



Saffires drugs and alcohol policy

Saffires aims to be a drug and alcohol free project. A simplified version of this drugs and alcohol policy is available on our website and leaflets or posters will be displayed for service users outlining the key points of our policy together with expected behaviour during any activities.

Saffires staff and volunteers are expected to work within the Law. Saffires staff and volunteers should also act as role models for service users and uphold the drugs and alcohol policy at all times. Saffires staff and volunteers hold a position of influence in addition to their legal and contractual obligations. Therefore Saffires volunteers and staff must not use alcohol, tobacco or any substances in the company of service users. The clothing worn by staff and volunteers must reflect this and other policies of the project.

Saffires recognises that many people working in prostitution may use or have used illegal drugs at some point. Therefore, our service users may also at times reflect this practice.

Saffires will train their staff and volunteers to have an awareness of the most common categories of substances, their legal classification, their effects and risks and criminal penalties for the use or supply of such substances.

Saffires does not condone the use of illegal drugs or underage/excessive drinking of alcohol. We want to create activities that are safe and supportive for those who use our project and access our services. We also want to show consideration to service users who might be trying to stop or have stopped using drugs. We will in whatever circumstances actively discourage the use of illegal drugs. There may be, however, circumstances when we will work with a service user who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Legally, Saffires staff have a duty of care for service users under their supervision, actions required for 'breaking project rules' need to be balanced against the promotion of safety for the service user and others.

Signs of substance misuse

If a service user is under the influence of drugs or alcohol and their behaviour is acceptable and within our ground rules, we will work with that service user. However this will be balanced by appropriately assessing the health risks to the service user and ourselves. If upon assessment, the service user requires urgent medical assistance, or is at risk, an ambulance will be called. If the behaviour of the service user is unacceptable i.e. violent or abusive we will ask them to leave the activity and premises. If the service user will not leave, Saffires staff will ring the police. We will ask the service user to leave for the remainder of that specific activity or meeting. Saffires staff will document the action taken on the appropriate activity evaluation form. The next time the service user attends a Saffires activity, we will find an appropriate time to talk to them about our drugs policy and offer relevant support to them.

Saffires wants to support service users who are using drugs or alcohol to access necessary services which will assist in addressing their substance misuse. If a team member believes that they can achieve some useful work with the service user at that moment, then they can use their discretion to do so but they must take responsibility for staying with the service user and being responsible for that person and other volunteers present. The member of staff taking this action needs to consider the wider implications for activities taking place with other service users and the expectations on other team members.

Team members must make it clear to all service users that

- we do not condone the use of drugs
- we do not condone under-age drinking or excessive drinking
- we do not condone service users being under the influence of drugs or alcohol when attending a Saffires project activity
- we want to accept service users for who they are and be tolerant of their behaviour with the view to working with them in a positive way

The table within this policy details recommended action with service users who are identified as under the influence of illegal substances (see below).

Complaints

If a service user feels that they have been treated unfairly under the drugs and alcohol policy they should be advised that they can make a complaint in accordance with the Saffires' Complains Policy for Service Users.

Drugs Information

An explanatory leaflet about the Saffires drug and alcohol policy should be used wherever possible with service users who are being asked to leave an activity due to drugs or alcohol.

Saffires will display posters and information on Saffires premises regarding our drugs policy to service users within its activities.

New Team Members

Saffires will ensure that new and existing team members are fully conversant with the project drugs and alcohol policy. Team members will receive relevant training, regular and effective supervision to ensure they are fulfilling their duties and are supported in their role.

	Appropriate care	Assessing risk	Taking action
On suspicion that a service user is under the influence of illegal substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● assess the risk of behaviour to yourself, other staff members, volunteers and service users present ● provide necessary first aid support ● move the service user to a safe place or position if at risk of unconsciousness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● is the service user creating a risk to staff members or other service users? ● is it safe to remove them from the project activity? ● do they need first aid or hospital treatment? ● are they in possession of the substance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● if staff or other service users at risk, then exclude the service user from the activity ● if service user will not leave, phone the police ● access necessary medical treatment –the service user should be assessed by a first aider and should medical assistance be required dial 999 ● confiscate any illegal substances safely- upon advance agreement with local police force** see page 5 ● record the incident using the Saffires evaluation form or activity incident log ● when the service user can understand, offer drugs education or other services e.g. Lifeline, Turning Point

