



## **Substance Misuse Service**

**Annual Report 2016-17**

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## Introduction

This report provides an overview of all our activity through the year and outlines our objectives for the forthcoming year.

The Social Care Substance Misuse Team is a small team of dedicated Social Workers based in Llanelli but covering the whole of the county.

We are co-located in an integrated substance misuse centre with the Community Drug & Alcohol Team CDAT (Hywel Dda Health Board), and Dyfed Drug and Alcohol Service DDAS. We have a Professional Lead/Acting Team Manager, Consultant Social Worker, 4 Social Workers and Business Support Officer.

## Working in Partnership

The service is a jointly managed service between **adult and children's services**, this was the first in Wales, and the team were recognised during a British Association of Social Work award ceremony at Cardiff Bay for their contribution to innovative Social Work.

We provide representation across children's and adult management teams and provide consistent representation at the Homelessness Forum & at MARAC, the domestic abuse risk management meeting. We also work with our Safeguarding Team in order to offer direct support to vulnerable adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect.

During 2016/17, work has continued with our partners to deliver an integrated care pathway for adults with

substance misuse problems. This work has also extended to working in partnership on a regional basis across Ceredigion & Pembrokeshire, in particular with our social care colleagues, and in response to changes in presenting need from our service user group.

We continue to extend the range of services within our multi agency base at **Vaughan Street** in Llanelli, DDAS provide needle exchange, open access to advice, & information. This is in addition to the structured work undertaken by social workers, nurses & substance misuse workers.

We continue to support the Wallich in developing the dry house project '**Derwen Newydd,**' a safe and supported short term environment for vulnerable people who are abstinent but require support to regain their confidence and independent living skills.

This project has been monitored via a quarterly steering group and has evolved with our support to provide a safe and protected environment to vulnerable people. We have been in negotiations with the provider to develop a down-stairs room to safely accommodate people with mobility problems, and hope to progress this in 2017-2018. Our team has also delivered a 'Step Forward' group work at Derwen Newydd to assist people to move back into the community.

Our **Hidden Harm Project** focusses on parental substance misuse and minimising the risks to families. Our

Consultant Social Worker continues to offer our colleagues in Children's services specialist advice and assistance. This has been further developed by setting up fortnightly meetings with children's services teams to offer support to families quickly.

As part of the service we provide support from the **Young Carer's Service** who provide individual and group based support for young people who live with parental substance misuse

We-ordinate the young person's panel where cases are discussed for young people who are approaching 18 years.

We continue to provide support to carers in line with the Social Services and Well-Being Act. The use of a modest Clients Needs budget and Direct Payments have further assisted families at the point of crisis.

There is a well-established **Information sharing protocol** between teams and this extends to other partnership agencies including Criminal Justice Teams, to allow for a swift exchange of information in order to manage risks and speed up the process of allocating the best service to respond to client need.

This is supported by weekly allocation meetings.. We Chair this meeting on behalf of the partnership, as well as chairing the monthly Operational Development Groups that are set up to monitor trends and respond to challenges in Carmarthenshire.

