DRUG & ALCOHOL AWARENESS WEEK

TIMETABLE OF EVENTS
Monday 10th – Friday 14th November 2014
As Chairperson of the Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (MRDATF), I am delighted to present to you the schedule for the 2014 MRDATF Drug & Alcohol Awareness Week. The aim of the Awareness Week is to focus on increasing awareness about drug and alcohol related issues and to highlight the drug and alcohol support services available to people in the region.

The primary role of the MRDATF is to research, develop, implement and monitor a more co-ordinated response to the problem of drug and alcohol misuse as experienced in the counties of Longford, Westmeath, Laois and Offaly. The Task Force has been given a key role by the government in responding to the drug and alcohol problem in the midlands. Its composition reflects the need to ensure locally based responses that complement existing or planned drug and alcohol programmes and services in the midland region.

The problem of drug misuse is tackled in a co-ordinated and integrated way under the National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016 and the work of the MRDATF is centred around the implementation of a regional strategy in the context of the National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016. The Strategy seeks to address the harm caused to individuals and society by drug misuse by tackling the problem in a comprehensive and integrated way by implementing what is known as a pillar based approach which incorporates a wide range of drug supply, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and research measures. Ireland has had a long and sometimes difficult association with alcohol and the development and introduction of a combined National Substance Misuse Strategy is very welcome.

Action 28 of the National Drugs Strategy under the Prevention pillar is to develop a sustained range of awareness campaigns that consider a co-ordinated approach by all key players to the development and implementation of a designated drug/alcohol awareness week. This is the third year the MRDATF has ran a Drug & Alcohol Awareness Week and on behalf of the MRDATF, I would like to warmly thank all the agencies involved in the development and co-ordination of the schedule of events.

The wide range of events scheduled to take place over the course of the week have been organised by the MRDATF and Community, Voluntary and Statutory Agencies working in the midland region. Each event scheduled to take place has a specific target audience to include service providers, parents, general public, students and under 18’s.

Community, Voluntary and Statutory agencies working in the midland region and indeed outside the region, face many challenges in the current climate and is has been very encouraging from an interagency point of view to see the commitment and co-operation the Task Force received from all agencies involved in co-ordinating specific events during the awareness week. So again, I would like to sincerely thank all agencies involved.

On behalf of the Task Force I would like to thank the Drugs Programme Unit in the Department of Health for their support in putting this programme of events together for the region.

Events of this nature are very beneficial as they help raise awareness of the issues surrounding drug and alcohol misuse, help strengthen and support a community based focus to the problem and most importantly mobilises a partnership responses at local and regional level.

Michael Dalton
Chairperson MRDATF
TIMETABLE OF EVENTS
Monday 10th – Friday 14th November
MONDAY 10TH NOVEMBER

LAUNCH OF THE MIDLAND REGIONAL DRUG & ALCOHOL AWARENESS WEEK 2014
The Drug & Alcohol Awareness Week to be officially launched by Frances Black, Singer, CEO and Founder of the RISE Foundation. This week will also see the launch of the ‘Alcohol & U’ App, a student led initiative developed in partnership with the MRDATF, Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) Healthy Campus Initiative, students, AIT Software Engineering Department, AIT Graphic Design Department, HSE & Foroige. The MRDATF will also be rebranded this week, with a new logo which reflects the inclusion of alcohol under the remit of Task Forces following the publication of the Report on the Review of Drugs Task Forces and the National Structures under which they operate.

Venue: Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar, Co Westmeath
Time: 10.00am
Audience: By Invitation
Further Info: Antoinette Kinsella tel: 086 3800517

ALCOHOL CONFERENCE – THE IMPACT ON HEALTH & SOCIETY
The Alcohol Conference has been organised and funded by the Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (MRDATF) and HSE CADS (Community, Alcohol and Drug Service) midlands area. The aim of the Alcohol Conference is to bring together interested agencies and individuals who work in the field of addiction to engage in meaningful learning and discussion regarding the impact of Alcohol use on the individual and society.