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • due to the risk of Hepatitis B and C and HIV, gloves should be used and volunteers should cover any open wounds to avoid infection
On witnessing consumption/use of illegal substances during outreach visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • politely explain that Saffires policies do not allow volunteers to be present whilst illegal substances are being consumed • explain that you will visit again at a later date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saffires volunteers/staff could be at risk of compromise or at health risk if illegal substances are being used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the outreach coordinator will initiate leaving the premises and record on activity record sheet
On suspicion that a service user is in possession of illegal substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saffires staff and volunteers must never hold onto illegal substances and must phone the police immediately should a service user relinquish a substance • The Law permits Saffires staff to temporarily take possession of a substance, where they suspect the substance to be an illegal drug, for the purposes of preventing an offence – provided it is handed to the police as soon as possible • explain the Saffires policy to the service user and the reasons making confiscation of substances appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has the service user concealed a substance in their belongings or told you they are carrying illegal substances on their person? • has the service user taken any of the substance themselves or given it to anyone else? • does the service user understand the Saffires drugs/alcohol policy? • does the service user understand that the substance should be confiscated? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if two team members agree the service user is in possession of an illegal substance, exclude service user from the activity • if substances have been passed to team members, phone the police so that substances are disposed of appropriately – upon agreement with local police teams • an adult witness must be present to agree the quantity and description of the substance confiscated • Place the substance in a sealed bag labelling the date/time/signature of witnesses and store in an agreed safe place • contact the police, describe the confiscated substance and where it is stored. Record the police officer's name and ID number – agree collection arrangements – get a receipt from the police officer receiving the substance. • if a service user gives a Saffires team member alcohol, it must be disposed of immediately and appropriately • record the incident – if the incident involves the supply of an illegal substance to others, see 'Handling incidents of supply' below

	Appropriate care	Assessing risk	Taking action
On suspicion that a service user is supplying others with an illegal substance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 18 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 states that it is a legal requirement to co-operate with enquiries relating to an offence • staff and volunteers must keep within the Law as outlined but use professional judgement about appropriate action • sharing or exchanging illegal substance constitutes supply even when no money changes hands • consider other people who may be involved in the situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has the action of supply been witnessed or is the witness merely suspicious? • how have staff identified the incident? • has the incident arisen as part of engagement activity with the service user regarding their known substance abuse? • has the service user been forced to hold substances for others? • what is the level of risk to the service user? • is there a child protection consideration? • does the service user have dependents? • is the service user willing to engage about changing their behaviour? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consult the Project Coordinator(s) • Make a record of the incident with any witnesses – record any action taken and state the reasons for your decisions • if substances are confiscated then follow the procedure outlined previously for safe disposal of illegal substances • according to the Project rules, exclude the service user from the current activity if appropriate • offer suitable service user services • some service users may share drugs by pooling money to buy at lower prices and then dividing up the drugs. There is case law precedent showing that it is not in the public interest to pursue such cases
Staff and volunteers who have experienced misuse of substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff and volunteers should carefully consider whether sharing former experiences with service user is necessary • staff and volunteers are role models and no action should be seen to condone the use of substances • staff and volunteers' main focus should be the needs of the service user 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is the information necessary? • what is the impact of discussing past experiences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff and volunteers who have formerly been involved in substance misuse should speak confidentially to the Project Coordinator(s) • staff and volunteers who are struggling with personal use of substances should seek advice from an appropriate agency or speak to a member of staff
Disposal of syringes and vessels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • care must be taken by all volunteers when touching clothing or belongings of service users (e.g. for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where was the item found? • has any other volunteer or staff member unknowingly come into contact with the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if possible, remove the item using another implement and whilst wearing gloves – place in a sealed container • for needles/ syringes – a member of staff will

	<p>washing machine use or administration of first aid)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all substance syringes, packaging, vessels, foils etc must be treated as harmful and contaminated • nobody under 18 years of age is permitted to handle such items 	<p>item?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is someone trained in 'safe handling' available to remove the item? • can the item be removed with another implement? • Are plastic gloves available? 	<p>remove the item according to 'safe removal of sharps' procedure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO not place syringes in ordinary waste disposal or recycling bins • see local pharmacy information if disposal is required • a sharps bin will be available for staff and will be provided via the local police contact and ask the service users to dispose of the syringe where possible
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**** agreement for the disposal of substances must be agreed with local police teams at a senior level. Should the main police contact not be available when the call is made, other beat officers would be sent out. In this situation, Saffires being in possession of Class A drugs, could face questions which compromise service user confidentiality agreements. Saffires need to confirm whether there is a local amnesty on confiscation of substances which may already be in place for other charities or venues dealing with vulnerable people. Local arrangements need to be confirmed with Saffires' SPOC and her senior officers.**