



Alcohol & Drugs Action

Reducing Harm. Enabling Recovery.

Organisational 10-Year Strategy

SEPTEMBER 2019



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Introduction

As Alcohol and Drugs Action's current Service-User Forum representatives, we are delighted that as part of our growing influence and recognition we find ourselves writing the opening section of the organisation's 10 year strategy. It has been an exciting and rewarding time for the Forum since its inception in 2016.

The Forum has been instrumental in a number of key areas and developments for ADA covering for example:

- Volunteering and peer-led groups and activities; such as rolling out a peer-led take-home naloxone programme and pioneering new initiatives in partnership with wider professional groups, peer in-reach within the Alcohol Liaison Nursing service within Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.
- Leading and facilitating community engagement and staff training events.
- Peer research into issues affecting the wider population e.g. the impact of Minimum Unit Pricing.
- Having representation and a voice on the Board of ADA.



Within the last 12 months alone, members of the Forum have in their own right achieved recognition for their efforts with a number of high profile awards; such as the Aberdeen Health & Social Care Partnership 'Heart' Awards; the Forum itself being recognised along with a successful nomination for 'volunteer of the year', and finally our group-led activity has been recognised on more than one occasion (such as the 'Urban Bee' partnership project). These efforts have further received recognition with a grant awarded from the Scottish Government in 2019 as part of the two year National Development Project Fund, looking to build on good practice and further develop ADA's 'volunteer pathway'.

As a Forum we are determined to build further on this success and are delighted to be an integral part of the direction of ADA over the coming years.

The Forum in particular wishes to focus its efforts and attention to;

- Continue being the voice of ADA's service-users and ensure that this voice is both heard, respected and therefore results in meaningful engagement and collaborative development going forward.
- Hold the organisation to account on behalf of those who use its services in terms of its standards of practice and how it promotes and makes visible the voices and activity of recovery.
- Improve communication processes to connect all levels of the organisation as a key standing function of the Service-User Forum.
- Contribute and collaborate further in terms of the organisation's goals of being a 'learning organisation'.
- Increase the role of peer-led volunteering and the opportunities available to service-users to become involved in roles vital to expanding the reach of services.
- Utilise advocacy based approaches for service-users in support of the organisation's objectives.
- Be part of delivering innovative services through volunteering activity, developing and delivering group-work and acting in an advisory role within all service development.
- Develop fund-raising activities along with the Board, Senior Management Team and Staff members and develop more fiscal autonomy for volunteering groups and activities.

As such, the Forum is pleased to say it is fully supportive of, and finds itself suitably integrated within, this new ten year strategy.

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**... OUR GROUP-LED
ACTIVITY HAS BEEN
RECOGNISED ON MORE
THAN ONE OCCASION ...**

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**Alcohol & Drugs Action
Service-User Forum Membership**

June 2019

Our organisation

Alcohol & Drugs Action (ADA) exists with the core purpose to organise, govern, control and deliver a range of services and evidence-based interventions that support the prevention, harm reduction and recovery associated with harm arising from all types of substance use.

ADA furthermore recognises the need to provide its services across a spectrum of activity encompassing the various stages and milestones within every 'recovery journey': each journey is unique and requires a holistic approach to meet a range of often complex needs.

ADA's philosophy ensures that the principles of harm reduction are recognised as a necessary precondition for recovery, as well as being part of enabling and sustaining a range of self-defined recovery aspirations for individuals.

This philosophy recognises the value of service-user involvement through a variety of opportunities, including: regular feedback, service design, volunteering and peer support. ADA is committed to working with the lived experience of those within the recovery community and using our shared learning to develop supportive and sustainable pathways in partnership. Equally the importance of family member experience requires full recognition. Traditionally under recognised and under valued, it is clear that in order to be holistic and person centred, family inclusive practice requires to be an essential part of the process of enabling recovery for many users of our services.

ADA will use its considerable experience and understanding in its field of operations in being adaptable and flexible to changing circumstances, whether social, cultural and/or substance related.

ADA's values will align to these principles at all times; and we are committed to 'live' these through all our endeavours. ADA advocates on behalf of all those who need our support; and ADA will not only help inform and educate the wider public, but takes a proactive role and compassionate role for anyone affected by substance use. We recognise the role of stigma in creating significant barriers to access to services and perpetuating negative stereotypes and outcomes. ADA looks to actively address stigma through these principles actively tackling the 'public', 'stigma by association' and 'self-stigmatising' personal behaviours.

