

Alcohol & Drugs Action

**REDUCING HARM
ENABLING RECOVERY**

ADA ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY



JUNE 2024



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"I enjoy coming to ADA: I find it helps me with tips to keep going with my recovery"

OUR ORGANISATION

As Alcohol and Drugs Action we aim to reduce harm and enable recovery by continuing to be an innovative, responsive, agile and flexible organisation, which is forward and outward focussed to stay abreast of changes in the environment, including changing trends across society. We will do this by not only acting on the evidence regarding effective treatment and recovery initiatives but in being directly involved in helping shape that evidence.

ADA operates with the belief that all engagements and interventions to support reductions in harm, also provide multiple opportunities to help enable the first steps toward unique recovery journeys. Our services provide a full range of support, for those with the most complex needs and often closest to harm, through to enabling recovery opportunities to re-engage fully in society, free from stigma and prejudice.

We believe that reducing harm and enabling recovery are not separate but that they are interconnected concepts on a spectrum of support that provides opportunities to improve the prospects of those that ADA serves, across its full range of services. Those services are delivered by an organisational ethos that embeds learning and development and looks to always sustain and consolidate best practice.

"Helping people keep safe, giving great advice and support".

We realise that recovery journeys are individual and therefore unique. We ensure that our work develops multiple opportunities and establishes 'pathways' to increase choice for those seeking to move away from substance use. Our philosophy recognises the active participation of those we seek to support, the wellbeing of the staff teams providing our services, and our full commitment to those with living/lived experience is key.

*"Meetings keep me busy-
I talk with lots of different people"*

5 WAYS TO WELLBEING

Underpinning our approach, we implement evidence-based frameworks such as 'The Five Ways to Wellbeing' as part of our holistic approach to recovery and wellbeing. This framework is therefore embedded to reflect our principles and is also integrated within our resources in order to consistently support and enable recovery.



*A report presented to the Foresight Project on Communicating the Evidence Base for Improving People's Well-being (Aked, J., Marks, N., Cordon, C. and Thompson, S.) Centre for well-being, New Economics Foundation. (2008)



OUR LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

In June 2019, Alcohol & Drugs Action launched a 10-year organisational strategy after extensive consultation with service users, staff, management and with the approval of the Board of Trustees. Changes, growth, and innovations were expected but nowhere in the document could the impact of the COVID pandemic on the whole organisation have been anticipated.

As ADA emerged from the COVID period, the time was then right to take stock of these changes and implement our learning from our experiences and review and refresh our strategic vision. Over the past year, we have consulted with those who use our services, our staff teams, volunteers and Board members thus ensuring that our updated strategy incorporates the essence of what really matters to the people who use our services, work in ADA, or volunteer with ADA.



With the recent launch of our newly formed and energetic Service Involvement and Improvement Group (SIIG) we are confident that this group is well positioned to both encourage, challenge, and develop ADA as an organisation and ensure the views of those who use our services including family members are not only heard but actively shape our decision making and service delivery. Through inclusive collaboration and embedding within our operational model, this will include self-defined priorities such as accessibility, communication and input to service design from the outset. Members of the SIIG will represent views at Board level and thus ensure that this voice is not only heard but is central to decision making processes.

"ADA has helped expand my recovery network and broadened my mind to other opportunities"

The SIIG role has at its core, the following mission:

A participatory voice for all ADA's service-users and those with lived and living experience, ensuring that this voice is represented, respected, and plays a constituent part in meaningful collaborative planning and delivery of services.

The organisation is held to account on behalf of those who use its services in terms of both standards of practice and in how it makes visible the voices and activity of recovery.

Improved communication processes to connect with anyone either currently using our services, or indeed potentially in need of accessing those services.

Active contribution to organisational learning for the organisation.

Support to the development of peer volunteering opportunities and thus help to expand the reach and access to our services through these key roles.

Develop independent advocacy-based approaches for those using our services wherever these may be required.

Support to the planning and delivery of innovation within services - filling a vital experiential advisory role to the organisation.

Support to the delivery of fundraising activities alongside staff and Board members.



"Getting clean works delivered to house is a lifesaver as I can't always get into town. Food is also magic".

While embarking on this journey, we also took time to reflect on and celebrate our Key Achievements since the June 2019 strategy was published:

The embedding of learning post Covid-19 has resulted in development of new operating principles, specifically more flexible approaches in delivering services ('Sharp Response', Virtual Online Groups and Contact), and more flexible working for staff members with the implementation of 'work-from-home' options.

