

## **PARALLEL SESSION 1B**

### **Prevention in Practice I**

#### **"Everything you need for a good night out": West Lothian DAT Substance Misuse Communications Campaigns**

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West Lothian Drug Action Team (DAT) is a local multi-agency strategic partnership tasked to co-ordinate local action and priorities on substance misuse as well as implement national strategies on drugs, alcohol and tobacco at local level. Cultural change is a key priority within these strategies. Both local and national statistics highlight that the excessive consumption of alcohol has increased rapidly, particularly amongst young women 16 – 24 years old. This, coupled with media coverage of drug- and alcohol-assisted sexual assaults, raises concern. Research also suggests that there has been a change in the attitudes towards cannabis and a substantial increase in the use of cannabis (with tobacco) among young people.

West Lothian DAT applied for funding from the Scottish Executive to produce a health promotion leaflet to target young women, highlighting the associated dangers of excessive drinking. West Lothian DAT were awarded £20,000 to develop the leaflet along with a cinema campaign. The ten “best practice” steps set out in Communities Scotland’s National Standards for Community Engagement were applied. The leaflet, in the shape of a pink handbag, was market-tested with young women in West Lothian and launched in partnership with two local nightclubs. “The Trouble with...” cinema campaign consists of a series of slides covering information on cannabis, tobacco, alcohol and solvents with links to a dedicated website. The campaign was selected as a finalist for the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) awards 2005.

A multi-agency group spent time working on a similar resource “Fags & Hash” to address tobacco and cannabis. The campaigns received extensive media coverage and have been showcased in two prestigious West Lothian Council partnership best practice events. West Lothian DAT has been awarded additional funding from the Scottish Executive to produce a male equivalent to the pink handbag as a result of its successful evaluation.



West Lothian Drug Action Team

## **Everything You Need for a Good Night Out - West Lothian DAT communications campaigns**

Hilary Smith

Research & Development Officer

West Lothian Drug Action Team

### **West Lothian Drug Action Team**

- West Lothian Drug Action Team (DAT) is a local multi-agency strategic partnership tasked to identify and co-ordinate local action and priorities on substance misuse (alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs)
- There are 22 DATs throughout Scotland
- DATs work closely with the Scottish Executive
- WL DAT structure - 3 tier (Strategic DAT, Operational DAT & subgroups), 2 Support Officers

## West Lothian DAT Communications Activity

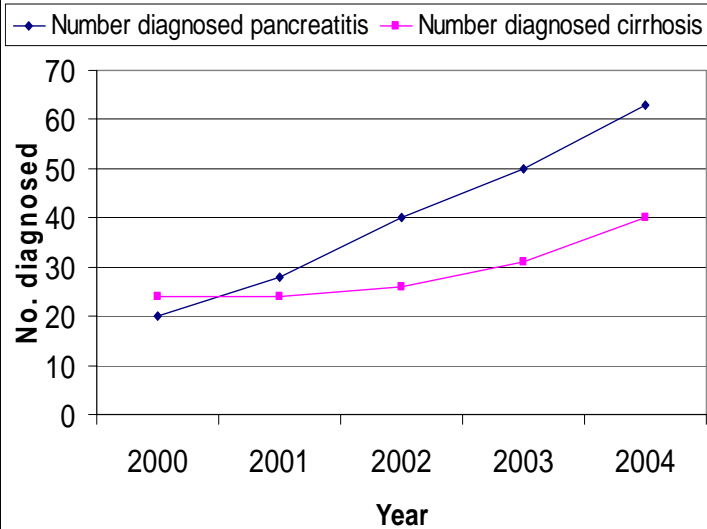
- **Pink Handbag campaign**
- **Beerhead - Comic book campaign**
- Act Your Age poster - proxy purchase campaign
- The Trouble With... - cinema campaign covering cannabis, tobacco, binge drinking & solvent use

## DAT Problem

- 1 in 3 men and 1 in 5 women exceed weekly guidelines for alcohol consumption
- In 1998 the figure was 1 in 4 men and 1 in 10 women
- Dramatic increase in female binge drinking in Scotland and West Lothian
- 16 - 24 year olds are most likely to drink heavily



## Number of alcohol-induced pancreatitis and liver cirrhosis diagnoses in West Lothian



## DAT Solution

- Apply for funding from the Scottish Executive Alcohol Communications budget
- Produce an innovative, non-preachy campaign, targeting young women in West Lothian, on the associated dangers of excessive alcohol consumption



## **Process**

- West Lothian DAT allocated £10k from communications budget to produce resource
- DAT Communications Subgroup was established to ensure that all key partners were represented
- Representation included: voluntary sector, police, young people's support services, schools, specialist alcohol services, NHS Lothian, Communications firm & DAT Research & Development Officer

## **Development**

- Group decided to produce an information leaflet containing local support services contact numbers
- Innovative design (pink handbag) was applied in order to appeal to the target group (young women)
- Draft leaflet was market tested with target audience to ensure effectiveness
- Development of pink handbag followed the 10 best practice steps set out in the national standards for community engagement to ensure that resources were used efficiently, effectively and fairly to create a worthwhile campaign

## Pink Handbag - women & alcohol resource

- Pink handbag resource was launched in a local nightclub in April 2005
- 20,000 handbags have been produced and distributed widely throughout West Lothian
- Evaluation of the resource was done in January 2006



## Evaluation Results

- 88% of respondents agreed that the pink handbag resource was attractive and easy to understand and **all** respondents understood the campaign's message
- 67% of respondents were not aware of the existence of all services listed in the leaflet
- Additional comments included:
  - “Excellent leaflet - very popular with female clients - eye-catching & memorable”
  - “It's very cool - a male equivalent would be good”
  - “It's a good idea and helps us understand better without giving us a lecture”
  - “I want a real one!!!!”

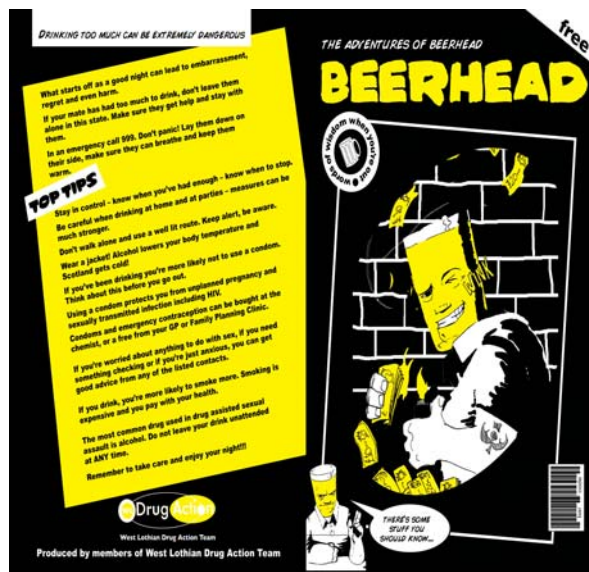
## Next Steps

- Several other DATs in Scotland are rolling out the pink handbag as a result of its success
- Pink handbag has been selected as a top finalist (out of 500 entries) for the national APSE awards
- West Lothian DAT is due to launch a male equivalent resource to the pink handbag



## Beerhead

- Targets young men and highlights the associated dangers of excessive drinking
- Resource covers sexual health, smoking, violence, drink & drug use
- Due to be launched in West Lothian in October



## **Contact Details**

If you would like more information on the work of West Lothian DAT please contact:

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