Schedule of Speakers:
Mr Joe Doyle, National Planning Specialist, National Social Inclusion Office, Primary Care Division, HSE
Ms Anne Marie Carew, Research Officer, National Health Information Systems, Health Research Board
Dr Kieran O’Malley, Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, FASD Specialist
Dr Bobby Smyth MRCPsych, MB BCh BAO. Consultant Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, Addiction Service, HSE
Mr Paul Goff, Clinical Nurse Manager for Substance Misuse Services, HSE Southeast Region
Dr Helen McMonagle BSc. MSc. PGDip. D.CounsPsych. Alcohol-Related Brain Injuries Rehabilitation Coordinator
Ms Marion Rackard, Project Manager, Substance Misuse Strategy, National Social Inclusion Office, Primary Care Division, HSE
Mr Tony O’Riordan, CEO Midland Simon
Mr Alan O’Mara, Communications Officer, Spunout.ie
Sgt John Connolly, Crime Prevention Officer Westmeath, Laois & Offaly, An Garda Siochana
Ms Anne Fanning, BSc, HSE Primary Care Addiction Counsellor Laois/Offaly

Venue: Mullingar Park Hotel, Mullingar, Co Westmeath
Time: 10.00am – 4.25pm (Registration from 9am)
Audience: Service Providers in the midland region working in the area of addiction and medical and non medical professionals with an interest in this area.
Further Info: Antoinette Kinsella tel: 086 3800517 or Fran Byrne tel: 086 3802612
Pre booking essential to attend. There is no charge for attendance and refreshments to include lunch will be served.
PEER EDUCATION ON SAFER DISPOSAL OF DRUG PARAPHERNALIA
Staff and service users of the Ana Liffey Drug Project will carry out a peer education campaign targeted at drug users regarding the mechanisms for safe disposal of drug paraphernalia and the rational of disposing of drug litter safely. The campaign aims to inform and motivate drug users.

Venue: On an outreach basis and in Ana Liffey Drug Project, Churchview, Bishopsgate Street, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath
Time: 9.30am - 5.30pm during Monday 10th to 14th November on an outreach, group and social media basis
Audience: Active substance users
Further Info: Yvonne Canning tel: 085 7521868

TUESDAY 11TH NOVEMBER

FILM LAUNCH “THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING”
The SUB Garda Youth Diversion Project produced a short film, approximately 18 minutes long, to target young people in the community about the issues pertaining to suicide and mental health. The young people actively participated in all areas of the film production including scripting, acting, recording and singing. The film highlights the everyday pressures that young people face and the roles that they can play in relation to supporting each other during times of difficulty. The film further emphasises the factors contributing to poor mental health and suicidal thoughts as well as the warning signs that often go unnoticed. The film highlights the supports and services available to young people suffering with everyday difficulties and stresses.

Venue: The SUB Garda Youth Diversion Project, Birr, Co Offaly
Time: 6.00pm
Audience: All Welcome
Further Info: Sophie Dawes tel: 086 3845646

BEER GOGGLE FOOTBALL
The Midland Regional Youth Service (MRYS) will be engaging young people in a test of football skills, which will involve looking at participants sporting accuracy and decision making skills while under the simulated “beer goggle influence”. The aim of this event is to make young people aware of the negative effects that alcohol has on their decision making and how they function with the beer goggles on. The winning team will be awarded a prize and refreshments will be served.

Venue: Grange Community Astro Turf, Grange, Mullingar, Co Westmeath
Time: 5.00pm – 7.00pm
Audience: Young people 12-18 years
Further Info: Christopher Barr tel: 087 6459468
**ALCOHOL AND YOU**
The County Longford Youth Service (CLYS) is running an information session with young people. The aim of this information session is to establish the amount of knowledge the young people have around the possible negative effects of alcohol use. It also aims to identify the main source of the young person’s information and to dispel any myths or stereotypes surrounding alcohol use. Information booklets will be dispersed to the young people.

