

# **Integrated Alcohol and Drug Services in Perth**

## **Model and Current Status May 2007**

### **Background**

There has been significant co-operation between the services of the Drug and Alcohol Office's Next Step drug and alcohol centres (DACs) in Fremantle and Warwick and various co-locating agencies. This has been most marked with the south and north metro community drug service teams (CDSTs).

In November 2005 senior staff of the Drug and Alcohol Office (DAO) and Palmerston, including the DAC and CDST managers, agreed to develop a 'green field' model for the establishment and operation of a new combined service in Rockingham. It was subsequently agreed to also include the consolidation of services in Fremantle as part of this development.

The combined Palmerston and Next Step service opened in Rockingham and Fremantle in November 2006 as the South Metro Community Drug Service. The integrated service approach has extended services in the region and been well received by staff of both organisations.

With the support of the other managing agencies for CDSTs in Perth, this development has subsequently informed planning for integrated services in the other metropolitan corridors and central Perth.

This paper outlines the service model that has been developed and the status of the planned implementation across metropolitan Perth.

### **Aims for integrating services**

- To provide access to a more effective and comprehensive range of alcohol and other drug treatment and prevention services
- To extend the availability of services into areas of significant demand.

### **Key principles in developing this approach**

There are a number of details in establishing combined and more integrated services that impact on the organisational interests and cultures of DAO and the managing agencies for the CDSTs.

The approach that has been taken is to recognise these as issues to be resolved rather than as barriers to proceeding, with the overriding principle underpinning development of the services being to assess the arrangements from the clients' perspective. This in turn requires providing the most substantial and accessible range of services possible within the resources available and in accord with best practice.

The South Metro Community Drug Service has combined services in Fremantle and extended them to Rockingham within existing staff resources drawn from the DAC and the CDST. The extension of combined and integrated services throughout Perth continues this approach.

### **Services offered in integrated locations**

The South Metro Community Drug Service and planned combined service locations will provide the full range of services currently offered at the DACs and CDSTs. Specifically these are:

- Assessment and referral
- Counselling (adult, youth and family)
- Opioid and alcohol pharmacotherapy
- Home-based withdrawal management (through DAWN)
- Provision of services under the WA Diversion Program (police, court and drug court programs)
- Community based alcohol and other drug prevention and community development activities.

### **Management of integrated services**

The South Metro Community Drug Service is operating and the other planned combined service locations will operate under 'unified management'.

This involves the CDST managing agency taking on the role of 'regional management and co-ordination', with Next Step providing specialist support with its staff of medical officers, nurses and clinical psychologists.

Within this approach, each agency is broadly responsible for different programs and aspects of program management within the combined service locations.

The CDST managing agency is responsible for the overall coordination of services and programs across the region, external liaison activities, and general service development, as well as the counselling and prevention services its staff provide. The CDST managing agency also manages the facilities in the region.

Next Step takes responsibility for the clinical areas of service delivery that fall within its area of expertise and current service delivery: pharmacotherapy, withdrawal management, mental health and clinical and medical management of clients.

Next Step and the CDST managing agency retain their identities and employment arrangements and line management of their employees.

A joint steering committee comprising representatives from Palmerston and DAO Next Step has overseen the development and operation of the South Metro Community Drug Service. Similar arrangements have been established to guide the integration of services in each of the other regions and these will be maintained. An overarching steering committee for the Perth integrated services is being established to meet bi-monthly to enable all regions to

share information and perspectives as the further integrated services are being planned and implemented.

Attachment 1 sets out the model for the management of integrated community drug services.

### **Next Step management and staffing**

The management structure of Next Step has been revised to reflect these developments with creation of a new position, Manager – Integrated Services, to oversee the Next Step components of community drug services and integrated youth services. Next Step will also establish clinical co-ordinator positions for the north east and south metro services and senior nurse positions for south east, north east and Perth services to provide local management. Attachment 2 sets out the progressive implementation of revised Next Step management.

A secondary aim of the integration is to reduce the size of the Next Step East Perth clinic to manage a more optimal number of patients, both as outpatients and at its pharmacy. This is compatible with deployment of East Perth clinic staff to new locations as part of the community drug services. However, the level of resources available means that care will need to be taken to maintain the viability and safety of all locations through the transition process. As such, some final staff allocations will be achieved over time rather than immediately.

### **Integrated policies and procedures**

The South Metro Community Drug Service has adopted uniform policies and procedures. This has been achieved by the agencies adopting all existing policies of both agencies and then reviewing them to identify repetition, in which case the better policy was adopted, and identifying a very limited number of areas requiring the development of a new combined policy. The process and outcomes of the South Metro Community Drug Service could usefully inform the other services.

### **Integrated client records and information**

The South Metro Community Drug Service has adopted single case files with sections for the staff of each agency and a shared client information system and data base. DAO and the WA Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies have agreed to develop a single client and service information system for government and non-government agencies across the sector. It is anticipated that the adoption of integrated client records will reflect the extent to which services are staffed by both agencies.

### **Local variations in integrated services**

In areas where DAO has had a Next Step DAC (Fremantle and Warwick), the Next Step staff and client presence will be greater than in locations where Next Step is deploying staff from its East Perth clinic to supplement existing and new community drug service locations.

There are a number of details around how the model functions that are best worked out at a local level in conjunction with the staff of the services.

