

Item No: 15

Meeting Date: Wednesday 25th September 2024

Glasgow City Integration Joint Board

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Update on the Implementation of Safer Drug Consumption Facility

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is to update the IJB on the progress of the implementation of a Safer Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF) in Glasgow City, as approved at the IJB in September 2023. The paper outlines governance arrangements and provides updates from a range of workstreams reporting to the SDCF Implementation Board.

Background/Engagement:

In [September 2023](#) a report was presented to the IJB seeking approval to progress with implementation if the Safer Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF) pilot in Glasgow City. That report provided a summary of the background to proposals for the new service dating back to 2016. The report describes the delays in being able to progress development of the service due to the absence of support from the Crown Office in relation to prosecution policy and required changes to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, responsibility for which rests with the UK Parliament.

Glasgow City HSCP submitted a revised proposal to the Lord Advocate in 2022 requesting further consideration to a public statement of prosecution policy that would support the implementation of a Safer Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF). The Lord Advocate communicated with Glasgow City HSCP on 11th September 2023, confirming that she would be prepared to publish a statement of prosecution policy to the effect that it would not be in the public interests to prosecute users of that facility in terms of section 5(2) of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 for simple possession offences committed within the confines of the Safer Drug Consumption Facility. The IJB approved progress to implementation on 27th September 2023.

	The Lord Advocate requested reassurance in relation to evaluation of the pilot phase of the SDCF, and that community engagement is undertaken prior to implementation. The Engagement Strategy was presented to, and approved by, the IJB in November 2023 and engagement activity has continued to be reported to the Public Engagement Committee on a quarterly basis. An update on evaluation is provided within the report. A further update on implementation was presented to the IJB on 24th January 2024, seeking approval to approach the Lord Advocate for the formal Statement of Prosecution Policy at a suitable time, to support full implementation of the SDCF. This paper seeks to update IJB on progress to date.
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Governance Route:	The matters contained within this paper have been previously considered by the following group(s) as part of its development. HSCP Senior Management Team ☐ Council Corporate Management Team ☒ Health Board Corporate Management Team ☒ Council Committee ☐ Update requested by IJB ☒ Other ☐ Not Applicable ☐
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Recommendations:	The Integration Joint Board is asked to: a) Note the contents of this report.
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Relevance to Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan:

The implementation of the Safer Drug Consumption Facility will support the IJB/HSCP to meet the Partnership Priorities laid out within the Strategic Plan 2023-26. In particular the SDCF will support the priorities of Prevention, Early Intervention and Well-being, Supporting Greater Self-Determination and Informed Choice, Supporting People in their Communities and Strengthening Communities to Reduce Harm.

Implications for Health and Social Care Partnership:

Reference to National Health & Wellbeing Outcome(s):	The SDCF will contribute to meeting the following health and wellbeing outcomes for health and social care services: People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected; Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services; Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities; People who use health and social care service are safe from harm.
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Personnel:	Alcohol and Drug Recovery Services will recruit, train and manage the workforce required to deliver a Safer Drug Consumption Facility. Staffside and Unison have been involved in the workforce planning for new posts.
Carers:	Family member and carer representatives have been consulted as part of the engagement strategy.
Provider Organisations:	Provider organisations operating with the proximity of the SCDF have been invited to participate in the engagement efforts. This includes local providers of services which are not contracted to deliver health and social care services by Glasgow City HSCP. Implications for provider organisations are considered through the SDCF Implementation Board.
Equalities:	An EQIA has been completed and published and has informed engagement activity to date. This was updated in February 2024, and will be reviewed following implementation of the service.
Fairer Scotland Compliance:	In seeking to offer a safer environment for drug consumption, co-located with a range of associated services and advice, the facility will contribute to supporting people to make choices that will help offset the impacts of socio-economic disadvantage often associated with this service user group.
Financial:	The financial framework for the operational costs for the facility have been agreed with Scottish Government, and operational costs will be delivered within this financial envelope. As per previous papers in September 2023 and January 2024, the implementation of an SDCF is likely to result in reduced costs to other parts of the health, social care and criminal justice system. The IJB previously agreed to earmark funds for the redesign works required to the Hunter Street Health and Care Centre to accommodate these services. Costs are being met from within this allocation.
Legal:	Legal advice and Counsel opinion has been sought to ensure that NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Glasgow City Council staff can deliver the facility within existing legislation. The SDCF will be delivered alongside other Alcohol and Drug treatment services aimed at reducing harms and providing pathways into treatment, care and recovery. Operational policies should be strictly adhered to and will be monitored closely. The Lord Advocate has indicated that she will provide a public statement of prosecution policy, so that service

