees of ISDD and the members of SCODA have voted in favour of the amalgamation, and the new organisation will legally come into existence on 1 April 2000.

As yet the new organisation does not have a name: several have been put forward then withdrawn for various reasons. But it does have a clear idea of its purpose – to inform the development of policies and to reduce drug-related risk.

As Chief Executive of SCODA, and now ISDD as well, it is my job to ensure that the transition to the new organisation is as smooth as possible. I look forward to the contribution the new body can and needs to make to a changing political and professional landscape.

*Druglink* has been a valued vehicle for independent comment on national and local policy, as well as professional practice, over many years. It will continue to be developed and we will look closely at our range of briefings, journals and other ways of communicating with interested parties.

The new organisation will continue to value the diversity of various communities involved in drugs work. We will work to ensure the rights of individuals

and communities to be treated fairly and equally. It will continue to provide information with integrity, impartiality, objectivity, and transparency. Underpinning the capacity to do this is the strength and knowledge of our increasingly diverse customers and membership, from health, education, enforcement and voluntary sectors.



Roger Howard

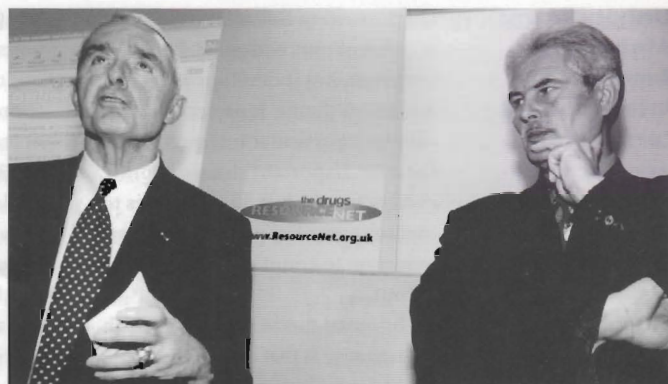
Priorities for the new organisation will include building an active information service on drugs, policy practice and research. It will take advantage of new opportunities in information and communication technology.

As drug policy increases to overlap other policy areas, so our task will be to embed knowledge across a range of professions and disciplines. Drug issues are complex, and informed open debate about drug policies is essential. The new organisation will aim to promote this.

Roger Howard  
Chief Executive of SCODA and ISDD

ISDD – is dedicated to providing information on all aspects of drug misuse: advancing knowledge, understanding and policy making about drugs. It is a Focal Point for the EMCDDA the European Union's agency for drug information exchange, and is a collaborating centre with the UNDCP.

SCODA – seeks to reduce harmful effects of drug use through informed debate, the promotion of best practice and effective, comprehensive services. It provides a voice for members, which are drug services and others concerned about the effects of drug use.



## Drug Czars launch ResourceNet

In October UK and USA 'Drug Czars', Keith Hellowell and Barry McCaffery, together launched ResourceNet, ISDD's website for drug education practitioners, at Goldsmiths College, London.

Demonstrators against US 'drug war' policy made it a bit of a rowdy affair, until security took control of the situation.

Keith Hellowell, told guests: 'I am delighted to launch this new service. It is essential that everyone involved in drug education and prevention is able to make an educated choice about the many resources on offer.'

ResourceNet is an interactive website coordinated by ISDD, which provides up-to-date information about drug education and prevention materials.

Resource materials are reviewed by an expert panel so teachers and youth workers can assess their usefulness before buying. Items reviewed include any physical resource used in work with young people: training packs, leaflets, videos, books, games, posters, tapes and CDs. Over the last year, around 40 items have been added to the ResourceNet database.

New resources are listed as they are produced and resources for vulnerable groups are currently a priority.

The ResourceNet review panel is made up of about 20 practitioners

who work in drug education in different settings. They review all the items listed on the site, so drug education and prevention professionals can make an informed choice about the resources they use in their work.

The website also contains a web board where professionals can comment on the resources. About 30 professionals currently have passwords to allow them to use the web board.

### Comments and links

A further feedback facility allows visitors to comment on what they like, and dislike about the service. They can tell the project co-ordinator about new resources they have come across, comment on their experience, or request a review.

Plans for the site are to join with the LOCATE website co-ordinated by SCODA in the new year. LOCATE gives information on drug education and prevention activities across England.

These two websites will provide practitioners with a comprehensive information service about drug education and prevention issues in general.

LOCATE is at <http://www.hea.org.uk/locate>

ResourceNet is at <http://www.ResourceNet.org.uk>