The award of significant national funding grants such as from the CORRA Foundation to implement; 'Sharp Response', 'YOUR' Project, Residential Rehabilitation Support, 'Grow Your Own Routes' (in partnership with Scottish Families).

The development and integration of a 'Crisis Response' service in conjunction with new national objectives for 'assertive outreach', as well as developing 'Sharp Response' – integrated mobile outreach needle-exchange approach. Both services allowing ADA to deploy resources proactively and swiftly to reduce harms at the point of crisis for individuals wherever they may be.

Successful recommissioning of both Aberdeenshire (North, Central and South) and Aberdeen City services.

The establishment and development of a new Service Involvement and Improvement Group (SIIG), showing that the organisation is firmly focused on taking a reflective approach that embeds learning and development based on direct experience, that is, not only from those delivering services, but from those receiving them.

The continued development of holistic health-led support and interventions such as with the in-reach of NHS Nurse Practitioners within both our harm reduction and recovery services and alignment with NHS Smoking Cessation and Health Improvement.

The delivery of wider support packages establishing a mechanism for the provision of direct essential supports such as food parcels, communications (mobile phones) and household utilities.



OUR VISION, OUR MISSION, OUR VALUES

"I have a plan for the future"



VISION

Alcohol & Drugs Action exists to proactively reduce the harms, inequalities and stigma arising from and associated with substance use. In so doing, we actively promote health and wellbeing in it's broadest sense, and make available the necessary tools and safe space for measurable recovery-focused outcomes.



MISSION

To provide a range of evidence-based services across the whole spectrum of 'the recovery journey', that delivers effective harm reduction and holistic tailored support to the individual irrespective of where and when they may start that journey.



"The non-judgemental approach helps me to be honest"

VALUES



People First:

ADA recognises the recovery potential and assets of everyone, including family members affected by alcohol and drug use.

To provide services that are easily accessible, flexible, and actively remove barriers to engagement.

To challenge all stigma wherever and whenever it presents itself.

Every service ADA provides has at its core a responsibility to safely reduce harm, enable recovery and to improve wellbeing.

ADA's services will work to the principles of being holistic, person-centred, trauma-informed and family inclusive.

Collaboration:

We learn, collaborate and develop as an organisation based on our learning experiences, including those of our vital and core constituents and assets, that is; people who use our services, staff team, volunteers and board members.

We establish and work positively within national and local partnerships to achieve objectives and goals both for ADA as well as the wider community we serve.



VALUES

Innovation & Consolidation:

We are innovative in that we effectively anticipate and adapt to the circumstances surrounding substance use, thus developing services that are fully based on the needs and priorities of those who use them.

Through effective financial and systems governance, we will work to evaluate, consolidate and sustain good practice at all times.

Integrity:

We communicate effectively reinforcing our positive welcome to anyone wishing to access our various services, ensuring stakeholders are appraised of our work, objectives and progress.

Our organisational culture is open, transparent, and both encourages and welcomes participation toward its goals.

We strive to be the best we can be, and to this end are rigorous in our outcome reporting and in self-evaluation.

We support and develop practice that reduces our environmental impact.



"I like the house visits as my mobility is not great."

OUR WORK

ADA provides services actively designed to encompass all facets of support for tackling the range of harms that are associated with substance use. To this end, we have developed, and will continue to enhance our Services Booklet, our organisation website and various communication channels to keep all stakeholders informed of what we do, as well as where, when and how to access. A summary of our service departments are outlined below.

Services Booklet



Recovery Services

ADA has a range of services to support those in their recovery from drug and/or alcohol use. From 1-2-1s to group activities there is something suitable for wherever people are in their recovery journey.

Direct Access

We have harm reduction services in the form of the Needle Exchange and Duty Drop-In. Sharp Response and Crisis Response are the mobile arm of our operations.

Quay Services

Quay Services provide support to women who are involved in the sex industry in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

"I couldn't have gotten where I am today without your help and I'm forever grateful. I have an amazing job and I've finally found the path I want to pursue. Thanks for helping me see that my bad experiences don't define me."

Young Peoples Service

ADA has a range of services that work with young people regarding alcohol and other drugs. The focus of the work is to prevent harm and escalation to problem substance use.

ADA Aberdeenshire

Our Services extend far and wide into the Shire including harm reduction operations and sessions for those that require one to one guidance.