	users will not be prosecuted for possession of drugs whilst using the SDCF.
Economic Impact:	It is anticipated that there may be economic benefits to the city as a result of the reduction of the visibility of drug misuse in public places and the reduction of drug-related litter being visible on the streets. Any economic impacts experienced will be considered as part of the evaluation.
Sustainability:	None.
Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:	None.
Risk Implications:	The implementation within Glasgow of the first facility of its kind in Scotland, carries with it a degree of reputational risk for Glasgow City Council, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Glasgow City IJB. Such risks are identified, monitored and mitigated through the SDCF Implementation Board, and will continue to be monitored via appropriate governance routes following implementation of the facility. A provisional date for opening has been reported in the media however there is a risk that this date may not be achieved due to water flushing works required on site and people will be unable to use the service in the absence of a statement of public prosecution.
Implications for Glasgow City Council:	There are a number of implications for both Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, including political and reputational impacts, positive impacts on the local community and media attention. There may also be increased demand for additional services as a result of successful sustained engagement with health and social care supports for a cohort of individuals who historically may be engaged on a sporadic and/or unscheduled basis. Resource implications of an increased uptake in preventative health and social care supports may be offset by a reduction in demand for unscheduled care services such as acute health services and crisis / emergency social care services.
Implications for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde:	There are a number of implications for both Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, including political and reputational impacts, positive impacts on the local community and media attention. There may also be increased demand for additional services as a result of successful sustained engagement with health and social care supports for a cohort of individuals who historically may be engaged on a sporadic and/or unscheduled basis. Resource implications of an increased uptake in consistent and preventative health and

	social care supports may be offset by a reduction in demand for unscheduled care services such as acute health services and crisis / emergency social care services.
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Direction Required to Council, Health Board or Both	
Direction to:	
1. No Direction Required	☒
2. Glasgow City Council	☐
3. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	☐
4. Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	☐

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update the IJB on the proposed implementation of a Safer Drug Consumption Facility in Glasgow City. The paper outlines progress towards implementation following approval by the Glasgow IJB on 27th September 2023, particularly in respect to the governance, engagement and evaluation. The Lord Advocate noted interest in the evaluation and community engagement within the communication of 11th September 2023, advising that she is prepared to issue a statement of prosecution policy when the service becomes operational.

2. Background

- 2.1. In [September 2023](#), a report was presented to the IJB seeking approval to progress with implementation of the Safer Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF) pilot in Glasgow City. That report provides a full summary of the evidence for such facilities and background to proposals from 2016.
- 2.2. Glasgow City HSCP submitted a revised proposal to the Lord Advocate in 2022 requesting further consideration to a public statement of prosecution policy that would support the implementation of a Safer Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF). The Lord Advocate, Dorothy Bain KC, confirmed in September 2023 that she would be prepared to publish a statement of prosecution policy to the effect that it would not be in the public interest to prosecute users of that facility for simple possession offences committed within the confines of the facility. The Lord Advocate indicated an expectation that the facility would be subject to robust evaluation, and also wished to be re-assured that public engagement would take place. She further noted that the exact terms of the statement of prosecution policy would be confirmed when such a facility becomes operational.
- 2.3. In [January 2024](#), the IJB noted progress to date in the implementation of the service, and approved the request to make a further approach to the Lord Advocate detailing governance arrangements, evidence of community engagement, evaluation plans and a final legal position for Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.
- 2.4. A communication has recently been submitted to the Lord Advocate to request the statement of public prosecution. The HSCP await a response to allow implementation of the service.

