

# Scottish Families

*Supporting anyone affected by alcohol and drugs across Scotland*

## WINTER

January 2020  
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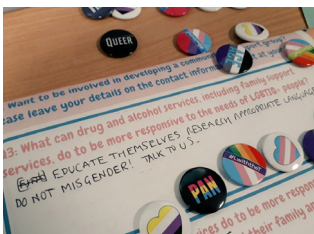
### My Family, My Rights

Read about our developments with our My Family, My Rights programme including our Glasgow event **p.4-5**



### Dundee Hope Festival

We share our findings and summary of our Dundee Hope Festival event in October 2019 **p.6-7**



### LGBTQI+ Working Group

Read about the developments of the Glasgow LGBTQI+ Substance Use Working Group **p.12-13**

### Dundee Drugs Commission

In August last year, the final report by the Dundee Drugs Commission was published, outlining a range of measures to reduce drug-related deaths and mend “a fractured system”. In his Foreword to the report, the Commission Chair Robert Peat noted that “We believe that a shared culture is needed which values kindness, compassion and the belief in hope”. Whilst the report made many service-specific, and even technical, recommendations throughout, it was this cultural change focusing on values, relationships and the possibility of change which threaded through the report, and which inspired the title.

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# Winter

A slight change in our usual rota, we are releasing our winter newsletter at the end of January rather than December! But that just means that we've been able to write-up so much more exciting pieces to share with you.

Our My Family, My Rights programme is ongoing and we hosted our events in the Scottish Highlands and Glasgow in November. At our Glasgow event, our young person's project Routes performed their own play 'What About Us?' which was an incredibly honest account of the impact of addiction on young people. We also have our final event for My Family, My Rights in Fife in February this year and more details will follow.

Our Communities team has put together a summary of the now well-known Dundee Hope Festival that took place in October 2019, and we also have further information on our exciting work with the Glasgow LGBTQI+ Substance Use Working Group.

Our CEO Justina summarises her recent meeting with the Dundee Drugs Commission, and we talk about the work we've been doing with the Scottish Prison Service and Sodexo.

To keep up to date with all of our latest news make sure to follow our social media channels (Twitter [@ScotFamADrugs](#), Facebook [@ScottishFamiliesAffectedByDrugs](#), and Instagram [@ScotFamADrugs](#)).

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## Mailing List

Want to stay up to date with all the latest news from us? Sign-up to our mailing list and we'll send you our monthly bulletin and other updates.

Sign-up here: <http://eepurl.com/c9oCYb>

# A word from Justina

I've never been one for New Year's resolutions (although I am enjoying everyone else sharing their pain on Twitter about how they are surviving their Dry January, daily gym visits and joyless diets...) but I do like the fresh start idea. Out with the old and in with the new. Despite the cold and the dark, a new year is a time of hope and anticipation – a chance to look ahead and make new plans.

I do love a plan, and am no doubt in a minority of one within the team to be bursting with excitement as we start the process of developing our new strategic plan this year. We launched 'It's All Relative', our strategic plan for 2017-20, at our family conference in Stirling in November 2017. At that point I had worked for Scottish Families for all of about five months, and I had hurtled about the country gathering views, ideas and suggestions before we combined them into something resembling a plan. Despite its speedy gestation, 'It's All Relative' has served us well over the past few years, and it is rewarding to see so many of the commitments in that plan come to life.

For example, we now have our Routes young person's project supporting 12-26 year olds; have established Scotland's first Recovery College (somewhat overstepping our commitment to develop a family recovery workbook!); have developed lots of new platforms for families to tell their own stories, including our Behind the Numbers film series; and have recently launched our #MyFamily-MyRights programme to ensure that families are aware of, and can access, their rights. We also ensured (although it did require us to go a bit nuclear at a few meetings) that Scotland's national alcohol and drug strategy – Rights, Respect and Recovery – has families at its heart, including significant commitments around family support, involvement and participation. All of our services are significantly busier, and we have done a lot to make sure families and partner agencies know we are here, what we offer, and how to connect with us, as well as really extending the ways people can reach us. And we have built lots of new partnerships (including with the fabulous