Our organisation therefore requires the highest standards of governance, financial probity and learning and development competence to provide the highest quality of service. Furthermore, ADA recognises that its efforts alone are not enough: harms from substance use cut across all aspects of society and no approach taken in isolation from others will deliver the desired impacts. We recognise the need to work in a collaborative and considered way with service-users, volunteers and community members, including wider public services and other third-sector providers.



**... SHARED LEARNING
TO DEVELOP
SUPPORTIVE AND
SUSTAINABLE
PATHWAYS ...**



Our work in brief

ADA provides a range of services for people who use alcohol and drugs, and their families and friends. We also offer services for those in recovery from alcohol and drug use.

HELPLINE



Helpline

Free, confidential advice and information on all drug and alcohol related issues. [Click ...](#)



Duty drop-in (face-to-face)

Immediate information, advice and support for any individual experiencing problems with their own or another's drug/alcohol use. [Click ...](#)

STRUCTURED PREPARATORY WORK



Structured preparatory work

Free, confidential service and recovery plan to explore drug/alcohol use with an allocated worker. [Click ...](#)



Needle Exchange

Sterile injecting equipment, safer injecting and harm reduction advice, Naloxone kits and Dried Blood Spot Testing (DBST). [Click ...](#)



Outreach & Inreach

Immediate information, advice and support, liaison and referral to other appropriate services. [Click ...](#)

ABERDEEN IPED CLINIC



Aberdeen IPED Clinic

Specialist advice, information and support for anyone considering or using steroids or other Image and Performance Enhancing Drugs (IPEDs). [Click ...](#)



Aberdeenshire Services

South/Central Aberdeenshire; Gateway (open access); Inverurie, Stonehaven, Banchory & Huntly. Includes key-working and 'moving-on' recovery support. [Click ...](#)



Family Support Group

Peer support group for people who have been affected by a loved one's alcohol and/or drug use. [Click ...](#)



Quay Services

Support to women involved in the sex industry, including a weekly outreach service, free condoms and lube, needle exchange, safety and harm reduction advice. [Click ...](#)



Recovery services

One-to-one support and recovery groups for those in recovery from drug and/or alcohol use, at all stages in the recovery journey. [Click ...](#)



Volunteering

Full training and support for volunteers, including a Peer Recovery Volunteer programme. [Click ...](#)



Children, Young People & Families

Reaching Aberdeen Families Together (RAFT) brings together 5 local and national charities (Barnardos, ADA, Foyer, Apex and Homestart) to provide early, short-term help and support to children, young people and families. [Click ...](#)

Our object

'The company's objects are: To relieve the needs of persons affected by problems relating to drug and alcohol use and in furtherance of this to;

- i) develop and provide a city centre counselling and advice centre for drug and alcohol users, their friends and relatives in the city of Aberdeen and elsewhere.
- ii) develop an information resource in the field of drug and alcohol misuse.
- iii) develop training for professionals and volunteers in conjunction with agencies seeking to support drug misusers and their families.
- iv) provide a consultative service to community projects, residential establishments, professionals and volunteers.
- v) co-operate in the development of a common approach to the problem of drug misuse through liaison with relevant bodies.
- vi) facilitate the development of community responses through the promotion of local awareness of alcohol and drug misuse.' (Object of SCO13582, OSCR 2018).