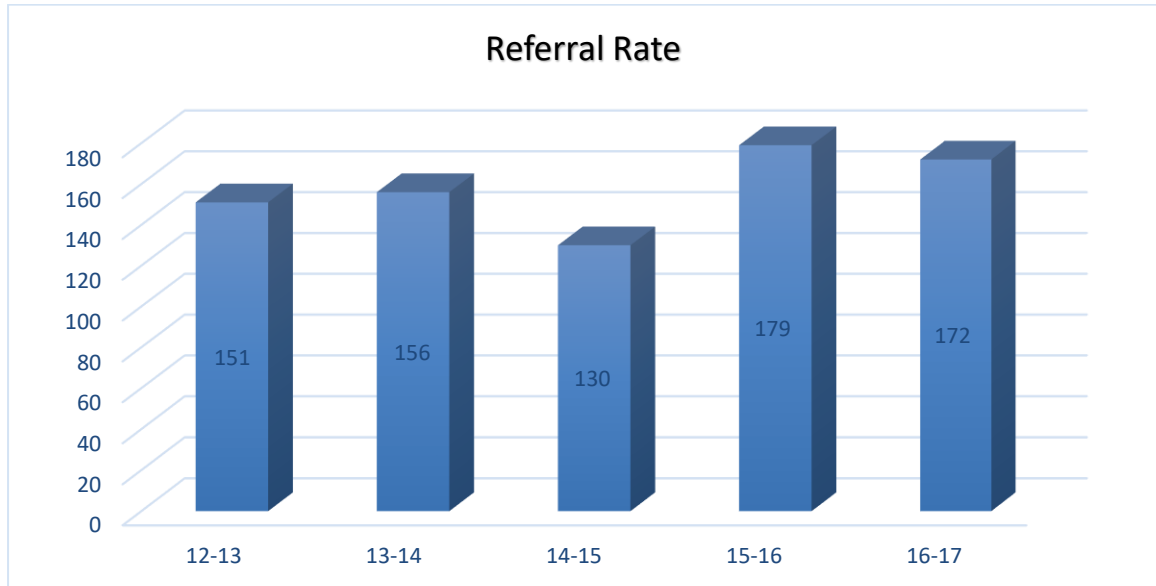
A good example of this is how a Task & Finish group was set up to respond to Drug Related Deaths within Carmarthenshire, and this has proved successful in implementing risk management strategies alongside Dyfed Powys Policewhere we can quickly look at trends and act to minimise risks to our service users, families and wider communities.

The team is also represented at many other meetings such as MARAC, MAPPA, where we look at responding to issues of domestic violence and public protection accordingly..

The introduction of the **Social Services & Well-Being Act** has been welcomed within the team and we have introduced a simple assessment tool to comply with the act and tested it prior to the Act going live.

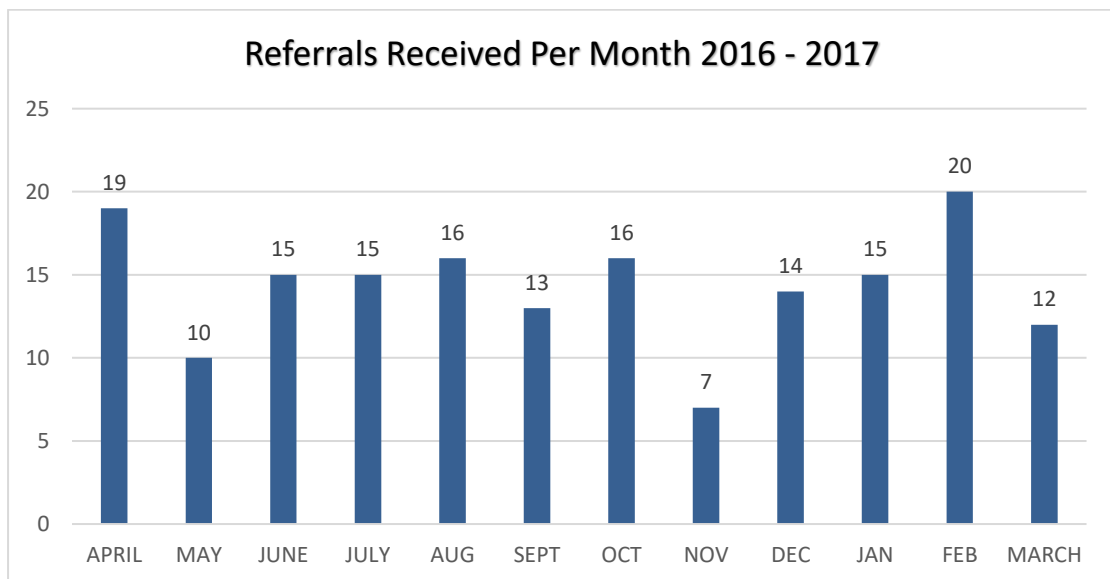
## 1. Total Number of Referrals Received Year on Year

The overall referrals received during the year were 172. This a slight decrease from last year.



