

Treo Port Lairge CLG

Substance Use Policy

Staff Signature

CEO Signature

Introduction

It is Treo's mission to provide a community based programme that addresses the needs of young people who have demonstrated actual offending behaviour and positively challenge this behaviour through the provision of a structured and supportive mentoring and guidance programme. This will aim to maximise their access to appropriate and useful training, education and development programmes through mediating and negotiating with existing responses where appropriate, and through the design and implementation of initiatives where no current relevant provision exists.

Given that it is Treo's aim to help people stay out of trouble and move forward with their lives, Treo understands that using and dealing substances is part of the lives of many its participants. Substance use among our target group varies from non-use right through to addiction and severely problematic use, (problematic drug use tends to refer to drug use which could either be dependent or recreational. It is not necessarily the frequency of drug use which is the primary 'problem' but the effects that drug taking has on the user's life (i.e. they may experience social, financial, psychological, physical or legal problems as a result of their drug use).

This policy needs to be informed by the laws in Ireland. The primary legislation under which criminal charges for drugs offences is brought is the *Misuse of Drugs Act 1977 and the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1984*. These have been further amended by the *Criminal Justice Act 1999, the Criminal Justice Act 2006 and the Criminal Justice Act 2007*. The *Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1988 (SI 328 of 1988)* (as amended) lists the various substances to which the legislation applies. The *Criminal Justice (Psychoactive Substances) Act 2010* covers substances which are not specifically proscribed under the Misuse of Drugs Acts, but which have psychoactive effects.

It is important to have a policy on substances that provides for the safety and welfare of each individual involved with Treo. It is also necessary to have a policy in place on substances to guide and support participants, staff, tutors and management committee members in their work in Treo.

Within this context, this policy contains guidelines of good practice recognising that staff must make assessments and decisions based on how participants present. Additional supports for staff can be found by referring to Treo's Incident Report Form, Substance Affected Form, Lone Worker Policy and Staffing Handbook. As recognised by the board Good Practice will necessitate regular training for all people associated with Treo and knowledge of services and professionals supports available.

It is extremely important that everyone understands this policy. The groups mentioned above must be familiar with it, add to it, and use it as guide. Ideas that you have for improving this document are most welcome and you can tell any staff member. The areas that the policy covers are:

Definition of Substances

Any substance, other than food, which changes the way the body works physically, mentally or emotionally. This includes legal and illegal substances, solvents and over the counter drugs. This also includes – but is not limited to - Alcohol, Ecstasy, Hash/Marijuana, Amphetamines, Speed, LSD/Trips, Ketamine, Heroin, Cocaine, Glue, Gas, Petrol and medication otherwise available only on prescription. This also

applies to drugs that are been bought on the internet and sold on the street. Tobacco and legitimate prescription use are covered towards the end of this document.

Who?

Anyone involved with Treo which may include participants, their families, tutors, staff, guest tutors, volunteers, people on student placements, guests to the centre and management committee members.

Where?

Any Treo activity.

When?

The people mentioned above are expected not to be under the influence of chemicals while present at Treo.

Programmes

Going into pubs for programme work i.e. outreach work or eating out is to be avoided where possible.

Substance Use

Substance use while involved with Treo can place the user, other participants, staff and members of the public at risk. If staff believe someone is under the influence of substances it is important to do things where safety and welfare of everybody including the user are most important.

- Participants who appear to be under the influence of substances will/should not be allowed to operate machinery or appliances.
- The user should be encouraged to tell staff about the particular type(s) and amount of substance(s) taken.
- If an individual is thought to be under the influence of substances and it is thought that medical attention is not needed, an assessment will be made to determine the safety of sending that person home. A Substance Affected Form will be completed by staff and used as a tool to engage that person in conversation about substance use.
- If an individual is thought to be under the influence of substances and it is thought that medical attention is needed, staff will summon an ambulance. Next Of Kin is to be contacted if possible and appropriate. A Substance Affected Form will be completed by staff and used as a tool to engage that person in conversation about substance use.
- In the case of a person under 18 a parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.
- Treo staff will follow up with one to one support work with the participant. Support of outside professionals will be offered to any individuals.

Substance Possession and Dealing

Substance possession and dealing while involved with Treo can place everyone at risk. This type of behaviour is illegal and is not acceptable. This type of behaviour will be treated very seriously. If an individual is suspected to be in possession of and or dealing it is important to act quickly. If this happens the CEO (or Project staff in her/his absence) should be alerted straight away.

- If it is thought that a person is in possession of or dealing substances inside the Treo premises or outside while involved in activities with Treo, s/he will be asked to leave the premises or activity immediately if safe to do so. One to One work with that person will follow.
- Staff doing the same thing will be treated in accordance with disciplinary procedures which may require reporting the matter to local Gardai.
- Records about incidents involving suspected substance possession and dealing shall be written in Treo's "Incident Report Forms." These forms will be completed and signed by staff & the CEO (or Project staff in her/his absence). Only that person, their parents in the case of under 18s and staff will be allowed to see these files.

Finding Substances

If substances are found on Treo premises, in project or staff vehicles, or while away from the centre on activities the outlined procedure must be followed;

- It is important to remember that the substances may not belong to anyone present.
- Inform a colleague immediately.
- Immediately put the substances in a secure safe place. Report the matter to the CEO (or Project staff in her/his absence). Because Treo staff may now be in possession of an illegal substance(s) the Gardai JLO will be contacted to collect the substance.
- Follow up Group discussion must take place (*Discussion re legal and criminal side of finding drugs, potential personal, placement and organisational harm*).
- Records regarding incidents involving the finding of substances shall be written in Treo's "Incident Report Forms." These forms will be completed and signed by the CEO (or Project staff in her/his absence). GDPR applies.

Participants taking medication

From time to time participants will be taking medicines or tablets that the doctor has prescribed. Participants are encouraged to inform Treo staff if they are on medication. Participants who have asthma and use inhalers should have their names clearly marked on each inhaler.

Staff will not give out medication to participants but may (parental/guardian permission required for under 18s) hold on to individuals' medicines or tablets. The medication will be asked for by the participant and handed over by staff where the participant will then take it him/herself.

Participants who appear to be under the influence of substances will/should not be allowed to operate machinery or appliances with the potential to cause harm.

Tobacco

Tobacco cannot be smoked in Treo' premises, in staff cars, transport to organised activities or in the place of these activities.

Under 18s will need parental/guardian permission before being allowed smoke cigarettes in the company of Treo staff. Participants and staff should be aware that it is illegal to purchase tobacco for people under eighteen years of age.

Storage of Solvents & Volatile Substances

Solvents and volatile substances as far as is practical will be safely stored. Their use by participants will be under the guidance of Treo staff and tutors.

Staff Training

Treo will facilitate the training of staff and all stakeholders on a regular basis.

Conclusion

This Policy/ Approach is offered to help keep Treo a safe place for participants, their families, tutors, staff, guests and the management committee. Situations may arise from time to time that are not covered by this policy. We therefore encourage you to bring this/these to the attention of the CEO.