3. Governance

- 3.1. A Safer Drug Consumption Facility Implementation Board was established in November 2023, and meets four weekly. The Board is chaired by the Interim Chief Officer and membership includes local and national stakeholders including Glasgow Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) and HSCP representatives, Scottish Government, Crown Office (for information purposes only), Lived experience representation, community representation, Registered Social Landlords, 3rd Sector, NHS GGC Public Health, and Staffside and Local Authority Trade Unions.
- 3.2. The Implementation Board provides a governance structure for the implementation phase of the Safer Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF). The Board ensures that all aspects of the service are developed within the current legal framework and oversees and coordinates progress of five sub-groups – Property, Workforce, Communication and Engagement, Evaluation, and Operational/Governance.
- 3.3. The Operational/Governance sub-group is co-chaired by Interim Assistant Chief Officer and Associate Medical Director and meets weekly. The group oversees and develops guidance and Standard Operating Procedures for the service, reviews evidence and learning from similar facilities across the world and considers impacts of all workstreams.
- 3.4. Members of this group support all other workstreams and supports the coordination of activities across the workstreams.
- 3.5. The Equality Impact Assessment for SDCF was updated in February 2024 ([EQIA - Safer Drug Consumption Facility | Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership \(hscp.scot\)](#)) and will be reviewed once the service is operational.
- 3.6. Testing of the first phase release of the SDCF electronic recording system is underway, with release of the next phase for testing in the coming weeks. A final version will be available for staff training and induction prior to the service opening.

4. Property

- 4.1. The Property sub-group, chaired by the Chief Officer, Finance and Resources, was established in October 2023 and continues to meet fortnightly to provide a formal governance structure for the delivery of the project for the implementation of the SDCF at Hunter Street Health and Care Centre. The Property workstream, working with key partners, ensures that all aspects of the project are delivered within the current financial framework and building guidelines. Work to finalise the detailed plans and programme of works for the build has continued at pace.
- 4.2. NHS Assure has been consulted with particular emphasis to the ventilation requirements of the injection room and the injection booths. Stage 2 & 3 Healthcare Associated Infection System for Controlling Risk in the Built Environment (HAI-Scribe) has been completed for all aspects of the work being undertaken.

- 4.3 Input from the ADP reference groups (people with lived and living experience) has continued throughout the planning and building process to ensure co-production in relation to the design, layout and furnishings within the facility. Several site visits have taken place with the women's reference group, who have co-designed a trauma-informed environment. Model drawings are provided on the SDCF website - [SDCF Model Drawings](#). Work with the reference groups has led to the inclusion of shower facilities, clothing storage and an outside patio area. The reference groups also led on the naming of the service.
- 4.4 The Safer Drug Consumption Facility will be named **The Thistle**, following a Scottish theme. The reference groups felt strongly that a less formal and more welcoming name was essential.
- 4.5 Building work started on site on 11th March 2024, work on site has progressed at pace with all internal structures removed and new internal partitions constructed, first and second fix for utilities are complete, and work is now moving towards final phase fit out and external landscaping works, with a proposed site hand over date of September 2024.
- 4.6 A final task that requires to be completed before opening relates to the flushing and chlorination of all pipework, which is required to prevent waterborne pathogens from contaminating the water supply and Leachate flushing to eliminate any harmful effects of organic material. 3 weeks of successful testing is required before the facility can become operational.
- 4.7 Works have been taking place on site whilst accommodating the remaining staff groups in other accommodation on the site and the Enhanced Drug Treatment Service has continued to operate as normal.

5. Workforce

- 5.1 The Workforce sub-group, chaired by Interim Assistant Chief Officer, was established in November 2023 and meets four-weekly. As outlined in the IJB Report in January 2024, a workforce plan had been developed within the financial allocation from Scottish Government of up to £2,347,000 per annum.
- 5.2 The multidisciplinary team is described in Appendix 1, and consists of administrative staff, harm reduction workers (peer support), clinical nurse specialists, nursing staff, social workers, medical staff, clinical psychology, health care support workers, primary care sessions, infectious disease consultant sessions, team leaders and an operational manager. Staffside and Local Authority Trade Union have been fully involved in the development of the staff team and in reviewing job descriptions. Whilst the injecting and recovery area of the facility is clinical and will be staffed by nurses, the other areas are designed and staffed in a way that aims to support people with their wider wellbeing in a less clinical environment.
- 5.3 A successful recruitment process has been undertaken, with all but one admin post filled. Face to face recruitment events took place at Emirates Arena and social media and partner organisations were utilised to advertise posts.