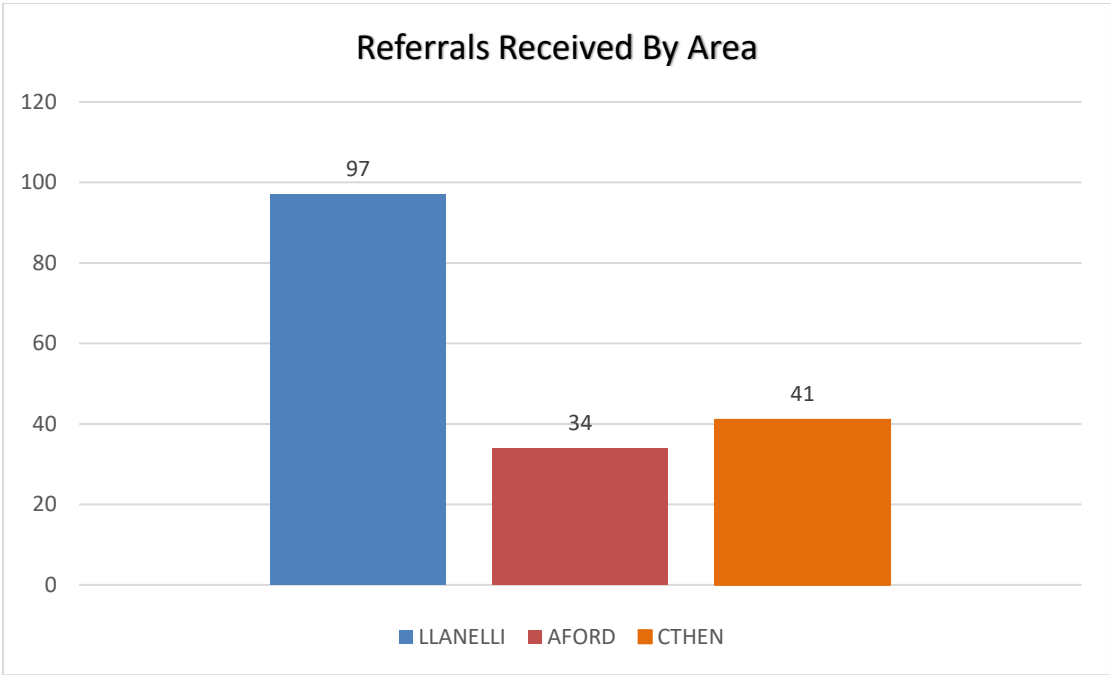
## 2. Referrals Received Per Month April 2016 – March 2017

**172** Referrals received April 2016 – March 2017 with November and February showing a contrast in referral rates per month. This fluctuation didn't result in a quiet period for the team with the cases across the team remaining constantly between 85-100 open and active cases with high levels of risk and support needs.



### 3. Referrals by Area

There is a long standing pattern of Llanelli having the greatest demand, with 56% of referrals over the year. There are challenges in covering both urban and rural areas in a large county, however we have established good working links with other Social Work Teams and have negotiated the use of 'hot desks' to ensure our workers have access to office space throughout the county.