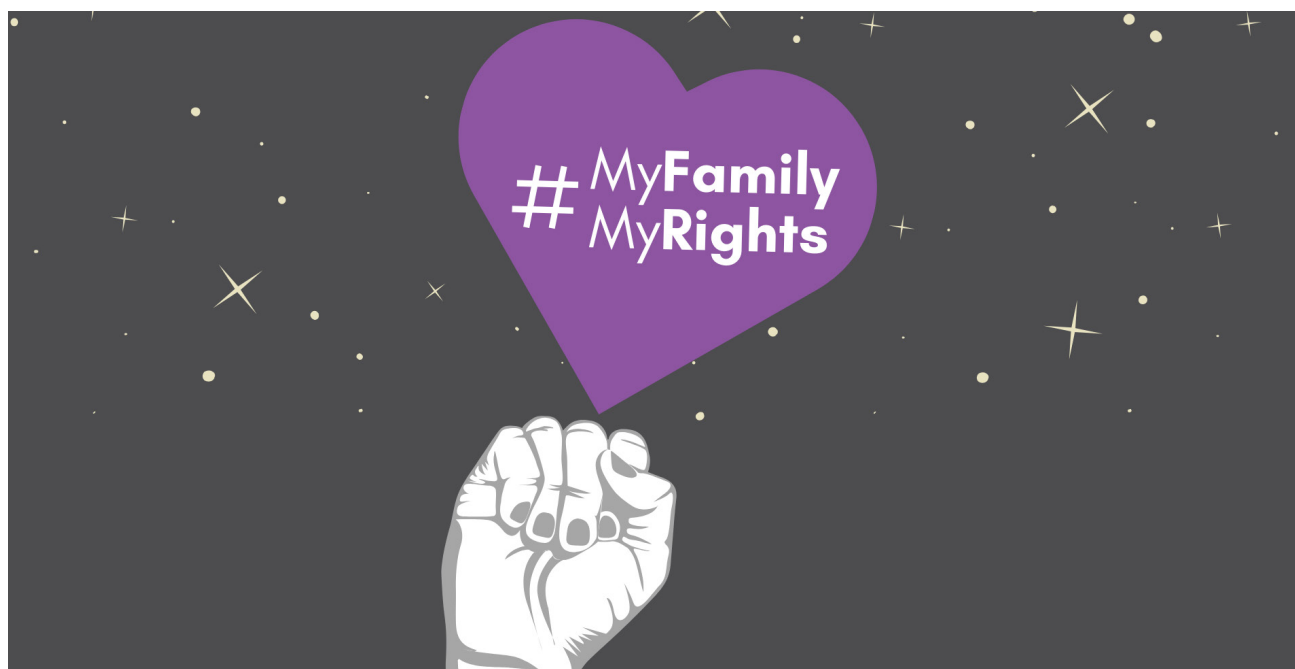
team at the South Lanarkshire Beacons whose whole branding summarises this theme of hope and light in the darkness – I am pictured at their launch event with the fabulous Margaret Halbert, CEO of Liber8, lead partner for the Beacons above).



Of course there are some things which were in our 'It's All Relative' plan which remain on the 'To Do' list. For example there is still very limited coverage of support for adult family members across Scotland, and we clearly have work to do to convince funders and commissioners that investment in this area will reap multiple rewards. We still have a tiny number of volunteers (who are wonderful I have to say), and we are still looking for funding for a dedicated volunteering coordinator, who could support us to grow our volunteer community, including family befrienders. And we would still love to develop a programme around conflict resolution and family mediation, supporting families to reconnect and rebuild relationships damaged through addiction.

So January is a good time to start thinking about new starts and new beginnings. To be full of hope and optimism that change is within our reach, and good times lie ahead. We know that barriers and challenges are all over the place. Just in the past week we've heard about families facing nine month waits for toxicology results after a loved one's sudden death, about tiresome politics around the date of the UK Drugs Summit in Glasgow, and about people being turned away from treatment services when they are reaching out for help (leaving families to act as unpaid carer, case manager and advocate all in one). But we also know we can use our position as Scotland's leading organisation for families affected by substance use, a weighty evidence base around family support, and our strong and enduring relationships with families to champion good practice and effect change where it is needed. The time is now! - Justina

# My Family, My Rights



Back in October 2019, we announced that we were launching a new programme of work called My Family, My Rights. The programme sets out to help make sure that the rights and commitments outlined in the Scottish Government's national alcohol and drug strategy 'Rights, Respect and Recovery' become reality for families across Scotland.

The strategy recognises that 'The Whole Family Needs Support', and defines families as anyone who is concerned about someone else's drug or alcohol use, including family members, Carers, friends, neighbours, siblings, older children, partners, parents, formal and informal kinship Carers, work colleagues, and anyone we may have missed.

Our My Family, My Rights programme includes:

- My Family, My Rights events (in Glasgow, Scottish Highlands, and Fife)
- Campaigning and awareness raising so families are aware of their new rights commitments, how to access them and what to do if their rights are not upheld;
- Learning and development – so

families and the workforce can learn more about a rights-based approach for families and how to bring this to life;

- Advocacy training for our staff and volunteers – so our work is embedded in a robust rights-based framework (working in partnership with Reach Advocacy); and
- Advocacy support for families – so we can test out whether families need additional support to access their rights, and how this can best be delivered across Scotland.

There has been a lot of planning with the advocacy training Reach Advocacy is delivering and our support staff member Gill Harmon will be taking on the training in the next few months. On our first week back from the Christmas holidays our staff team was trained by Patricia Clark from Carers Scotland in 'Self Advocacy' which was fantastic and very informative.

So far we have had our events in the Scottish Highlands including Fort William, Inverness and, Wick. And we've also had our Glasgow event which included our AGM (Claire Wadsworth has written about the event on the next page).

## My Family, My Rights Glasgow Event

Our My Family, My Rights Glasgow event was held in the beautiful Royal College of Physicians on St. Vincent Street in Glasgow on a grey November afternoon.

The cold weather was soon forgotten when family members, people in recovery and professionals gathered together to enjoy what was to become an afternoon of differing emotions.

Comedian Gary Little was the host for the event, and he soon had the audience in stitches with stories of his life growing up in Glasgow. He then introduced the young people from our Routes drama group to the stage.