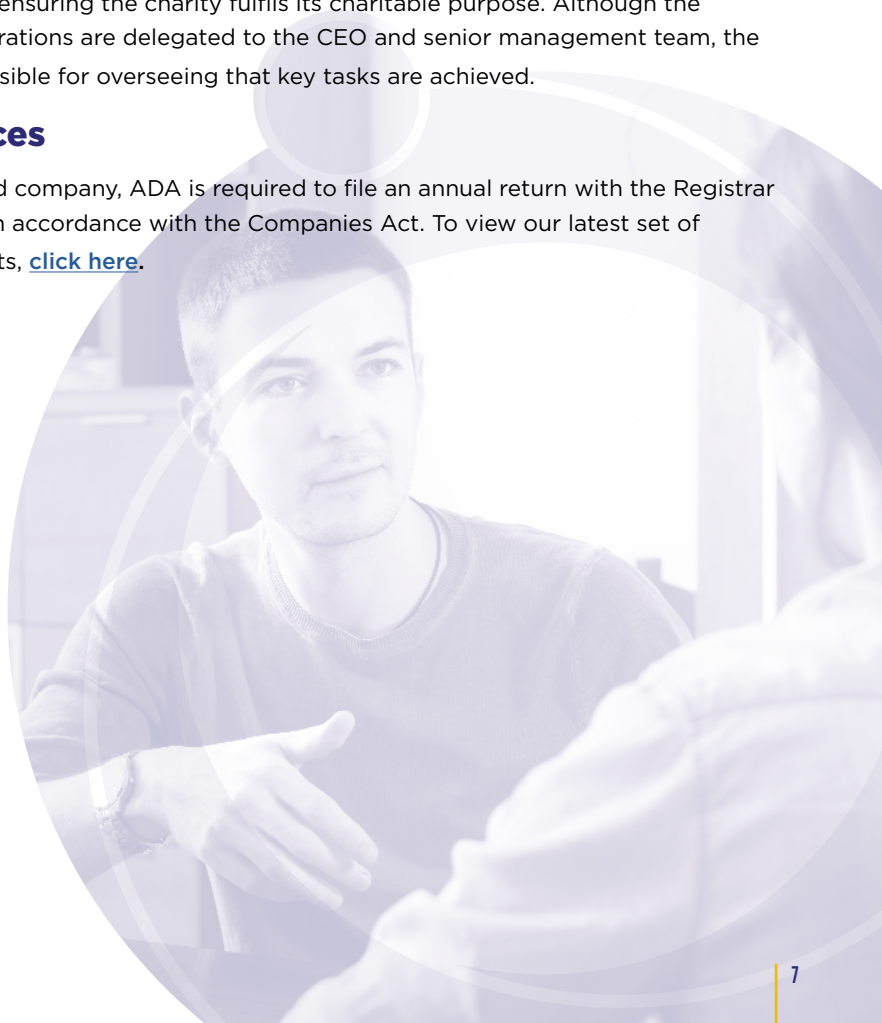
Our board

The roles and responsibilities of our board of directors are set out in our Board of Directors' handbook. It provides directors with a comprehensive overview of ADA from its history to its aims and objectives, the legal structure, liability and charitable status. It includes the specific duties of all board members, including chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, treasurer and auditors.

The Board of Directors are trusted to look after the charity's assets and are responsible for ensuring the charity fulfils its charitable purpose. Although the day-to-day operations are delegated to the CEO and senior management team, the Board is responsible for overseeing that key tasks are achieved.

Our finances

As a guaranteed company, ADA is required to file an annual return with the Registrar of Companies in accordance with the Companies Act. To view our latest set of audited accounts, [click here](#).



Our vision

Wherever it operates Alcohol & Drugs Action will proactively work to reduce the harms, inequalities and stigma associated with substance related issues, thus enabling and improving access to recovery by delivering a wide range of measurable, positive outcomes for individuals, families and communities most in need.

Our mission

Alcohol & Drugs Action will provide a range of substance use related services, collaborating with its partners, including its service-users, volunteers and local communities, to provide evidence-based interventions across the full spectrum of the 'recovery journey'. By providing harm reduction and tailored holistic support to the individual irrespective of their starting point within that journey, we ensure that our service provision is flexible, accessible, timely and person-centred.

Our values

PEOPLE FIRST

- We will work with individuals wherever they are to support them to wherever they wish to be, with emphasis on our core message of *reducing harm and enabling recovery*
- We will recognise the strengths and assets of those we work with
- We will treat people with dignity, compassion and respect

INNOVATION

- We embrace a learning culture and actively include our board members, staff, service-users and volunteers in continuous learning and development
- We will continually evaluate our work and develop our practice
- We will develop our services to be flexible and meet emerging needs as and when they arise

COLLABORATION

- We will work closely with those who align with our philosophy and values
- In all our relationships we will seek to add value to our objectives and outcomes

ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY & INTEGRITY

- We will use our quality systems to manage resources to support the further development of both people and services
- We will work to ensure our services have the appropriate financial support, and ensure that this support is ethical and sustainable
- We will ensure our values are measurable by holding ourselves to account through rigorous external and self-evaluation processes

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... OUR SERVICE
PROVISION IS
FLEXIBLE, ACCESSIBLE,
TIMELEY AND
PERSON-CENTRED ...

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Our strategic objective

ADA's core objective is to be regarded as the *pre-eminent service provider of choice wherever it operates*.

