

Drugs Research Network Scotland

STEERING GROUP

Fri 17th Nov, 12:30-3:30pm

Maitland Room, Iris Murdoch Building, University of Stirling

MINUTES

Present: Catriona Matheson, Tessa Parkes, Anne Whittaker, Alison Munro, Alex Baldacchino, Aileen O’Gorman, Duncan Hill, Dave Liddell.

In attendance: Marcus Cusack (notes)

1. Welcome and introductions

Catriona welcomed everyone to the meeting and round-table introductions were made.

2. Steering Group membership

The group formally confirmed Catriona as DRNS Convener and Tessa as Deputy Convener.

After two rounds of advertising, no-one has applied for the role of Prevention theme lead. Four options were identified to progress this agenda:

- i. Re-engage with University Principals seeking expressions of interest from appropriate senior academics, widening the call to additional departments (e.g. social anthropology, human geography). **Action: Catriona**
- ii. The network should seek involvement from a range of colleagues with expertise in prevention but who have not expressed interest in joining as theme leads, e.g. Alan McNair, Garth Reid, Eleanor McKee, Lee Barnsdale and Andy McAuley and a number of ADP colleagues. These colleagues could be approached and asked if they would be able to engage with the DRNS as advisers or sponsors who we can engage with on specific issues. Joe will also arrange regular dialogue with Alan McNair.
Action: Joe
- iii. We should also consider revising the title of the Prevention theme to reflect the wider factors associated with determinants of problem drugs use (e.g. social exclusion, adverse childhood events). For inclusion and ongoing discussion on future agendas of the DRNS Steering Group meeting. **Action: Joe, all SSG members**
- iv. In the meantime, agreed to consider prevention as a cross-cutting theme that should be reflected in the work of the other theme groups and the wider DRNS research strategy.
Action: Anne, Alison, Aileen.

3. DRNS Structure and Governance

a. Declarations of interest (DoI)

All Steering Group members have returned completed DoI forms. Agreed these will be reviewed and recorded by **Catriona and Joe**. **Tessa and Joe** will review Catriona’s form.

Agreed to remove the reference to ‘competing research grants’ from the list of potential competing interests, as all members of the Steering Group will routinely be involved in a range of projects and associated funding bids. Joe will check for any impact on the DRNS Charter, and liaise with the Convenor before amending the DoI form. **Action: Joe**

Agreed to develop a lighter touch to declarations of interest from the general DRNS membership, mainly focussing on financial involvement with the alcohol / tobacco industries.

b. Structure & Theme Group names

After discussion regarding the need to broaden out the 'recovery' theme group in order to attract a suitable academic lead, and be inclusive of a wide definition of recovery, the SSG agreed to rename the 'Recovery' theme as 'Health, Social Care and Wellbeing'. Recovery still remains a key component of this theme.

Catriona will write a brief statement outlining updates to the current theme names, and highlighting linkage to current/emerging Scottish Government policy. These will go on the DRNS websites.

Action: Catriona

c. Governing documents

Joe will work with the Convenors and Theme Leads to draft the following documents, for review by the Steering Group before our next meeting:

- Peer Co-production / Lived Experience involvement.
- Record of progress against KPIs agreed with SFC and Scottish Government.
- Strategy to address Cross-cutting themes.
Also agreed that these should form standing agenda items for the Steering Group.
- DRNS communications.

d. Research Strategy development

Theme groups: Anne, Alison, Aileen and Joe will liaise to arrange an initial strategic event in early 2018 for DRNS members to start discussion on priorities for theme groups and cross-cutting themes, and ideas for collaborative projects aligned to funding opportunities. This will feed into the research strategy. This event will engage with a range of academics and experts from the field, people with lived experience, and representatives from related Scottish research networks (Mental Health, Pain, BBV).

Agreed to update previous work on baseline Scottish drug-related research. **Joe** to circulate an online survey tool to capture activity from May 2016 to Aug 2017.

Joe will develop a system to record the activity and outputs of the DRNS, including feedback from members on additional grants applied for, research projects delivered, who they worked with, support provided by the DRNS etc.

e. DRNS Membership process

Agreed to develop a process for interested stakeholders to become members of the DRNS; taking an inclusive, open approach to general membership, with the opportunity for people with relevant experience/expertise to express interest in joining Theme groups. This process will reflect discussion about Declarations of Interest (above) and comply with relevant Data Protection legislation. **Joe** will progress development of a policy and online form, for review by Theme Leads and the Steering Group before being widely promoted.

Also important to formalise links with existing Scottish/rUK research networks. **Action: Joe**

4. Peer / Lived Experience involvement

Joe will engage with contacts provided by Steering Group members, AA/NA groups, recovery groups (incl. 12 step groups), Serenity Café and SDF Peer Researchers on the design and delivery of the peer involvement strategy. As requested by a researcher and worker from the Serenity café (Edinburgh), this will include peer representation on, and engagement with, the Steering Group.

5. Network identity & communications

A selection of draft DRNS logos will be circulated for Steering Group review, and the preferred option will be developed and adopted.

The web address www.drns.ac.uk has been registered, as have DRNS accounts on Twitter and Facebook. These will be populated for launch in early 2018. **Action: Joe**

Anne has written a promotional piece for AFInet. **Joe** will adapt this and circulate to other networks, ADPs etc.

6. Emerging funding opportunities

a. Funding spreadsheet

Agreed **Joe** will update this monthly and make it accessible to Steering Group members. This will also be available to theme group members in due course (once membership procedures have been established).

b. ESRC: Mental Health Network plus call

Agreed to explore development of a bid to explore integrated treatment for people with complex trauma and problem drug use. **Anne and Alison** will initially scope. **Joe** will arrange an initial teleconf. for Anne, Alison, Catriona and Tessa to discuss.

7. Review of Scottish Crime and Justice survey

Noted that the Scottish Government were consulting on proposals to 'rest' the self-completed drug and alcohol section of the survey for the next two sweeps. Steering Group members responded to the consultation, and Joe offered DRNS support in validation / quality assurance of previous findings, which colleagues in Govt. are considering.

8. DRNS admin post recruitment

There has been a good response to this advert. Shortlisting will take place the w/c 27th Nov, and interviews the w/c 11th Dec.

9. Meeting dates: Spring 2018

Agreed to hold three meetings during the first quarter of 2018, and to review frequency at the April meeting.

Thu 18 January	1330-1530	Scottish Drugs Forum offices
Wed 28 February	1300-1500	University of Stirling
Fri 27 April	1300-1500	University of Stirling