***'I really enjoyed it, funny and very emotive too.'***

After many weeks of blood, sweat and tears (from the Scottish Families staff!) the premiere of **'What About Us?'** was finally here. The young performers were excited and anxious in equal measure. However they needn't have worried, they pulled off an amazing performance that had most of the audience in tears. They showed unbelievable courage and strength to perform such an emotive play in front of such a large audience. You would never guess that none of them had ever done anything like this before. The first thing one of them said when they came off the stage was, *'when can we do it again?!'*

***'The drama was so powerful. Especially the idea around people wearing masks to hide what is going on. I couldn't stop crying at that part as it really hit home.'***

Other talented teenagers from Routes had their beautiful photographs on display in the hallway, depicting scenes of what was important to them and what made them feel safe.

***'It was an amazing and touching day, the girls did so well. It was a great insight into how much you help the***



***families affected.'***

But it wasn't all about the youngsters, our very own Colin McIntosh spoke about his recovery and the impact his drinking had on his family. His heartbreakingly brave and honest account resonated with many of our audience members.

The event went a long way in breaking down stigma but also showing what it's like for young people living in a home where drugs or alcohol are a normal sight. These young voices are not often heard, so it was lovely that they were being heard by such a receptive audience.

Thank you to everyone who came along and made it the success it was and for your kind comments!

***'It was a mix of many emotions from extreme hilarity to deep pain. That's the true nature of addiction for all involved. It was a wonderful reminder for us ladies in recovery what could have been, in some cases was and is now better. We all heal together which was the fabulous message we took away. We all love to be spoiled so the venue and food were exquisite. Here's hoping 2020 brings a lot more families together in a healthy loving home free from addiction.'***



# Dundee Hope Festival October 2019

The 19th of October 2019 marked the very first Dundee Hope Festival hosted by Scottish Families in partnership with a huge group of organisations, agencies and community members who were instrumental in bringing it all together.

The Festival aimed to bring the whole Dundee community together to challenge stigma and send a message of hope to people who use drugs and alcohol and their families and friends. It is with warm hearts that we announce that over 500 people travelled from across the region to celebrate hope and challenge stigma.

***'All very informative and uplifting with music and song. Helped me to challenge my thoughts when becoming frustrated with siblings struggling with addiction.'***

When Ash from Scottish Families had her first planning meeting with partners from Dundee she heard their message loud and clear - Dundee often gets a bad rap in the media about drug and alcohol problems but there is an important story that is often left untold. This story is one of a Dundee community that is supportive, compassionate, loving and holds a space for hope for people impacted by their own or someone else's alcohol and/or drug use.



It's through an approach of compassion, connection and hope that communities can come together to support each other, challenge stigma and make sure that there are people,



places and support services that will welcome those impacted with open arms.

***'Keep it going, so important for families and people caught up in addiction to come together.'***

When we engage with our empathy we know that people who are having difficulty with their own drug and alcohol use are often coping with much deeper challenges such as those born out of poor emotional wellbeing and mental health, trauma, inequality or challenging life circumstances. Similarly, we know that the families and friends in their lives are doing their best to cope with the pain of seeing their loved one in pain and embarking on the challenging task of looking after their own wellbeing in the process.

This shouldn't be an experience that anyone goes through in isolation. We need communities behind us to have our backs, remind us we are doing our best and guide us towards support or different ways of thinking when we need it and are ready.

Whilst there's no denying the ongoing impact of stigma, the Dundee Hope Festival has shown us that there is a groundswell of people in Dundee who are there to support and inspire hope.

***‘Need to make sure this happens next year too. Dundee, city of hope and recovery, where people care for each other.’***

The way that services, community members and all partners came together to bring the festival to life was nothing short of inspiring. Our planning meetings were packed and every single person at the table put their time and energy towards making the festival what it was. We often ran out of chairs, rarely all fit comfortably around the table and our meetings were full of passion and community spirit. On the day of the Festival, we were blown away by an attendance of over 500 people (not including our many volunteers and partners). People from all walks of life attended – people in different stages of change or recovery, families, friends, professionals, politicians, media, and community members who popped in to see what it was all about and show their support.

Thanks to JustBee Productions, we watched incredible musicians. Many with their own experience of drug and alcohol-related difficulties shared their talents and stories with us. We listened to inspiring speakers. We trained 43 people in administering Naloxone thanks to the help of Addaction and Tayside Substance Misuse Service. We watched #BehindTheNumbers videos showing the stories of families and friends and providing information about the Scottish Recovery Consortium’s Lived Experience Network. We ate food, rode Re-Discover Dundee E-Trikes, got our faces painted, did some amazing art, and connected with one another.

We issued a challenge to stigma, made a case for the power of communities to come together to make a change and we had fun in the process. But don’t take our word for it! Here’s what our attendees said in our anonymous event survey:

- **94.52% of people rated Dundee Hope Festival as ‘Excellent’ or ‘Very Good’**

- **87.14% of people said they were ‘Extremely Likely’ to recommend the Dundee Hope Festival to a friend or colleague**

We would like to thank the National Lottery Community Fund, Dundee Alcohol and Drug Partnership and Dundee Volunteer and Voluntary Action for funding the event.

We would like to thank Mr. Joe Fitzpatrick MSP, Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing for opening the event and showing your support on the day.

