

DRSTP II



Issue Number 5 September 2001

NEWSLETTER

**Council of Europe Pompidou Group
Co-operation Group to Combat Drug
Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs**

Welcome to this edition of the Demand Reduction Staff Training Programme (DRSTP) Newsletter. There have been a few changes since our last Newsletter; the most significant is that Arne Schanche Andresen has moved on – he has returned to his native Norway to take up the post of Head of Department, Centre of Competency Substance Abuse Care Services for the City of Oslo. Arne has made a fantastic contribution to the development of the DRSTP – he has been working on the Project since its inception – and we will miss him. We wish him well in his new and demanding post. *See his message on the next page.*

I have taken over from him, working from my London base, but keeping in close touch with colleagues in Strasbourg, especially with Marina Lajoinie, the Project Administrator. I am familiar with the Programme, having served on the Management Group for DRSTP I and DRSTP II.



Richard Ives

I have recently been working on a UNDCP project in the Baltic States, so I have had the opportunity to meet some of the 'key players' in these three countries. Having also worked, albeit briefly, in eight of the other nine countries, I am familiar with some of the issues there. My work in the UK is largely concerned with drug education and prevention. If you want to know more, visit our website at www.educari.com. I look forward to working with you in the final phase of this Programme
Richard Ives

DRSTP Progress

The DRSTP is progressing according to plan, although some of the consultancies are still to take place. The original idea of having a group of consultants who develop long-term relationships with a particular country appears to have been successful – the consultants have been able to adapt their input to meet the needs of the local National Project Teams.

Some highlights from the work include:

Albania: A draft National Drugs Strategy has been developed.

Bulgaria: Plans for an university-based drugs course are well advanced.

Czech Republic: A text-book – containing 90 articles about drug demand reduction – is being produced, in addition to a glossary of drug-related terms.

Estonia: National guidelines on drug treatment are in development.

Hungary: A textbook is being produced, covering a wide range of drug-related topics. This will be used for distance education.

Latvia: A community prevention handbook is being produced, focusing on the town of Jelgava.

Lithuania: A comprehensive local drug prevention handbook is being put together.

Poland: Again, a drug prevention handbook is being developed. The focus is on drug prevention at the community level.

Romania: Drug treatment guidelines are the focus of the work in Romania.

Russia: Drug treatment guidelines are also the focus here.

Slovakia: A drug information manual is being produced. Chapters include substitution therapy and outreach work.

Slovenia: A post-graduate drugs course has been developed.

An apology

Some consultants, members of the National Project teams and other people working in the 12 countries participating in the Programme have had problems with their payments for their work on the DRSTP. We would like to apologise for these problems, which have been largely due to difficulties of adapting to new financial systems introduced by the Council of Europe. We believe that these 'teething problems' are now over and that financial matters should proceed more smoothly from now on.

Plans for the future

Completion

The key task over the next few months is to bring the work to fruition. All our efforts will not have been worthwhile unless we can point to materials and other concrete developments that have occurred as a result of our work.

Evaluation

'I don't think we have failed. We have just found another way that doesn't work.' Andy Elson, one of the pilots of an unsuccessful round-the-world balloon flight

We also need to learn from the process, and we therefore need to evaluate what we have done. This evaluation will include not just the outputs of the Programme, but also the processes of creating those outputs. We will be approaching the evaluation in a spirit of enquiry, with a view to identifying the good and the less-good aspects of this Programme so that we – and others – can learn from what we have done.

Dissemination

'If we have a correct theory but merely prate about it, pigeon-hole it and do not put it into practice, then that theory, however good, is of no significance.' (Mao Tsetung *On Practice*)

The dissemination of our work is an important aspect of the DRSTP, which in this final phase of the Programme will be given more attention. The participants need more information about what each other are doing – we can learn from each other's mistakes and successes. This is one of the aims of the Seminar in September.

There is also the need to disseminate our work more widely and we are keen that this should continue beyond the Programme. The publications produced in many of the participating countries will have a relevant beyond their borders, and where appropriate translations are available we aim to make them widely known about. Often, only summaries will be available, but these can be very useful in giving others the 'flavour' of what the work has covered. We intend to use our website to continue to make these materials readily available beyond the end of the Programme. More details will appear in future editions of this newsletter.

A Message from Arne Schanche Andresen

You are not forgotten and you will never be – I feel I owe you all a big 'thank you' for all the devotion you have given to the DRSTP, many of you throughout a period of almost six years! Thanks to what I learned throughout my time in the Pompidou Group Secretariat, and perhaps not least throughout my visits to many of the CEEC countries, I feel I have had a good education for what is being expected of me in my new job which is all about supporting development of competency, networking and co-operation across institutional borders and professional territory. I am confident that from time-to-time we will be in touch; do not hesitate to contact me if you should come up with good ideas that we might be able to work together on.

Good luck to all of you and keep up the good work!

Drugs Study possibilities in the UK

Various universities in the UK offer the possibility to study drugs issues. Two of the DRSTP consultants are from universities which offer such courses.

Our consultant in Slovenia is Dr Kim Wolff, who is Programme Leader of the course at the National Addiction Centre of the Institute of Psychiatry. This Institution offers a full-time (12 Months) and a part-time (2 or 3 years) course starting in early October and ending in late September leading to an MSc qualification. The course has a strong international and multidisciplinary focus and takes post-graduate students from a variety of academic backgrounds. The MSc course provides an attractive educational opportunity for staff in many different sectors.

For details, contact Dr Kim Wolff, National Addiction Centre, 4 Windsor Walk, Denmark Hill, London, SE5 8AF
e-mail: k.wolff@iop.kcl.ac.uk.

Our Consultant in Bulgaria is Sally Woods, of Liverpool John Moores University. The MSc/Diploma Course here was set up in 1994. It and takes a multidisciplinary approach, along with three other guiding principles:

- as well as covering abstinence-oriented approaches, it focuses on the philosophy of harm reduction
- rather than focusing simply on national problems and policies, it considers the international dimension of drug use, particularly European policy
- it provides formal instruction about existing theories and studies but also deals with applied research.

For details on the web, visit <http://cwis.livjm.ac.uk/hum/psych> and follow links to the MSc Drug Use and Addiction programme.

Here is some information about another such course.

The Drugs and Alcohol Studies unit at the School of Social Science, Middlesex University is interested in establishing links with similar groups in other European countries to foster exchange and the development of joint teaching and research.

The Middlesex team is launching a new certificate/diploma/MSc *Drugs in Society: Policy and Intervention* in September 2001. This programme will be available by distance learning but students will have the option of spending some time at the University and combining distance learning modules with taught modules from other related programmes.

We would especially like to encourage a visiting fellow or visiting professor link with a view to building joint research. This would require support from the country of origin or from an external source but Middlesex would provide accommodation and office facilities, use of information and library services and many opportunities to interact with teachers and researchers in the School both informally and through participation in seminars and workshop discussions.

If you would like to explore the possibilities of a link with the Drugs and Alcohol Studies unit, please get in touch with:

*Dr. Betsy Thom, School of Social Science, Middlesex University, Queensway, EN3 4SF Middlesex, UK.
E-mail B.Thom@mdx.ac.uk*

Byways of biology

FRUIT flies get a kick from cocaine, displaying the same behaviour as humans. Colleen McClung and Jay Hirsh of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville exposed fruit flies to cocaine vapour and recorded their behaviour on videotape. The flies twirled, compulsively repeated their motions and bounced off walls. (*Current Biology*, vol 8, p 109).