**Venue:**  
St. Mary’s Community Campus, Edgeworthstown, Longford

**Time:**  
5.00pm – 6.30pm

**Audience:**  
CLYS Edgeworthstown group aged 10-14 years

**Further Info:**  
Mark Noble tel: 043 3340907

---

**WEDNESDAY 12TH NOVEMBER**

**COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD**
This talk will look at a very simple way of communication that will explain the roles we play, recognising how and what we communicate and ways of improving communication. The talk will be delivered by the Family Welfare Conference Co-ordinator. Available on the day will be a Drugs & Alcohol Handbook for Parents which was developed by Laois Local Drug Network.

**Venue:**  
O’Moore Place, Community Centre, Portlaoise, Co. Laois

**Time:**  
11.00 am

**Audience:**  
All parents welcome

**Further Info:**  
Sylvia Rouget tel: 087 2651706

---

**STRAIGHT TALK FOR PARENTS**
Parents are invited to attend a free information session which aims to give practical straight talking information on the topic of drugs and alcohol with young people. Available on the day will be a Drugs & Alcohol Handbook for Parents which was developed by Laois Local Drug Network. Refreshments will be provided.

**Venue:**  
Cara Phort Family Resource Centre, Harbour Street, Ballymacargy, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

**Time:**  
11.00am – 12:15pm

**Audience:**  
All parents welcome

**Further Info:**  
Maria Quinn tel: 044 9373060
**COFFEE MORNING - COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD**
This talk will look at a very simple way of communication that will explain the roles we play, recognising how and what we communicate and ways of improving communication. The talk will be delivered by the Family Therapist, Ana Liffey Drug Project. Available on the day will be a Drugs & Alcohol Handbook for Parents which was developed by Laois Local Drug Network.

**Venue:** Family Resource Centre, Arden View, Tullamore, Co Offaly  
**Time:** 11.00 am  
**Audience:** All parents welcome  
**Further Info:** Margaret Murphy tel: 057 9320598

**PRESENTATION ON OVERDOSE, BBQ AND MUSIC**
Overdose presentation to be delivered by Mark Kennedy, Head of Day Services, Merchants Quay Ireland. BBQ and Music on the day for all attendees.

**Venue:** Open Door Project, Ball Alley Lane, Parnell Square, Athlone, Co. Westmeath  
**Time:** 12.00pm – 3.00pm  
**Audience:** Adult audience, clients, statutory and voluntary agencies, community groups and the general public  
**Further Info:** Mark Kennedy tel: 090 6417097

**STUDENT TO STUDENT - ALCOHOL & U APP**
Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) is organising an event which is centred around the promotion of the Alcohol and U App, which was a student led initiative developed in partnership with the; MRDATF, AIT, HSE & Foroige. There will be demonstrations of the App, music, spot prizes and much more. The aim is to focus on peer led project information and encourage downloading of the Alcohol App.

**Venue:** Campus Canteen, Athlone Institute of Technology, Athlone, Co Westmeath  
**Time:** 12.00pm – 2.00pm  
**Audience:** Students  
**Further Info:** Anne Cooney tel: 090 6468122 / email: acooney@ait.ie or healthycampus@ait.ie
**LAUNCH OF YOUTH HEALTH SERVICES (YHS) FACILITIES MULLINGAR**
The Midland Regional Youth Service (MRYS) is organising the official launch of the Youth Health Services in Mullingar. Due to an increasing need for Youth Health Services and interventions the Youth Health Service has secured additional space and facilities. The aim of the Youth Health Services is to reach a wider number of young people in the Mullingar area with the Ennell Court premises central to all target areas.

**Venue:** Ennell Community House, Ennell Court, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath  
**Time:** 7.30pm  
**Audience:** 15-25 yrs  
**Further Info:** Christopher Barr tel: 087 6459468

---

**THURSDAY 13TH NOVEMBER**

**GET “REAL”… REALISTIC, EDUCATED, AWARE & LISTEN**
Students will be encouraged to take part in an interactive Safer Drinking Campaign which aims to provide students with key messages around safer drinking in order to encourage safety and self regulation. Organised by the MRDATF, AIT Healthy Campus, Foroige & HSE. The Alcohol & U app will also be promoted on the day.