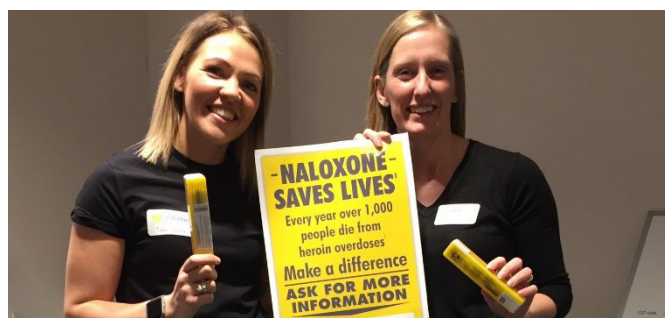
Finally, we would like to thank our amazing partners without whom the event couldn’t have happened.

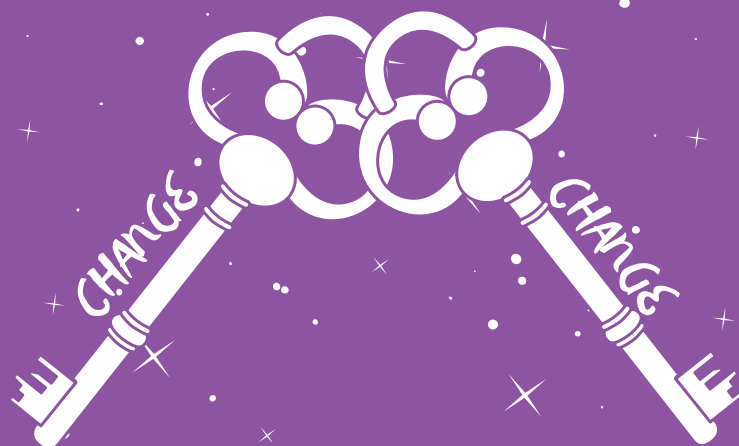
The Dundee Hope Festival 2019 was a Connecting Families event from Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs in partnership with The Steeple Church, Just Bee Productions, Hillcrest Futures, Recovery Dundee, Dundee Alcohol and Drug Partnership, Volunteer Dundee, Addaction, RecoverTay, Crossreach, Dundee City Council, Police Scotland, Dundee Integrated Substance Misuse Services, Positive Steps, Street Soccer Dundee and the Scottish Recovery Consortium.

### **Dundee Hope Festival 2020:**

We are delighted to announce that we are working alongside JustBee Productions to handover the hosting of the Dundee Hope Festival for 2020. JustBee Productions have offered to lead on the planning and delivery of the festival in the coming year and we look forward to continuing to support Dundee communities to challenge stigma and bring people together in the spirit of hope.

We hope to see you at Dundee Hope Festival 2020!





# #MyFamilyMyRights Keys to Change

Come to our free event hosting Fife services and organisations that all have something to say about your rights and how you can understand and access things you are entitled to.

**Saturday 22nd February 2020**  
**Beverage Studio, Adam Smith Theatre,**  
**Kirkcaldy**  
**Time: 12:00pm - 4:00pm**



Registered charity:  
SC034737

**LUNCH INCLUDED**  
**FREE KIDS ACTIVITIES**  
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# Routes Christmas Party



During the Christmas period, our young person's project Routes was busy with a family Christmas party at the Milngavie Town Hall in early December.

Families from East and West Dunbartonshire came together for an evening filled with dancing, games, pampering, and of course, a visit from Santa himself!

Our monthly support group was our busiest yet with young people making gifts for their loved ones, makeup tutorials with a makeup artist, cake decorating and outdoor sports.

We were lucky enough to receive donations of Christmas presents from Cash for Kids, The National Lottery Community Fund Scotland and KidsOut charity, meaning all of our young people were given a Christmas present – so thank you.

Routes is our young person's project in East and West Dunbartonshire that supports 12-26 year olds with one-to-one support and group support.

The project gives young people the opportunity to be involved in the designing, developing and testing of our new programme of support for young people affected by alcohol or drug use in the family.

To come to the group or have a chat about it you can contact Claire by email, phone or text. Claire can meet you whenever you feel comfortable and you can bring along a friend or relative to your first chat.

Claire Wadsworth:

07387852186  
claire@sfad.org.uk

You can follow all of the latest news from Routes on their Facebook page [@youngpersonsscottishfamilies](https://www.facebook.com/youngpersonsscottishfamilies)

# Kindness, Compassion and Hope? Families and the Dundee Drugs Commission

In August last year, the final report by the Dundee Drugs Commission was published, outlining a range of measures to reduce drug-related deaths and mend “*a fractured system*”. In his Foreword to the report, the Commission Chair Robert Peat noted that “*We believe that a shared culture is needed which values kindness, compassion and the belief in hope*”. Whilst the report made many service-specific, and even technical, recommendations throughout, it was this cultural change focusing on values, relationships and the possibility of change which threaded through the report, and which inspired the title. At the time, I felt the title was perhaps too gentle, and I favoured something slightly more ‘kick-ass’ (with apologies for coarseness!). But I am proud to admit I was wrong (what???? I hear you gasp!) and that actually that focus on connection, relational practice and optimism for the future was absolutely perfect.

I was an active member of the Commission and it was fantastic to be included from the start, along with two local family members Pat Tyrie and Maureen Walker, who brought their own experience to the table (particularly when we’d had one organisational powerpoint presentation too many and there was a serious need to get back to reality). It was an honour to serve on the Commission alongside Pat and Maureen and so many other experts in their field.