In order to both achieve and uphold its core objective, ADA will need to build upon its reputation achieved in the northeast of Scotland, by continuing to manage existing resources to maximise the quality of its services, as well as seeking to ensure long-term financial resourcing from wider funding sources. Importantly, it will regularly consult, and involve its service-users and relevant partners such as the local recovery community, in order to ensure it upholds this objective at all times.

The organisation's strategic outcomes necessary to achieving this objective will be operationalised through its Operational 'Delivery Plan' which will be crucial in formulating and taking forward key actions designed to bring the organisation's vision to life.

ADA's strong reputation is built on a history of providing quality services with a focus on innovation and adaptability. It has also developed a *learning culture* over its more than 30 years of operation and recognises a vital part of its assets lie with the professionalism of its staff and the learning afforded by the lived experience of its service-users, as well as the dedication and enthusiasm of its volunteers. ADA has significantly developed peer-led recovery within its services and beyond. This strategy builds upon these strong foundations and core strengths, adding further appropriate governance, use of improvement methodology and sound evaluation. As a result, ADA will structure itself to adhere both to its values and philosophy but also ensure all its work has a direct contribution to its objectives (see Planning Structure diagrams).



Planning Structure 1

Strong and positive communication is essential to this strategy. There is a need to develop robust, consistent, clear and sustained communication to ensure services reach all of those in need, as well as building positive influence through informing the context in which those services operate. ADA is well regarded and well placed to inform the debate surrounding the inequality and stigma associated with substance use.

ADA will seize every opportunity to take and apply learning by refining quality improvement systems, case management database and service inspections and reviews to help further organisational ambitions. Aligned with practice-led reviews and both formal and informal learning opportunities, ADA will step forward with confidence.

Our strategic outcomes

Strategic Outcome 1

Sustainability

We will look to build:

- Our financial capacity by growing and diversifying our income streams
- Our capacity to establish and sustain a social enterprise model fully aligned to our philosophy and values
- Our dynamic management of risks across the organisation

Strategic Outcome 2

Learning and Development

We will foster a learning organisation by:

- Utilising to the full the collective knowledge, expertise and experience of board members, staff, service-users and volunteers
- Delivering a sector-leading competency framework, always with the aim of being the best at what we do
- Aligning our support and supervision processes (including continuing professional development) with our vision, mission and values, to ensure our focus remains consistent across the organisation

Strategic Outcome 3

Innovation and Adaptation

We will not stand still, and will always seek to adapt to change and innovate wherever necessary through:

- Developing and enhancing interventions to reduce alcohol and drug related harms
- Ongoing evaluation and the use of improvement methodologies in reviewing our service outcomes
- Developing relationships and structured developmental pathways with the growing recovery community
- Actively promoting and encouraging service innovation coming from within our organisation, our workforce, service-users and volunteers
- 'Horizon scanning' and adoption of continuous improvement methodology to assess the value of adopting and adapting innovative and evaluated practice

Strategic Outcome 4

Collaboration

We recognise that we are not specialists in all areas of work, and we will seek out partnership opportunities in order to:

- Fill gaps and needs for our service-users by developing a bespoke relationship with our local recovery community
- Develop our relationships with other specialist organisations including the integration of services and practice where appropriate
- Enhance and add value to our existing service provision and outcomes
- Identify new areas of work where collaborative approaches will enhance our offering and add value to both organisations and service users alike

Strategic Outcome 5

Communication

We will communicate to:

- Tell our story and enhance awareness of our full range of services
- Expand our reach identifying new media platforms and channels as necessary and appropriate
- Influence and inform the local and national agenda for substance use
- Tackle social inequality and stigma for our service-users, family members and communities through highlighting good practice, use of advocacy and through positive interaction with media, press and key influencers across society