**Venue:** Campus Canteen, Athlone Institute of Technology, Athlone, Co Westmeath  
**Time:** 11.00am – 2.00pm  
**Audience:** Students  
**Further Info:** Anne Cooney tel: 090 6468122 acooney@ait.ie or healthycampus@ait.ie

---

**WWW.WHAZUP.IE HAVE YOUR SAY!**
The Westmeath Comhairle Na Nóg operated by Midland Regional Youth Service (MRYS) on behalf of Westmeath County Council welcomes any young person from Westmeath to this event. The event being organised is an interactive event which will publicise www.whazup.ie with a short presentation by the website moderator and will give young people an opportunity to critique the website’s contents and make decisions for future inclusion on the site. www.whazup.ie is managed by Midlands Regional Youth Service Ltd who are grateful for the support of Westmeath Community Development Ltd and the CBSP working group for financing the creation of the site. www.whazup.ie is the new ‘go to’ website for young people in Westmeath. www.whazup.ie provides constantly updated information on events, sports, festivals, music gigs, training etc around Westmeath that are of interest to people aged 12 to 25. www.whazup.ie crucially provides 24 hour 7 days a week contact details of supports for young people in crisis. The responsive website appears in app format on smart phones.

**Venue:** Bloomfield Hotel, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath  
**Time:** 12.45pm – 3.00pm (Comhairle Na Nóg AGM will commence at 10am on 13th November 2014 in Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath)  
**Audience:** Young people 13-18 years  
**Further Info:** Joan O’Connor tel: 086 3728994
SERVICE PROVIDERS NETWORKING EVENT  
Service providers working in the area of addiction are invited to attend a networking afternoon to share information in relation to the range of services currently available within the midland region. Event organised by Athlone Drug Awareness Group.

Venue: Civic Centre, Athlone, Co. Westmeath  
Time: 2.30pm to 4.30pm  
Audience: Service Providers  
Further Info: Frankie Keena tel: 085 7474074

BARTENDER CHALLENGE  
The Midland Regional Youth Service (MRYS) will be hosting a social event in Mullingar. The aim of the event is that young people can attend an alcohol free event and enjoy themselves without the negative effects of alcohol. With the success of last year’s mocktail night the young people want to expand on this theme with a bartenders challenge which will involve the young people creating their own alcohol free cocktails. The winning cocktail will be judged by the young people themselves and there will be a prize giving for the top three mocktails.

Venue: Riverside Community Centre, Dalton Park, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath  
Time: 5.30pm - 7.30pm  
Audience: Young People 12-18 years  
Further Info: Christopher Barr tel: 087 6459468

MYTH OR FACT? COME AND FIND OUT  
Offaly Traveller Movement’s aim is for Traveller rights and social justice throughout the county. They are a community development organisation offering services responding to health, accommodation, youth, education and human rights. The vision of Offaly Traveller Movement is full equality and social justice for Travellers in County Offaly. Offaly Traveller Movement is hosting an event filled with fun, games, quizzes and facts around alcohol and drug use. Information on a serious topic will be presented in a fun and enjoyable way. Teams and individuals can win prizes and have a good laugh on the night. Refreshments will be served.

Venue: Offaly Traveller Movement, Bury Quay, Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
Time: 6.00pm  
Audience: Young People 13-18 years  
Further Info: PJ Connelly tel: 057 9352438
PAINT YOUR OWN FUTURE
Young people will launch their graffiti murals which will be on display on Great Water Street, Longford Town. The abstract graffiti will focus on positive aspects including the celebration of personal identity, talents and the bright future young people can have based on their choices of today.

Those attending the launch will have access to a range of drug and alcohol information and will be advised of programmes and activities currently available within the Attic Youth Café Project. Music and refreshments will be provided.