So how have things been going as we’ve moved from the launch of the report into the



Figure 1: The Courier

implementation phase?

Starting with the positives (and just saying that you may have a sense of where this is going), there is no doubt that the Commission’s hard lessons around leadership were taken on the chin, particularly by the leader of the Council and Dundee Partnership Chair John Alexander, and the Council Chief Executive David Martin. They could not have been clearer in subsequent meetings with the Commission that they felt they had taken their eye off this particular ball and that was going to change with immediate effect. At the Dundee Partnership conference in October 2019, which was the first opportunity for the Commission members to hear whether and how their recommendations were going to be put into practice, Cllr Alexander reflected on the shocking statistic that there had been over 400 drug-related deaths in just 10 years in Dundee, and that the “dehumanisation” of those affected had to end. (Plus he got extra brownie points for recognising the passion and commitment of families, and the impact of this).

However also on that day, with the Commission members waiting with bated breath for some detail around implementation plans, very little in the way of concrete actions and changes could be seen. I was not the only one who left Dundee that day with a sense of frustration and even desperation. In my own reflections on being part of the Commission, within our final report I had written that ***“the evidence from Dundee has come thick and fast with no holds barred, and people have shone a powerful light on a broken system which is full of injustice, judgement and complacency. I feel a massive responsibility to all of the people who have shared their stories with us to ensure that their words do effect unprecedented change and improvement across the city”*** (p79). On that day, we were not living up to that responsibility in my view.

Since then, we have received more detailed updates on what is happening locally. My own team were involved with others in planning and delivering Dundee's first Hope Festival in October, where over 500 people came together for a day of recovery-oriented fun, friendship and connection. There are now concrete response arrangements in place following Non Fatal Overdoses in the city, which is very welcome. There is a renewed focus on the contribution of the third sector, the need for the Alcohol and Drug Partnership to be truly empowered, and another push towards locality-based partnership working. A health needs assessment is being undertaken to properly understand Dundee's situation, and there is no doubt that the focus on this issue in the city is helping to unlock new resources and new opportunities.

However in terms of families, much of the focus to date seems to have been on improving the response to children affected by parental substance use, which whilst essential does little to recognise and respond to adult family members who are affected by others' substance use. Parents, partners, siblings, young adults and adult children (many of whom gave powerful and memorable testimony to the Commission) are largely missing in action at this point within

the local improvement plans. There is a real opportunity as we move into 2020 to effect significant change in Dundee by looking again at the Commission's recommendations about families and bringing these to life. Kindness, compassion and hope is for everyone, after all.



Figure 2: The Courier

You can find more information about the Dundee Drugs Commission and the Dundee Partnership response at:

<https://www.dundee.gov.uk/dundee-partnership/dundee-drugs-commission>

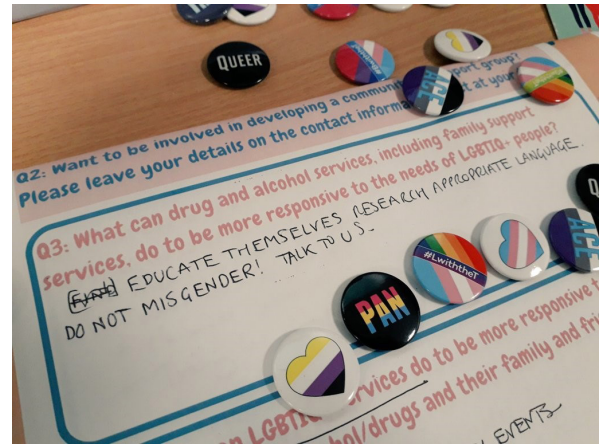
# Glasgow LGBTQI+ Substance Use Working Group

Last year in partnership with Glasgow Council on Alcohol (GCA) Scottish Families established a Glasgow-wide working group focused on addressing drug and alcohol-related health inequalities experienced by LGBTQI+ people, communities and families.

The working group is a partnership between LGBTQI+, drug and alcohol family support organisations and academics. The group has committed to focus on two streams of work - community engagement and service inclusivity. The service inclusivity subgroup is developing and delivering a training pack for drug and alcohol services aimed at increasing sector knowledge and understanding of supporting LGBTQI+ people who use substances and their friends, partners and family members. We know that LGBTQI+ people experience barriers to accessing drug and alcohol support services and the group hopes to engage with partners and Glasgow based organisations to improve their confidence and knowledge around working with LGBTQI+ people impacted by substance use.

The community engagement subgroup is focusing on grassroots engagement and development with LGBTQI+ communities. In December Scottish Families co-hosted a Community Discussion event in partnership with LGBT Health and Wellbeing and Glasgow Council on Alcohol. This started a conversation around drug and alcohol use in LGBTQI+ communities and how LGBTQI+ people can come together to support one another.

Alongside Ash from Scottish Families we had some fantastic panellists attend on the day including Adrienne Hannah (Scottish Drug Forum), Oceana Maund (Scottish Trans, Equality Alliance), Michaela Jones (Scottish Recovery Consortium), Judith Schooling (Pride in Recovery, Mungo Foundation) and David



Barbour (Glasgow Council on Alcohol).

