



**Ministerial Meeting of the Sectoral Group on the Misuse of Drugs
29th June 2012**

Communiqué

Deputy Anne Pryke, Jersey's Minister for Health and Social Services, today hosted the eighth Ministerial meeting of the British-Irish Council on the Misuse of Drugs in St Helier, Jersey. The meeting was chaired by Ms Róisín Shortall T.D., Minister of State with responsibility for Primary Care in Ireland. The key thematic discussion at the meeting focused on "Young People and Drugs – Breaking the Cycle".

The Ministers agreed that the promotion of healthier lifestyle choices for young people through an improved focus on personal development and life-skills is key to breaking the cycle of problem substance use.

A graduated approach to prevention and education measures is favoured by Ministers, ranging from universal approaches aimed at the general population to more targeted interventions aimed at those who are at greater risk.

Evidence of trends in drug use among young people in Member Administrations was shared by the Ministers. The need for improved understanding of how the attitudes and behaviours of young people change and develop was acknowledged as important in optimising the success of any interventions.

Ministers focused particularly on family situations, and especially on addressing the increased risks for children in families that are experiencing problem substance use. The

need for referral procedures across all service providers to ensure early and appropriate interventions for members of such families was also highlighted.

The importance of providing timely, age appropriate treatment and support to young people who use drugs was discussed, together with options other than incarceration for dealing with young offenders.

The Ministers also took the opportunity of this British-Irish Council meeting to discuss the use and misuse of alcohol in their jurisdictions. They exchanged information on the extent of problems pertaining to alcohol and the various approaches that are being taken to address these issues, including through legislative measures which are being explored in a number of Member Administrations. Ministers agreed to include the use and misuse of alcohol in the work of the Council.

The Ministers reviewed the recent work carried out by the British–Irish Council in the area of the Misuse of Drugs. This included the Summit Meeting which took place in Dublin earlier this year where Heads of Administrations and Ministers discussed Recovery from Problem Drug Use and agreed to encourage a renewed focus on recovery and to share successful approaches in this regard. The 2012 Work Programme also covered issues such as (i) developing methods of assessing progress of local drugs programmes to inform wider policy development; (ii) the development and implementation of naloxone programmes to reduce deaths from heroin overdoses; and (iii) issues around the misuse of prescription drugs, in particular Benzodiazepines,

The Ministers agreed that these meetings had provided a very useful forum for sharing the detailed expertise and knowledge of those involved in the drugs sector across the British-Irish Council area. It was also noted that, in addition to exploring specific themes in depth, each meeting had facilitated the exchange of information on wider policy developments and initiatives.

The Ministers agreed that the work programme for 2013 will include Sectoral Group meetings on the Misuse of Drugs in Scotland, UK, Guernsey and Ireland. They also looked forward to

the continuation of the informal links that have built up between the administrations to the benefit of the effort against drug misuse in all jurisdictions.

It was agreed that Ministers would meet again in the latter part of 2013.

The Irish Government was represented by the Minister of State with responsibility for Primary Care, Ms. Róisín Shortall T.D., who chaired the meeting. Jersey was represented by the Minister for Health and Social Services Deputy Anne Pryke, Minister for Home Affairs Senator Ian Le Marquand and Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services Constable John Refault. The British Government was represented by Lord Henley, Minister of State for Crime Prevention and Antisocial Behaviour Reduction. Northern Ireland was represented by Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, Junior Minister Jonathan Bell MLA and Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister Junior Minister Jennifer McCann MLA. Guernsey was represented by Minister of Home Department, Mr Jonathan Le Tocq, and the Isle of Man by Honourable Juan Watterson, MHK, Minister for Home Affairs. The Scottish Government was represented by Ms Roseanna Cunningham, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs. The Welsh Government was represented by Ms Joanna Jordan, Director of Corporate Services and Partnerships, Health Social Services and Children Department. A full list of delegation members is attached.

The British-Irish Council was established under the Strand Three Provisions of the 1998 Multi-Party Agreement as a forum for its Members to exchange information, discuss, consult and use best endeavours to reach agreement on co-operation on matters of mutual interest within the competence of relevant Member Administrations. Ireland is the lead administration within the Council on the issue of Misuse of Drugs.

British-Irish Council (Misuse of Drugs Sectoral Group)

29th June 2012

List of Delegates

Irish Government	
Minister of State with responsibility for Primary Care	Ms Róisín Shortall T.D
Principal Officer, Department of Health	Mr. Michael Conroy
Higher Executive Officer, Department of Health	Ms. Linda O'Rourke
Private Secretary to Minister of State Ms Róisín Shortall T.D	Mr. Michael Corban
Jersey	
Minister of Health and Social Services of the States of Jersey	Deputy Anne Pryke
Minister of Home Affairs	Senator Ian Le Marquand
Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services	Constable John Refault
Director of Public Health	Dr Susan Turnbull
Director of Alcohol and Drugs, Department of Health and Social Services	Mr. Michael Gafoor
Community Safety and Substance Misuse Strategy	Ms Gillian Hutchinson
Government of the Isle of Man	
Minister for Home Affairs	Hon. Juan Watterson MHK
Chief Executive, Department of Home Affairs	Mr. Mark Kelly
UK Government	
Minister of State for Crime Prevention and Antisocial Behaviour Reduction	Lord Henley
Drug Strategy Delivery Team, Home Office	Ms Ruth Fowler,
Assistant Private Secretary to Lord Henley, Minister of State for Crime Prevention and Antisocial Behaviour Reduction.	Ms Suzette Spencer
Northern Ireland	
Junior Minister, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	Mr Jonathan Bell MLA
Junior Minister, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	Ms Jennifer McCann MLA
Health Development Policy Branch, Dept of Health, Social Services & Public Safety	Ms Maureen McCartney
Guernsey	
Minister of Home Affairs	Mr. Jonathan le Tocq
Chief Officer, Home Department, States of Guernsey	Mr. Paul Whitfield
Drug and Alcohol Strategy Co-ordinator, States of Guernsey	Ms. Andrea Nightingale
Scottish Government	
Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs,	Ms Roseanna Cunningham
Drugs Policy Unit, Scottish Government	Mr John Somers
Private Secretary to the Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs,	Ms Alison Dewar
Welsh Government	
Director of Corporate Services and Partnerships, Health Social Services and Children Department	Ms Joanna Jordan

BIC Secretariat	Mr Jeremy Martin
BIC Secretariat	Mr Pat Allan