- Walk-in services – Considered desirable in all locations but present significant challenges in the areas with fewer staff and may not be feasible in the early stages of some combined services.
- Assessment and triage – Services aim to achieve the most efficient and effective processes and will benefit from information sharing. Specific services will need to consider which clients might see a nurse and/or medical officer as part of their assessment. This warrants consideration of a single stream of assessment.
- Joint case management – Regarded as necessary to realise the full benefits of a fully integrated service but it is subject to each service organisation's capacity and can best evolve once services are combined.

### **The role of DAWN**

Home withdrawal management is a key service element and DAWN is one of the three integral services in the model along with the CDST and Next Step.

DAWN will be invited to participate in the overarching steering committee for the Perth integrated services.

### **Branding**

Community Drug Service branding recognises both the CDST managing agency and Next Step, and is preceded by the location. The South Metro Community Drug Service has branded its signage and all forms accordingly.

### **Current status and timeframe for implementation**

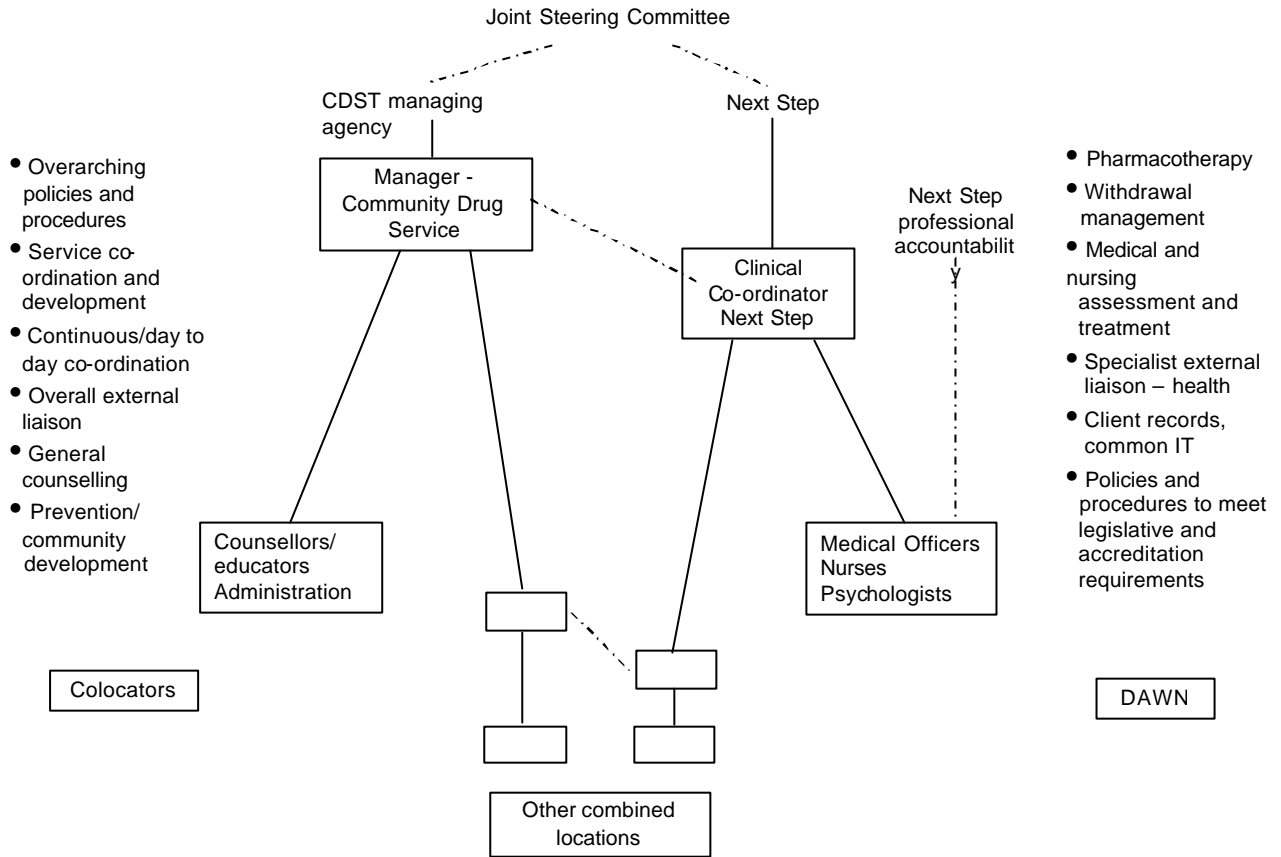
The South Metro Community Drug Service is operating. The advice from both Palmerston and Next Step is that the integration has been effective and continues to evolve. A formal evaluation report will be completed in June 2007.

Planning is underway for all other service locations. The current status and indicative timeframe for the implementation of the integration is set out below. The plans are subject to availability and refurbishment of premises and the continued implementation of the various locations informing subsequent developments.

- South: Full integration with a new service in Rockingham commenced late 2006.
- North east: Next Step supplementation of CDST in Midland planned. Temporary refit to CDST premises in process. New larger premises under option for 2008. Commencing mid 2007.
- South east: Next Step supplementation of CDST with a new service in Gosnells planned. Refit to expanded premises in Gosnells underway. Commencing mid 2007.
- Perth inner city: Next Step supplementation of CDST in North Perth planned. Refit to premises underway. Commencing mid 2007.
- North metropolitan: Integration discussions underway with a view to commencing late 2007.

Attachment 1.

**INTEGRATED COMMUNITY DRUG SERVICES - PERTH**



**NEXT STEP – DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICES**

**STRUCTURE – MAY-NOVEMBER 2007**