The conversation touched on topics such as the impact of discrimination and isolation on mental health and substance use, a lack of alcohol and drug free LGBTQI+ spaces, a sense of dislocation from LGBTQI+ community for people in recovery, how LGBTQI+ communities can support each other, barriers to accessing LGBTQI+ responsive drug and alcohol services, and diverse ways in which LGBTQI+ form support networks and define 'family'. Kelly Minio-Paluello from LGBT Health and Wellbeing skilfully facilitated an interesting and thought-provoking discussion and we are delighted to work in partnership with so many passionate and skilled individuals and organisations.

We have some exciting new plans with Glasgow Council on Alcohol and other working group partners to co-develop a community-led drug and alcohol health campaign to address the disproportionate drug and alcohol-related harm experienced by LGBTQI+ people, families and communities.

We will be planning a launch event for this campaign in late March 2020 so watch this space if you are interested in coming along and seeing what it's all about.

Ash from Scottish Families warmly welcomes contact from anyone who wants to find out more about our work in the LGBTQI+ space. If anything has sparked your interest please get in touch! [ash@sfad.org.uk](mailto:ash@sfad.org.uk)

You can follow the Glasgow LGBTQI+ Substance Use Working Group on Twitter at: [@LGBTQISubUse](https://twitter.com/LGBTQISubUse)



## LGBT Substance Use Working Group: 2019 in Review



4 training sessions delivered

**4 groupwork sessions**



**35 staff trained**

**Total Reach: 116,071**  
**Engagement: 957**  
**Impressions: 31,881**  
**Retweets: 91**  
**URL Clicks: 48**



22 people engaged

### Alcohol Brief Interventions



**97 direct engagements**

**60 screenings**

**17 ABIs**



### Other Work

- LGBT Recovery Group started - Mungo Foundation
- LGBT Experiences of Alcohol Services Research - Glasgow Caledonian University
- Funding secured for LGBTQI Substance Use harm reduction campaign & website

### Events



**Community Discussion Event with LGBTQ Health & Wellbeing:**

**25 attendees**

powered by



# Prison Support Work (Scottish Prison Service & Sodexo)

Our Scottish Families support services can be contacted through a range of different channels –phone, webchat, email, etc. This allows families to get support when and where they need it most, but what about our communities who are serving a custodial sentence or on remand and therefore unable to access our support in the same way as the rest of the population?

To minimise this barrier, we are promoting our services through the Scottish Prison Service National Recovery Network. Scottish Families are a member organisation of this network and we promote our services through it. All of the prison establishments are represented on this network so they have access to our support information and how they can refer people into our services.

A brilliant piece of work was developed to support HMP Kilmarnock through the Community Links Drop-In. Previously a third sector organisation managed the throughcare support for the men leaving HMP Kilmarnock, however, when the funding for this was no longer available, an alternative was put in place before the third sector service withdrew. Scottish Families were invited to be part of this service and we have been offering direct support to the men for over a year now.

Community Justice Ayrshire now manages the coordination of the Community Links drop-in service. Services attend the drop-in every two weeks on a rota-basis. Each session has 10 services attending, offering a range of support with family support, addiction, recovery support, housing, counselling, employment, health and wellbeing, and advocacy.

The Scottish Families drop-in sessions are

always popular as our Helpline Development Officer Suzie Gallagher takes in a lot of biscuits so the men have something to look forward to on top of receiving incredible support – it's also an icebreaker to encourage the men to get involved. Suzie provides direct support to anybody who has a concern about their loved one's alcohol and/or drug use. If the person has difficulties with their own alcohol and/or drug use, Suzie supports them too with a recovery peer from the local addiction support services. Suzie also arranges bereavement counselling support within HMP Kilmarnock for anyone who has lost a loved one to an alcohol or drug-related death.

The Community Links Drop-In service is an incredible resource and we are passionate about carrying this on.

## Emergency Services

The Police, Fire and Ambulance services regularly meet families impacted by someone else's alcohol and/or drug use through their day-to-day work. Scottish Families have been working hard to build strong links with the emergency services to make sure families have accessed support in the easiest way possible.

We have delivered briefings to operational staff within Police, Fire and Ambulance services about Scottish Families' support services, highlighting that appropriate support for families can have a positive impact on their loved one's alcohol and/or drug use, and may then reduce the need for emergency services to be involved.

Scottish Families, Police Scotland and the Scottish Ambulance Service held an

information day named 'Caithness Initiative' in Thurso last year. Fire service, health professionals, educational representatives, addiction services and community groups all came together to learn more about supporting families.

Suzie highlighted how therapeutic interventions for families (e.g. our support service Telehealth) can have a positive impact on their loved one and improve the wellbeing of the families. As Caithness is a rural area, this was a direct way to discuss the barriers affecting families and how our Telehealth service can support families. Since the information day, we have had an increase in referrals from Caithness which was previously under-represented.

We will continue working with the emergency services across Scotland to make sure the communities they serve can access our support should they need it.