" I live in a rural village where public transport made it hard for me to access the needle exchange. I am delighted to have a doorstep visit".





We also remain live to and will address the challenges regarding:

Funding, both in relation to sustaining and continuing projects, and our own fundraising efforts, as well as being aware of the general context in which our sector may find itself.

Achieving adequate funding to undertake our mission and objectives and to manage our finances in a way that enables and sustains our continuing work.



We will seek to use our community profile and engage our local communities to:

1. build awareness of our work and
2. help raise funds that can be fully invested towards development ideas within our client-facing work.

Emerging substance trends that pose a threat and risk to the local population. Potential changes and amendments for both substances and alcohol specific legislation.

Our environmental impact, and specifically how we work to find ways to reduce or mitigate our carbon footprint.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS & PRIORITIES

The diagram below outlines how ADA puts into place an inclusive and cyclical decision-making process that involves various stakeholders (both external and internal). In particular, the Service Involvement and Improvement Group (SIIG) forms a vital part of this planning and operational delivery. This group has an open and flexible membership and ensures opportunities to anyone engaged with our services to be able to contribute on their own terms and in whatever capacity, frequency and duration they wish.

"Staff understand where I am coming from".



This will be vital to the organisation continuing its path of innovative practice and consolidating its success in the field of substance use. By living our values, we will endeavour to bring to bear all our assets (our collective experience, knowledge and expertise). We will deploy our resources within a culture of openness and respect.

"My experience with ADA has helped me change my life"

Therefore, our learning and development will ensure that we:

Continue to develop and enhance our learning and enhancing the evidence-base to ensure that ADA remain at the forefront of innovative harm reduction interventions and practices.

Employ improvement methodology and a dynamic evaluation process.

Are alert to developments and change in our sector by horizon scanning and through being an outward facing organisation.

Remain proactive in realising the opportunities of advancing new technological solutions to ensure that we protect and enhance our resources through improvements to our efficiency and effectiveness.

Deploy a dynamic operational delivery model that ensures meaningful participation and input from within the organisation.

Are open to effective partnership working with funders, commissioners, collaborating organisations and academia.

Continue to develop our internal governance and financial systems to help both sustain, support and evidence our work.

Develop practice that is at its core environmentally friendly, with a view to reducing our environmental impact and footprint wherever possible.

Put 'People First', e.g. our staff, our volunteers any anyone engaging with our services.

Prioritise the training/development, welfare, wellbeing and support needs of our staff and our volunteers.

Foster our relationship with the local recovery community by investing in recovery focused activities and volunteering and a bespoke employability pathway.

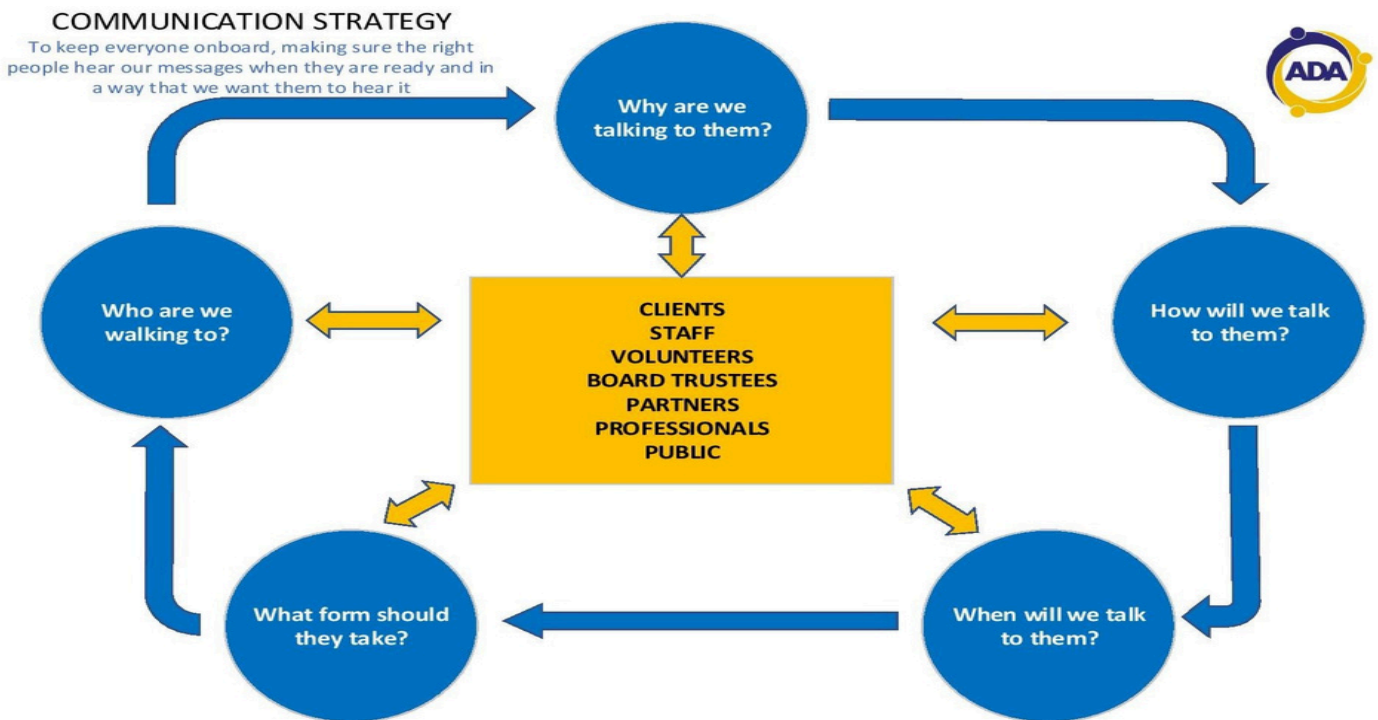
Expand and enhance our competency framework to be person-centred and trauma informed.