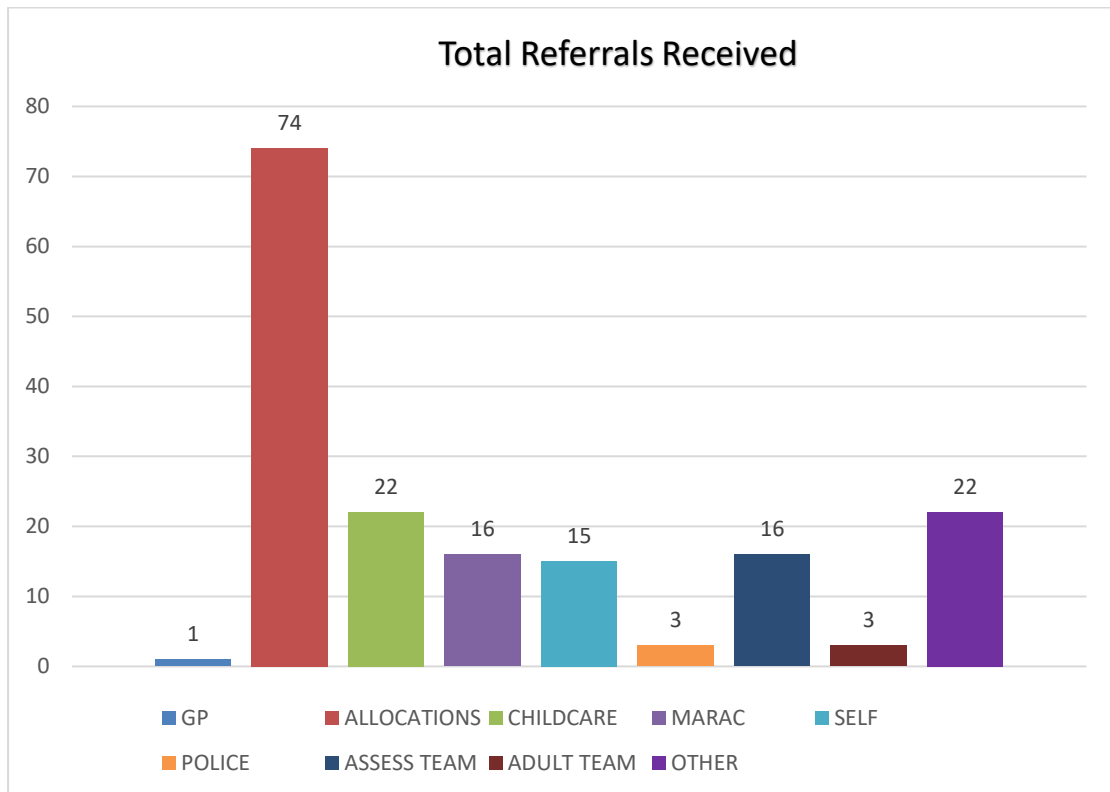


#### 4. Referrals by source

The weekly allocation meeting continues to be our biggest referral source. The allocation meeting is our weekly partnership between services to ensure people receive the right help at the right time.

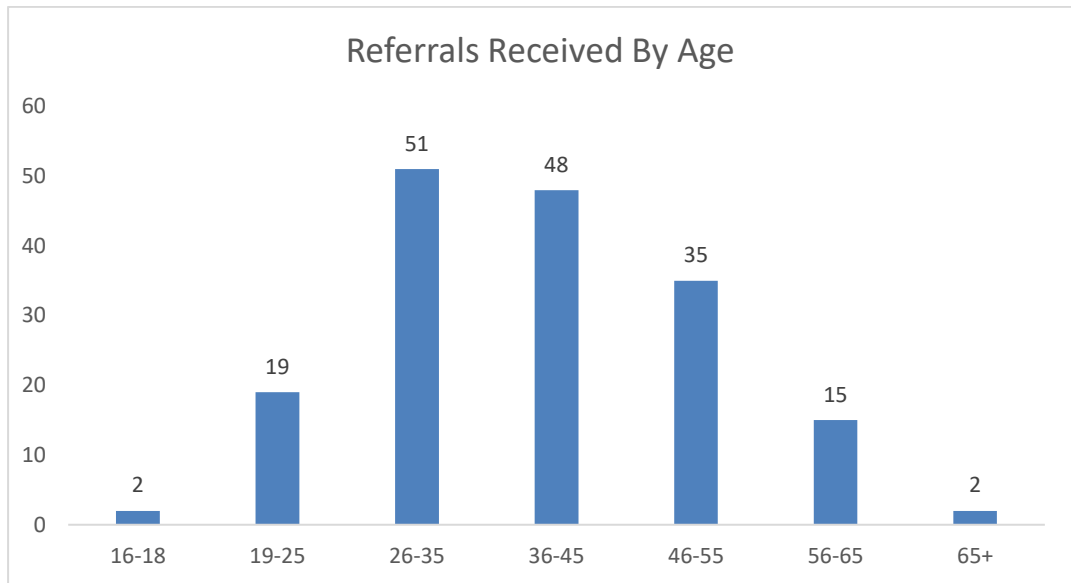
There has been a growing number of direct referrals from other Social Worker Teams such as Childcare Team, Assessment Team and Adult Team with just under a quarter of our referrals 24% coming from our Social Work colleagues.

The referral sources also reflect the risk involved with many cases being referred in due to domestic violence such as MARAC 13% and Police 2%.