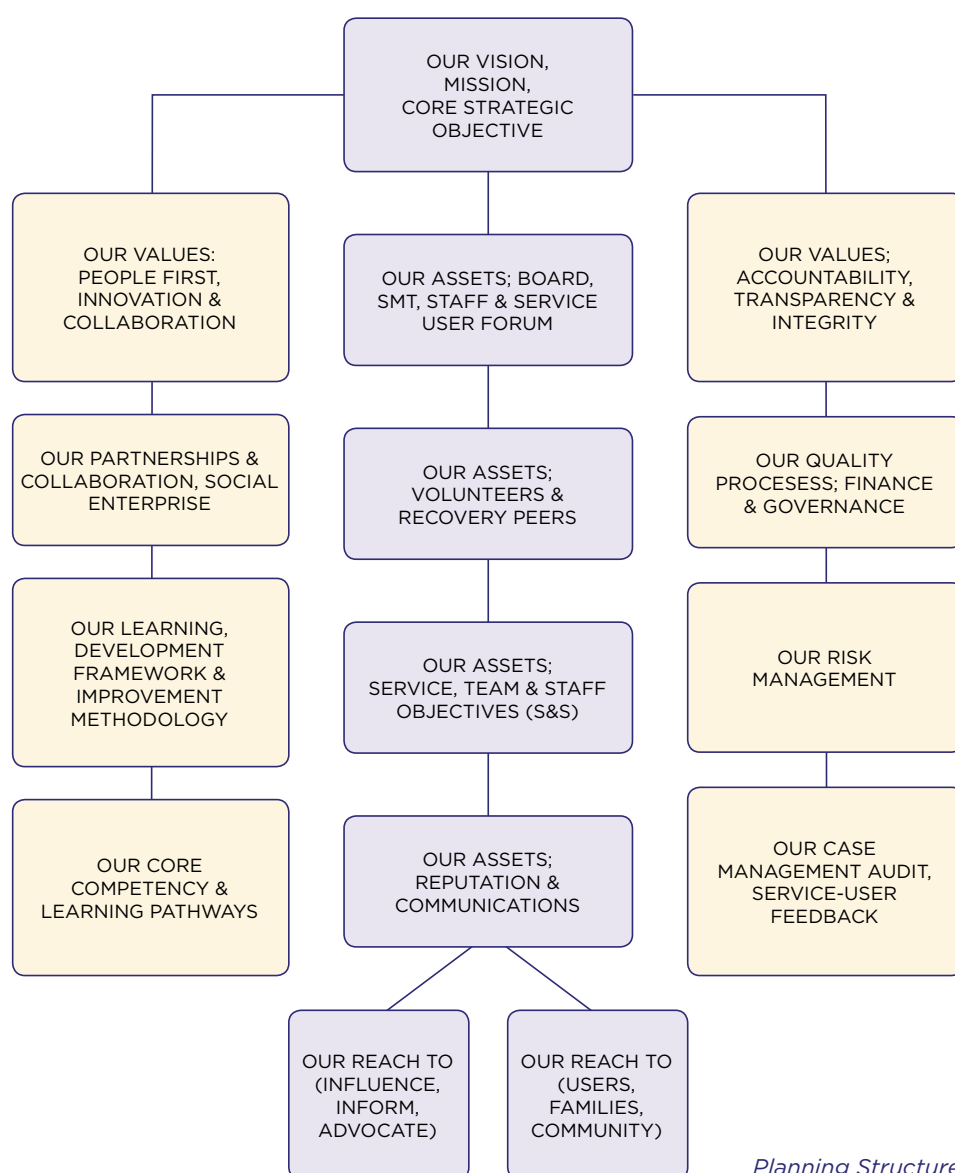


Our operational delivery plan

This strategy has been devised with a long-term view covering the next ten years. Clearly context and circumstance can change rapidly and nowhere less so than in the field of substance use. ADA recognises the need for flexibility and to be able to react to changes outwith its control.

To that end, our Operational Delivery Plan will focus on delivering on the short to medium term as well as longer term strategic objectives. It will deliver in a Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound (SMART) framework in line with the timelines of its current contracts, local planning priorities and national strategy. Progress towards each of the key Strategic Outcomes identified will be assessed by the Delivery Plan.

This document will therefore be a 'live' process and will be influenced by a variety of actors and processes (Our Planning Structure 2). It will be reviewed on a regular ongoing basis and will form part of our internal and external reporting structure and governance.



Planning Structure 2

Concluding remarks

This 10 year strategy for ADA has been developed by service users, staff, ADA management and approved by the Board of Trustees, to establish and record guidance for ADA's operations and foster its success in delivering benefit to actual and potential users, families, communities, commissioners and society. We welcome feedback and comment on ADA's work and its strategy and operations: please comment via the links below.

Roger Buckland

Chair of Trustees

June 2019

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Alcohol & Drugs Action

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Alcohol & Drugs Action is a registered charity and a
company limited by guarantee.

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