

# **CONSIDERATION FOR THE NEXT NATIONAL STRATEGY**

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# Starting point is the current Strategy, *Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery, 2017-2025*, and its implementation:

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- Strategy is an “integrated health-led approach”, with 50 actions, each of which was assigned a lead agency, or agencies.
- Current strategy reviewed in 2021, with 6 new strategic priorities- and 6 Strategic Implementation Groups (SIGs).
- Challenges in delivering a multi-agency strategy –particularly in holding people accountable.
- Structure is there –lead agencies reporting back to National Oversight Committee (directly or through the SIGs), but will only deliver the actions if those with responsibility are held to account.
- This matters because the strategy is about reducing harm, so time is important.

# What should be in the next Strategy?

10 Regional Task Forces and 14 Local Task Forces across the country, covering very diverse areas, with differing needs.

Strategy should address whatever is required to reduce the harm- the legal framework, policies, services/interventions, and the resources required in order to deliver the strategic actions and goals.

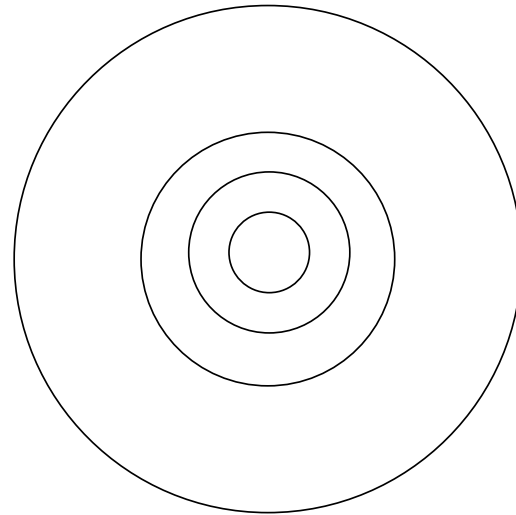
Identify the needs – by reference to recognised standards or by other agreed measures.

My own thoughts:

- The Strategy must contain commitments, not aspirations
- The State must acknowledge the scale and extent of the problem, and acknowledge that it has primary responsibility for solving it
- The health-led approach requires a considered response to the full extent of the problem – from prevention and education right through to supporting recovery
- Whole of Government response – eg housing, education
- The Strategy should be costed, funding secured for its delivery, and resources allocated on the basis of evidence-based need.
- Services must be available across the State – and must be user-friendly, appropriate to the needs, and sustainable.
- Provision must be made for meeting needs specific to certain areas or regions.

# Circles of Influence

The legal framework influences the policy and service response to drug misuse.



The primary requirement for saving lives and reducing harm will be the implementation of the strategy. Effective implementation will only happen if those in power prioritise the actions and ensure that they are delivered in a timely fashion.