Venue: The Attic Youth Café, Temperance Hall, New Street, Longford
Time: 6.00pm
Audience: Young people aged 12-18 years
Further Info: Theresa Connell tel: 086 7811535

DRUG AND ALCOHOL AWARENESS AND ADDICTION
Gatekeeper Course – final night of Community Gatekeepers Course in association with GROW, Mental Health Organisation.

Venue: Prince of Wales Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
Time: 7.30pm
Audience: Course participants
Further Info: Carmel Daly tel: 086 0455013

FRIDAY 14TH NOVEMBER

INTERACTIVE ALCOHOL AND DRUG AWARENESS EVENT
The aim of the morning is to engage the public in a range of interactive activities including quizzes, measuring alcohol units and games to highlight levels of alcohol consumption on an average night out. Treatment and Support Services will also be there to provide relevant information in relation to the range of local Drug and Alcohol Services available within the region. All who visit on the day will be entered into a free raffle.

Venue: Clonbrusk Primary Care Centre, Athlone, Co Westmeath
Time: 10.00am – 2.00pm
Audience: All welcome
Further Info: Grainne Powell tel: 086 3801154
LONGFORD LOCAL DRUG NETWORK INFORMATION DAY
Longford Local Drug Network is hosting an information day. During this information day local service providers will provide information stands, which will offer opportunities for people to seek face to face information or access relevant literature regarding addiction and support and treatment services available.

Venue: Longford Shopping Centre, Longford Town
Time: 12.00pm – 4.00pm
Audience: All Welcome
Further Info: Tony Flaherty tel: 086 7329177

ART EXHIBITION MERCHANTS QUAY IRELAND (MQI) MEN’S GROUP
For the past year, ten men recovering from addiction have attended art classes with Laois Partnership and Laois/Offaly Education & Training Board (ETB). The exhibition will display the pyrography and paintings they produced during the year. The event is funded by the ETB and Laois Partnership. No refreshments will be provided. The intention is to promote the rehabilitation of the participants within the local community by displaying their skills.

Venue: Laois Shopping Centre, Portaoise, Co. Laois
Time: 1.00pm – 5.00pm
Audience: General public and the local community
Further Info: Sylvia Rouget tel: 087 2651706

LAOIS LOCAL DRUG NETWORK – INFORMATION DAY
Service providers will have information stands on display for the local community in relation to Drug and Alcohol awareness. Services in attendance will include Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI), HSE, Ana Liffey Drug Project, Garda, Youth Work Ireland, Laois Partnership, Laois/Offaly Education and Training Board, Laois Travellers Action group and the BLOCK Project. The intention is to promote the local services available under three of the pillars of the National Drugs Strategy.

Venue: Laois Shopping Centre, Portlaoise, Co. Laois
Time: 1.00pm – 5.00pm
Audience: General public and the local community
Further Info: Sylvia Rouget tel: 087 2651706
BEFORE YOU GO TOO FAR THINK

ALCOHOL

ADDICTION
MENTAL HEALTH
SEXUAL HEALTH
RISKY BEHAVIOUR
BINGE DRINKING
POLYDRUG USE

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
WWW.MRDATF.IE
WWW.DRUGS.IE
WWW.HSE.IE

DOWNLOAD THE
ALCOHOL & U APP

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
ALCOHOL & U APP

The development of the Alcohol App, ‘Alcohol & U’, which was funded by the Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force (MRDATF), through funding received by the Drugs Programme Unit (DPU) in the Department of Health, was a student led initiative and developed in partnership with the MRDATF, Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) Health Campus Initiative, AIT Software Engineering Department, AIT Graphic Design Department, Health Service Executive (HSE) and Foróige.

The aim of the Alcohol Awareness App is to provide accurate and up-to-date alcohol related information to a target audience of those 18 years and over. This information is presented in an easily accessible and interactive manner.

There were two phases to the development of this App:
Phase one of this initiative refers to the development of a poster competition with graphic design students in AIT. The brief was for the students to design an Alcohol Awareness poster which would be used to advertise the App and the graphics that would be in the poster would be used throughout the App also.