*'I feel that Police Scotland have gone above and beyond what is required to support me. Without them, I wouldn't have known that your service exists and now I have real hope for the future.'*

*'It's amazing to know that my local community officer still thinks of me 10 months after the death of my daughter and thought about me when he heard about your service. You assume that Police are relieved when your drug-using relative dies as it's one less hassle for them to deal with but that is so not the case.'*

**Are you worried about  
someone's alcohol and/or  
drug use?**

**Contact our helpline for  
information and support**

**08080 10 10 11**

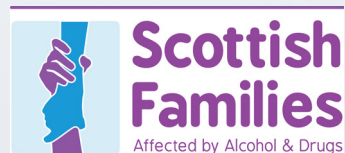
**helpline@sfad.org.uk**

**webchat online [www.sfad.org.uk](http://www.sfad.org.uk)**

 **@ScotFamADrugs**

 **@ScottishFamiliesAffectedByDrugs**

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Recognised Scottish Charity SC034737



# Self Advocacy

On our first week back after the Christmas holidays, we took part in Self Advocacy training with Patricia Clark from Carers Scotland.

Carers Scotland has an entire website filled with resources for Carers in Scotland and also for paid support workers.

We've put together some of the information that was shared in the training below but we recommend the Carers Scotland's website for access to all resources.

Since 2011, Carers Scotland has been working with the Scottish Government to develop self-advocacy resources for Carers.

While some Carers have access to advocacy in Scotland, many others do not. They have to navigate a confusing system, get their message across in difficult situations and cope with complex thoughts and emotions.

## What is self-advocacy?

Caring can be rewarding in its own way but it can also be very isolating, and Carers may not know what help to ask for, how to ask, or indeed who to ask. Self-advocacy means enabling a person to get their own voice heard. For a Carer, this means speaking up for themselves and for the person they are caring for. There is nothing mysterious about self-advocacy; it's just about someone knowing how to communicate their concerns in a way that gives them the best chance of getting a positive outcome.

## Carers Rights

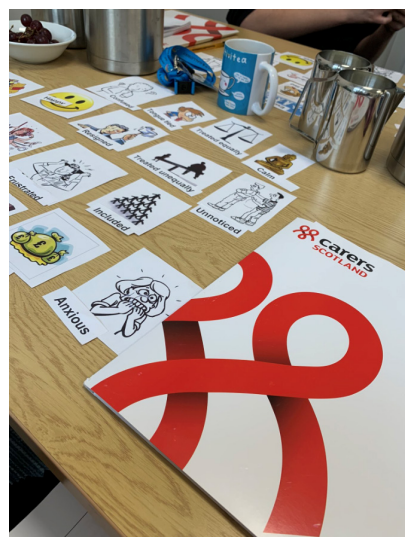
- To ask for a 'Carers support plan'
- To have a life outside of caring
- To choose what you are willing and not willing to do in your caring role
- To make decisions with someone who can

no longer make decisions for themselves (Power of Attorney/Guardianship)

- Be protected from disability discrimination 'by association'
- Ask for an Assessment of Need for a child with additional support needs
- Raise concerns about a vulnerable adult
- Potentially claim benefits
- Could become a 'named person' for someone who is mentally unwell
- Ask for flexible working arrangements

## Carers also have a right to:

- Be treated fairly
- Be given information in layman's terms
- Be given clear answers to your questions
- Have time to voice your concerns
- Feel your opinions are valued
- To have your needs considered
- To be protected against discrimination



## Emotions and Thinking – taken from a self-advocacy guide for Carers in The Carers Self-Advocacy Toolkit p.29

### Understanding Family Relationships

When it comes to family relationships, most of the rules about communication and assertiveness that are listed in the Carers Scotland Self-Advocacy Guide apply. However, the key difference is that family relationships bring more emotions and history than other kinds of relationships.

Some families get on very well and provide each other with invaluable help and support. However, many families are not emotionally close and rifts, rivalries, personality clashes, and family breakdowns are a fact of life.

For many people, things can become particularly difficult when a family member becomes unwell or vulnerable. These days it is quite common for siblings and relatives to be spread across the country or even the world. It is also fairly usual for one family member to take on the main caring role, with other relations contributing to where and when they can. In many cases, other family members may not have any role in caring for their relative. There is no norm, so as a Carer, you just have to work with the circumstances you face.

It is worth remembering that most people have the best intentions for the family member who needs care – even though their ways of doing things may differ greatly to yours. If they haven't got much of a caring role for the person you look after, it may be that they feel guilty about this situation but find it difficult to say. Maybe they don't want to seem like they are interfering in the caring role by taking an active part themselves. Maybe they feel left out or even envious of the closeness you have to the relative you are caring for. Maybe they feel uncomfortable in a caring role, or they think you are happy to carry on providing the amount of care you are providing. If some

family members have never been close to the person being looked after, they may try and 'make amends' or on the other hand, they may still want to keep their distance.

If you are experiencing hostility or unhelpfulness from a family member (including the person you are caring for) it's very important that you have a support network around you when things are difficult. Spending time with supportive people will help, along with the stress management and mindfulness techniques. Try and limit the time spend with those who get you down and make sure you get breaks when you really need them, however short. If the person you care for is creating the bad feeling, explain – if you are able to – that you are doing your best in difficult circumstances and explain what your needs are.

All resources from Carers Scotland on Self Advocacy can be found on their website. [www.carerscotland.org/scotland/training-resources](http://www.carerscotland.org/scotland/training-resources)



carerscotland.org

### Being Heard: A self-advocacy guide for carers



# Scottish Families Helpline Trends

From October to December 2019 we had **334** contacts to our helpline. This is a 40% increase from the same period in 2018. We have been seeing a steady rise in contacts to our helpline over the past 12 months.

From the 334 people who contacted us, 54% were family members concerned about someone else's alcohol and/or drug use.