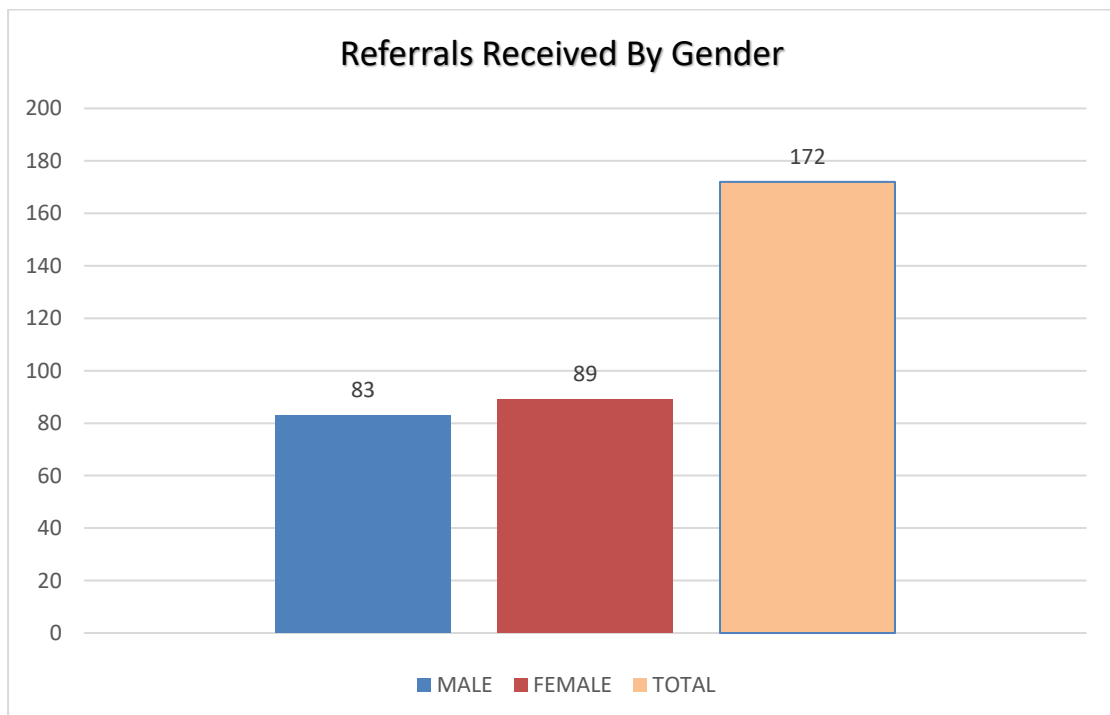
## 5. Age Range

There is a relatively low number of referrals for people aged 18-25, however the lowest age group is that of the over 65 with only 2%. The bulk of referrals however are within the 26-55 age groups.



## 6. Gender

Across all referrals there was a gender split of 52% females to 48% males. The higher percentage of female referrals reflects the referrals received via Childcare and Assessment Teams where the woman is the primary or sole parent.