There was significant interest in working in the service, with over 700 applications received for 30 posts.

- 5.4 Recruitment has involved people with lived experience, with peer panels forming part of the process for all leadership posts, and a panel member with lived experience for the remaining posts. Scottish Drugs Forum also joined the interview panels for some posts.
- 5.5 The Operational Manager, Nurse Team Leader and Social Work Team Leader are in post, with the remaining staff coming into post by mid-September. A training needs analysis has been undertaken and an extensive induction and training and development programme has been developed.
- 5.6 In recognition that the service is likely to be an emotionally challenging environment for staff, the clinical psychologist will be available to provide onsite support, training in relation to trauma-informed practice and facilitate reflective practice sessions. Daily staff meetings will take place at various points, and an extended period of handover has been included in the shift pattern. Services operating in other countries have highlighted that split working patterns, rotation within the service during shifts, and an opportunity to discuss issues arising during the shift all help to reduce stress experienced by staff.

6. Communication and Engagement

- 6.1 The Communication and Engagement sub group, chaired by the ADRS Associate Medical Director, has been meeting since final proposals for the facility were developed in August 2023. The Engagement Strategy was presented to, and approved by, the IJB on [29th November 2023](#), and has since been reported quarterly to the IJB Public Engagement Committee.
- 6.2 Phase 1 of the Engagement Plan began in September 2023 and has involved engagement with local residents, elected members, people with lived and living experience of injecting drug use and their families, housing providers and businesses in the immediate vicinity of Hunter Street Health and Care Centre. Officers have attended local Community Councils, Area Partnership Forums and Local Engagement Forums. 12 community drop-in sessions between November 2023 to August 2024 have taken place in Calton and Bridgeton, at various times in afternoons and evenings to offer opportunities for all community members to attend. Sessions have been promoted through posters, social media and 18,000 flyers sent to Calton residents. A Summary of phase 1 engagement and feedback was presented to the Public Engagement Committee in [February 2024](#).
- 6.3 Phase 1 also included the development of a bespoke webpage and video. The Safer Drug Consumption Facility webpage ([Safer Drug Consumption Facility | Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership \(hscp.scot\)](#)) includes a Frequently Asked Questions for potential service users, their families and friends and for local communities, as well as providing background information, engagement session information with an online feedback form. The site was visited 3,841 times between December 2023 and July 2024.

The YouTube video explains the need for the SDCF in Glasgow, using the voices of people with lived experience and family members as well as service providers in the sector. This has been viewed over 1,300 times in the last 6 months.

