

Better care for dual diagnosis

A new report by the All-Party Parliamentary Drugs Misuse Group calls for urgent government action to provide better care for those with the dual diagnosis of mental illness with drugs and/or alcohol use.

The study found that people with dual diagnosis are some of the most vulnerable and socially-excluded members of the population.

Many fail to get adequate treatment as neither drugs services nor mental health agencies take responsibility for them.

The cross-party group of MPs and peers heard evidence from the Health Minister John Hutton, workers in dual diagnosis and from former clients of drug and mental health services.

The group was told that people with dual diagnosis have a higher risk of: violence (including self-harm and suicide), non-compliance with treatment, repeated hospital visits, imprisonment, HIV/AIDS, homelessness and death.



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The report *Drug misuse and mental health: learning lessons on dual diagnosis* calls for:

- better training in substance misuse and dual diagnosis for doctors, nurses, social workers, probation officers, police and prison officers, and voluntary sector personnel
- investigation of more services dedicated to dual diagnosis
- government to tackle uncertainties and complexities over funding
- more aftercare for every client whether treated in the community or in prison
- better processing of people with dual diagnosis through police cells
- the prison service to ensure it adequately addresses the needs of this group

The report concludes that government pressure must force drug/alcohol and mental health services to work much more closely together as part of a national strategy.

For copies of the report *Drug misuse and mental health: learning lessons on dual diagnosis*, contact Paula Woodward, DrugScope, fax 020 7928 1771, email: paulaw@drugscope.org.uk

Roger Lewis

(1943–2000)

Roger Lewis, one of the best-known, respected and loved figures in the drugs field over the last three decades, has died, aged 56. His death from pneumonia occurred in the early hours of Tuesday, 25 April in Lisbon.

He moved to Portugal 18 months ago, with his wife Deborah and their daughters Anna and Isabella, to work at the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).

Just prior to his death, Roger had been a lively contributor to the international harm reduction conference in Jersey. En route he met many long-time friends and colleagues in London – at the launch of DrugScope and at the seminar to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Centre for Research on Drugs and Health Behaviour.

Roger's involvement and subsequent passionate and multi-faceted commitment to the drugs field grew out of an early interest in English literature, opium and the romantic poets. His involvement rapidly expanded to more concrete and applied dimensions.

From the early 1970s he was a key figure at Release. As a worker and subsequently as a trustee he lobbied for less repressive and more humane approaches to drug use and drug users. It was at this period that I first met him, in the middle of the night at the second Windsor Free Festival in 1973. Our paths continued to cross throughout the 1970s, at festivals and elsewhere.

In the first half of the 1980s we worked together on the Drug Indicators Project to identify indicators for assessing local drug problems. This work laid the basis for development of indicators in the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe and then at the EMCDDA. It was an exciting period of development and one in which Roger became a stimulating colleague and friend.

In the mid-1980s Roger moved to Italy, carrying out research on illegal drug markets with Pino Arlacchi – now executive director of the United Nations International Drug

Control Programme. It was at this time that he met and later married Deborah Olsiewski.

At the end of the decade, Roger moved back to Britain, initially working for the Standing Conference on Drug Abuse (SCODA). He then worked as manager of HIV and AIDS services in Edinburgh – where drug users were severely affected by the AIDS epidemic and where new pragmatic responses were needed.

Roger moved to Lisbon in 1998 to co-ordinate the network of national focal points of the EMCDDA. This brought us to work together again. He quickly became a lively and much appreciated colleague for all staff. His

death was a hard shock and loss to us all.

In all these steps, Roger pursued and continually expanded his knowledge and understanding of themes that remained dear to him throughout his life: the development of youth and music cultures and subcultures, the

emergence and dynamics of drug trafficking and organised crime, the relationship of drug use and supply to wider history, culture and politics, the impact on drug users of policies and responses and how these could be made more humane. Probably no one knows as much as he did about illicit drug markets.

Everyone who knew Roger will miss his irrepressible enthusiasm and humour, his kindness, his encyclopaedic knowledge and quick mind, his commitment to his field and to a humane, intelligent and non-repressive approach to drugs.

I, along with many others, have lost a friend and a kindred spirit, with a history of shared experiences and understandings of our field.

He would not have wished us to be gloomy – he left money in his will for his friends to hold a party. This was typical of a man who never let childhood polio prevent celebration of life to the full. Many people's reactions to Roger's death have been a source of strength to Deborah. We wish her, Anna and Isabella all courage for the future.

Richard Hartnoll



A memorial service and celebration of Roger Lewis' life will take place at Malmesbury Abbey on Saturday 22 July at 3pm.

For details contact Tim Malyon on 01884 821176 and www.rogerlewis.co.uk