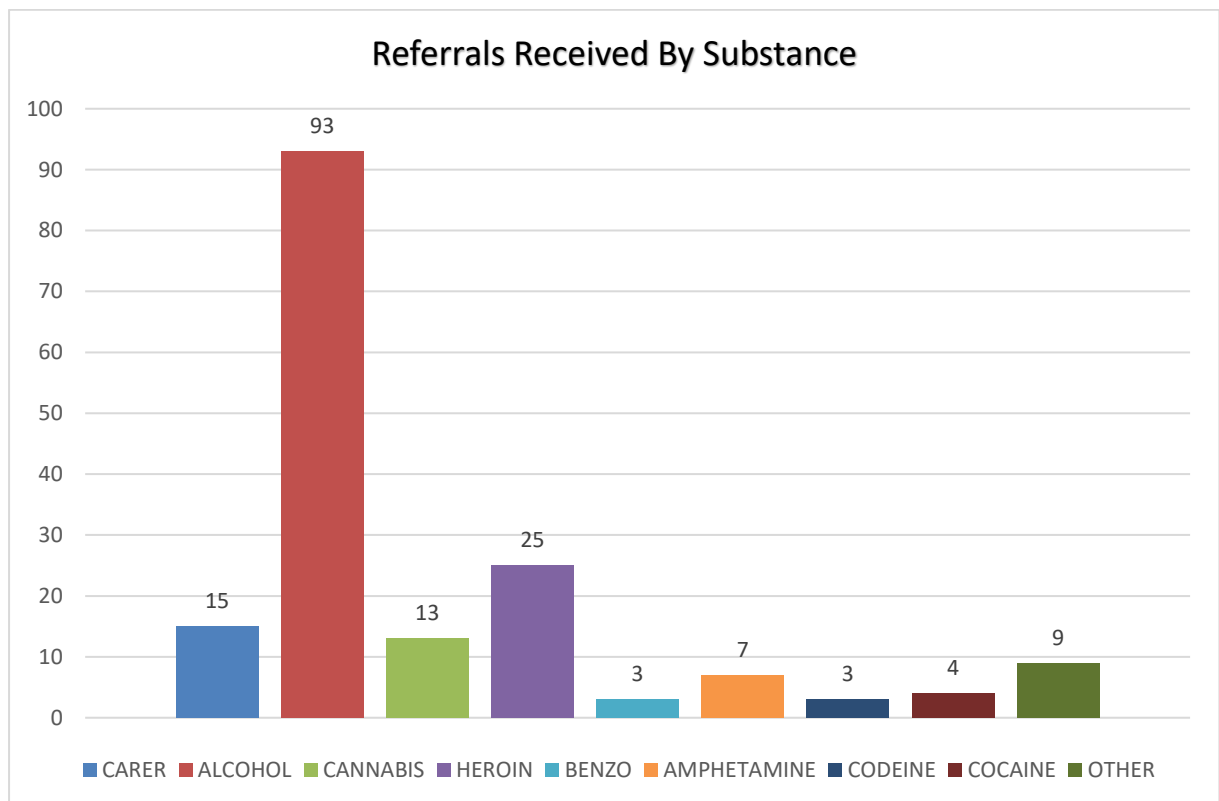
## 7. Substance Used

Alcohol continues to be the biggest recorded substance with 54% of referrals logged as the primary substance. Alcohol is also a significant secondary substance.

% of primary substance reported at referral stage

- 54% reported alcohol as primary substance
- 14% reported heroin as primary substance
- 8% reported cannabis as primary substance
- 4% reported amphetamine as primary substance
- 2% reported benzodiazepines as primary substance
- 2% reported codeine as primary substance
- 2% reported cocaine as primary substance
- 5% reported 'other' as primary substance – to include Spice, Gas, Subutex
- 9% reported to be a carer

There continued to be concern regarding the combination of more established substances mixed with new psychoactive and prescribed substances with the use of Spice and Pregabalin prominent in recent drug related deaths. There is also concern regarding the introduction of a strong synthetic opioid fentanyl.



## **8. Team Caseload**

Although the referral & assessment rates into the service have decreased in the past year the caseload for the team has remained constant at between **85 and 100 cases**.

This reflects the complex nature of the cases the team hold. Many cases have been open to the team for over 12 months.

There was a capacity issue within the team from November 2016 to May 2017 when we were reduced to 3 Social Workers and to avoid a waiting list the Acting Team Manager took on more cases.

## **9. Rehab**

The team continue to assess individuals to access community services within Carmarthenshire, however there are occasions when it is necessary to look at more intensive interventions to achieve the goal of abstinence. Our team continue to provide an early consultation regarding residential rehab, providing individuals with information. Most individuals assessed at this early stage are curious about the process and will not go into residential rehab, instead will have their needs met within the community. However there were a number of people who needed a safe environment in order for us to complete our assessment.

**The total spend in 2016-2017 was £129,000, and this accounted for 8 individuals who had their placements in 7 different residential rehabilitation providers.**

## **What will we do this year?**

This year we will build on our working links with partnership agencies in the following areas;

- Improve our care management practice, and electronic filing system Establish a longer term plan for office space in Llanelli.
- Continue to meet our statutory requirements of the Social Services & Well-Being Act. Develop a coordinated approach between services for Adult Carer's, Young Carer's & concerned others.
- Improve the capability of Children & Adult Services staff to recognise and respond to substance misuse through training and direct work.
- Develop better solutions with our partners for people with Alcohol Related Brain Damage.,
- Monitor emerging trends and quickly respond to risks to safeguard vulnerable adults, children and families
- Use research and evidence based practice to inform our working practice.
- Further develop the specification of Derwen Newydd in order to provide a safe and protected environment for people with mobility issues and respond to changing needs.

**Gary James Acting Team Manager 2017**

