

Priority 4

Improving Health through Housing

4.2 Helping People with a Drug and/or Alcohol Dependency

A drug or alcohol dependency can adversely impact upon a person's capacity to live in their home and/or may result in problems for other family members and neighbours. Helping people to address their drug and/or alcohol dependencies is therefore of great importance to housing services in the city. Leeds has a Drug and Alcohol Strategy that focuses on the need for people to take a responsible attitude to alcohol use and to help people affected by drug or alcohol use to lead 'safer, healthier and happier lifestyles'.

The Council and its partners have commissioned a new wrap around Drug and Alcohol service, covering both employment and housing related support, that will focus on the prevention of use and harm as well as access to and effectiveness of treatment programmes. A key focus will be to ensure that the city has effective pathways to suitable housing options to promote prevention and recovery. This will be underpinned by joint working protocols between housing and health partners.



Case Study—Joe

Joe is a single man in his late 40s who has a long history of mental ill-health, alcohol and drug dependency, poor physical health and homelessness – including rough sleeping. Joe has had involvement with a number of support agencies. These arrangements were breaking down because of his support needs and a failure to build trust. Joe also has a dog and this has presented challenges in terms of accessing housing. Joe uses the York Street Practice and has benefitted from access to a wide range of services. These include GP, mental health, alcohol and drug therapy, dental services, and benefits and housing services. He has been able to book appointments for the range of practice services on the same day. Joe has reduced his alcohol use and is on a methadone programme. Joe is also now living in a private rented tenancy with his dog.

Case Study—York Street Practice

The York Street Practice, which is part of the Leeds Community HealthCare NHS Trust, provides primary care to homeless and vulnerably housed people. Many of the York Street Practice patients require care and support relating to mental health, and drug or alcohol dependency. The service also provides advice and support relating to housing – especially those who are, or at risk of, rough sleeping. The service works closely with a range of statutory and third sector partners including Leeds Housing Options, St George's Crypt and CRI.

Actions

- 1 The new Drug and Alcohol service will be in place by June 2015, and will include housing and employment support
- 2 Establish effective pathways from prison to housing advice and to supported and long term housing services
- 3 Establish effective pathways from residential rehabilitation detox to housing advice, supported and long term housing services
- 4 Review housing and support options for people with the most complex needs and entrenched behaviour
- 5 Improve understanding of housing services and options for drug and alcohol support service workers
- 6 Offer training on drug and alcohol issues and available services to housing practitioners