Explore and develop opportunities to improve family focused support including development of a recovery-coaching model.

"Giving people belief that you can get better"



OUR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



The Framework above ensures that our Communications have a targeted and systemic approach in support of developing our key messages. A cross-organisational sub-group headed by our Governance Officer and Communications Officer ensures an inclusive and consistent approach to this task.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the fast-moving context of substance use, we note that trends can shift and are prone to changes over time, sometimes extremely swiftly, and in many cases, these often reflect wider determinants within our society.

ADA has established itself at the vanguard of change, adaptation and innovation over recent years with significant progress since the publication of our 2019 strategy. A global pandemic led to considerable change in how we adapted to delivering our services, and as ever, ADA grasped the opportunity to review and implement positive new ways of working to the benefit of all those who find themselves in need of our support. Open, flexible ways of working have been developed and sustained; however, we realise that there is no room for complacency as the ever-present risks from alcohol and drug harms are central to our thinking and everyday practice.

To this end, our new strategic vision embodied here within this document is designed to allow us to continue developing and innovating and sustaining our positive impact. This will ensure that ADA continues to be at the forefront of leading in the design and delivery of first-class services targeted to benefit the communities which we serve.

Fraser Hoggan Ruby Watt

Chief Executive Officer Board Chairperson

Alcohol & Drugs Action

Dated July 2024.

Move: Web Links and Charitable Function etc to document final page.

OUR CHARITABLE FUNCTION

Our Object

'The company's objects are: To relieve the needs of persons affected by problems relating to drug and alcohol use and in furtherance of this to; i) develop and provide a city centre counselling and advice centre for drug and alcohol users, their friends and relatives in the city of Aberdeen and elsewhere. ii) develop an information resource in the field of drug and alcohol misuse. iii) develop training for professionals and volunteers in conjunction with agencies seeking to support drug misusers and their families. iv) provide a consultative service to community projects, residential establishments, professionals and volunteers. v) co-operate in the development of a common approach to the problem of drug misuse through liaison with relevant bodies. vi) facilitate the development of community responses through the promotion of local awareness of alcohol and drug misuse.' (Object of SCO13582, OSCR 2018).

Our Board

The roles and responsibilities of our board of directors are set out in our Board of Directors' handbook. It provides directors with a comprehensive overview of ADA from its history to its aims and objectives, the legal structure, liability and charitable status. It includes the specific duties of all board members, including chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, treasurer and auditors. The Board of Directors are trusted to look after the charity's assets and are responsible for ensuring the charity fulfils its charitable purpose. Although the day-to-day operations are delegated to the CEO and senior management team, the Board is responsible for overseeing that key tasks are achieved.

Our Finances

As a guaranteed company, ADA is required to file an annual return with the Registrar of Companies in accordance with the Companies Act. To view our latest set of audited accounts, [click here](#)



ALCOHOL & DRUGS ACTION



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