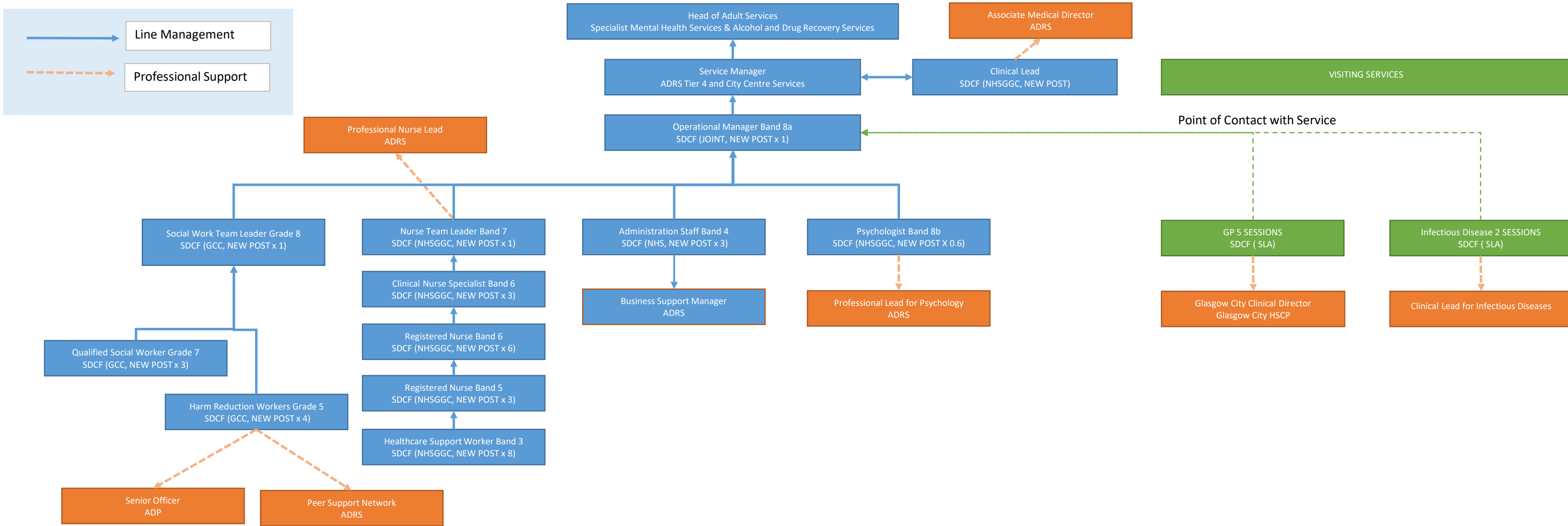
- 6.4 Phase 2 of the Engagement plan included more widespread communities and businesses in the city and a wide range of third sector services, statutory services and staff. A *You Said, We Did* document has been developed following Phase 1 & 2 engagement (Appendix 2).
- 6.5 Phase 3 of the engagement plan is underway, focussed on potential service users, referring services, local businesses and residents. An online city-wide session for all interested parties is being planned prior to the opening of the facility.
- 6.6 Feedback from local residents has resulted in a planned deep clean in the vicinity of the service and engagement with the independent evaluation team to ensure that the impact on local priorities is included in their work.
- 6.7 The SDCF Implementation Board has agreed the creation of a Community Engagement Forum, similar in design to those in other countries that are reported as successful in addressing any immediate concerns. The community engagement forum will facilitate ongoing communications for the service leads and community members to meet, discuss and respond to any issues following implementation of the service. Representatives from SDCF management, residents, businesses, housing providers, elected members, those with lived and living experience, and Police Scotland will be invited to join the forum, supported by the ADP.

7. Evaluation

- 7.1 The Evaluation planning group is chaired by NHSGGC Director of Public Health and involves colleagues from NHSGGC Public Health, Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland and Academia.
- 7.2 NHSGGC, together with independent academic partner institutions, submitted a research grant bid for the evaluation, and a funding decision is expected by end September 2024.
- 7.3 Pre-implementation preparation and baseline data collection for the evaluation is complete and submitted to Public Health Scotland and the team have attended recent community engagement sessions to begin the process of gathering community opinions. Planning for a community survey and systematic social observation study is underway.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The Integration Joint Board is asked to:
 - a) Note the contents of this report.



Glasgow City's Safer Drug Consumption Facility (SDCF)

You Said

We Did

You are concerned about increased drug dealing and violence in the local area when the service opens	We are working closely with Police Scotland to establish a community forum where concerns can be raised and resolved as quickly as possible once the service is operational
You are worried about increased anti-social behaviour in the local area	We are working with the evaluation team to ensure that any changes in anti-social behaviour will be measured and reported
The local residents need to know about the engagement sessions and get a chance to discuss their concerns with service leads	We scheduled engagement sessions at a variety of timeslots across community venues and promoted the sessions on posters, social media and sent out 18,000 flyers to local postcodes.
Some service users of the SDCF may be homeless, there needs to be facilities to support them	We added a shower room and clothing store to the layout of the service
The local community needs somewhere to raise concerns and get a response	We will create a local engagement forum that will continue throughout implementation and delivery of the pilot
Many people will want to go for a smoke after injecting, it's important they can do that and still come back in to receive aftercare services	We added a secure smoking area for service users to access from and return to the aftercare area
People with lived experience should be involved in recruitment of staff	People with lived experience will be involved in recruitment
A safer community would be a key measure of success	We have ensured this is included in the evaluation