20% were people who said they were experiencing problems with alcohol and/or drugs and looking for support for themselves.

And 12% of contacts were people looking for bereavement support.

Contacting by phone is still the most popular with our webchat being not far behind.

Phone call – 30%  
Webchat – 24%  
Email – 18%  
Third-party referrals – 10%  
Website contact form – 8%  
Text – 6%  
Online community – 4%

The majority of people who contacted us mentioned that it was someone else's cocaine use that was concerning them. The 'top' substances recorded on our helpline were:

Cocaine – 24%  
Alcohol – 24%  
Heroin – 10%  
Benzodiazepines – 9%  
Cannabis – 9%  
Methadone – 7%

We also received contacts from every council area in Scotland with the exception of Shetland and the Western Isles.

Scottish Families' helpline advisers are here to support you if you are concerned about someone else's alcohol and/or drug use. We can chat, offer advice and information, and link you either into our services or services local to you.

Contact us:

08080 10 10 11  
helpline@sfad.org.uk

Support for families  
affected by  
alcohol and drugs

PHONE: 08080 10 10 11  
EMAIL: HELPLINE@SFAD.ORG.UK  
WEBCHAT: WWW.SFAD.ORG.UK  
GENERAL: INFO@SFAD.ORG.UK



# Aberdeenshire Family Support Service

Carly has settled into her role as the Family Support Development Officer in Aberdeenshire. She has been working with the existing family support groups in Banff, Macduff, Peterhead, and Inverurie. There are also plans to set up new family support groups, with a focus on getting one up and running in South Aberdeenshire. If you or someone you know may be interested in attending a new or existing family support group, please get in touch with Carly. Alternatively, if you or someone you know could benefit from some advice, signposting, or one to one support, Carly would be pleased to hear from you. Evening appointments can be arranged. (Email: [carly@sfad.org.uk](mailto:carly@sfad.org.uk) Mobile: 07879674061)

One family member who has been engaging with the Aberdeenshire family support service wrote:

***'I actually look forward to our appointments, because I feel I can be completely honest and open and I won't be judged. You've helped me find me again as a person and you've given me belief back in myself.'***

In October, George Charlton visited Aberdeen to teach Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) to a group of 18 peers and professionals. CRAFT is a behavioural program that teaches family members how to engage with their loved ones to encourage them into treatment whilst avoiding confrontation and detachment. There was a lot to take in over the two days, but George did a great job of keeping everyone engaged, and made sure that everyone left feeling **'Craft Daft!'** If organisations are interested in becoming CRAFT trained, please get in touch with us at Scottish Families or contact George directly. To find out more about George, or the CRAFT technique, please visit his



website:

<https://georgecharlton.com/craft/>

The Recovery Star Awards, hosted by Alcohol and Drugs Action, will take place on Thursday 26th March at Pittodrie Stadium in Aberdeen. The Alcohol & Drugs Action Recovery Star Awards is an annual event, held to recognise and celebrate the achievements of our service users, volunteers, staff, and partners in making recovery possible. If you know someone in Aberdeen or Aberdeenshire who you would like to nominate, visit [www.alcoholanddrugsaction.org.uk](http://www.alcoholanddrugsaction.org.uk) for more info. The cut-off date for nominations is Thursday 27nd February.



# It's Kiltwalk Time!

Grab your trainers, your kilt and your sponsor forms – #TeamSFAD is gearing up for another summer filled with Kiltwalk fundraising and we want you to be part of our biggest ever team!

The Kiltwalk is a unique charity event that lets walkers raise money for any Scottish charity of their choice. **The event is supported by Sir Tom Hunter and The Hunter Foundation who boost fundraising so every pound you raise gets a 50% boost – if you raise £100 we as a charity get £150!**

There are four Kiltwalks across Scotland in Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, and Edinburgh. In each city, you have the choice to walk 6, 15 or 26 miles so there is something for you no matter what size of challenge you want to take on.

As a small charity, every walker makes a big difference. We have to keep raising funds to help us continue our work supporting families. Everyone is impacted by drugs and alcohol in Scotland but we believe that no-one has to suffer the consequences alone.



Anyone who walks for Scottish Families gets their place for FREE, all we ask is that you try and raise a minimum of £100 sponsorship. Walkers get a Scottish Families t-shirt and fundraising pack, as well as food, snacks, and water on the day provided by the Kiltwalk.

If you would like more information please contact Fundraising Manager Sarah Campbell, [sarah@sfad.org.uk](mailto:sarah@sfad.org.uk) or 0141 465 7541

[You can sign-up directly to one of the Kiltwalks over on our website here.](#)





**Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs**

**Main Office:** Edward House, 199 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3EX

**Helpline:** 08080 10 10 11

helpline@sfad.org.uk

webchat available at: [www.sfad.org.uk](http://www.sfad.org.uk)

**Twitter:** @ScotFamADrugs

**Facebook:** @ScottishFamiliesAffectedByDrugs

**Instagram:** @ScotFamADrugs

**General enquiries:** 0141 465 7523

**email:** [info@sfad.org.uk](mailto:info@sfad.org.uk)

**website:** [www.sfad.org.uk](http://www.sfad.org.uk)



**Scottish  
Families**

Affected by Alcohol & Drugs

Registered Scottish charity: SC034737