



An tSeirbhís Phromhaidh
The Probation Service

Drug Use amongst Probation Service clients

Mark Wilson, Director

Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use
Saturday 2nd September 2023

The Probation Service



Safer and more inclusive communities where offending, and its causes, are effectively addressed



National Service

35 offices



Social Work Trained

420 staff



16,000 Clients

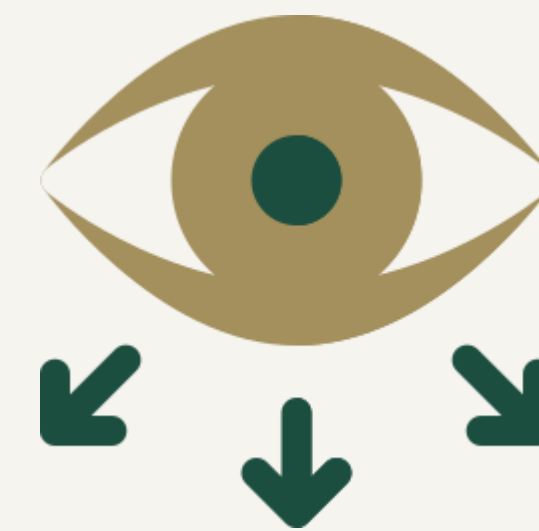
15% Female
7.5% Children
11% Traveller
Community

Who we are



Assessment

13,700 Reports



Supervision

7,500 Orders



Community Support

One third of total budget

What we do

Substance Misuse Research



81%

of clients reported misusing drugs and/or alcohol



most at-risk group

25-34
years old

67%

misused drugs

64%

misused alcohol

binge drinking

44%

identified link between substance misuse and current offence

50%

Other Key Findings



- ✓ **Cannabis / Benzos / Cocaine / Heroin** - highest level of misuse
- ✓ **Males** more likely to misuse cocaine, ecstasy & cannabis
- ✓ **Females** more likely to misuse heroin
- ✓ **79%** of participants with a conviction under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1977 were convicted for possession
- ✓ **25%** engaged with alcohol support services at referral
- ✓ **33%** engaged with drug supports services at referral

Primary Issues



- Healthcare-led prevention
- Diversion from the Criminal Justice System at the earliest point
- Community Sanctions used where appropriate
- Build capacity of all necessary services to respond to need
- Overcoming societal barriers to enable access to meaningful opportunities
- Enhance use of collective data to inform policy and operational outcomes

Key Points To Consider



1



Prevention & Diversion

Avoid criminalisation
where possible

2



Access & Collaboration

Timely access to
appropriate services

3



Engagement & Alignment

Necessary supports in
place to enable people
maintain engagement



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