The HSE Health Promotion Officer delivered an alcohol awareness workshop to the graphic design students in AIT and students were also advised of the proposed range of material that would be available in the Alcohol App. Under the supervision of AIT Graphic Design Lecturer, the design students then developed a range of posters. The detail in the winning poster then formed part of the creative elements which is visible in the Alcohol & U App.

In phase two of this initiative, Software Engineering students were chosen by the AIT Computer and Software Engineering Lecturer to develop an android and iphone application which would contain the relevant content, and using the graphic design elements from the poster competition presented this information in a format that would be interactive and appealing to the target audience.

The MRDATF team in consultation with HSE Health Promotion Officer, HSE Project Manager Substance Misuse Strategy and Foróige Education Co-ordinator for the midlands drafted and advised on the content to be included in the App.

The range of material available in the Alcohol & U App are as follows:

Information Section – This section contains information on a range of topics to include Alcohol the facts, the effects (short & Long term), sexual health, mental health, low risk drinking, road safety, alcohol and sport and alcohol and pregnancy.

Alcohol Quiz - This section has a myth and facts quiz aimed at testing the users knowledge of alcohol related facts. Each participant will have a timeframe to complete the quiz and results are shown at the end.

Standard Drink Calculator - This allows participates to calculate their weekly/daily consumption of alcohol and will advise of recommended weekly limits for low risk drinking.

Supports and Services - List of Support and Services. This section lists a range of support services that can be accessed by clicking the relevant icon. This will bring people directly to the individual services website whereby the person has access to a wide range of information and supports which are available to them.
The following services are available in the midland region:

**HSE Services and Supports; CADS (Community Alcohol and Drug Service)**

- Methadone Maintenance Programme / Urinalysis
- Addiction Counselling
- Out Patient Psychiatric Service
- Alternative Therapies
- Community Detox for Methadone and Benzodiazepines

Portlaoise and Birr: 057 8692516
Longford: 043 3346992
Tullamore: 057 9315801
Mullingar: 044 9395200
Athlone: 090 6424820

**Merchants Quay Ireland Outreach Harm Reduction Programme**

- Laois: 087 9150329
- Mullingar: 087 9328468
- Longford: 087 9148782
- Athlone / Moate: 087 9512989

**Merchants Quay Ireland Aftercare & Rehabilitation Service**

- Laois / Offaly: 087 9150329
- Longford / Westmeath: 087 9328468

**Merchants Quay Ireland Family Support Service**

- Laois / Offaly: 087 2925727
- Longford / Westmeath: 085 2749983

**Ana Liffey Drug Project** 1800 786 828

**Drugs, Alcohol & HIV Helpline** 1800 459 459
email: helpline@hse.ie

**Suicide Prevention Resource Service** 086 8157320 / 086 8157850

**Substance Use Education Co-ordinator (Regional)** 090 644 8947

**HSE Health Promotion Service** 057 9357817

**The GAA Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention ASAP Programme**
www.gaa.ie/asap  01 8658674

**Youth Projects**

**Youth Work Ireland Laois** 057 8665010
Mountmellick Youth Development Centre (MYDC) 057 8624525
County Longford Youth Service (CLYS) 043 3340907

**The Attic Youth Café Drug Education Initiative** 043 3342515

**Gateway Project Athlone Co. Westmeath** 086 0279149

**Big Brother Big Sister Programme** 086 8596879

**Jigsaw Offaly** 057 9352871
**Midland Regional Youth Service (MYRS)** 090 647 7075

**Foroige Youth Cafés and Clubs**

**Westmeath / Offaly** 090 644 8947
**Longford** 086 9672920
**Laois** 086 2043599

**Websites**
www.mrdatf.ie
www.drugs.ie
www.spunout.ie
www.foroige.ie
www.myrs.org
www.fsa.ie
www.athlonedrugawareness.com
For Further Information contact
Antoinette Kinsella, Co-ordinator,
Midland Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force

A: Health Centre, Coosan Road, Athlone, Co Westmeath
T: 086 3800517
E: mrdatf@hse.ie
www.mrdatf.ie